

**THE CONSECUTIVE CONFERENCE INTERPRETER  
AS INTERCULTURAL MEDIATOR: A  
COGNITIVE-PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO THE  
INTERPRETER'S ROLE**

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Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy, May 2007

*I dedicate this thesis first and foremost to the man whom Allah, the Most Gracious the Most Merciful, sent to us with a divine message of love, peace and knowledge to shed off ignorance when humanity went astray: the Prophet Muhammad, peace & blessings of Allah be upon him.*

*I also dedicate this thesis to my father & mother, the sources of continuous love and emotional support; my teachers; the two little angels, Fad-Allah & Nasr-Allah; Suhaib and all my brothers & sisters; my dear friend, Mr Baree, and all my friends; and last, but not least, to the woman who captured my heart & mind, and offered me true love when I needed it the most: my beloved wife.*

*The mission of the interpreter is to help individuals and communities to acquire a fuller knowledge and a deeper understanding of one another, and, what is more important, a greater respect for one another. Also to come to an agreement if they should want to do so.*

(Herbert, 1952: 3, emphasis in original)

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## Acknowledgments

My greatest indebtedness, sincerest appreciation and deepest gratitude are due to my God, Allah glorified be He, the One and Only God, the Lord of lords, for had He not bestowed success upon me, this research would have never come into being; to Him and to Him alone, I remain faithful, devoted & sincerely grateful for everything, forever.

My heartfelt love and sincerest acknowledgements go to the greatest teacher of all teachers at all times, the Prophet Muhammad peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, for the great impact his divine message has had on the course of my life.

My deep indebtedness and sincere gratefulness naturally go to my supervisor, Professor Myriam Salama-Carr, for her great and unlimited support, encouragement, patience & invaluable guidance throughout.

I am grateful to my teachers and tutors at Omar Ibn al-Khattab Elementary School, Ahmad al-Hussein Preparatory School, Saraqueb Boys' Secondary School, Department of English at the University of Aleppo – Syria, and School of Languages at the University of Salford – UK for their help, support and guidance.

Much love and gratefulness go to my father and mother whose unwavering, unconditional and uninterrupted emotional support was a source of constant encouragement.

I am greatly thankful and deeply indebted to my homeland – Syria – represented by the University of Aleppo, for granting me a generous sponsorship to carry out this research.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Mrs Nwadinafor De Souza, Chief Interpreter and Head of the Interpretation Section at the African Development Bank for her enormous help in distributing the survey of professional conference interpreters to staff interpreters at the African Development Bank in Tunisia; Mrs Cecile and Mr Philip Evans, NATO Senior Interpreters, who very kindly helped in distributing the survey to staff interpreters at NATO in Brussels; Ms Carole Tayler, Administrative Assistant at the Interpretation Service at the United Nations Office at Geneva for her invaluable help in distributing the survey to staff interpreters at the United Nations Office at Geneva; Mr Yuqiang Zhou, Chief of the Interpretation Section at the United Nations Office at Vienna for his help in distributing the survey to staff interpreters at the United Nations Office at Vienna; Mr Sergei Chernov, Deputy Chief Interpreter, for his kind help in distributing the survey to staff interpreters at the International Monetary Fund; and to colleagues and administrators at the World Arab Translators' Association (WATA) for kindly distributing the survey to WATA members.

My special thanks are due to all colleagues who contributed significantly to the completion of this thesis by participating in the survey of professional conference interpreters. I am also indebted to colleagues who not only participated in the survey, but were also so kind in distributing the survey to their colleagues. I am very grateful to those colleagues who were generous by giving much of their time to include in their responses to the survey many interesting points, comments and suggestions that were constructive and invaluable in helping understand some of the results obtained through the survey data.

I shall never forget to express my sincere appreciation and indebtedness to my beloved wife who has always been the source of love, patience & unwavering support.

## Abbreviations used

|      |  |
|------|--|
| AIIC | International Association of Conference Interpreters |
| CCI  | Consecutive conference interpreting                  |
| CCIr | Consecutive conference interpreter                   |
| CI   | Consecutive interpreting                             |
| CISs | Conference interpreting settings/situations          |
| CPA  | Cognitive-pragmatic approach                         |
| EMCI | The European Masters in Conference Interpreting      |
| EU   | European Union                                       |
| EVS  | Ear-voice span                                       |
| IS   | Interpreting Studies                                 |
| ISO  | International Organisation for Standardisation       |
| LTM  | Long-term memory                                     |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation                   |
| RT   | Relevance theory of communication                    |
| SI   | Simultaneous interpreting                            |
| SL   | Source language                                      |
| STM  | Short-term memory                                    |
| TL   | Target language                                      |
| UN   | United Nations                                       |

## Abstract

This thesis is an empirical and interdisciplinary investigation into the consecutive conference interpreter's (CCIr) role as intercultural mediator.

It seeks to determine whether there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting despite the greater degree of cultural transparency that characterises discourse in conference interpreting situations (CISs) when compared with other settings such as community and/or court interpreting. It also proposes an account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator as an alternative to other accounts of the interpreter's role in the literature on conference interpreting because those accounts do not explain clearly the CCIr's role or are in conflict with very well-established concepts and principles associated with translation/interpreting such as faithfulness, accuracy, neutrality or accessibility. The account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator is derived from the principles of a theoretical framework that draws on the findings of the theory of sense (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995) and Sperber and Wilson's (1986; 1995) relevance theory of communication (RT). The account provides the basis for formulating a clearer definition of the concept of intercultural mediation in the context of consecutive conference interpreting (CCI).

Analyses of two types of data underpin the investigation: data from authentic examples from interpreters' actual performance and data from 295 responses to a worldwide survey of professional conference interpreters conducted by this researcher for use in this thesis.

Results of both analyses confirm the case for intercultural mediation in CISs and the validity of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator though situationality has been found to play an important role in the extent to which intercultural mediation is needed. Results also shed light on CCIrs' use of cultural mediation procedures and the role of interpreters' professional status, experience and language direction on their ability/willingness to perform intercultural mediation.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

It is generally agreed that translation and interpreting are two processes of interlingual and *intercultural* mediation since, like linguistic differences, cultural differences have an immediate effect on the translation/interpreting process due to the relationship between language and culture which are inextricably interwoven. This relationship manifests itself mostly in the existence of cultural elements, concepts, terms or expressions that can only be understood within the context of their culture of origin, which presents translators and interpreters with a challenging task when trying to provide a faithful and, at the same time, easily accessible rendition of such culture-specific references (cf. Al-Zahran 2003: 6f). Thus, the task in translation and interpreting is not only one of bridging linguistic gaps, but also and to a great extent cultural gaps as put elegantly by Namy (1978: 25):

Interpreting [...] is not merely transposing from one language to another. It is, rather, throwing a semantic bridge between two different cultures, two different “thought-worlds”.

The above quotation is echoed in an AIIC<sup>1</sup> publication (2002a), where the conference interpreter’s role is seen as that of ‘a bridge between different cultures’.

This view is shared by the great majority of Interpreting Studies (IS) researchers who acknowledge the importance of cultural understanding for effective communication among interlocutors belonging to different cultures. Almost all contributions in the literature on IS mention the importance of intercultural communication.

The view is also supported from a professional perspective. In a survey addressed to 40 conference interpreters working for the European Commission in Brussels, Altman (1989: 74) has found that two thirds of them believe that even in the context of the European Commission cultural differences between speaker and listener form a greater obstacle to communication than linguistic ones, an opinion that is shared by 54 AIIC interpreters residing in the UK who have participated in an almost identical survey by Altman (1990: 25), and one that suggests that cultural differences and their effects on the communication process are a reality that translators and interpreters alike have to live with. This is why

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the International Association of Conference Interpreters.

Altman argues that the ‘interpreter’s role is, of course, to facilitate communication between participants across linguistic and cultural barriers’ (1990: 23).

The results of Altman’s surveys are reflected in the following comments by one of the respondents to the survey of professional conference interpreters conducted by the present researcher as the main source of data for investigating the consecutive conference interpreter’s (CCIr) role as intercultural mediator in this thesis (**Chapter 7**<sup>2</sup>), the results of which survey confirm Altman’s results and support the case for intercultural mediation even in conference interpreting situations (CISs) which are obviously characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than community and/or court interpreting:

Too often people think that there is a perfect fit in switching from one language to another and they don't realize that you operate [...] on an everchanging cultural 'front' trying to reconcile and bridge cultural universes that are at times unexpectedly distant from one another. Even with languages that appear close, like French and English: I distinctly [sic] recall a conference on computational fluid dynamics, essentially a branch of mathematics used in aeronautics; French mathematical tradition involves presenting a problem and elucidating it in the course of your presentation in a very different way from an MIT trained engineer, for instance and in the booth you find yourself, at least on the margins, maybe adding a few cues, section titles, etc... to facilitate the target audience experience.

Moreover, one of the first and most important requirements of aptitude to be tested in candidates for admission to interpreter training programmes is ‘Excellent knowledge of A, B, C, languages *and cultures*’ (Longley 1989: 106, emphasis added; see also AIIC 2002a), and one of the main objectives of training programmes is to make trainees aware of the problems of intercultural communication (Arjona 1978: 36).

However, mention of the role of culture in the literature on conference interpreting often comes in passing without venturing much into the depth of the problem by dedicating contributions especially designed to look into the problems of cross-cultural communication. In addition to the references quoted above, other examples include Jones’s (1998: 3f) hint at the problems of dealing with explicit and/or implicit cultural references which more often than not have no equivalents in the TL or are completely unknown to the TL audience and Kurz’s (1988: 425) claim that if they would like to be ‘first-rate mediators between people and cultures’, interpreters should possess broad cultural knowledge besides their linguistic knowledge. The result is that the issue of intercultural mediation does not

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<sup>2</sup> References and/or cross-references to specific chapters and locations in this thesis are always written with a first-word upper case and bold type to be distinguished from references to locations in other contributions.

feature prominently in the literature on conference interpreting in the same way it does on Translation Studies (cf. Kondo et al. 1997: 158), or even community interpreting. Even the elevation of mediation to a ‘meme’ of interpreting (Pöchhacker 2004: 59) has been related to and motivated by the emergence of community interpreting (ibid: 147).

Moreover, although many conference interpreting researchers agree that the interpreter’s ideal position is that of a cultural mediator (Kurz 1988: 425; Kondo et al. 1997: 150; Katan 1999: 1/11-15), most of the definitions of the interpreter’s role (as a cultural mediator) offered so far are inappropriate because, as shown in **Chapter 5**, they do not explain the interpreter’s role clearly or are in conflict with very well-established concepts and principles that are associated with translation and interpreting such as faithfulness, accuracy, neutrality or accessibility. This opinion is not only supported from an academic standpoint, but also from the market, professional and users’ perspectives. All contracts agreed between interpreters and employers and/or agencies providing interpreting services insist that interpreters must abide by the rules of accuracy, faithfulness and neutrality and state that interpreters must not take sides or act like advocates for any of their clients.

Besides, AIIC (2004, emphasis in original) insists in its *Practical Guide for Professional Conference Interpreters* that it is the interpreter’s

job to communicate the speaker’s intended messages as **accurately, faithfully, and completely** as possible [... and that the] interpreter must never change or add to the speaker’s message. Furthermore, the interpreter must never betray any personal reaction to the speech, be it scepticism, disagreement, or just boredom.

It is not surprising that 96% of AIIC interpreters who have been asked by Bühler (1986) to give their ratings of importance for 16 criteria of quality (**2.2.2.4.1.1 Professional criteria**) have given sense consistency with the original message their highest rating (ibid: 231).

This professional view is also reflected in the results of the present researcher’s survey of conference interpreters which shows that the overwhelming majority (99%) of 295 respondents believe that *interpreters should interpret information faithfully even if they do not agree with the speaker* (**7.5.3.4 Question 9**). If interpreters violate the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original, no communication can be said to have taken place between participants, as one of the respondents to the survey remarks:



I would always consider it a basic principle of my professional ethics to be faithful to the original; anything else would mean that no real communication is taking place.

In a series of empirical studies conducted by Kurz (e.g. 1989a; 1993; 2001) to compare Bühler's findings from a user-oriented perspective by addressing a number of questionnaires to *three different user groups*, there have been high correlations between AIIC interpreters' evaluation criteria in Bühler's study and user expectations in Kurz's studies in that the three different user groups in Kurz's studies have given their highest ratings of importance for such criteria as *sense consistency with the original message* and *the use of correct terminology* despite Kurz's assumption that different user groups might give different ratings of importance to different criteria (2001: 398). This indicates homogeneity not only among different user groups, but also among users and professionals in their ratings of the importance of faithfulness and accuracy (**2.2.2.4.1.2 User criteria**).

Hence, there is a need for a clearer definition of the interpreter's role (as intercultural mediator), a definition that reflects the reality of the role interpreters actually assume when interpreting, which is one of the major reasons that have motivated the choice of this area of investigation in this thesis to stand as one of the contributions on this issue in the field of consecutive conference interpreting (CCI). The researcher contends that such a clear and accurate account can be sought within a theoretical framework referred to as the cognitive-pragmatic approach (CPA) (**Chapter 4**). This account is elaborated in **Chapter 5**.

## **1.1 Scope and research objectives**

This part defines the scope of the thesis and its research objectives in terms of subject; interpreting mode, setting and theoretical framework; methods of investigation; and rationale behind the choice of the subject, mode, setting and theoretical framework in this inquiry. The remainder of this chapter outlines the various chapters of the thesis.

### **1.1.1 Topic of the thesis**

The above should have made it clear that this thesis relies on empirical and interdisciplinary investigation into the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator. The inquiry is restricted only to the CCIr's role in terms of the *actual interpreting (translational) decisions, performance, behaviour or product*. It is thus not concerned with interpreters' or interlocutors' 'social

power' (cf. Brislin 1976; 1978) or behaviour (or translation of such behaviour) in the taking of turns (cf. Keith 1984), coordination or co-construction of the dynamics of the interactive discourse (Pöchhacker 2004: 150). Nor is it concerned with the CCIr's role from the perspective of the social, socio-cultural or interactional context(s) in which CCIrs operate; their non-translational behaviour; or behaviour around the translational process<sup>3</sup>.

In CISs, discourse is usually monologic as opposed to the dialogic discourse in community interpreting, for example. Moreover, users of the profession of conference interpreting are influential public figures such as heads of state, politicians, ambassadors, scientists, etc. and thus normally enjoy equal status in conferences, which accounts for the absence of power differentials in CISs (see also Mason 1999: 148). This also accounts for the equally significant argument that conference interpreters do not normally enjoy (social) power<sup>4</sup> or control over the conference proceedings even in conversational settings (see also Baker 1997: 118) such as interrupting speakers or deciding who speaks when or for how long. Thus, it seems that the only area where conference interpreters can really exercise control is their translational decisions and actual interpreting performance/product, which contributes to the belief that conference interpreters' non-translational behaviour inside the conference hall is irrelevant to an objective investigation into the conference interpreter's role.

Even the conference interpreter's translational behaviour/product, which is mostly his/her own area of remit, can still be subjected to delegates' monitoring and even censorship<sup>5</sup> (see also Baker 1997: 113f/121). The comment below by one of the respondents to the survey of conference interpreters lends considerable support to this premise:

[...] In my specific case, some of the delegation members would always understand the other language, i.e. [TL], and stop me if I changed the wording – however right I may have been.

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<sup>3</sup> For studies of the interpreter's role along some of these lines, see for example Lang (1978), Roy (1996), Wadensjö (1998) and Diriker (2004) in the fields of court, sign language, community and conference interpreting, respectively. Many studies and ample references on many of these issues in dialogue/liaison interpreting can also be found in Mason (1999; 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Roland's (1999: especially chapter 5) anecdotal accounts (see also Mason 2002: 140f) of some manifestations of 'power' which some 'outstanding interpreters' once enjoyed in the past is by no means representative of the true state of affairs of present-day conference interpreting because those are not more than isolated incidents that happened, in Roland's (1999: 167) own words, with 'top-ranking interpreters' who once enjoyed diplomatic status and some liberties that other interpreters do not normally enjoy, hence the title of her book: *Interpreters as Diplomats*. Thus, they are the exception, not the rule.

<sup>5</sup> See also Viaggio (1996: 193ff) for examples of delegates' objections to interpreters' renditions.

The above also justifies the belief that conference interpreters, whether assuming the linguistic- or intercultural-mediator role, cannot impose their opinion on their interpretation or allow social factors (ethnicity, race, nationality, social status, etc.) to affect their performance (see also Gile 1995d: 29f) not because conference interpreters are over and above ideology (cf. Roland 1999: 167/172; Pöchhacker 2006), but based on what interpreters are (not) allowed to do during interpretation. The thesis seeks to argue that conference interpreters cannot choose to be faithful, neutral or not because usually conference delegates (heads of state, etc.) prescribe what conference interpreters should do. The treatment of the CCIr's role in this thesis is thus based on the central assumption that CCIrs are more likely to endeavour to produce a faithful and accurate rendition to the sense of the original message and thus assume a neutral position vis-à-vis their clients.

Specific research on the CCIr's role in CISs is reviewed in **Chapter 5** where an account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator based on the principles of the CPA is also proposed by the present researcher as an alternative to other definitions of the interpreter's role in the literature because they do not explain the interpreter's role clearly or are in conflict with the essential principles of faithfulness, accuracy, neutrality and accessibility. Based on the proposed account, a hypothesis referred to as *Hypothesis A* (or *Central Hypothesis*) is developed to be tested through the analyses of data from some interpreting examples and the survey of conference interpreters. The discussion serves to provide accurate definitions not only of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator, but also concepts like faithfulness and fidelity, neutrality, intercultural mediator and intercultural mediation.

Cultural mediation procedures CCIrs are likely to use when doing intercultural mediation to overcome cultural problems, differences, etc. are also borrowed from Translation Studies and discussed with reference to authentic interpreting examples in **Chapter 6**.

The discussion also seeks to establish whether variables such as interpreters' professional status and experience and interpreting into A or B languages (**2.2.2.2.1 Language classification**) can affect interpreters' perception of their role or ability to perform intercultural mediation. A number of secondary hypotheses with particular relevance to these points are developed to be tested through the survey analysis in **Chapter 7**.

## 1.1.2 Setting

The CCIr's role as intercultural mediator is discussed in the context of *professional conference interpreting* as a specific interpreting setting, the discourse of which is generally characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than discourse in local settings such as community and/or court interpreting. Cultural transparency is a real issue in conference interpreting because the international aspect that characterises conference interpreting discourse does away with a great deal of culture-specificity which is more likely to surface in discourse in other settings. Moreover, conference interpreting is a service for highly educated public and international figures such as heads of state, diplomats, politicians, scientists, etc. who are usually familiar to a certain extent with and prepared to invest some time in learning more about the other culture before meetings, summits or conferences if they think is necessary, which could require a minimum level of cultural mediation by the interpreter.

Obviously, this is very different from local settings such as community or court interpreting situations where the interlocutors are less likely to be familiar with one another's culture, which makes way for more intercultural mediation by the interpreter.

The research thus endeavours to determine whether there is a case for intercultural mediation in CIs despite the assumption that discourse in CIs is characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than local settings such as court and/or community interpreting, and if there is really a case for intercultural mediation in CIs, then the research seeks to determine the nature of intercultural mediation CCIrs perform in CIs.

Based on the above, the *Central Hypothesis* is developed in **Chapter 5** to be tested through the analyses of data from authentic interpreting examples in **Chapter 6** and the survey of conference interpreters in **Chapter 7**:

*Hypothesis A: CCIrs do perform intercultural mediation despite the cultural transparency that characterises discourse in international CIs, and the motive behind intercultural mediation as carried out by CCIrs is to achieve understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds while remaining neutral, accurate and faithful to the sense of the original and without imposing their own opinion on what they interpret.*

Thus, the aim of the current inquiry is to assess the validity of the *Central Hypothesis* and hence the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator from which the hypothesis has been derived. It is also hoped that the analysis of the authentic interpreting examples and the survey analysis will make it possible to propose definitions of such concepts as faithfulness, neutrality, etc. and to shed light on the use of cultural mediation procedures used by conference interpreters. Besides, it is hoped that the survey analysis will make it possible to determine whether such variables as conference interpreters' professional status and experience and language direction (interpreting into A or B) can affect interpreters' perception of their role or ability to perform intercultural mediation.

### **1.1.3 Mode of investigation**

The CCIr's role as intercultural mediator is also discussed with sole reference to *the consecutive mode of interpretation* (CI) in international CISs. Thus, the investigation is not concerned with the simultaneous mode (SI).

The choice of CCI is attributed to the fact that it offers a situation where all the participants including the CCIr are present at the same place and time *without any physical barriers* as in SI, which illustrates a basic difference between face-to-face communication (as in CI) and interpreting from the booth (as in SI) in that the CCIr's physical presence alongside the delegates can have an immediate effect on the communication process as this can help him/her check how much intercultural mediation is needed between speaker and audience based on the feedback that he/she can obtain directly from delegates or through their body language, gestures and/or facial expressions (cf. also Alexieva 1997: 230f).

More importantly, the choice of CCI has to do with the nature of the subject under discussion (the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator) and that of the processes of the two modes of conference interpreting, CCI and SI, in that the CCI process presents the CCIr with a degree of freedom which is not available to the simultaneous interpreter (such as explaining cultural differences/elements while interpreting or using some of the cultural mediation procedures discussed in **Chapters 6 and 7**) due to the time and memory constraints and mental pressure imposed on the latter by the SI process (cf. also Altman

1989: 80; 1990: 25/29; Setton 1993: 252; Kondo et al. 1997: 160). This is noted by one of the respondents to our survey of conference interpreters:

[...] The role of an interpreter generally, regardless of the mode of interpretation, is to transmit a message between interlocutors such that ideally, not only semantic content but also sub-text, such as tone, attitude, etc. are understood. It can be more difficult in simultaneous interpretation to do this because of time constraints. Consecutive interpretation offers more freedom in this respect because while the speech is often summarized, the interpreter can inject material to facilitate understanding of the message by the listener [...].

Thus, CCI is the ideal mode to seek to assess the case for intercultural mediation in CISs. In other words, if there is really a case for intercultural mediation in CISs at all, then it is in the context of CCI that such a case can better be proved or disproved.

#### **1.1.4 Theoretical foundation**

The theoretical framework (CPA) adopted in this thesis draws on two theoretical models: the theory of sense which has been developed by Danica Seleskovitch and adopted by members of the Paris School (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995) and relevance theory of communication (RT) developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) and most prominently applied to translation by Gutt (1991/2000) and SI by Setton (1999).

The theory of sense is essential in investigating the interpreting process not only because of the supremacy it achieved after its appearance in the late 1960s up to the late 1980s (Pöchhacker 1995a: 22) and the significant role it has played in shaping the theoretical conceptualisation for the pioneering training programme at ESIT, but also because its essence has remained protected against challenges levelled against its principles by scholars of different orientations from the 1980s onwards (Pöchhacker 1995b: 53; Setton 2002; 2003a: 49f). According to Pöchhacker, Seleskovitch's efforts 'against the narrow linguistic conceptions of language still prevailing in the early 1970s' are still acknowledged since she has succeeded in showing that what counts in the translational process is the communicative use of language in a certain situation or context, not linguistic systems or rules or semantic properties (Pöchhacker 1992: 212), thus providing a theory that is regarded as the first attempt at promoting the study of interpreting to the status of scientific investigation (cf. Seleskovitch 1978a: 146; 1986a: 376; Garcia-Landa 1995; Pöchhacker 2004: 69; Salama-Carr 2004, personal communication) and one that has offered the closest

ever scientific account to the interpreting process in practice. Little wonder that Viaggio (1992a: 310) puts the concept of deverbalisation (offered by the theory of sense) at the forefront of models that should be utilised in translator/interpreter training.

This contribution has been recently acknowledged even by Gile (cf. 2003a; Mouzourakis 2005), a vocal critic of Seleskovitch, and also by researchers in the so-called ‘natural science oriented group’ (Moser-Mercer 1994a: 17). Moser-Mercer (1994a: 20) acknowledges that the coherence of the theory of sense, its inclusiveness, simple elucidatory power and easy application to teaching and training are factors that have made it widely accepted and in many ways meet many of the requirements generally demanded from theories while the natural science group are still trying to construct their theory, proposing, testing and often rejecting hypotheses (see also Setton 2002: 124).

Moreover, as Gile (1995a: 1/5; 2000a: 314f) himself argues, and as mentioned in **2.2.1.4.1.1 Limitations in interdisciplinary research**, interdisciplinary research has yet to produce much needed achievements; it has not materialised into an alternative clear-cut theory of interpreting that offers sound explanations and solutions to the numerous problems encountered in interpreting or at least a convincing comprehensive account of the process. In fact, it has yielded evidence to support the pillar on which the theory of sense is based (deverbalised sense). Recent experiments by some members of the natural science group have shown that students outperformed professional interpreters in the recognition of *syntactic errors* while professionals have been better at the recognition of *semantic errors* (cf. e.g. Fabbro et al. 1991, quoted in Fabbro and Gran 1994: 302; Fabbro and Gran 1997: 23ff). According to Fabbro and Gran (1994: 304), the result shows that student interpreters and professional interpreters approach SI differently. The former are more inclined to divert their attention to the syntactic form of the message (word-for-word translation) whereas the latter seem to adopt ‘semantic strategies’ or a meaning-based approach, which supports the account of the interpreting process as described by the theory of sense, namely the fact that interpreting is a translation of sense, not words or syntactic structure.

One can then understand Pöchhacker’s (1998: 171f) argument that talking about the natural science group as the winning camp over the ‘liberal arts’ (Moser-Mercer 1994a: 17) or ‘personal theorizing’ (Gile 1990a) group (reference to Seleskovitch and proponents of the

theory of sense) is not more than an impression based on a ‘selective’ approach to the ‘meta-theoretical literature’ (Pöchhacker 1998: 172) notwithstanding the criticisms levied against the theory of sense, as mentioned earlier.

Thus, in the absence of an alternative scientific account of the interpreting process, use of the theory of sense is justified until a more solid theoretical foundation is conceptualised.

Likewise, RT is described as a theory that ‘offers what is so far the most coherent articulation of pragmatics and cognitive psychology in an account linking cognition and communication’ (Setton 1999: 6; see also Viaggio 2002).

Besides, as shown in **Chapter 4**, RT has a great deal in common<sup>6</sup> with the theory of sense as both theories are concerned with communication and language use in a particular context and mainly top-down as opposed to bottom-up processing. Both theories are also concerned with explicit and implicit information types of the original that are equally essential in helping the interpreter abstract the sense of the original. The two theories offer two similar concepts (deverbalised sense and interpretive resemblance) to explain faithful representation of the original which obviously does not depend on resemblance in linguistic form, surface structure or semantic meaning, but resemblance in sense in its deverbalised or cognitive shape (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 24f; see also Setton 2005: 75).

More importantly, RT plays a complementary role to that of the theory of sense by offering and explaining in much detail the principle of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1995) which imposes further constraints on the process of abstracting the sense of the original, thus guiding the listener to identify the intended interpretation of the original.

As mentioned above, the two models are integrated into a unified theoretical framework referred to as the CPA. The researcher contends that the CPA allows for developing a definition of the CCIr’s role as intercultural mediator because it can explain the communication process not only in monolingual, but also bilingual and bicultural settings, thus offering a clearer account of the CCIr’s position in the communication process. The

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<sup>6</sup> This can be said despite the fact that there remain certain theoretical incompatibilities between the theory of sense and RT.



account is proposed by the present researcher as an alternative to other definitions of the interpreter's role in the literature on conference interpreting (**Chapter 5**).

Therefore, one of the major objectives of this research project is to test the validity of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and thus the principles of the CPA on which both the proposed account and *Central Hypothesis* are based.

### **1.1.5 Methodology of investigation**

Two complementary methods of data analysis are used to approach the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator: qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative analysis is carried out on a selection of examples from interpreters' actual performance which are discussed as illustrations on the use of cultural mediation procedures in **Chapter 6**.

The quantitative analysis is based on data from the responses of 295 professional conference interpreters to the survey of conference interpreters (see **Chapter 7** for the survey analysis and **Appendix 1** for a sample version of the survey).

## **1.2 Thesis outline**

The thesis consists of eight chapters in total. **Chapter 1** is the introduction which has set the scene for the thesis. **Chapter 2** contains a general overview of IS and comprises two parts. The first is a presentation of basic concepts in IS in terms of the definition of interpreting and various interpreting types classified according to mode (SI and whispered interpreting), setting (community, conference, court, escort, media and remote interpreting), directionality (bilateral, retour and relay interpreting) and language modality (spoken- and signed-language interpreting). The second part of **Chapter 2** contains a review of the relevant literature on conference interpreting which in turn consists of two sections: a historical overview and a research profile. The historical overview traces the development of the interpreting profession which dates back to 3000 BC (cf. Hermann 1956: 15f) and research into interpreting which started to appear only in the 1950s. The research profile reviews aspects of cognitive issues (bilingualism, attention, comprehension, memory, production and interpreting strategies), language issues (AIIC's classification of interpreters' working languages, SI into B, and linguistic abilities and language teaching in

training programmes), professional issues (interpreters' knowledge and specialisation, documentation, optimal technical working conditions such as high quality electronic equipment and good design of mobile and fixed booths, work load, fatigue and stress), quality issues (professional and user criteria of quality and factors that could affect interpreting quality) and training issues (student selection and aptitude testing, interpreting curricula and the sequence of CCI and SI training).

**Chapter 3** contains specific research on CCI. It presents a brief historical overview of the development of CCI and some relevant background information. The chapter also discusses the CCI process through a discussion of a number of process models including Herbert's (1952) model, Seleskovitch's theory of sense (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995), Gile's (1997) Effort Models and Weber's (1989b) model, the strategy of note-taking and the role of attention and memory. Moreover, the chapter discusses issues related to CCI training such as preparatory exercises, public speaking skills and note-taking training.

**Chapter 4** contains a presentation of the theoretical framework (CPA) which draws on two models: Seleskovitch's (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995) theory of sense and Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) RT. The presentation includes a discussion of the basic concepts of each theory, and a unified cognitive-pragmatic 'model' is derived from the two theories. The model provides the basis for developing the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and the *Central Hypothesis* in **Chapter 5**.

**Chapter 5** reviews some definitions of the conference interpreter's role. An account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator is also proposed as an alternative to other definitions of the interpreter's role regarded by the present researcher as not entirely satisfactory because they do not explain clearly the actual role interpreters assume while interpreting or are in conflict with such established principles as accuracy, faithfulness, neutrality and accessibility. Based on the proposed account, *Hypothesis A (Central Hypothesis)* is developed to be tested through the discussion of cultural mediation procedures and interpreting examples in **Chapter 6** and survey analysis in **Chapter 7**.

**Chapter 6** discusses some translational procedures that could be used by CCIrs as possible means to overcome problems caused by cultural differences, elements or gaps. Authentic

examples from interpreters' actual performance are used to illustrate the use of the procedures in CCI. The discussion also serves to test the validity of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and thus the *Central Hypothesis*, and tries to determine if there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting.

**Chapter 7** contains an analysis of the survey of conference interpreters. It includes detailed discussions of the 15 questions of the questionnaire which aims at finding answers to questions about the case for intercultural mediation in CISs, validity of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator, role of interpreters' professional status and experience on their ability/willingness to assume the intercultural-mediator role, role of language direction on their decision/ability to perform intercultural mediation and use of cultural mediation procedures.

The last chapter presents a summary of the thesis, conclusions drawn from the results of the analyses of the interpreting examples in **Chapter 6** and survey of conference interpreters in **Chapter 7**, suggestions and recommendations for further research.

Before discussing the main subject of the thesis, the following lines embark on a general overview of IS including a review of relevant literature on conference interpreting.

## Chapter 2: Disciplinary context

The first part of this chapter surveys a number of basic concepts in IS. The second part presents a review of *relevant literature on conference interpreting*. The discussion develops from the most general concepts in IS to the more specific concepts in the literature on conference interpreting which, as mentioned in **Chapter 1**, is the interpreting setting in the context of which the main subject of investigation in the present thesis (the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator) is discussed, thus putting the various concepts discussed in this and the following chapters including the subject under discussion and mode of investigation in their broader disciplinary context.

### 2.1 Basic concepts in interpreting

This part aims at describing and defining the interpreting activity and presents a brief description of a number of interpreting types distinguished according to varying criteria.

#### 2.1.1 Defining interpreting

Attempts at defining the interpreting activity have generally tended to focus on the *oral* aspect of interpreting. Consider the following definition by Anderson:

[...] interpretation occurs whenever a message originating *orally* in one language is reformulated and retransmitted *orally* in a second language (1978: 218, emphasis added).

Anderson's definition is not so different, at least in its emphasis on the oral aspect, from the following definition by Seleskovitch:

Interpretation is, to a great extent, the verbal expression of things and ideas accompanied by the nondeliberate creation of temporary linguistic equivalents (1978a: 87, emphasis in original).

However, Pöchhacker (2004: 10) argues that a more accurate way of defining interpreting is to disregard the oral-written dichotomy in favour of 'the feature of immediacy' in order to accommodate for other interpreting types in which the oral aspect, though not necessarily entirely absent, is not a distinctive feature as in sign language interpreting, sight translation, live subtitling, etc. Based on Kade's ideas (1968, quoted in Pöchhacker 2004: 10), Pöchhacker suggests the following definition:

Interpreting is a form of Translation in which a **first and final rendition in another language** is produced on the basis of a **one-time presentation** of an utterance in a source language (Pöchhacker 2004: 11, emphasis in original).

## 2.1.2 Interpreting types

The distinction between the various types presented here is based on the criteria of mode, setting, directionality and language modality.

### 2.1.2.1 Modes of interpreting

There are at least four modes of interpreting: CI, SI, whispered interpreting and sight translating. Only SI and whispered interpreting are discussed here. **Chapter 3** is entirely dedicated to CCI. For sight translation, see **2.2.2.5.2.3.7 Sight translating**.

#### 2.1.2.1.1 Simultaneous interpreting (SI)

According to Herbert (1978: 7f), SI was introduced shortly before World War II, but delegates did not trust the newly introduced mode because they were unable to check translations and there were too many mistakes. However, with the introduction of Spanish, Chinese and Russian to the United Nations (UN) and the need to save much needed time spent by CCI from one language into two or more languages, ‘experimenting’ with SI began because SI started to be seen as the solution to problems of interpreting.

The universal publicity of the 1945-6 Nuremberg Trials contributed to the popularity of SI (Bowen and Bowen 1984: 25) being the first experience of SI *on a large scale* (Bowen and Bowen 1985: 77; Roland 1999: 128ff) that has helped establish the belief in the effectiveness of SI (Ramler 1988: 439) though the first two occasions of the use of SI date back to the 1928 International Labour Conference and the 1928 VI<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Comintern in Moscow (Moser-Mercer 2005a: 208f; see also Chernov 1992: 149).

According to Ramler (ibid: 437), the trials were conducted in English, French, German and Russian, involved many people from all walks of life who did not necessarily know any languages except for their mother tongues, and involved dealing with many complex legal and historical issues that were difficult to be dealt with by the prosecution staff, the tribunal or defence counsel in a foreign language. Besides, the trials attracted world media attention.

Ramler (1988: 437) argues that all this meant that CCI would not have been feasible as some estimates put the time needed to complete the trials to four years if CCI was used.

However, Bowen and Bowen (1984: 25) argue that SI would not have been feasible had it not been for technical improvements in broadcasting and telephony, the first system of which was invented by the American businessman Edward Filene with the help of the British electrical engineer, Gordon Finley, thus the Filene-Finley IBM system, and was used as early as the 1927 International Labour Conference (see also Roland 1999: 127).

The SI process may be described in very simple and general terms as one in which the interpreter, isolated in a soundproof booth, receives a SL speech through headsets and transfers it into a TL through a microphone to the TL audience at *roughly* the same time, taking up the original message segment by segment and thus he/she does not need to take notes or memorise large chunks of the original (Paneth 1957: 32; Seleskovitch 1978a: 125). This is why Kirchhoff (1976a: 111) describes this process as ‘quasi-simultaneous at most or, more aptly, as requiring a phase shift from SL input to TL output’, arguing that the ‘use of the term “simultaneous” is justified only from the perspective of an observer’ because the interpreter’s output cannot take place exactly at the same time as the production of the SL segment even if the interpreter happens to have excellent anticipation skills. Paneth has been a forerunner in observing this fact as early as the 1950s, arguing that the ‘interpreter says not what he hears, but what he *has heard*’ (1957: 32, emphasis added).

Research into this highly complex information-processing task focuses on such widely debated aspects in the literature as simultaneous listening and speaking, divided attention, segmentation of input, time lag or ear-voice span<sup>1</sup> (EVS), SI into B, etc. These and many other concepts are investigated in **2.2 Conference interpreting review**.

#### **2.1.2.1.2 Whispered interpreting**

Whispered interpreting, also known as whispering or by the French term ‘chuchotage’, is considered as a variation<sup>2</sup> of SI (Herbert 1952: 7; Gile 2001a: 41; Pöchhacker 2004: 19) since the interpreter is actually doing SI but instead of being in a booth relaying his/her

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<sup>1</sup> EVS is ‘the number of words or seconds the interpreter [... lags] behind the speaker’ (Gerver 1976: 169).

<sup>2</sup> Some (cf. e.g. Roland 1999: 126f) argue that whispered interpreting is the ‘rudimentary origin’ of SI.

rendition through the microphone, he/she is physically present next to the audience (a maximum of two people) whispering his/her output into their ears (Jones 1998: 6).

### **2.1.2.2 Settings**

Interpreting types studied under this category include in alphabetical order: community, conference, court, escort, media and remote interpreting.

#### **2.1.2.2.1 Community interpreting**

Community interpreting refers to

interpreting which takes place in the public service sphere to facilitate communication between officials and lay people: at police departments, immigration departments, social welfare centres, medical and mental health offices, schools and similar institutions (Wadensjö 2001: 33).

Community interpreting is also known as ‘cultural interpreting’ mainly in Canada (Mikkelson 1996b), ‘community-based interpreting’ (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 8; Pöchhacker 2004: 15) and public service interpreting mainly in the UK.

As its name suggests, community interpreting is directed towards residents of a certain community in contrast to conference delegates as politicians, diplomats or scientists participating in international conferences (see also Mikkelson 1996a: 126f).

Community interpreting is usually carried out bi-directionally (**2.1.2.3 Directionality**) in the consecutive mode, that is, the interpreter works into and out of both languages (Wadensjö 1998: 49; 2001: 33). This is why it is also referred to as ‘liaison interpreting’ (Gentile et al. 1996: 1) or ‘dialogue interpreting’ (Wadensjö 2001: 33).

According to Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 6), community interpreting developed into a sub-domain in the mid-1980s, but continued scientific inquiry appeared only a decade later heralded by Wadensjö’s doctoral dissertation (1992) on interpreting in immigration and medical encounters. Community interpreting both as a profession and a subject of scientific investigation has continued to grow to the extent that the profession is now ‘more likely to be a full-time job than a part-time hobby for amateurs’ (Mikkelson 1996a: 127). This growth has come about as a response to the increasing communication problems in

public sector institutions, which in turn have been due to increasing numbers of economic migrants and asylum seekers who have been coming to the developed countries because of wars, ethnic struggles or economic problems (Mikkelson 1996a: 127; Pöchhacker 2004: 15). The development of research into community interpreting is reflected in the growing volume of contributions on (cf. e.g. Mason 1999; 2001) and interest (cf. Amato and Mead 2002) in (issues in) community interpreting and in the convening of academic conferences dedicated to research into community interpreting, namely the ‘Critical Link’ series of conferences (cf. Carr et al. 1997; Roberts et al. 2000; Brunette et al. 2003).

#### **2.1.2.2.2 Conference interpreting**

This is arguably the most prestigious and highly remunerative form of interpreting, but equally the most demanding one as it is characterised by high-quality performance owing to the growing developments in international communication. According to Pöchhacker (2004: 16), conference interpreting used to be associated only with multilateral diplomatic interpreting; however, the concept of linguistic equality advocated by the European Union (EU) has contributed to spreading conference interpreting to almost all fields of interlingual and intercultural communication. One could thus talk not only about political or diplomatic conferences, but also medical, technical, agricultural, etc. conference interpreting.

Conference interpreting is carried out with either CCI (**Chapter 3**) or mostly SI (**2.1.2.1.1 Simultaneous interpreting (SI)**). Conference interpreters should thus be able to interpret effectively in both modes. For the history of the profession of conference interpreting and research into this interpreting setting, see **2.2 Conference interpreting review**.

#### **2.1.2.2.3 Court interpreting**

Court interpreting is not restricted to courtrooms, but can be carried out in law offices or enforcement agencies, prisons, police departments, barristers’ chambers or any other agencies to do with the judiciary (Mikkelson 2000: 1; Gamal 2001: 53). Thus, the concepts of judiciary or legal interpreting, for example, can better accommodate for the above legal interpreting situations than the widely used concept, court interpreting.

The 1945-46 Nuremberg Trials are not the first interpreted trials in the history of legal



interpreting (cf. Colin and Morris 1996: 177), but they are the most well-known trials both in the history of interpreting and Western culture in general. Their publicity in terms of the history of Western culture is pretty obvious: closing a bloody chapter of struggle against Nazism. As mentioned in **2.1.2.1.1 Simultaneous interpreting (SI)**, their publicity in terms of the history of interpreting is related to the special impetus the trials have given to SI which is incidentally a component not of court, but conference interpreting.

According to Gamal (2001: 53), the most distinctive feature of legal interpreting is its outstanding adherence to ethics, fidelity, confidentiality, impartiality, etc. because what is at stake is a 'human being's life and liberty'. However, it can be argued that these concepts are not alien to conference interpreting or indeed other interpreting types since any interpreter *shall* stick to the codes of ethics of the profession. In high-level instances of interpreting such as conference or diplomatic interpreting, what might be at stake is not the life or liberty of an individual but the fate of (a) whole nation(s) as in the case of the UN Security Council debates or high-level summit meetings. This is why Mikkelson (1999) argues that the belief that only legal interpreters have to adhere to ethics is a myth.

#### **2.1.2.2.4 Escort interpreting**

According to Mikkelson (1999), escort interpreting refers to interpreting that is carried out during on-site visits made by official figures, business executives, investors, etc. to factories, buildings, monuments, parties, and so on, thus putting the interpreter in a variety of formal and informal situations. CI is mostly used in this type of interpreting and is usually limited to several sentences at one time (Gonzalez et al. 1991: 28).

#### **2.1.2.2.5 Media interpreting**

This is the term used to describe the interpreting activity being carried out in and for various broadcast means of mass communication such as television, satellite or radio. It is also known as 'broadcast interpreting' and 'TV interpreting' (Pöchhacker 2004: 15).

Media interpreting was performed as early as 1969 when the Apollo landing on the moon was simultaneously interpreted live on TV in some non-English-speaking countries (Kurz 1997: 195; Shibahara 2003: 37), but according to Tsuruta (2003: 30), the designation

broadcast or media interpreter started to be distinguished from conference interpreter or just interpreter in 1991 during the Gulf War (at least in Japan).

According to Kurz (1990: 169f/174; 1997: 196ff; 2002a: 195f), besides the constraints imposed on conference interpreters, media interpreters are subject to other kinds of challenge and stress. First, there is more emphasis on smooth style as the media audiences are used to the refined style and pleasant delivery of TV newsreaders and presenters. Second, interpreters' delivery should be carried out very quickly because taking longer time than the speaker might detract the audience from the impact of the interpreted event. Third, media interpreters have to rely on monitors instead of a direct view. Fourth, media interpreters do not usually have much awareness of their audiences who might number in millions (cf. also Tsuruta 2003: 33) so there is more fear of failure. Fifth, media interpreters might have to work night shifts and on short notices. Sixth, media interpreters might sit in newsrooms or studios, not in soundproof booths, so they might be exposed to visual and acoustic distractions and, finally, might be exposed to occasional technical problems<sup>3</sup>.

Kurz (2002a) reports on the preliminary results of a pilot study in a medical conference using two 'objective physiological measurements' of stress: pulse rate and skin conductance level. The results have indicated that during the medical conference, the interpreter's pulse rate has been most of the time in the 70s, but consistently above 80 during live TV interpreting. Skin test measurements have also indicated that the interpreter's skin conductance level has ranged from 0.9 to 1.2 during the conference, but has jumped from 1.1 to a maximum of 3.4 during live TV interpreting, thus confirming that live TV interpreting is more stressful than SI (ibid: 200).

Due to these difficulties and challenges, AIIC has published articles setting out what could be considered optimal working conditions which should be observed during media interpreting (cf. AIIC 1999; 2000; Bros-Brann 2002).

#### **2.1.2.2.6 Remote interpreting**

The developments in telecommunications have also made possible interpreting from a

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth mentioning here that live broadcast studios in most, if not all, TV channels are soundproof and separated from non-broadcast newsrooms. Moreover, technical problems can also occur in conferences.

distance where either one or none of the participants is present at the same place as the other participants, thus transforming the traditional image of a conference hall into a 'virtual conference milieu' separated by distance from the actual conference venue (Diriker 2004: 3). According to Pöchhacker (2004: 21), the oldest form of remote interpreting is 'telephone interpreting' or 'over-the-phone interpreting' which dates back to the 1950s and came to be widely used in the 1980s and 1990s. Pöchhacker (ibid: 21f) argues that telephone interpreting is usually carried out in bilateral CI, but there have been efforts, especially in the US, to offer remote SI in healthcare settings using a specially made audio switching system. Remote interpreting is also possible through 'videoconferencing' (Mouzourakis 1996; Pöchhacker ibid: 22) or 'tele-interpreting' (Pöchhacker ibid).

However, Riccardi et al. (1998: 94) argue that despite contributing to considerable reductions in time and cost (but see Mouzourakis 1996: 35ff), remote interpreting has disadvantages. First, interpreters are deprived of visual aid as they cannot see the participants and will thus lose the audience's feedback. Second, interpreters are faced with different working conditions from the ones under which they usually work. This will force interpreters to develop new adaptive strategies, which might cause them more stress in an already stressful task and affect quality (Riccardi et al.: 94f). Thus, Riccardi et al (ibid) call for more research in this area to find appropriate strategies and decide on optimal working conditions and for training students in remote interpreting to reduce the amount of stress they might undergo when performing remote interpreting.

Besides the disadvantages mentioned above and other challenges (cf. Mouzourakis 1996: 30-35), Mouzourakis (ibid: 37) dismisses remote interpreting in the form of videoconferencing as unrealistic because it is more stressful, less motivating to interpreters and of lesser quality than normal SI, not viable for certain types of meetings (e.g. parliamentary assemblies), and not necessarily cost-effective even for meetings where it is a viable option. Moser-Mercer (2005b) also rejects remote interpreting based on many studies by the UN and EU that have revealed difficulties caused by remote interpreting for interpreters. The most important of these is interpreters' inability to develop a 'sense of presence' and 'emersion' in the 'virtual environment', thus causing them extra fatigue brought about by the need to deploy more attentional resources (ibid: 731/735).

### **2.1.2.3 Directionality**

The discussion of interpreting types in this category is a descriptive one; for the controversy over the quality of retour interpreting, see **2.2.2.2.2 SI into B**.

#### **2.1.2.3.1 Bilateral interpreting**

Interpreters usually work in one direction at a time, but there are situations where interpreters work in two directions with each of the languages involved becoming interchangeably the SL and TL. The interpreter then works in both directions and clients alternately become speaker and audience during the same interpreted dialogue which is different from monologues typical of CISs (Pöchhacker 2004: 20). The former situations are typical of ‘interpreter-mediated communication’ in ‘face-to-face interaction’ such as business negotiations, police and immigration interviews, lawyer-client, doctor-patient encounters, etc. (Mason 1999: 147). These are also referred to as ‘bilateral interpreting’, ‘liaison interpreting’<sup>4</sup>, ‘dialogue interpreting’ (Pöchhacker 2004: 20), ‘community interpreting’, ‘ad hoc interpreting’ (Mason *ibid*), ‘three-way interaction’ or ‘triadic exchange’ (Mason 2001: ii).

#### **2.1.2.3.2 Retour interpreting**

In CISs, however, directionality is described in terms of ‘retour’ and ‘relay’ interpreting (Pöchhacker 2004: 21). Retour interpreting refers to interpreting out of the interpreter’s A language (Jones 1998: 134), usually into the B language.

According to Lim (2003) and Pöchhacker (2004: 21), retour or ‘A-to-B interpreting’ in SI is still not as widely accepted in Western Europe as in other parts of the world (e.g. Asia), but with ever changing language markets and more enlargements of the EU, retour interpreting is more likely to gain ground and be more widely accepted in Europe and elsewhere especially when the situation involves ‘exotic’ languages as this usually makes it difficult to find a sufficient number of interpreters who can do the normal B-to-A direction.

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<sup>4</sup> This should not mean that liaison interpreting refers exclusively to interpreting in community/business settings. The very definition of liaison interpreting as a form of interpreting in ‘spontaneous conversational settings’ (Hatim and Mason 1997: 219), Pöchhacker’s (2004: 16f) positioning of liaison interpreting in the middle ground between community and conference interpreting, and Gentile et al.’s (1996: ix) reference to ‘liaison interpreting in non-conference settings’ indicate that liaison interpreting can be used to refer to a variety of interpreting settings including high-level ones as long as the interpreting instance is conversational, not monologic (see also Keith 1984: 312).

Jones (1998) argues that a number of things have to be borne in mind in retour interpreting<sup>5</sup>. First, there are nuances of meaning and stylistic effects that are difficult to express in the foreign language, which means interpreters should remember that their role is to achieve communication and thus must concentrate on relaying the speaker's ideas without falling into the 'trap' of attempting to provide a perfect translation which is impossible to achieve in any case (ibid: 134). Second, interpreters should be careful in their choice of the style or register which should not be pompous or too familiar, but suitable to the occasion. Third, since in retour interpreting linguistic difficulties of expression are somewhat greater than when working into the mother tongue, interpreters should avoid complex grammatical structures and use short and simple sentences to avoid making grammatical mistakes or forgetting the beginnings of sentences (ibid: 135f).

### **2.1.2.3.3 Relay interpreting**

Relay interpreting is defined as 'a mediation from source to target language in which the translational product has been realised in another language than that of the original' (Dollerup 2000: 19). This type is used when one member or a number of other members in the team of interpreters in a certain conference cannot cover all the working languages of the conference and is usually carried out into or out of a 'rare language' (Bowen and Bowen 1986: 409). Such a situation could obtain at UN meetings where if an Arabic or Spanish interpreter or both do not understand the language spoken on the floor (say Chinese), they will have to rely on the output of their English, French or Russian colleagues to interpret the speech into Arabic/Spanish. The English/French/Russian interpreter is usually referred to as the 'pivot' (AIIC 2004). The consequence of this is that the Arabic/Spanish interpreter's SL is practically not Chinese any more, but either one of the aforementioned (pivot) languages. This might have implications on the quality of interpreting (**2.2.2.4.2.3 Relay interpreting and quality**).

Thus, according to Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 173f; see also AIIC 2004), some considerations should be borne in mind when relay interpreting is used. First, interpreters depending on relay cannot hear the original speaker and thus they will not be able to utilise the original's prosodic features (rhythm, stress, intonation, etc.) which are complementary

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<sup>5</sup> See also Déjean Le Féal (2003) for training students on performing retour effectively.

elements that help in understanding the message. Second, because of their lack of knowledge of the original language, interpreters taking from relay may not understand some culture-specific references, nuances of meaning and the like. Third, they might not be aware of the local, political or geographical circumstances of the country the original speaker represents. Fourth, they might find it difficult to pronounce names of people or places since they do not know the original language. Finally, and more importantly, there might be the extra difficulty of being too distant in time from the original speaker due to the inevitable extra time lag which is normally more excessive in relay than normal situations (cf. also Jones 1998: 137; Dollerup 2000: 20).

These considerations impose on pivots certain demands that should be met to help their colleagues whose output depends on relay to achieve their task successfully. Clarity is the most important of these demands. For other problems of relay and guidelines to follow when using relay interpreting, see Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: chapter 4), Jones (1998: 136-139) and AIIC (2004).

#### **2.1.2.4 Language modality**

According to Pöchhacker (2004: 17), in language modality a distinction is made between ‘spoken-language interpreting’ and ‘signed-language interpreting’. The former term, which can cover all the types mentioned above, only gained currency with the growing need for a distinction against the latter which is also known as ‘visual language interpreting’ (ibid) and ‘interpreting for the Deaf’ (Isham 2001: 231). Other variations of interpreting that involve (a) signed language(s) include ‘signing’ which refers to interpreting *into* a signed language (‘voice-to-sign interpreting’ or ‘sign-to-sign interpreting’) as opposed to ‘voicing’ or ‘voice-over interpreting’ (‘sign-to-voice interpreting’) which refers to interpreting *out of* a signed language (Pöchhacker 2004: 18).

According to Isham (2001: 231), the designations ‘sign language interpreters’ and ‘interpreters for the deaf’ are not satisfactory because the former refers only to one language used (a signed language) and the latter only to one community offered the service (the deaf community). Thus, he agrees with practitioners who prefer to call themselves only ‘interpreters’ because they perform the same activity and have the same aim as spoken-

language interpreters but happen to be working with signed languages. One can then use the generic term interpreting or interpreter, but if the need arises for being more specific, one can use either ‘signer’ (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia Deluxe 2001) when referring to interpreters working into a signed language or Pöchhacker’s ‘voice-over interpreter’ for referring to an interpreter working out of a signed language.

The 1964 workshop on interpreting for the deaf is considered a significant contribution to the creation of the profession of signed-language interpreting (Domingue and Ingram 1978: 81). The following year witnessed the publication of Quigley and Youngs’s (1965) manual *Interpreting for Deaf People* which Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 5) regard as a counterpart for Herbert’s renowned 1952 handbook in conference interpreting.

The 1970s witnessed further momentum in the development of signed-language interpreting with research into it occupying a whole section in the proceedings of the 1977 NATO Symposium (Gerver and Sinaiko 1978). The 1990s saw the publication of a major contribution (Cokely 1992) which shows ‘explicit consideration’ of spoken- and signed-language interpreting<sup>6</sup> (Pöchhacker 2004: 102).

## **2.2 Conference interpreting review**

The first section in this part traces the historical development of IS since the 1950s which marked the beginning of research into IS (e.g. Gile 1995a: 1; 2000a: 300; Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 5) while the second draws a profile of the relevant issues that have characterised the literature on conference interpreting.

### **2.2.1 Historical overview**

Interpreting as a form of interlingual mediation is as old as the ancient Pharaohs of Egypt, 3000 BC, when it was carried out for day-to-day interaction between the Egyptians and Nubians, Libyans, and other foreign peoples by interpreters (Hermann 1956: 15f; Kurz 1985: 213; Bowen et al. 1995: 246).

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<sup>6</sup> Another interesting recent development is the publication of *The Sign Language Translator and Interpreter* journal by St. Jerome Publishing.

Interpreting has continued to exist in one form or another with varied purposes (military, diplomatic, economic, religious, etc.) throughout almost all different stages of human development (Bowen and Bowen 1984: 23; see also Roland 1999). Considering recent developments in telecommunications, it can be assumed that those old forms of interlingual mediation were different from today's conference interpreting.

It was not until the twentieth century that conference interpreting as known today emerged as a profession. According to Herbert (1952: 2; 1978: 5), the 1919 Peace Conference (held in Paris in the wake of World War I) witnessed the birth of conference interpreting as French ceased to be the *lingua franca* of international diplomatic negotiations when several senior American and British negotiators did not have good command of French (cf. also Baigorri-Jalón 2005: 988) or, now according to Longley (1968: 3) and Roland (1999: 122f), wanted to use English in the negotiations though earlier signs heralding this decline in the status of French go back to the 1914 conference on the status of Spitsbergen when German and Russian delegates began speaking in their own languages (Roland 1999: 57). In the 1930s, conference interpreting, still in the consecutive mode, became a recognised and established profession unlike other types, such as community or court interpreting, which took longer (1980s and 1990s) to develop into established professions (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 5; Pöchhacker 2004: 15).

However, research into IS<sup>7</sup>, which is only about five decades old as it started to appear in the late 1950s (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 25), is a relatively young field of scientific inquiry with regard to the old age of the profession itself on the one hand, and research into other scientific disciplines on the other. Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (*ibid*: 3) argue that even the term Interpreting Studies (IS) itself only came into existence in 1992 (at least in English) when it was first used by Gile (1994a), at the Translation Studies Congress in Vienna, and by Salevsky at the 8th Conference on Translation and Interpreting at Charles University, Prague, in October 1992, but Salevsky (1993) is the first to use the term in a major publication. Works by the Paris School researchers (e.g. Seleskovitch 1968/1978a: 146; 1986a: 376), though, contain an earlier reference to interpreting as an area of scientific investigation (Salama-Carr 2004, personal communication; see also Garcia-Landa 1995).

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<sup>7</sup> It is well known that academic/scientific research into IS started with research into conference interpreting (see also Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 5-8; Gile 2003b: 1).



From the 1990s onwards, IS research has continued to grow rapidly now as an international academic discipline in its own right (or at least as a sub-discipline within the Interdiscipline of Translation Studies, see Schäffner 2004a) with researchers from different parts of the world (e.g. Japan and North America) taking part in research, thus eliminating the European monopoly of research into IS (Pöchhacker 1995a: 23; Gile 2001b).

Gile (1994a: 149-152; 2000a: 300f; 2003b) divides the development of conference interpreting research throughout these fifty years into four periods: the pre-research, experimental psychology, practitioners' and renewal or 'renaissance' periods.

### **2.2.1.1 The pre-research period**

According to Gile (1994a: 149), the essential characteristic of this period (the 1950s) is that production was based on speculation and personal experience rather than scientific or academic research apart from Paneth's (1957) MA thesis which is the first academic study (cf. also Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 25). However, Gile (*ibid*) argues that some of the best texts produced at that time have identified most of the central issues being studied by researchers at present. Among these is Herbert's (1952) well-known Handbook which, according to Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 5), is the earliest best known publication on interpreting. Others include Rozan (1956), Ilg (1959), etc.

### **2.2.1.2 The experimental psychology period**

According to Gile (*ibid*; 2003b: 3-6), this period (the 1960s and early 1970s) is characterised by studies based on experiments carried out by such psychologists and psycholinguists as Oléron and Nanpon, Triesman, Goldman-Eisler, Gerver, Barik, etc.

Oléron and Nanpon's (1965) achievement in developing a method of time lag ('*décalage*') measurement, 2-10 seconds (*ibid*: 49), between the original and the interpreter's output is considered by Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 26) as a 'pioneering investigation' into SI, being the first to carry out an experimental study on SI.

Gile (1994a: 149) and Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (*ibid*) argue that the most prominent figure in this period is Gerver who conducted experiments on various factors that could

affect the capacity of the interpreter's short-term memory (STM) or SI performance in general such as intonation, stress, noise, SL presentation rate, etc. which have later formed the basis for many studies by various researchers of different orientations. Moreover, Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 27) point out that Gerver was the first to develop a complete information-processing model of SI (Gerver 1976).

Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (*ibid*: 27f) note that Barik, the first non-interpreter to be awarded a PhD (1969) in interpreting, discussed error analysis and pauses which have also been taken up by some other researchers in the field at a later stage.

However, Gile (1994a: 153f) and Schjoldager (1995: 34) argue that the validity of experiments by non-practising interpreters and their results have always been questioned by practising conference interpreters as their laboratory experiments do not have the characteristics of the real situations, strain or pressure under which professional interpreters struggle in real conferences (cf. Seleskovitch 1978a: 146; Lederer 1978: 323).

### **2.2.1.3 The practitioners' period**

This lasted from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s and witnessed the taking over by practitioners (professional interpreters and teachers of interpreting) with the main thrust of interpreting research coming from ESIT researchers in Paris (Gile 1994a: 150). A number of models<sup>8</sup> have been put forward to account for the interpreting process, including Danica Seleskovitch's (1975a) theory of sense (**Chapter 4**) which achieved unprecedented predominance in the field of interpreting research during this period (Gile *ibid*; Pöchhacker 1995a: 22; Schjoldager 1995: 34), Gerver's (1976) and Moser's (1978) information processing models, Gile's (e.g. 1985; 1991; 1997) processing-capacity oriented 'Effort-Models', and other studies on such aspects of interpreting as training, processes, improvised and read speeches, etc. (Gile 1994a: 151; 2003b: 6-11).

It has been argued that the most essential characteristics of research in this period are, first, researchers were mostly practising interpreters; second, research was theoretical rather than empirical; and third, researchers were unaware of one another's studies (Gile 1994a: 150).

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<sup>8</sup> For thorough reviews of various models describing different aspects of the interpreting phenomenon, see Setton (2003a) and Pöchhacker (2004: chapter 5).

#### **2.2.1.4 The ‘renaissance’ period**

Gile (1994a: 151) calls this period (the late 1980s onwards) a ‘renaissance’ because it is only in this period that the earlier calls for more scientific, empirical and interdisciplinary investigation and cooperation have been seriously echoed and heeded (see below) by many researchers (mostly practising conference interpreters) who have been increasingly attempting to benefit from findings and ideas from Translation Studies and cognitive sciences. Gile (ibid: 151f) argues that this period has witnessed more proliferation of (empirical) research into interpreting, communication and cooperation among researchers from different regions and research orientations.

##### **2.2.1.4.1 Interdisciplinarity**

It must be acknowledged that the recent calls for interdisciplinary investigation into interpreting research can only be seen as echoes of a much earlier call by Oléron and Nanpon who, from an earlier stage of evolution of interpreting research, have argued and called for a ‘psychological study of interpreters’ (Oléron and Nanpon 1965: 49) (particularly of interpreters’ non-linguistic abilities such as the amount of information they can retain at one time, abilities to concentrate on and carry out more than one task simultaneously, etc.) through ‘investigations in which psychologists, linguists, and professionals could [...] usefully cooperate’ to make interpreters’ task easier (ibid: 50).

The first interdisciplinary gathering on theory and practice in conference interpreting is the 1977 NATO Symposium (Gerver and Sinaiko 1978) which in addition to conference and sign language interpreters and teachers of interpreting was attended by many representatives from such fields as psychology, linguistics, translation, anthropology, sociology, etc. (ibid: 1). The symposium aimed at achieving such objectives as utilisation of the research findings in the fields mentioned above, identifying the professional and research interests, and establishing cooperative research (ibid: 1f).

Another collective and rather stronger call for interdisciplinarity in conference interpreting research came from the University of Trieste, Italy, during the Conference on the Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Teaching Interpreting (Gran and Dodds 1989). The conference aimed at presenting the latest findings of neurophysiological experiments and

studies on lateralisation of language in bilinguals and polyglots, studying and assessing aptitude tests for would-be student interpreters, comparing teaching methods with non-European training schools, and motivating further research to encourage researchers to exchange information and experience (Gran and Dodds 1989: 12). Participants in this conference included researchers from other fields and interpreting researchers from other parts of the world such as the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Japan, etc. (ibid: 11), which allowed these researchers to compare their work with that of Western European researchers. This prompted Gile (1994a: 151) to argue that this conference heralded the beginning of a new era in the evolution of interpreting research, an era described by Jennifer Mackintosh as '*The Trieste Era*' (1989: 268, emphasis in original).

Gile (ibid) argues that this openness has resulted in actual multidisciplinary interpreting research. A prominent example is neuroscientific studies in interpreting on shared attention, memory and recall, lateralisation, role of ears, etc. coming mainly from the Trieste School (Gran and Fabbro 1988; 1989; Gran and Dodds 1989; Gran and Taylor 1990; 1995; Fabbro and Darò 1995; Fabbro and Gran 1997, etc.) and other researchers (e.g. Lambert 1993; Lambert et al. 1995; Paradis 1994a; 1994b; Kurz 1994), but see Gile (2003b: 17).

Another example of multidisciplinary is the bulk of studies on interpreting drawing on such Translation Studies components as text linguistics, discourse analysis and text typology. Pöchhacker (1995b: 55) and Gran and Viezzi (1995: 108) refer to the special interest which this type of study enjoys in the School of Trieste (see also Gran 1990) and which is reflected in IS graduation theses as well as papers by some very well-known researchers at the school (e.g. Taylor 1989a; Allioni 1989). Other prominent contributions include Hatim (1984), Hatim and Mason (1990; 1997), Tommola and Neimi (1986) Crevatin (1989), Bühler (1989), Lang (1992), Alexieva (1994a), Dam (1998), etc.

Intercultural mediation is yet another trend in IS which, according to Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 96), has been first raised by Kirchhoff (1976a: 113) who has discussed the difficulty of interpreting texts with 'a distinct SL orientation'. Her interpreting model (1976b) has been explored by Kondo (1990; 2003) and Dam (Kondo et al. 1997: 158ff). The subject of this thesis represents a continuation of this trend as the thesis is mainly concerned with the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator (**Chapters 5-8**).

Calls for interdisciplinary research involving such scientific disciplines as sociology, cognitive psychology and neuroscience as well as Translation Studies (Schäffner 2004a) continue to dominate the thinking and research output of many prominent researchers in the field of 'Translation and Interpreting Studies' (Schäffner 2004b: 5).

#### **2.2.1.4.1.1 Limitations in interdisciplinary research**

There is no doubt about the benefits of interdisciplinarity in IS due to the invaluable insights it can offer to the field, but despite the fact that Gile sees interdisciplinary research as 'a natural if not inevitable research policy component' (1995a: 5), he argues that it should not be viewed as an achievement per se, but as a course of action for future research (1995a: 1/5; 2000a: 314f) for it has not yet produced much needed results (see also Gile 2003b: 17/22). According to Gile (2000a: *ibid*), the limitations in interdisciplinarity can be attributed to several factors. First, only a few non-interpreter researchers are involved in 'sustained interpreting research'. Second, concepts and theories brought into interpreting have produced only a few empirical studies that have not even been developed further or replicated. Third, cognitive psychology paradigms imported to conference interpreting research have generated only a small number of experiments in interpreting along the lines of research in cognitive psychology. However, Gile does not specify what a small number is or, in other words, what number of experiments will be sufficient.

Kurz (1995: 167) argues that part of the problem lies in the differences of interest between scientists from other disciplines and professional interpreters for each group are seeking answers for questions which the other group are not interested in or do not have answers to. The consequence of this failure of communication between the two groups is another problem. Lambert (1978: 133) reports on the failure of a seminar on translation and interpreting in Washington in the 1960s because scientists used jargon, which meant insulting or patronising the outsiders, and professionals asked practical questions that did not have answers in cognitive psychology, which meant putting psychologists off.

There is also the fear that interpreting might lose its status as a discipline or become of secondary importance in partnership with other scientific disciplines (Dodds 1989: 18; Gambetti and Mead 1998: 172), a phenomenon that has also been observed in Translation Studies (cf. Pym 1998: chapter 12).

### **2.2.1.5 Factors that led to the growth of IS**

A number of factors have played a vital role in motivating research throughout the development of IS in general and conference interpreting in particular. The following are among the most crucial ones (cf. Gile unpublished script).

#### **2.2.1.5.1 Degree and research training programmes**

The first, and probably the most important, factor is the establishing of degree and research training programmes in interpreting at some universities, which have given rise to the production of a considerable number of MA/graduation theses and doctoral dissertations (Mackintosh 1995: 122; Gile 2000a: 301f; unpublished script) though the significance of the former is seen in terms of quantity and the latter in terms of quality. This is why doctoral dissertations are considered to have proved to be crucial to the evolution of IS, offering high-quality research with long-term commitment (Gile 2000a: 301; Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 6; Pöchhacker 2004: 31). Pinter/Kurz (1969), Barik (1969), Gerver (1971), Seleskovitch (cf. 1975a), Moser (1976), etc. are generally cited in the interpreting literature as references to the earliest and most renowned doctoral dissertations.

The impact of these training and research programmes on the development of IS has become more pronounced as some of the interpreting schools have come to be seen as centres of excellence by IS researchers worldwide (cf. Gile unpublished script). Among the most well-known of these are the Paris School (ESIT), which introduced the first doctoral studies in translation and interpreting in 1974 (Gile 1990a: 33; Pöchhacker 2004: 35) and has strengthened the theoretical foundation of conference interpreting (Weber 1989a: 8; Mackintosh 1995: 122) and the Trieste School which is specifically renowned for its interest in interdisciplinary research (cf. also Pöchhacker 1995b: 52-58).

#### **2.2.1.5.2 Conferences**

Conferences have served as fora for researchers from different parts of the world and research orientations to meet, discuss and exchange ideas (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 7f). Some conferences can be considered as landmarks in the history of IS in general and conference interpreting in particular such as the 1977 NATO Symposium (Gerver and Sinaiko 1978), the 1986 Symposium in Trieste (Gran and Dodds 1989), the 1994 Turku

International Conference on Interpreting (Tommola 1995; Gambier et al. 1997), The First Forlì Conference (cf. Garzone and Viezzi, 2002), the American Translators Association's annual conferences (e.g. Bowen and Bowen 1990), etc.

### **2.2.1.5.3 Publication of interpreting journals**

The main interest of specialised journals is the sharing of research findings in any scientific field. Some of the well-known journals include *The Interpreters' Newsletter* (SSLM, Trieste), *Interpreting* (John Benjamins, Amsterdam) and Translation Studies journals which frequently publish articles on interpreting such as *Babel* and *Target* by John Benjamins, Amsterdam, *Forum* (ESIT, Korean Society of Conference interpreters and UNESCO), *Meta* (University of Montreal), *The Translator* (St. Jerome, Manchester), *AICC bulletin*, etc. The fact that these are issued on a regular basis creates a demand for research papers (Pöchhacker 1995b: 59; Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 9; Gile unpublished script).

## **2.2.2 Research profile**

The issues discussed below comprise the research profile of *relevant* literature on conference interpreting. These issues are, alphabetically, cognitive, language, professional, quality and training issues (adapted from Gile 2000a). Due to much overlapping between the issues, there are concepts that fall under more than one heading or have relevance to other issues depending on the perspective selected for approaching a certain concept, but studied under one of them either for convenience or based on evidence from the literature. For example, stress falls under cognitive, quality and professional issues, but is discussed under the latter for convenience. This overlapping is signalled whenever needed.

### **2.2.2.1 Cognitive issues**

Cognitive research into interpreting seems to have been motivated by the 'mystery' of the mental processes that lie beneath the 'strange' activity of simultaneous listening and speaking (Gile 2001b). Psychologists' and psycholinguists' interest in understanding these processes and attempts to account for the interpreting process from a cognitive perspective (**2.2.1.2 The experimental psychology period**) have resulted in a significant contribution of cognitive psychology<sup>9</sup> to the development of IS (cf. Flores d'Arcais 1978).

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<sup>9</sup> See also Gile (2003b) for an interesting outline of past and present cognitive research into interpreting.

Cognitive research into conference interpreting has been mostly process-oriented. Thus, it has mostly focused on SI (Gile 1997: 196; Pöchhacker 2004: 113), but the concepts studied below are still relevant in this inclusive review because the concepts refer to mental aspects many of which are equally relevant to CCI: bilingualism, attention, comprehension, memory, production and interpreting strategies. A review of specific literature on CCI can be sought in **Chapter 3** since this mode is specifically chosen for research in this thesis (**1.1.3 Mode of investigation**).

### **2.2.2.1.1 Bilingualism**

This refers to the use of two languages or more (polyglossia) either on the social level, thus the term ‘social bilingualism’, or individual level, bilinguality of the individual (Pöchhacker 2004: 113). This argument is concerned with bilinguality of the individual and its relevance to interpreting, particularly language dominance.

Psychological research into bilingualism distinguishes between early and late bilinguals depending on the history of acquiring the two languages. Early bilinguals are those who have both languages acquired at the same time during early childhood and are thus said to be native speakers of these two languages. Late bilinguals are those who acquired their L1 (first language) before a critical period (that is before puberty) and their L2 after that period. When proficiency in L2 reaches a high level in a late bilingual, he/she is referred to as near-native speaker (Lambert 1978: 139; Moser-Mercer et al. 1997: 136).

Thiéry has pronounced this distinction in terms of ‘second language learning’ and ‘an extreme form of bilingualism’ called ‘true bilingualism’ (1978: 145). Thiéry (1975, quoted in Thiéry 1978: 148) has surveyed 34 AICC interpreters with an A-A language combination (**2.2.2.2.1 Language classification**). He (1978: 149) has found that a second language is one that is learned through the first language (the mother tongue) or by tuition. However, true bilingualism can be said to exist in bilinguals who literally have two mother tongues which they acquired before puberty, by immersion and directly. To him, therefore, such notions as ‘first’ or ‘dominant’ languages are irrelevant to true bilingualism (ibid: 151).

#### **2.2.2.1.1.1 Linguistic dominance vs linguistic balance**

One of the most important aspects of bilingualism which is directly related to interpreting is



the question of language dominance in bilinguals. Lambert and other psychologists (cf. e.g. Lambert 1955; Lambert et al. 1959, both quoted in Lambert 1978: 133) have tried to measure the dominance of one language over the other in the bilingual's brain or balance between the two by measuring the speed of response to directions in A and B languages, asking subjects to push buttons of certain colours. Tests have been developed to detect the time needed for word recognition in each language, fluency of producing associations to stimulus words from A to B and vice versa, and relative speed of reading and translating words from A to B and vice versa (Lambert 1978: 133). Results about the facility of translation have surprisingly revealed that some bilinguals have shown dominance of their foreign language over their native language. In-depth interviews after the experiment have shown that this has been due to the subjects' deep academic and social involvement (immersion) in the foreign language though the main reason has been a motivational and attitudinal one towards the foreign language and/or its culture (ibid: 134).

However, recent psycholinguistic experiments (cf. de Bot 2000: 80-86) have shown that reaction times have been found to be longer for translation from the dominant into nondominant language. This has implications for the controversy over language direction in interpreting (**2.2.2.2.2 SI into B**).

### **2.2.2.1.2 Attention**

In their pioneering study of SI, Oléron and Nanpon have been forerunners in advocating psychological research into the interpreting process to study, inter alia, interpreters' ability to concentrate on and carry out a number of different tasks 'simultaneously' (1965: 49f), an issue which is still the main preoccupation for many researchers.

Goldman-Eisler's (1961a; 1961b; 1967) studies of two hesitation phenomena, filled and unfilled pauses, have led her to suggest that pauses can be exploited by interpreters to reduce the strain of simultaneous listening and speaking:

[...] the intermittent silence between chunks of speech is [...] a very valuable commodity for the simultaneous translator; for the more of his own output he can crowd into his source's pauses, the more time he has to listen without interference from his own output (1967: 128).

This suggestion has later been supported by Barik (1973: 260-264) but challenged by

Gerver based on the length of pauses and SL input rate (**2.2.2.4.2.1.3 SL input rate**). Gerver (1976: 181ff) has argued that when interpreting at an articulation rate of 96 to 120 words per minute, pause lengths of one or two seconds can offer very little help for interpreters and thus they will not always be able to actively apply this strategy. Barik (1973: 263) acknowledges, though, that making use of the speaker's pauses by the interpreter should not be viewed as a strategy as such but, in Pöchhacker's words, an 'epiphenomenon of the task' (2004: 116).

Gerver (1969) has also found experimental evidence of output monitoring by interpreters because subjects have *corrected* some errors in their output, thus invalidating Welford's (1968, quoted in Gerver *ibid*: 54) 'single-channel hypothesis' that interpreters acquire the ability to listen and speak simultaneously because they learn to neglect the sound of their voice after much practice. This has prompted Gerver to conclude that attention-sharing actually *exists* between input, translation and monitoring (1969: 65), and when the overall capacity of the processing system is exceeded, less attention is paid to either input or output, which means less information is available for recall for translation, more omissions and occurrences of uncorrected errors (*ibid*: 66).

According to Pöchhacker (2004: 115f), contrary to the assumption held by cognitive psychologists<sup>10</sup> in the 1950 and 1960s (cf. e.g. Broadbent 1952; Welford 1968) that attention can be shared only for highly automatic tasks and that the human mind can attend perfectly only to one task at a time, recent research suggests beyond any doubt the validity of the principle of shared attention in interpreting and that cognitive tasks requiring divided attention can improve with training and practice for specific tasks (see also Gerver 1974a; 1975; 1976; Spelke et al. 1976; Hirst et al. 1980; Lambert 1989; Lambert et al. 1995; Darò 1995; Fabbro and Gran 1997; Lee 1999, etc.). However, Pöchhacker (2004: 116) argues that the details of the selective allocation, or otherwise switching, of the interpreter's attention remain to be demonstrated.

### **2.2.2.1.3 Comprehension**

According to Hatim and Mason (1990: 226f; 1997: 17f) and Pöchhacker (2004: 118f), in

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<sup>10</sup> See also Lambert (1992: 268-271) for a review of psychological research on this subject.

research into language comprehension there is a basic distinction between bottom-up (input-driven) and top-down (knowledge-based) operations, both being essential for an encompassing account of comprehension since comprehension is seen as a dynamic process that largely depends on what one already knows. Thus, processing new information requires the build-up of a mental representation resulting from the interaction between the input and already existing information whether lexical, semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, encyclopaedic, etc. or linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge (Gile 1993: 69).

Several studies have been carried out along the lines of the aforementioned fact, but they differ in approach or concepts used to describe the process. Proponents of the theory of sense (cf. e.g. Seleskovitch 1978b: 334; Lederer 1990: 53), reject research into grammar and contrastive linguistics as the sole basis for approaching language comprehension and suggest ‘cognitive complements’ (verbal, situational and cognitive contexts and world or encyclopaedic knowledge) that interact with ‘units of meaning’ (Lederer 1978: 330) to ‘make sense’ (Seleskovitch 1986a: 371), thus allowing for comprehension of the incoming message (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 23; **Chapter 4**).

Chernov (cf. 1979; 1992; 1994) has based his SI processing model of ‘probability prediction mechanism’ on redundancy (1979: 107). In an experiment involving 11 professional interpreters, UN General Assembly speeches of 20-minute duration have been designed in such a way that the first type of utterances contains unpredictable endings and the second nonsensical sentences. More than 76% of subjects have either omitted utterances with unpredictable endings (38.75%) or translated them according to the expectations prompted by context (37.5%), and more than 89% have mistranslated (53.58%) or omitted (35.71%) the semantically unusual sentences. Chernov has concluded that message redundancy and predictability are vital for the comprehension process. To him, the semantic comprehension process is a ‘*cumulative dynamic analysis*’ (1979: 104f, emphasis in original) that generally covers the gradual addition of rhematic elements to the thematic ones, bridging sense gaps, linking and combining rhematic and thematic components into fewer but more complex semantic configurations, and integrating this semantic structure into the larger situational context and the knowledge of the hearer (ibid).

According to Pöchhacker (2004: 119), Chernov’s approach is largely compatible with the

Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) model of discourse analysis because it relates to building a propositional textbase, inferencing, building macrostructures and a situational model.

Mackintosh (1985) has applied the Kintsch and Van Dijk model (1978) to CCI and SI, conducting two experiments to test its application. The experiments have indicated the relevance of the model's macrorules of deletion, generalization and construction to interpreting processes as 'mapping rules which link the stages in the process and explain why certain things [errors and omissions] occur' (1985: 42). However, Mackintosh argues that the level of macrostructural processing required for 'surface text comprehension' without recall remains to be demonstrated because it is not possible to measure how much processing is made in response to the comprehension or recall tasks (ibid).

Drawing on findings in discourse analysis, text linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, semiotics, conversation analysis and artificial intelligence, Hatim and Mason (1990) propose a textual model of discourse processing in which context is defined in terms of three dimensions: a communicative transaction (subsuming user: <idiolect, dialect>, use: <field, mode and tenor> as register variables), pragmatic actions (intentionality, speech acts, implicature, inference, etc.) and a semiotic interaction (word, text, discourse, genre, etc. as signs). These contextual dimensions determine the structure (compositional plan) and texture (cohesion, coherence, etc. devices) of the text seen in the model as 'the ultimate unit of effective communication' (Hatim 1997: 12). Hatim and Mason (1997) argue that, and show how, their model applies to all fields of translation activity, from literary and religious translation, through subtitling to different interpreting types, including SI, and thus interpreter training (see also Hatim 1984; 1989; Mason 1989).

Dillinger (1994) has conducted an experiment on eight experienced and eight novice interpreters to determine if there are any potential differences in comprehension processes between the two groups, but found no significant evidence of interpreting-specific comprehension skills. Thus, he suggests that comprehension is the application of an innate skill, which is a natural consequence of bilingualism, in more unusual situations because there has been only insignificant evidence (17%) of superiority of trained interpreters (1994: 166/185). Pöchhacker (2004: 120) attributes this failure to reasons of experimental design. However, although Dillinger (1994: 156) acknowledges that his study concerns

comprehension only and that the importance of production should not be ignored, strangely enough, he uses these results to conclude that interpreting is an innate skill and thus suggest that the selection of students is in fact more crucial than training (1994: 185).

Dillinger's results have been questioned by the results of a number of experimental studies (cf. Padilla et al. 1995; Bajo et al. 2000) that have suggested that training and experience in interpreting have been found to be essential for developing such skills as fast and accurate reading abilities, faster access to lexical and semantic storage, larger working memory capacity and more efficient use of such capacity. Besides, bilinguals have not shown any superiority of comprehension skills, which also suggests that comprehension is not due to linguistic abilities gained by knowledge of another language (Bajo et al. 2000: 140f).

Isham (1994) has found 'evidence for and against' deverbalisation because in an experiment nearly half of the subjects (nine professional interpreters) have shown a superior verbatim recall of the most recent sentence, translating on a sentence-by-sentence basis and focusing attention on the surface form of the SL sentences. However, the recall of the other half of interpreters has been inferior, indicating no distinction between the clause or sentence boundary conditions with interpreters' attention being diverted away from the surface form, thus using the meaning-based approach (ibid: 205f). Isham has (ibid: 208) concluded that interpreting 'from English into French' is not a single process, but involves at least two, form- and meaning-based approaches. However, research is needed to determine whether the interpreters' choice of either approach is a strategic one or not (ibid).

Incidentally, Setton's (cf. 1998; 1999) bottom-up cognitive-pragmatic analysis, which is described by Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 178) as 'one of the most significant advances in interpreting research at the close of the twentieth century' and draws on RT, cognitive semantics, mental models and speech-act theory, supports the knowledge-based approach to comprehension and confirms the claims of the theory of sense concerning a big role for extralinguistic factors in the comprehension process and irrelevance of language-specific factors or language-pair processing (**2.2.2.1.6.2.4 The anticipation strategy**).

#### **2.2.2.1.4 Memory**

According to Pöchhacker (2004: 120f), the hypothesis suggesting the presence of a

temporary storage system that is distinguished from a permanent storage one goes back to the mid-twentieth century. However, Darò (1997) suggests that the hypothesis of dualistic models of memory actually goes back to the *late nineteenth century*, citing James (1890) as the first to distinguish between '*primary and secondary memory*', the former for storage of past knowledge and experience while the latter for information attracting current attention (1997: 623, emphasis in original). These correspond to the modern terms of long-term memory (LTM) and STM, respectively, the latter being later referred to as working memory (Darò *ibid*; Pöchhacker 2004: 121).

The state-of-the-art model of working memory has been proposed by Baddeley (cf. e.g. Baddeley 1990; 2000; Baddeley and Logie 1999). This model comprises multiple specialised components of perception that allow humans to relate new information to the knowledge already stored in their LTM. The specialised components include a *central executive* that serves as a supervisory, regulatory or control system that performs several functions such as connecting the two slave systems, focusing and switching attention, etc. The two slave systems are the *phonological loop* that is responsible for storing and processing speech-based information and the *visuospatial sketchpad* that is responsible for processing images (Baddeley and Logie 1999: 28).

LTM is likewise viewed as a multifaceted system comprising various subsystems, each being responsible for one type of information storage and can be functionally independent from the other subsystems (e.g. Cohen and Squire 1980; Squire and Zola-Morgan 1991; Darò 1997: 623). A distinction is made between *declarative* (or explicit) memory and *procedural* (or implicit) memory where the former refers to events and facts directly accessible to conscious recollection (knowing that) while the latter is implicitly contained within learned skills and cognitive operations (knowing how). Explicit memory in turn consists of *semantic memory* for storing encyclopaedic knowledge and *episodic memory* for recall of one's personal experience or past events. Implicit memory comprises motor and cognitive skills and habits, conditioning and non-associative learning (Darò *ibid*: 623f).

#### **2.2.2.1.4.1 Working memory and interpreting**

In an experimental study, Gerver (1974a) has found that simultaneous listening and speaking can hinder retention of the material listened to when speaking, but that recall

becomes better when a complex form of information processing is involved in the simultaneous and listening tasks because results have indicated that subjects' recall has been better after listening, followed by SI and shadowing, respectively.

This finding was later supported by Lambert (e.g. 1989) who has obtained evidence of poor recall when listening and speaking simultaneously because the results have indicated higher recognition scores after listening, followed by CCI, SI and shadowing, respectively. Lambert explains that during listening no vocalisation is required and thus attention is devoted only to one task (ibid: 89). Recall after CCI has been higher because CCI involves complete overt rehearsal of the text, longer exposure to information, visual cues provided by the notes and oral feedback provided by the delivery. Thus, CCI represents a deeper level of processing than SI. SI is deeper than shadowing because the translation factor, which is absent in shadowing, requires more processing of the stimulus and thus longer duration can be regarded as a distinctive factor. Thus, Lambert hypothesises that listening and CCI involve deeper processing than SI and shadowing because whereas vocalisation is not required in listening and only required in CCI after the original has been delivered, simultaneous vocalisation is required in SI and shadowing. In terms of the effort and attention, during CCI and listening, attention and effort are devoted completely to the processing task whereas they are shared with other tasks in SI and shadowing (ibid: 90).

Isham (1994) has found that simultaneous interpreters' verbatim recall of the final clause has been poorer from English to French than from English to American Sign Language. He (ibid: 204) suggests that the difference between the two groups lies in the fact that sign language interpreters have been exposed to *one spoken* language at a time, but simultaneous interpreters working between English and French have been in fact exposed to *two spoken* languages. Thus, he has attributed the latter's inferior recall to 'phonological interference' that is 'caused by the two speech streams encountered by this group alone' (ibid). Isham (2000) has concluded that phonological interference causing poor verbatim recall is not a matter of storage but of process. In other words, it is not due to two speech streams but to interpreters' inability to 'refresh the trace for phonological form through subvocal rehearsal' because interpreters are engaged with speaking while listening (ibid: 147).

Isham's initial conclusion that phonological interference is the factor behind poorer recall

after SI has been confirmed, at least partially, by Darò and Fabbro (e.g. 1994; Darò 1997) who have suggested that other factors such as divided attention and translation processes also significantly reduce recall in that they contribute to a reduction in the capacity of the working memory, which in turn reduces long-term memorisation of translated material in SI. This they attribute to a mechanism of ‘articulatory suppression’ of ‘subvocal rehearsal’ in the phonological loop of working memory (Darò 1997: 625).

The existence of the mechanism of articulatory suppression has been confirmed in a series of experimental studies by Padilla et al. (1995) and Bajo et al. (2000) who have found that interpreters’ recall and comprehension have been superior to those of student interpreters and non-interpreters (Bajo et al. 2000: 132). It has been suggested that this superiority might be related to the assumption that interpreters use the capacity of their working memory more efficiently because they are less affected by the disruptive effect of the mechanism of articulatory suppression. Interpreters’ recurrent exposure to simultaneous listening and speaking could be an ideal exercise on working memory, which explains the decrease of the disruptive effect of the articulatory suppression mechanism (ibid: 140f).

#### **2.2.2.1.4.2 Long-term memory (LTM) and interpreting**

According to Darò (1997: 626), reduced LTM abilities (to recall previously translated material) in interpreters may be attributed to two factors. The first is the need to divide attention between the complex and simultaneous tasks. This need for attention-sharing intervenes in the work of the central executive of the working memory in that its capacity becomes overloaded when trying to achieve all these tasks. The second is an unconscious strategy developed by interpreters to control superfluous material since most of the information that interpreters deal with may not be relevant to their personal life.

However, Darò (ibid) uses the results of some experimental studies (cf. Spelke et al. 1976; Hirst et al. 1980) which have suggested that complex cognitive tasks requiring attention-sharing improve with training and specific exercises to suggest that implicit skill components such as concurrent listening and speaking as in SI, simultaneous listening and note-taking as in CCI, divided attention, etc. can also be improved by means of implicit exercising of the components of the whole process, a view that is also supported by recent experiments (cf. Padilla et al. 1995 and Bajo et al. 2000).



Darò (ibid: 626f) also suggests that semantic memory in interpreters and encyclopaedic knowledge may increase constantly through repeated exposure and practice, but that implicit (memory) skills are exposed to decay because of ageing, and this is detrimental particularly to interpreters because without these implicit procedural and highly automatised skills, interpreting can hardly be achieved.

### **2.2.2.1.5 Production**

The following sub-sections discuss a sample model of the process of speech production and one aspect of the interpreter's output, namely error analysis. Another aspect of speech production, hesitation, is investigated in **2.2.2.4.2.2 Slips and shifts**.

#### **2.2.2.1.5.1 The process of production**

Most research into the production process in conference interpreting has been psycholinguistic-oriented (Pöchhacker 2004: 125). Levelt's (1989) tripartite model of language production is hailed (cf. de Bot 2000: 70; Pöchhacker ibid) as the most widely accepted and influential psycholinguistic model. In this model, a *conceptualizer* produces an output, called *preverbal message*, which forms the input for a *formulator* that translates this conceptual structure into a linguistic one, called *internal speech (phonetic/articulatory plan)*, through grammatical and phonological encoding. The formulator's output (internal speech) forms the input for the *articulator* which executes the phonetic/articulatory plan and produces *overt speech* (Levelt 1989). This model has been taken up by some conference interpreting researchers (e.g. Setton 1999; de Bot 2000).

#### **2.2.2.1.5.2 Error analysis**

According to Corder (1981, quoted in Altman 1994: 25), the study of error analysis is justified on pedagogical grounds for it contributes to the improvement of teaching methods. Falbo (2002: 111) justifies it as one of the tools for assessing quality.

Altman (1994: 26) evaluates the seriousness of an error according to the extent to which an error stands as an obstacle to communication.

Gerver (1969; 1974b) identifies the following categories of errors, which he prefers to call 'discontinuities' (1969: 54): omissions of words, phrases and longer stretches of input of

eight words or more; substitutions of words and phrases; and corrections of words and phrases (Gerver 1969: 54). Barik (1971) provides a more detailed description of errors and identifies the following categories: omissions which include skipping, comprehension, delay and compounding omissions; additions which include qualifier, elaboration, relationship and closure additions; and substitutions and errors which include mild semantic errors, gross semantic errors (which have two subcategories: errors stemming from assumed misunderstanding or errors of false reference), mild phrasing change, substantial phrasing change and gross phrasing change.

Besides her own description of errors which is not very different from Gerver's and Barik's versions, Altman (1994) provides a conjectural hierarchy of the causes of errors:

- (i) excessive concentration on a preceding item due to processing problems, resulting in a lack of attention and hence omission [...];
- (ii) attempt to improve TL style, leading to a tendency to overstate the case or to embroider the text unnecessarily [...];
- (iii) difficulty in finding the correct contextual equivalent for a given lexical item [...];
- (iv) drawing erroneously upon one's store of background/general knowledge [...];
- (v) compression of two information items into one, thereby producing a third, incorrect item [...];
- (vi) shortcomings in mastery of the FL [Foreign Language], leading to misunderstandings and therefore misinterpretations of the original speech (1994: 34).

Gile (1991: 19f; 1997: 200f) relates the cause of such deviations to overload in processing capacity. Based on the study of processing capacity requirements within the framework of his 'Effort Models', he argues that in a task like SI which involves speaking and listening at the same time, thus splitting attention between the two and many other tasks, interpreters need much processing capacity. Once this capacity is overloaded or a task takes too much of the limited attentional resource, there will not be enough capacity left for other tasks and thus errors and problems occur.

Tijus (1997: 35f) argues that what may seem to be an error in the interpreter's output may have been the only or most reasonable solution at a certain situation. When the interpreter starts translating, he/she starts dealing with some variables that do not necessarily have to do with the meaning of speech, thus rapidly making conscious or indeed unconscious decisions that are made under too much pressure. For example, an interpreter might decide to keep a reasonable EVS instead of translating a certain phrase immediately, which may

cause him/her to be under heavy time constraints and thus force him/her to commit mistakes of the type mentioned earlier. The actual error in this case is a *strategic* one; it is not related to semantics or understanding of the speech. Thus, Tijus rejects the idea of calling these omissions or deviations as ‘errors’, arguing that calling them errors amounts to neglecting the dynamic nature of the interpreting process.

### **2.2.2.1.6 Interpreting strategies**

One of the most important aspects of the interpreting process is the strategic dimension which has enjoyed a great deal of interest by many IS researchers. The interpreting process from comprehension to production, seen by some professionals as a ‘crisis management’ situation (cf. Gile 1995d: 191), is a task that imposes a high processing load and certain cognitive constraints (such as simultaneity, SL input rate or text complexity) on the interpreter who, in order to cope with these constraints, must apply certain strategies or *tactics* to achieve the task successfully (cf. Pöchhacker 2004: 132).

A strategy is

*goal-oriented, so that the goal determines the amount and thoroughness of processing. It may be consciously used but may also have become automatic in so far as the processor will not have to make any cognitive decision (Kalina 1992: 253, emphasis in original).*

Pöchhacker (2004: 132) distinguishes between overall task-related strategies, process-oriented strategies and communicating content strategies. As Pöchhacker (ibid) rightly argues, the line between the various classifications of different strategies is ‘hard to draw’. Pöchhacker’s way of presenting the different strategies, which is borrowed here, is used only as a convenient example among some others (Kirchhoff 1976a: 114-117; Van Dam 1989; Kohn and Kalina 1996, etc.) including a more detailed treatment of the issue (Gile 1995d: chapters 6-8) and is thus not intended to be viewed as a model to be followed<sup>11</sup>.

#### **2.2.2.1.6.1 Overall task-related strategies**

Overall task-related strategies have to do with the interpreting task in general. Thus, a distinction is made between off-line and on-line strategies (Pöchhacker 2004: 132f).

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<sup>11</sup> See also Lee (2006) for a recent proposal of SI strategies categorization and review of other categorizations by different researchers.

#### *2.2.2.1.6.1.1 Off-line strategies*

Off-line strategies have to do with creating and consulting sources for specific knowledge acquisition (glossaries, reference documents, encyclopaedias, etc.) and preparing for interpreting assignments by highlighting specific terms, names, numbers or segments when written material is available in the booth, archiving and indexing documents for future use, etc. (Gile 1995d: 146-151; Pöchhacker 2004: 133; **2.2.2.3.2 Documentation; 2.2.2.5.2.4.2 Training on SI with text; 7.5.4.3.3 Off-line procedures**).

#### *2.2.2.1.6.1.2 On-line strategies*

Pöchhacker (ibid) classifies these according to interpreting modes. Good examples are note-taking in CCI (**3.2.2 The strategy of note-taking**) and anticipation in SI (see below). Others include using the help of the booth mate ('passive interpreter') in SI for noting down a technical term, name or number (Gile 1995d: 193) and asking the speaker for help in CCI if the interpreter misses something he/she thinks is important. Jones's (1998: 53f) advice in this respect is to reflect the missing information on the notes so that the interpreter can locate it quickly on the notepad when asking the delegate and put the delegate in context to help him/her find the answer quickly. Other examples include consulting written material in the booth if any documentation is provided by conference organisers/speakers, noting down a number or name during SI to reduce memory or processing load, etc. (Gile ibid: 194).

#### **2.2.2.1.6.2 Processing strategies**

Processing strategies can be applied during a certain phase in the interpreting process to achieve a given task effectively under certain processing conditions. The following sections are dedicated to the discussion of the following most commonly cited processing strategies: waiting, stalling, segmentation and anticipation.

##### *2.2.2.1.6.2.1 The strategy of waiting*

When faced with temporarily vague strings of meaning, interpreters may wait for a few seconds until further constituents contribute to the disambiguation of the incoming message (Kirchhoff 1976a: 114; Gile 1995d: 192; Setton 1999: 50; Pöchhacker 2004: 133).

##### *2.2.2.1.6.2.2 The strategy of stalling*

Stalling is another form of delaying response by slowing down delivery or using 'neutral

padding expressions' or hesitation fillers (Kirchhoff, 1976a: 116) when searching for or trying to remember a missing item, word or even a sentence structure (Gile 1995d: 197).

#### *2.2.2.1.6.2.3 The segmentation strategy*

According to Kirchhoff (1976a: 114f), proper segmentation of the SL text into function units is one of the prerequisites of information processing. A function unit is defined as the smallest possible SL decoding unit for which a one-to-one relationship may be established with a TL segment and is thus determined not only by the structure of the SL, but also by this relation of SL-TL equivalence. The lower limit for the size of the function unit is determined by the criterion of equivalence to the TL segment while the upper limit by the interpreter's processing capacity (cf. also Wilss 1978: 346). The information value of a segment therefore must not go beyond the interpreter's processing capacity in relation to the time available. The interpreter's choice of timing thus lies between a minimum time lag and a maximum EVS of 10 seconds, and his/her optimum start should lie in a point that ensures the greatest amount of certainty and a minimum load on capacity. Comparisons between SL input and TL output show that experienced interpreters endeavour to adjust their segmentation strategies to the speaker's rhythm (Kirchhoff *ibid*).

Kirchhoff's argument confirms Barik (1969, quoted in Gerver 1976: 178) and Gerver's (cf. 1976: 178ff) results that SL pauses assist interpreters in segmenting the SL message.

However, Goldman-Eisler (1972: 74) has experimentally arrived at a contradictory result in that in 90% of the cases interpreters have been more inclined to ignore the SL chunking and impose their own segmentation of the input either by starting to translate before the SL chunk has been finished or by delaying translation and storing more than one chunk. Moreover, Goldman-Eisler (*ibid*: 73f) suggests that whether interpreters begin to translate before the end of the SL chunk or delay translation and store more than one chunk, is by and large an issue of the nature of the particular language, citing the example of German which forces interpreters to store more than one chunk while waiting for the predicate which comes at the end of the proposition (cf. also Wilss 1978: 350). Goldman-Eisler's finding that interpreters decide on a different structure from that of the input is supported by Kalina (1992: 254) who suggests that the reason for this is to avoid interference between the SL and TL syntactic systems, thereby achieving a better TL style.

For proponents of the theory of sense, the segmentation of input is based on ‘units of meaning’ (Lederer 1978: 330) or ‘subunits of sense’ (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 125) which are a combination of a number of words in the STM and prior cognitive experiences and occur whenever the interpreter grasps what the speaker intends to say (ibid: 227-231).

#### 2.2.2.1.6.2.4 *The anticipation strategy*<sup>12</sup>

Anticipation is described as ‘a fundamental feature of strategic discourse processing’ (Kohn and Kalina 1996: 124) and one of the most essential factors that explain simultaneity in SI (Chernov 1994: 140). Setton (1999: 52) defines<sup>13</sup> anticipation as the production of ‘a sentence constituent – a main verb, for example – before any equivalent constituent has appeared in the SL input’.

Almost all researchers who have discussed anticipation (e.g. Kirchhoff 1976a: 115; Wilss 1978: 349; Lederer 1978: 330ff; Gile 1995d: 176ff) distinguish between two types of anticipation: linguistic/syntactic and extralinguistic anticipation. The former refers to prediction from knowledge of ‘syntactic and semantic regularities in the SL’ (Kirchhoff 1976a: 115); formulas, such as debate openers or gambits, and collocations (Wilss 1978: 348/350; Lederer 1978: 331); ‘predictor words’ such as connectives, function words, or subordinators (Setton 1999: 52); ‘selectional categories and case morphology’ or generally speaking from ‘transitional probabilities related to phonological, grammatical, stylistic and other language-related rules’ (Gile 1995b, quoted in Setton 1999: 52).

Extralinguistic anticipation, which is based on ‘sense expectation’ (Lederer 1978: 331), refers to prediction from extralinguistic knowledge or, in the words of Lederer (1990) and Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 23), ‘cognitive complements’ (verbal, situational and cognitive contexts and world/encyclopaedic knowledge).

According to Setton (1999: 52-57) and Pöschhacker (2004: 134), the study of anticipation by various scholars with different research orientations reflects a deeper controversy over the issue of language-specific factors in interpreting. While proponents of the theory of

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<sup>12</sup> See also **2.2.2.5.2.3.10 Anticipation exercises**.

<sup>13</sup> For a recent and more comprehensive review of research into anticipation and a survey of various definitions of anticipation, see Kurz and Färber (2003).

sense, or the ‘universalists’ (Setton 1999: 53), have generally maintained a position that minimises the importance of the role of (strategies for) syntactic asymmetries, followers of the tradition of the Leipzig School and scholars in the information processing paradigm, or the ‘bilateralists’ (ibid), have generally insisted on the importance of ‘language-pair-specific’ factors (Wilss 1978: 350; see also Riccardi 1996), especially in languages with ‘left-branching’ or ‘verb-last structures’ (Setton ibid).

The findings of Setton’s (1999) cognitive-pragmatic analysis, which has been based on authentic corpora involving two left-branching languages (Chinese and German) do not seem to support the bilateralists’ word-order-strategy or ‘strategies-for-structures’ approach (ibid: 126); Setton concludes that ‘marked syntactic structure alone does not obstruct SI’ (ibid: 282) and stresses the need for recognising ‘individually and culturally variant expressions of intentionality’ (ibid: 283; see also Setton 2003a: 55; 2005: 72-75). Setton’s conclusion confirms Seleskovitch’s argument on ‘the reflex nature of language’ that:

If ... we look at language in communication, we note that, at least in our mother tongue, we are not aware of language as such; we are aware of our purpose, of what we intend to say when speaking, of the contents of the message we receive, but rarely do we choose our word deliberately or remember specific words uttered by a speaker (1977: 31).

### **2.2.2.1.6.3 Communicating content strategies**

According to Pöchhacker (2004: 134), communicating content strategies, which mainly concern ‘reductive’ or ‘adaptive’ strategies, have been proposed as forms of coping tactics that can be applied as a response for processing constraints.

#### *2.2.2.1.6.3.1 Reductive strategies*

In response to either one, some or all of such extreme input variables as high SL presentation rate (cf. e.g. Gerver 1969), ‘excessive time lag and overload’ (Kirchhoff 1976a: 116), linguistic complexity or syntactic and semantic difficulty (Tommola and Helevä 1998: 179), the interpreter can apply one or more of several reductive strategies, which refer more or less to the same operation but are given various denominations by different researchers. Chernov (1994: 145f) suggests lexical or syntactic compression. He argues that redundancy, which is usually present in the thematic or topical part of utterances, allows for compressing speech by reducing the number of syllables, words or

semantic elements or simplifying syntactic structures. Thus, Chernov (1994: 146; 1992: 156) argues that the interpreter can compress a speaker's announcement such as:

I now give the floor to the distinguished delegate of the United Republic of Tanzania!

to only

Tanzania!

by deleting the theme and conveying only the rheme of the utterance.

Using data from a 588-word text corpus from Spanish-Danish CCI involving ten MA translation and interpreting students and two professional interpreters, Dam (1993) proposes 'text condensing' through substitution and omission. Dam argues that this is 'a perfectly admissible and even good interpreting strategy' (1993: 299) as long as the end product allows for getting the message across to the TL audience (ibid).

Sunnari (1995) has concluded that macroprocessing of the SL message (microstructure), which can be achieved by Van Dijk's (1977) macrorules (selection, deletion, generalization and construction), is one of the most important strategies for fluent and high-quality interpreting between languages with different syntactic structures. Sunnari's data have been generated from three recorded presentations and their translations by four professionals in a real conference and have rendered three different situations: ideal, counter-ideal and pseudo-ideal. Part of the pseudo-ideal original has been interpreted in a laboratory by four trainees whose performance has been compared with the professionals'. Results have not revealed any loss of relevant information in all cases because professionals have known 'when and how to apply macroprocessing' (Sunnari 1995: 118). Besides, it has been revealed that macroprocessing has been an effective strategy without which interpreting would have been impossible in the counter- and pseudo-ideal situations and that it has helped make the output smoother and more natural in the ideal situation. It seems, however, that the trainees have not mastered the strategy and thus their output has been incoherent.

The results of an empirical analysis of 357 speeches and their interpretations in three languages (English, Italian and Spanish) in all possible combinations and directions from



the European Parliament Interpreting Corpus confirm the above arguments on reductive strategies. Russo et al. (2006: 248) have found, inter alia, that there has been a ‘general tendency to text compression in interpreted speeches’ as revealed by the lower number of words in the interpreted speeches compared to their corresponding originals.

#### *2.2.2.1.6.3.2 Adaptive strategies*

Kohn and Kalina (1996: 127f) suggest adaptation strategies in the production phase in accordance with the TL conventions of expression, in particular cultural adaptations which interpreters may apply to bridge gaps brought about by differences between the SL and TL cultures or when the SL discourse contains facts or events known to the SL audience but not necessarily known to the TL audience. Thus, the interpreter might have to go beyond linguistic mediation. Inevitably, this has implications for the interpreter’s role as to whether or not he/she can, should or must play the intercultural-mediator role, and if yes, through what means can this be achieved? This is the main subject of this thesis and is fully investigated within the context of CCI (**Chapters 5-8**).

### **2.2.2.2 Language issues**

Language issues discussed here concern language classification, language direction and linguistic abilities and language teaching in interpreter training.

#### **2.2.2.2.1 Language classification**

Conference interpreters’ language combinations are of particular importance because interpreters’ employment opportunities depend, inter alia, on the (number of) languages they master since job opportunities depend on market requirements. AIIC (cf. 2002a) divides a conference interpreter’s working languages into active and passive languages.

##### **2.2.2.2.1.1 Active languages**

Active languages are languages into which the conference interpreter works and can be either one of two kinds: A language(s) and B language(s) (ibid).

###### *2.2.2.2.1.1.1 A language(s)*

A language(s) refer(s) to the interpreter’s mother tongue(s) or any language that is strictly

equivalent to a mother tongue. The interpreter should work into his/her A language(s) from all the other languages in his/her language combination both in CCI and SI (AIIC 2002a).

#### *2.2.2.2.1.1.2 B language(s)*

According to AIIC (ibid), (a) B language(s) refer(s) to the interpreter's language(s) of which the interpreter, though not his/her mother tongue(s), has a perfect command and into which he/she interprets from one or more of the other languages in his/her language combination. Since not all interpreters are 'true bilinguals' (cf. e.g. Thiéry 1978), some of them prefer to work into B only in CCI (Seleskovitch 1978a: 74/139; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 100; Gile 1995d: 209; 1997: 203; 2001c) though Seleskovitch and Lederer demand, first, the interpreter's command of his/her B language(s) be 'outstanding' and, second, his/her statements in his/her B language(s) be correct and the information he/she conveys to the TL audience be consistent with what experts in the field already know.

If it is not a mother tongue, an interpreter's B language requires a long time, considerable efforts, repeated stays in the country of that language and extensive practice until it can be fully or satisfactorily mastered. It is thus more suitable for interpreting technical speeches where the accuracy of lexical items is more important than style or nuances of meaning and thus a more literal approach is possible (Seleskovitch 1978a: 139; AIIC 2002a). Moreover, AIIC (ibid) recommends carrying out interpreting into B out of the mother tongue.

#### **2.2.2.2.1.2 Passive (C) language(s)**

A passive or C language is a language which the interpreter can fully understand and out of which he/she interprets into the active language(s) (ibid).

Mackintosh (1995: 123) argues that each of the major employers of conference interpreters or training institutions have their own demands for the number of working languages an interpreter must have, but generally the ACCC or ABCC language combinations are increasingly required. However, market demands, which are usually affected by political or economic developments, can sometimes contribute to violation of these norms (AIIC ibid).

#### **2.2.2.2.2 SI into B**

The significance of the issue of SI into B or 'retour interpreting' (e.g. Jones 1998: 134;

**2.1.2.3 Directionality**) derives from its potential implications for interpreting quality. Denissenko (1989: 157) argues that interpreting into B is ‘more optimal’ because comprehension, which is better in the interpreter’s A than B, is the most crucial stage that requires concentrated attention even under normal conditions, let alone when disturbing factors such as non-native speakers’ defective language, pomposity/syntax of written texts read at a firing speed, etc. come into play. When interpreting into A, the interpreter also has a wider choice of possible ways of expression compared to a restricted choice in B since his/her command of A is better than the foreign language, which could be detrimental because the decision-making process might take much longer especially when knowing that interpreters subconsciously seek to be at their best. Thiéry (1989a: 199) demands scientific basis for Denissenko’s claim.

Tommola and Helevä (1998) have examined the effects of language direction and linguistic complexity (semantic and syntactic difficulty) on *trainees*’ performance and found only a slight and insignificant effect suggesting that interpreting from A has resulted in more accurate renditions, but they acknowledge that results might be different with professionals. A possible explanation for this could be Seleskovitch’s (1978a: 138) suggestion of the beginners’ fear of misunderstanding the second language.

Researchers who oppose A-to-B interpreting put three arguments. First, it is generally known that humans can comprehend more than they can express and that understanding in B is easier than production (Anderson 1976: 213; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 112f).

Second, understanding is not enough to achieve proper communication as communication does not only hold between the speaker and interpreter, but there is also the listener who needs to understand the entire message in a natural flow and easy expression. This can only be achieved when working into A because the intelligibility of the interpreter’s output into B suffers due to the limited choice of ways of expression (Seleskovitch 1978a: 136ff; 1999: 62f; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 113; Thiéry 1989a: 199), which is contrary to Denissenko’s view that the wider choice in A is a disadvantage. The discussion in **2.2.2.4.2.2 Slips and shifts** supports the view that hesitations, unorthodox syntax, etc., which are more likely to occur during A-to-B interpreting, do negatively affect quality. Seleskovitch (1999: 63) thus argues that training into B is acceptable only if there is a real

need for interpreting from less widely known languages and should not be extended to languages for which interpreting can be easily provided into A since SI is itself arduous enough for students to master and can be more difficult if it is taught into B at an earlier stage (see also Déjean Le Féal 1990: 157f; 2003: 70).

Third, Schweda-Nicholson (1992: 96f) argues that the automaticity of production in A reduces the amount of time and attention needed for production and monitoring, thus allowing the interpreter to assign extra effort for analysis and abstraction of sense.

Gile (1991: 20f) argues that a native-like level of proficiency in B differs from A and thus may not be sufficient when speech comprehension and production must be performed with a processing capacity that is less than the normal level as in SI which is characterised by competing efforts. However, Gile points out that interpreting into B could be accepted when specific language-pairs require more or less capacity for comprehension/production if linguistic differences between the languages involved have been clearly demonstrated or when interpreting speeches in technical or other fields well known by the interpreter. Similarly, Pinhas (1972, quoted in Gerver 1976: 176) suggests that the B-to-A direction should be used under good listening conditions or when interpreting general texts, and A-to-B should be used under difficult listening conditions or when interpreting technical texts.

Empirical research, however, favours the B-to-A direction. Recent psycholinguistic research (e.g. de Bot 2000: 80-86) has indicated that reaction times have been found to be longer for translation from the dominant (A) to nondominant (B) language though the effect of the direction of translation has decreased with increasing proficiency. This is contrary to the previously widespread belief in cognitive psychological studies on bilingualism (cf. e.g. Dornic 1978: 260) that reaction times to verbal stimuli in a nondominant language may be slower than the dominant language. Moreover, neuropsychological research (cf. Darò et al. 1996) has produced results that favour the B-to-A direction because mistakes leading to losses of information have been found to occur more frequently when interpreting into B. Besides, Bartłomiejczyk (2004) has addressed a questionnaire to 53 students and 40 professionals, and 82.9% of the latter have thought that their performance has been better when interpreting into their mother tongues compared to only 48% of students.

However, other researchers (e.g. Setton 1993: 250; Lim 2003: 152) argue that (training on) SI into B is a reality and sometimes requirement in many language markets such as Japanese, Korean and even Arabic and Chinese which are official UN languages. Lim (ibid: 161) also argues that because more and more Eastern European countries are joining the EU, the reluctance in Western Europe to accept the A-to-B direction could fade away (see also Seleskovitch 1999: 63; Pöchhacker 2004: 21), which puts demands on western interpretation schools that have never taught the A-to-B direction to reconsider their position in line with the upcoming market changes. Indeed, Western European schools have already shown signs of change as evidenced by the preliminary conclusions of the EMCI Consortium's<sup>14</sup> workshop (EMCI 2002: 60) on SI into B which recognised the need for the practice to be used for 'various practical reasons' in a 'variety of circumstances' and thus the need for introducing it into training programmes.

#### **2.2.2.2.3 Language teaching in training programmes<sup>15</sup>**

One of the most important purposes of examinations for assessing students' interpreting aptitude and acceptance to training programmes is to test the candidate's linguistic abilities and command of his/her working languages because knowledge of languages is a prerequisite to interpreting (cf. Seleskovitch 1978a: 77f; 1999: 59f; Carroll 1978: 121; Keiser 1978: 17; Longley 1978: 46; 1989: 106, Bowen and Bowen 1989: 109; Weber 1989a: 14; Donovan 1993: 220; 2006: 11, etc.). This view is upheld by AIIC (2002a) as one of its training criteria. This is why these researchers and their corresponding institutes tend to insist on discarding the language-teaching element from their training programmes, arguing that training programmes should be devoted solely to the teaching of interpreting (techniques). This, according to Bowen and Bowen (1989: 109), does not mean that learning a language is an obstacle to learning interpreting techniques, but means language learning should precede interpreter training and language teachers should not be interpreter trainers unless they are qualified as conference interpreters.

However, others (cf. Wilss 1977: 119; Viaggio 1988: 405; 1992a: 308ff; Renfer 1992: 178f; Gile 1992: 185/192; 1995d: chapter 9; Setton 1993: 251; Park 2004; Park and Cho

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<sup>14</sup> The European Masters in Conference Interpreting: <<http://emcinterpreting.net/>>.

<sup>15</sup> This argument has some implications for training, in particular linguistic abilities related to the selection of students and language teaching in interpreting courses but studied here for convenience.

2006, etc.) do not necessarily agree with the above view and argue for enhancing language-skills in trainees especially at the undergraduate level (or the long postgraduate model of two years). Viaggio, for example, argues that it is true that the student should come to the course with a full mastery of his/her working languages, but it is

a serious mistake to think that he will know them the way he really should [...] Even the most gifted students have to re-learn language *the right way*, i.e. as a scientific object and not merely a reflex (1992a: 309, emphasis in original).

The reason for this controversy is the underlying philosophy of the whole education system followed in a certain school or country (Longley 1989: 105; Bowen and Bowen 1989: 109; M. Bowen 1989: 51). By and large, it seems that those who prefer the postgraduate model tend to devote the whole course to interpreting techniques and skills and discard language teaching since the duration of postgraduate programmes is from six months to two years (Gile 1995d: 6) and thus does not allow for too many things to be crammed in the course. However, those who are in favour of longer (undergraduate) programmes tend to insist on the importance of incorporating some language enhancement during the course.

It can then be argued that if there is any controversy among researchers at all, then the controversy is certainly not over language teaching in training programmes but goes beyond this issue to the more general question of which interpreter training model, longer (undergraduate) or shorter (postgraduate), is the more efficient to follow (**2.2.2.5.2.1 Basic models for interpreter training**). The answer again lies in the underlying philosophy of education systems in different schools, countries and/or organisations.

### **2.2.2.3 Professional issues<sup>16</sup>**

Some issues related to the profession of conference interpreting also have a considerable share in the literature on IS. By and large, such issues concern conference interpreters' needs, working conditions, problems, etc. Optimal working conditions in any profession can (with other things) only contribute to a high quality service. In conference interpreting, the importance of having optimal working conditions in place is even more pressing given the very complex and stressful nature of the task.

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<sup>16</sup> The AIIC website contains ample information and downloads that concern anyone interested in learning about the professional and indeed other research issues of (conference) interpreting: <<http://www.aiic.net>>.

According to Mackintosh (1995: 122), the establishment of AIIC in 1953 with its codes of practice and ethics could be considered as the first step towards organising and establishing conference interpreting as a profession. The adoption of ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) standards on booth size and ventilation, technical equipment, etc. has been the second step. Besides, AIIC has signed several agreements with major employers of conference interpreters, such as the UN and EU, to set such employment conditions as the duration of a working day, rest periods, remunerations, travel arrangements, etc. The issues surveyed below include interpreter knowledge and specialisation, documentation, technical working conditions, workload and fatigue and stress.

### **2.2.2.3.1 Interpreter knowledge and specialisation**

This concerns the question of how much knowledge (of the subject under discussion) conference interpreters should possess. In other words, should the conference interpreter be a generalist, ‘a Jack of all trades’ (Henderson 1982: 152), or specialist in one or more fields? The issue is significant due to the established fact that understanding without linguistic and/or extra-linguistic knowledge is impossible, and interpreting in turn cannot be achieved without complete understanding (Seleskovitch 1978a: 61f/64; 1986a; Kurz 1988: 424; **2.2.2.1.3 Comprehension**).

Seleskovitch (1978a: 62ff) argues that interpreters do not need to possess the same specialised knowledge as the speaker because they are not the initiators of speeches (see also Lochner 1976: 103), neither are they in any way expected to give their own opinion/response to the information they receive. What interpreters need instead is the ability to understand this information. They must thus have the faculty of analysis and an intellectual level equivalent to that of the speaker.

Schweda-Nicholson (1986) has surveyed<sup>17</sup> 56 UN permanents, the majority (80.3%) of whom have demonstrated that they have not been specialised in a certain subject, indicating that specialisation is not necessary for quality interpreting. Moreover, 87.5% have indicated that they would work in all fields if documentation was provided in good time (1986: 74f).

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<sup>17</sup> It is now more than twenty years on since that survey was carried out; therefore, figures should be read in the context of the development of the profession.

Kurz insists that interpreters cannot ‘afford not to be generalists’ (1988: 423, emphasis in original), citing many examples where the interpreter’s specialised knowledge will do little for him/her if it is not coupled with encyclopaedic knowledge. One example she gives is a presentation on a new generation of desktop computers in which the chairperson of the board gives a review of performance in the previous year and asks the company’s managers to do what they can to achieve higher growth rates in the following year. According to Kurz, the chairperson’s entire speech has been based on a comparison with major league baseball, a very popular game in the US. Kurz argues that without knowledge of such terms as ‘pitcher’, ‘infielders’, ‘outfielders’, ‘catcher’, ‘innings’, etc. the interpreter will be in a very awkward situation (ibid: 426f).

However, those who are in favour of specialisation seem to lament the insistence by academics and professionals on the generalist approach. Feldweg (1990: 162) argues for specialisation as a response to the growing complexity of the professional environment, ever increasing specialisation of clients and emergence of new disciplines. Wilss (1992: 391f) argues that the ‘fiction’ of encyclopaedic knowledge and general tendency in the field of translation/interpreting towards the generalist approach in the age of ‘dominance of expertise knowledge’ could be detrimental to the translation profession which is ‘losing ground’ because professional translators/interpreters are losing jobs to experts with some linguistic knowledge. Chernov (1996: 227) argues that students should know that they cannot interpret all kinds of conferences and thus calls for ‘stricter thematic specialization for interpreters’ than is the case at present.

It must be stressed that even researchers who favour the generalist approach (Seleskovitch 1978a: 71f; Schweda-Nicholson 1986: 78; Kurz 1988: 424/427) acknowledge that the need for specialisation may arise with future developments in the profession and other fields of knowledge, but still not at the expense of general knowledge.

Having said that, one can only reiterate what one of Schweda-Nicholson’s respondents has said when asked about the issue: ‘[...] be a generalist, but be ready to specialize if necessary’ (1986: 76). Moreover, it is interesting to replicate Schweda-Nicholson’s survey by involving more conference interpreters working as staff and freelance interpreters for other organizations on the one hand, and on the other hand conduct other surveys but by



targeting users of the profession. Through such (a) survey(s), it might be possible to gain an insight into whether present-day conference interpreters still have the same view as respondents to Schweda-Nicholson's survey reported above, and whether users of the profession of conference interpreting prefer the specialist or generalist interpreter; and if they prefer the former, will they be prepared to pay extra fees for the specialist?

### **2.2.2.3.2 Documentation**

"Documentation will be provided." So we are informed on innumerable occasions by conference organizers. But how true is the above statement? (Altman 1984: 82).

With this rather pessimistic tone, Altman summarises one aspect of the difficulties professional conference interpreters sometimes face when carrying out their job.

Official documentation of a conference concerns anything which can help make the interpreter well prepared to deal with conferences professionally (Altman 1984: 82) including special terminology glossaries, background information on the organisations involved, abstracts or copies of the speeches and papers to be presented in conferences, briefing sessions, etc. (Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 163; Gile 1995d: 147).

All interpreters and researchers in the field of conference interpreting (e.g. Seleskovitch 1978a: 135; Altman 1984; Schweda-Nicholson and Tuinder 1984: 385; Schweda-Nicholson 1989; Gile 1995d: 147) stress the importance of the provision of documentation for it allows interpreters to familiarise themselves with the topics dealt with, terminology used, speakers and audience participating in the conference, etc. and thus makes the interpreter's task easier and the quality of his/her performance higher.

Yet, conference interpreters are not always provided with the necessary documentation. In a survey of conference interpreters, Cooper et al. (1982: 99) have found that more than 50% of their respondents believe that the percentage of failure to provide documentation has been 70-80% of the time. Mikkelsen (1999) describes the idea that conference interpreters are always provided with documentation as a myth. The present researcher's own experience suggests the same. The researcher's *first* interpreting assignment was on a

subject of a highly technical nature, namely the effects of YAG<sup>18</sup>-Laser on humans, but no documentation arrived by post *as promised*.

One reason for this is that people outside the profession, conference organisers included, do not seem to understand the interpreting process (Daly 1985: 94) or think that interpreters are like machines without thought (Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 164). Altman quotes one of her interviewees in an informal oral survey of some professional interpreters as saying:

They're [conference organisers] not cruel on purpose. They just think we're like a slot machine: put [sic] the coin, out comes the translation (1984: 83).

One interviewee in Cooper et al.'s study (1982: 99) gives an example of the lack of consideration some speakers show towards interpreters such as when a chairman may end the session by saying 'we would like to thank the technical equipment', referring to interpreters. Herbert (1978: 8) reports an incident when the chairman sent him a note asking him to 'speak faster – or make it short' because there was not much time left before the end of the session instead of asking (the) speaker(s) to cut the speech(es) short.

Therefore, conference organisers, delegates, etc. should be well informed of the facts of the interpreting process (Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 166). Seleskovitch (1978a: 135) also calls for conference organisers to ensure that a sufficient number of interpreters are hired so that the interpreter who is not engaged with interpreting can have sufficient time to read the documents which arrive at the last minute while his/her colleague is at work.

### **2.2.2.3.3 Technical working conditions**

Technical working conditions concern the technical equipment and facilities that should be provided by conference organisers to make the conference interpreter's task easier.

#### **2.2.2.3.3.1 Acoustics: electronic equipment and sound quality**

It goes without saying that if the quality of the sound transmitted to the interpreter is bad, the resulting end-product (the interpreter's output) will be of poor quality because bad sound quality makes it difficult, if not impossible at times, to understand. No understanding definitely means a bad-quality product, if any. Moreover, Seleskovitch (1978a: 128f)

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<sup>18</sup> This is an acronym for Yttrium, Aluminium and Garnet.

argues that technical equipment providers need to understand that the interpreter speaks and listens at the same time. The technical equipment should therefore be designed in such a way that makes it possible for the interpreter to hear without being obliged to listen. This is because if the interpreter exerts a conscious effort to perceive the incoming sounds of words, the interpreter's attention, already divided between many complex processes, will be divided further. Consequently, the interpreter will be diverted away from analysing the meaning of the incoming message, thus concentrating on words rather than sense and producing poor word-for-word translations.

This has been confirmed by Gerver (1974b) who has conducted an experiment to study the effects of noise on simultaneous interpreters' performance, asking 12 interpreters to shadow and simultaneously interpret six French passages into English at three signal-noise ratios. He has found out that noise has had a significant effect on interpreters' performance during shadowing and SI, and that more errors have been committed in the case of interpreting even at lower signal-noise ratios. This and analyzing the subjects' self-corrections have enabled Gerver to conclude that the difficulty in perceiving the original passages has weakened the interpreters' ability to monitor their output.

The ISO standards which are prepared in collaboration with the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) and adopted by AIIC set certain requirements to be met in the design of acoustic facilities such as controls, microphones, interpreters' headphones, soundproofing of booth glass to prevent noise, etc. to ensure that communication between the booths and the conference hall is efficient (cf. ISO 2603 1998a).

#### **2.2.2.3.3.2 Booth design**

Booths are part of the professional interpreter's physical working environment which should be helpful enough to ensure the provision of optimal working conditions, thus the smoothness and easiness of the interpreting process. Not surprisingly, poor physical working conditions are identified by conference interpreters as one of the main sources of stress (cf. Cooper et al. 1982: 97f; AIIC 2002b).

To ensure that optimal working conditions are in place, the AIIC Technical Committee, as mentioned above, has adopted the ISO standards for booth design and signed several

agreements with conference interpreters' major employers. The most recent and comprehensive studies carried out in this respect are (ISO 2603 1998a) and (ISO 4043 1998b) for fixed and mobile booths, respectively. The two studies set the optimal conditions and requirements that should be met in the design of both permanent and mobile booths in terms of location in the conference room, size and minimum dimensions, ventilation and air quality, levels of humidity and temperature, seating, lighting, visibility of conference participants and the conference setting if possible for visual contact which is of enormous help to the interpreter<sup>19</sup> (cf. also Jumpelt 1985; Jones 1998: 71), etc.

#### **2.2.2.3.4 Workload**

According to Seleskovitch (1978a: 139-142), if the average duration of an international conference is about six hours (thus the interpreter's working day), the interpreter will be speaking one-third of the total time since interpreters work in pairs in the booth. In view of the speed of the spoken language, an hour of SI is equivalent to about 9,000 words spoken by the interpreter at a pace dictated by the speaker. If this figure is to be compared with the workload of translators working at the UN for example (2,000 to 3,000 words a day), one can realise the repercussions of the amount of the mental activity involved. Moreover, if the interpreter is not speaking, he/she is listening to take notes of the words and expressions used and monitoring to follow the discussions and be ready to take turn when the time comes, etc. Above all, before entering into the booth, the interpreter must have spent some time preparing for the conference (see also Henderson 1982: 151).

This is why AIIC (2002b) recommends that interpreters do not work individually for more than 40 minutes for a single speech or a short meeting and that they take turns every 30 minutes approximately when working all day.

#### **2.2.2.3.5 Fatigue and stress**

According to Zeier (1997: 231), stress refers to the psychophysiological processes that are caused by a 'perceived threat or danger'. Psychologically speaking, the phenomenon of stress consists of two components: experiencing a threatening situation that requires a taxing effort and the uncertainty of whether one can cope with such a situation.

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<sup>19</sup> For studies on the importance of non-verbal communication, see Bühler (1985) and Besson et al. (2005).

Riccardi et al. (1998: 97) argue that stressful situations that interpreters undergo are related to the fact that no physical activities are involved, no helpful instruments are present since technical equipment is used only to transmit the signal to the interpreter from the speaker and from the interpreter to the audience, and that the mind is responsible for virtually everything. Besides, everything the interpreter does is dictated by the speaker.

A large-scale empirical study on interpreter stress and burnout based on a survey of staff and free-lance conference interpreters (607 respondents) and booth data collection commissioned by AIIC (2002b)<sup>20</sup> has confirmed that SI is a stressful task, and that the main stressors in the interpreters' job are reading from texts, fast delivery, lack of background material (conference documentation), difficult accents of speakers, discomfort in the booth, lack of preparation time, and undisciplined speakers (cf. AIIC 2002b; 2004).

Cooper et al. (1982) have surveyed 826 interpreters worldwide and found that 13.8% of them have suffered from chronic insomnia, 24% from nervousness, 55% from trouble getting up in the morning, 20% from nightmares, 25% from weight loss, 27% from rapid heartbeat, 16% have had or are having psychological counselling, of these 25% have counselling at least once a month, 12% every three months, 3% every six months, 8% at least once a year and 52% every few years, etc. (ibid: 103).

In an empirical study on interpreters in a real conference, Klonowicz (1994) has found a significant increase of cardiovascular activity before 20-30 minute interpreting shifts and a return of systolic blood pressure and heart rate, but not diastolic blood pressure, to the normal condition at completing the shifts. Klonowicz has thus concluded that the workload and demand for high quality performance may cause a health risk factor (ibid: 220).

In yet another empirical study reported by Zeier (1997), stress has been found to have a negative effect on interpreting quality in that the serious errors in meaning committed during the second 30-minute session have been twice as many as during the first 30-minute session with interpreters unaware of this decline in the quality of their output (ibid: 246f).

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<sup>20</sup> See also Mackintosh (2003) for an abridged report on this study.

Taking the above into account, one can only reiterate the numerous calls made by researchers and professionals in the field of conference interpreting for educating conference organisers, delegates, employers, etc. of the nature of the interpreting process and conference interpreters' needs to facilitate their task, which will in the end help interpreters to mediate effectively between languages and cultures.

#### **2.2.2.4 Quality issues**

The debate over interpreting quality is still an unresolved issue due to the elusiveness of the concept of quality (Shlesinger et al. 1997: 123). The need for the evaluation of interpreting quality as stressed by almost all researchers who have debated this issue arises from the need to improve performance and thus obtain reliable and high quality interpreting on the professional level and develop methods to improve performance on the training/teaching level (e.g. Bühler 1986: 231; Moser 1995; Kurz 2001: 407). This is why AIIC has set up a screening system whereby each candidate for membership of AIIC should be sponsored by five competent members who will observe him/her in real situations before the candidate is given admission to AIIC (Bühler 1986: 231; Moser 1995). The issue of quality in the literature has been approached from at least two perspectives: mainly the criteria for evaluating quality and factors that could negatively affect interpreting quality.

##### **2.2.2.4.1 Criteria of the quality of interpreting**

The essential problem of quality can be summarised by Shlesinger et al.'s (1997: 123) two questions: 'Quality according to what criteria? Quality for whom?'. Several studies with varied methodological lines such as surveys, experiments, corpus-based observations and case studies (cf. Pöchhacker 2001; 2002) have identified a number of criteria which can be divided into two main groups: professional standards and user criteria<sup>21</sup> or what is generally referred to as professional norms (Chesterman 2000: 67) and 'expectancy norms' (ibid: 64) which in turn reflect a deeper argument over who is qualified to assess interpreting quality.

###### **2.2.2.4.1.1 Professional criteria**

Bühler (1986) has conducted an empirical study into the criteria of interpreting quality by

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<sup>21</sup> See Schjoldager (1996) and Riccardi (2002) for proposals of criteria for the assessment of *students'* interpreting performance.

administering a questionnaire containing 16 criteria<sup>22</sup> to 47 AIIC members (six of whom are members of AIIC's Committee on Admissions and Language Classification<sup>23</sup>) to give their ratings for these criteria when evaluating a candidate for AIIC membership. She assumes that her study provides a system of criteria that reflects 'the requirements of the user as well as fellow interpreter in a [...] well-balanced mixture' (1986: 233). She has found out that

practically all linguistic criteria, namely *fluency of delivery* (3), *logical cohesion of utterance* (4), *sense consistency with the original message* (5), *completeness of interpretation* (6), *correct grammatical usage* (7), and *use of correct terminology* (8) were rated high by informants, and that among the extra-linguistic criteria *reliability* (14), followed by *thorough preparation of conference documents* (10) and *ability to work in a team* (15), were the leaders. The criteria of *native accent* (1), *pleasant voice* (2), *use of appropriate style* (9), *endurance* (11), *poise* (12), and *pleasant appearance* (13) were considered desirable in most cases, but not essential (1986: 233, emphasis in original).

*Sense consistency with the original message* has been given the highest rating of importance (Bühler's 1986: 231) by 96% of the respondents.

Déjean Le Féal (1990: 155) argues for what she calls commonly shared standards of what to be considered professional interpreting for quality evaluation of interpreter output:

What our listeners receive through their earphones should produce the same effect on them as the original speech on the speaker's audience. It should have the same cognitive content and be presented with equal clarity and precision in the same type of language. Its language and oratory quality should be at least on the same level as that of the original speech, if not better, given that we are professional communicators, while many speakers are not, and sometimes even have to express themselves in languages other than their own.

What is also noticeable in the two studies is the fact that while professional criteria of quality are being discussed, user expectations are given prominence.

#### **2.2.2.4.1.2 User criteria**

Many studies have followed to test Bühler's standards of quality from a user-oriented perspective. Inspired by Bühler's study, Kurz has conducted a series of empirical studies (cf. e.g. 1989a; 1993; 2001) to compare Bühler's findings from a user-oriented perspective

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<sup>22</sup> (1) native accent, (2) pleasant voice, (3) fluency of delivery, (4) logical cohesion of utterance, (5) sense consistency with the original message, (6) completeness of interpretation, (7) correct grammatical usage, (8) use of correct terminology, (9) use of appropriate style, (10) thorough preparation of conference documents, (11) endurance, (12) poise, (13) pleasant appearance, (14) reliability, (15) ability to work in a team and (16) positive feedback from delegates (Bühler 1986: 234).

<sup>23</sup> A committee set up by AIIC for admission and language classification of applicants (Bühler 1986: 231).

by administering a number of questionnaires containing the first eight criteria in Bühler's survey to three different user groups<sup>24</sup> to give their ratings of the relevant importance of these criteria, setting from the assumption that different user groups might give different ratings of importance to different criteria (2001: 398).

Yet, there have been high correlations not only in the expectations among different user groups, but also between user expectations and AIIC criteria in Bühler's study in the ratings of importance of such important criteria for communication as *sense consistency with the original message*, *use of correct terminology* and *logical cohesion of utterance*, in this order (Kurz 1993: 317; 2001: 398). This has led Kurz (1993: 319) to argue that the results confirm the validity of the theory of sense (cf. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995; **Chapter 4**).

AIIC interpreters and different user groups, however, have differed in their ratings of other criteria such as *native accent*, *pleasant voice*, *correct usage of grammar*, *fluency of delivery* and *completeness of interpretation* (Kurz 1993: 317; 2001: 398).

Kurz has concluded that AIIC interpreters in Bühler's study generally impose higher demands on interpreting quality than users and that the findings validate theories which view translation and interpreting as an intercultural communication process and stress the importance of situationality and communicative context, which in turn shows that TL receivers must be seen as an important element in the interpreting process (1993: 323).

A number of other researchers have conducted similar user-oriented surveys including Vuorikoski (1993; 1995; 1998), Kopczyński (1994), Mack and Cattaruzza (1995), Moser (1995), etc. Generally, these surveys emphasise the importance of users' opinions regarding quality, which is commonsense. Seleskovitch (1986b: 236) has anticipated this a long time ago, arguing that 'interpretation should always be judged from the perspective of the listener' because the 'chain of communication does not end in the booth'.

However, each survey has addressed a given audience, in a given situation, in a given

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<sup>24</sup> 47 delegates of an international medical conference in Klagenfurt, Austria in 1988 (cf. Kurz 1989a: 144), 29 delegates of an international conference on quality control in September 1989, and 48 participants in a Council of Europe meeting on equivalences in Europe in 1989 (cf. Kurz 1993: 316).



language combination and focused on different variables, which highlights, in Vuorikoski's (1998: 189) words, the considerable heterogeneity of audience's opinions even within the same audience, though almost all surveys provide a consensus on the importance of faithfulness to the sense of the original as the most important criterion of quality. Thus, some (Shlesinger et al. 1997: 128f) have criticised user surveys for their unreliability resulting from the lack of comparability of findings, inability to make up for the basic lack of clear definitions of quality components (Mack and Cattaruzza 1995: 47), and for being 'more liable' to subjectivity and 'ideological distortion than research based on a rigorously descriptive approach' Garzone (2002: 118).

Thus, there have been calls for, first, specific definitions of criteria (cf. Vuorikoski 1998: 193); second, broadening research into quality to include information, communication and pragmatic issues to define the communicative situation as a whole including the special demands of the situation, speakers, organisers, audience and interpreters, modes or conferences, etc. (cf. Kahane 2000); and third, coordination of the way surveys are being carried out, and a multidisciplinary approach to the evaluation of results to obtain reliable information on users' perceptions and expectations (cf. Mack and Cattaruzza 1995: 47).

#### **2.2.2.4.1.3 Who can evaluate the quality of conference interpreting?**

The dichotomy between criteria defined by professional interpreters and standards defined by users of the service reflects an even deeper chasm in the question of who should assess interpreting quality: is it the user or professional? If it is the former, are users capable of providing quality assessment? What makes it more complicated is that the user is not only the listener, but could also be the speaker (Kopczyński 1994: 190) or client who might not be a speaker or listener (Gile 1995d: 36).

Shlesinger et al. (1997: 127) argue that listeners cannot be judges of interpreting quality for two reasons. First, they lack the ability to know the SL, which is one of the fundamental means for assessing fidelity/quality. Kurz (2001: 403), however, argues that this does not necessarily apply to all audiences since some audiences, such as Finnish delegates (Vuorikoski 1993: 324), know the SL but use the interpreting service only for support. The present researcher's experience shows that some use it even for prestige. However, Seleskovitch (1978a: 121) argues that experience has shown that multilingual delegates

unfamiliar with interpretation problems may ‘grossly misjudge the quality of the interpretation’ by looking at individual words rather than sense. Moreover, some studies have empirically shown that users cannot be judges of the fidelity of interpreting even though they might happen to know the SL because subjects have failed to detect a considerable number of errors (Collados Aís 1998: 336; Gile 1995c: 160f).

Second, as shown above, different user groups or listeners have different priorities, tastes, attitudes, etc.; therefore, satisfying listeners might not necessarily result in high-quality performance as Cartellieri (1983: 213) rightly argues in his call for finding reliable parameters for assessing quality, in particular, the quantity of some features that might develop into quality criteria such as keeping a certain rate of speed whatever that of the speaker is might result in a loss of some original material (quantity) to serve the smoothness of presentation (quality) (see also Pöchhacker 1994).

If users cannot be reliable judges of interpreting quality, then can interpreters themselves judge the quality of their output? Déjean Le Féal (1990:154) and Gile (1995d: 37) dismiss the interpreter’s on-line self-evaluation of his/her output as unreliable because the complex nature of the interpreting process and efforts involved prevent the interpreter from giving much needed attention to monitor the output. Déjean Le Féal’s (1990: 156) idea of self-assessment of output by tape-recording is also dismissed as subjective. Viaggio’s (unpublished script) idea of judging quality by a professional interpreter who does not know or is not given access to the SL cannot be accepted either for the purposes of fidelity or sense consistency with the original.

Seleskovitch (1986b: 236) recognises the importance of user satisfaction, but she argues that ‘competent’ conference interpreters or chief interpreters should assess an interpreter’s performance as long as they are ‘able and objective’.

It might be argued that while user satisfaction should be taken on board in any project of quality assessment, interpreting quality should always be assessed by *independent* conference interpreters or teachers of conference interpreting, because they are *experts* in the field. In all areas of research or practice, quality assessment is usually assigned to experts in a given field, which is commonsense. There is no reason why conference

interpreting quality should be singled out and assigned to other people than experts. Since on-line assessment is very difficult, if not impossible, by audience or interpreters alike, Déjean Le Féal's (1990: 156) idea of self-evaluation by tape-recording can be made less subjective by extending the assessment of the recording to other more experienced professionals or chief interpreters as Seleskovitch (1986b: 236) suggests.

As for the question of what criteria (professional or user criteria?) should be assessed, some argue that these should be *norms* that concern all players in any conference (interpreters, users, listeners, speakers, clients, conference organisers, etc.) (cf. Gile 1999; Garzone 2002) including factors, prerequisites, conditions and requirements that are not only related to the interpreter's output, but also to all stages of the process, before, during and after the interpreting process (cf. Kalina 2002; 2005) though, as Kalina admits, research is needed to determine which ones can be measured and how (see also Pöchhacker 1994).

#### **2.2.2.4.2 Factors that might affect quality**

There are a number of factors that could affect interpreting quality. As mentioned earlier, there is too much overlapping between the issues researched in this chapter. Thus, a decision has had to be made as to which factors should be studied under this heading because, after all, research is all about interpreting quality. For example, SI into B and stress could well fit under this heading but have been investigated under language and professional issues, respectively, for convenience. Another factor that might have a direct effect on the quality of interpreting is the interpreter's role which is the main subject of this thesis (see **Chapters 5-8**). The factors researched below are SL input variables, slips and shifts and interpreters' professional status.

##### **2.2.2.4.2.1 SL input:**

Below is a discussion of possible effects of the following SL input variables on interpreting quality: spontaneous vs. non-spontaneous speech, SL text/speech complexity and input rate.

###### *2.2.2.4.2.1.1 Spontaneous vs. non-spontaneous speech*

Academics and professionals are generally aware of the differences between interpreting a spontaneous speech, also referred to as 'impromptu speech' (Seleskovitch 1982; Déjean Le Féal 1982; Kopczyński 1982), and interpreting a 'non-spontaneous speech' (Gregory 1980:

464) or text that is read out loud<sup>25</sup>. When delegates speak spontaneously, they think, conceptualise and contemplate to generate new ideas for their speech (Seleskovitch 1978a: 132-135; Lederer 1978: 324; Henderson 1982: 149f; Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 165f). Obviously, this thinking process takes much longer than reading from a written text because it includes such features of natural speech as hesitations or longer pauses (Goldman-Eisler 1961a; 1961b; 1967; Barik 1973), repetition or redundancy, etc. (Triesman 1965; Chernov 1979; 1994; Déjean Le Féal 1982). Interpreters can therefore take advantage of the presence of such pauses, hesitations or redundancies in speeches because these allow them to have more time in rendering the incoming message (Paneth 1957: 33f; Goldman-Eisler 1967: 128f; Barik 1972: 6f; 1973; Seleskovitch 1978a: 133; Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 165).

In non-spontaneous speech, however, there is hardly any thinking involved; the process of thinking and conceptualisation took place at an earlier stage (Seleskovitch 1978a: 132; Lederer 1978: 324; Jumpelt 1985: 83; Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 165). Moreover, written texts are usually characterised by information density (Jones 1998: 114). Furthermore, when speakers read out from a prepared text, the rate of their delivery tends to be very rapid (Cooper et al. 1982: 99; Altman 1984: 85; Jones 1998: 113). Inevitable time constraints on speeches at conferences can further force speakers to deliver their speeches at a firing speed to meet the time limit (Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 166). Seleskovitch refers to this as one of the ‘obstacles which impede interpretation in the true sense of the word’ (1978a: 132).

#### *2.2.2.4.2.1.2 Source text/speech linguistic complexity*

Considering the complex process of SI, and indeed CCI (cf. Keith 1984: 310), and the cognitive load it usually entails, Tommola and Helevä (1998: 179) suggest that linguistic complexity (semantic and syntactic difficulty) of the SL text might negatively affect the quality of the interpreter’s output in the sense that it can contribute to a reduction in the accuracy of performance. Complex sentence structures and an increase in the number of semantic propositions in a paragraph can make processing more difficult and comprehension time much longer (ibid). In an experiment on 12 trainees, Tommola and Helevä (ibid: 183) have found a significant effect of linguistic complexity on the trainees’

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<sup>25</sup> This also has implications for training (**2.2.2.5.2.4.2 Training on SI with text**).

performance because interpreting of a linguistically simpler original text has been found to be more successful. They have concluded that linguistic complexity of the original text is a psycholinguistic reality that has had an effect on the SI process. The quality of a *trainee* interpreter's performance can be affected if the SL text contains a complex conceptual content or is formed in a complex surface structure (Tommola and Helevä 1998: 184).

Linguistic complexity could also affect professional interpreters' performance. Thirty-three professional interpreters interviewed by Cooper et al. (1982: 99) state that technical texts make the situation particularly difficult to handle because more time is required to process the incoming message (see also Jones 1998: 114).

#### 2.2.2.4.2.1.3 *SL input rate*

It is commonsense to suggest that too rapid delivery can have a negative impact on interpreters' performance because it makes information processing very difficult. Seleskovitch (1965, quoted in Gerver 1976: 172) suggests that the comfortable SL input rate for interpreters is between 100 and 120 words. Gerver (1969; 1975: 121f; 1976: 172) has experimentally confirmed this suggestion by asking ten interpreters to simultaneously interpret or shadow passages at increasing rates of 95, 112, 120, 142, and 164 words a minute. He has found out that the correctly interpreted amount has decreased significantly with each increase in presentation rate and that the optimal rate for SI has been between 95 and 120 words a minute. Another large-scale empirical study commissioned by AIIC has shown that the first two main stressors in the conference interpreting profession are reading from texts and fast speakers (AIIC 2002b; 2004).

The situation can be worse if rapid delivery is coupled with 'information density' (Jumpelt 1985: 83), linguistic complexity discussed above, or even technical difficulty (Cooper et al. 1982: 99; Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 167; Jones 1998: 112).

Under these conditions, the quality of the interpreter's output will definitely suffer, and the situation will impose on the interpreter certain strategic responses to cope with the information overload (Gerver 1969: 64ff; 1976: 173). These include redistribution of speech and pause times (Gerver 1969: 64; Goldman-Eisler 1967: 128f); omissions, additions, substitutions and errors (Barik 1971; 1972); lexical or syntactic compression

(Chernov 1969, quoted in Gerver 1976: 173; 1994); ‘adjustment procedures’ such as omission, escape, error, delaying responses, systematic omission of certain kinds of information and approximation (Miller 1964, quoted in Gerver 1976: 173); simplifying, generalising, economy of expression and omission (Jones 1998: 113), etc.

Obviously, as Gerver (1969: 65) finds out, such operations, if implemented by the interpreter, might result in bad quality because the interpreter’s attention cannot be shared *equally* between the various complex cognitive processes involved in interpreting, which can account for the occurrence of omissions and uncorrected errors.

However, it might be equally argued that such adjustment procedures, though resulting in bad quality, are the best solutions in a worsening situation under which, as Seleskovitch (1978a: 122) states, even the most experienced of interpreters will be struggling. Indeed, as mentioned in **2.2.2.1.5.2 Error analysis**, Tijus (1997: 35f) does not even accept considering these omissions and deviations as ‘errors’ because the dynamic nature of the interpreting process and the different variables the interpreter deals with at the same time force him/her to make conscious and/or unconscious decisions while he/she is under pressure so that what may seem to be an error in his/her output may have been the only or most reasonable choice in a given situation. Tijus therefore prefers to call the resultant error, which does not necessarily have anything to do with semantics, a ‘strategic’ error. This is why Pöchhacker (1994: 242) calls for extending the analysis to the surroundings of the text(s) when investigating quality, which will enable the assessment of both quality and ‘quality under the circumstances’ (Pöchhacker 1994: 242; see also Viezzi 2003: 148).

Other researchers suggest more radical measures under severe circumstances such as switching off the microphone because interpreters are not only entitled, but ‘honour-bound’ (Jones 1998: 114) to say that interpreting is impossible under such impossible conditions and refuse to ‘jeopardize their profession’s reputation’ (Seleskovitch 1978a: 135) though the best solution is yet again to educate conference organisers and delegates about the nature of the interpreting process (Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 166).

#### **2.2.2.4.2.2 Slips and shifts**

From a qualitative point of view, the interpreter’s output should ‘sound like an original

speech' (Pöchhacker 1995c: 73) to the extent that listeners should 'forget they are hearing the speaker through an interpreter' (AIIC 2004) and that his/her words should 'flow easily and naturally' (Seleskovitch 1978a: 79).

In her studies of two hesitation phenomena, filled and unfilled pauses, Goldman-Eisler (1961a) has related the causes to the cognitive processes of planning and production of speech (see also Henderson et al. 1966; Goldman-Eisler 1967).

Gile (1991: 19f; 1997: 200f) relates the cause of slips and shifts and errors in general to processing capacity overload. Since attention is a limited resource, it should be shared between the complex tasks of the interpreting process, which allows only a limited processing capacity for the different tasks involved in the process as a whole. Thus, if a task exceeds its processing capacity limit, problems, hesitations, errors, etc. may occur.

In an experiment involving 45 subjects (30 beginner and advanced students and 15 professionals) on hesitations and pauses in CI, Mead (2002) has found through the subjects' retrospective evaluation of why they have paused during two CI renditions into English and Italian that the reasons for their pauses and hesitations have fallen in one of five categories:

- (1) difficulties of formulation (lexis, grammar);
- (2) difficulty with notes (e.g. indecipherable symbol);
- (3) logical doubts (e.g. 'Does this comment make sense?');
- (4) no apparent reason perceived by the subject;
- (5) others (e.g. thinking about previous difficulties or reading ahead in notes) (Mead 2002: 77f).

In a case study of a scientific-technical conference, Pöchhacker (1995c) has conducted a corpus analysis of speeches by speakers and simultaneous interpreters. The parameters have been slips and shifts. His findings question the assumption that interpreters are more prone to produce slips and shifts in their speech production than speakers. This is not surprising since conference interpreters are supposed to be professional communication experts as Féal demands in her description of the quality of professional interpreters' output:

Its [interpreters' output] language and oratory quality should be at least on the same level as that of the original speech, if not better, given that we are professional communicators, while many speakers are not (Déjean Le Féal, 1990: 155).

According to Pöchhacker (2004: 125f), Goldman-Eisler's and other subsequent studies

have helped consider hesitations, slips, shifts, pauses, etc. as typical features of the process of speech production and interpreters' output though the presence of such slips and shifts as 'unorthodox syntax', uncorrected 'slips of the tongue', 'numerous "uh's" and "um's",' (Déjean Le Féal 1990: 156), hesitations or corrections (Henderson 1982: 151), etc. in the interpreter's output 'might detract from the actual quality' of SI and 'make it somewhat unpleasant, if not "painful", to listen to' (Pöchhacker 1995c: 75). The effect of these can best be understood when one knows that interpreters who simply leave what they do not understand but build up their sentences in a seemingly pleasing way usually survive while those who hesitate, get nervous or leave gaps in their output are usually eliminated (Seleskovitch 1978a: 121) or their interpretation loses its credibility (Kurz 2002b: 70).

#### **2.2.2.4.2.3 Relay interpreting and quality**

Relay interpreting has been presented in **2.1.2.3.3 Relay interpreting**. The discussion below seeks to determine whether this method can negatively affect interpreting quality.

The use of relay is so accepted that many discussions of relay interpreting (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: chapter 4; Jones 1998: 136-139; AIIC 2004) have been mostly devoted to problems inherent in relay, considerations to bear in mind when using relay, and implications for training on relay (Seleskovitch and Lederer *ibid*) without directly touching on the effect of relay on quality except in cases to do with problems such as the pivot's poor command of the SL or TL though the interpreter's poor command of any of the working languages will negatively affect quality whether relay is used or not.

Mackintosh (1983, quoted in Gile 2003b: 9f) has experimentally found no significant differences of message loss between direct and relay conditions. In a series of relay exercises involving students from the universities of Georgetown, Graz and Vienna by David and Margareta Bowen (1986: 412-415), a number of omissions and losses of information have occurred both in the pivot and relay products. Mostly, the study shows that any wrong figures given by the pivot have remained wrong in the relay output, but also that a relay interpreter's good performance is not necessarily the outcome of a good job done by the pivot. Thus, the study shows that relay interpreting as a method can only be partially blamed for the mistakes committed by the pivot and delivered to the relay audience, but not the pivot's audience since the pivot's mistakes will be delivered directly



to his/her audience whether relay is used or not. It can still be argued though that there is no reason why the pivot's mistakes should not be committed by the relay interpreter if the latter has been interpreting the speaker directly, which makes it really difficult to argue against relay or be sure that relay is definitely detrimental to quality. This is true even if the relay interpreter commits errors the pivot does not commit because it will still be difficult, if not impossible, to assume that the relay interpreter will not commit the same errors if he/she interprets the speaker directly. Dollerup (2000: 21) reports on a problem that has occurred not because of relay, but due to mismanagement of relay by the chair of the meeting who has given the floor to a new speaker before the message of the previous speaker has been delivered to the relay interpreter's audience.

Therefore, it can safely be argued that, pending definitive empirical evidence, the relay method does not seem to negatively affect interpreting quality. In fact, Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 178) argue that taking relay from a pivot working into his/her A and following the guidelines of working as a pivot is easier than interpreting a speaker directly. The pivot can usually provide a clear and coherent rendition, thus clarifying obscure points in the original. This may help colleagues on relay who, because they are faced with a speech that is easy to understand, can devote the attention normally needed for understanding to the style of their own rendition.

However, the above argument is not intended to be understood as a call or justification for the systematic use of relay which should be avoided as much as possible, but the inevitable need for relay due to the growing number of conference languages points to the need for preparing trainees for relay (see also Bowen and Bowen 1986: 409).

#### **2.2.2.4.2.4 Interpreters' professional status**

The interpreter's professional status could also affect the quality of his/her output. Gile<sup>26</sup> (1995d: 38f) argues that if the interpreter has a high status, he/she will have access to speakers, information, documents, etc. which will help the interpreter to prepare well for

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<sup>26</sup> Gile presents his argument under what he refers to as the 'social status' of the *professions of translation and interpreting* in general, but reference is made here to the *interpreter's professional status* because what Gile argues could be considered as one facet of the interpreter's professional status. The other facet being the freelance-staff distinction made by Altman and studied in **Chapter 7** as a variable that could affect the interpreter's ability/willingness to perform intercultural mediation in the light of data from the survey of professional conference interpreters conducted by the present researcher in this thesis.

his/her assignment. However, if the interpreter is seen as a mere ‘low-level linguistic [member of] staff’, he/she might be refused access to speakers or documents.

Another distinction is made by Altman (1984: 83) between staff and freelance interpreters. The former will usually enjoy greater access to speakers and documents on the one hand, and their work might include a lesser variety of subject matter on the other. The latter, however, might not enjoy easy access to information or speakers, and at the same time their work involves a larger variety of subject matter, which puts a greater demand on freelance interpreters to be well informed about different topics at international conferences.

### **2.2.2.5 Training issues**

A great part of the literature on conference interpreting is devoted to training and pedagogy. Indeed, as discussed in **2.2.1.5.1 Degree and research training programmes**, establishing interpreter training programmes at universities has been a driving force behind research into (conference) interpreting.

Moreover, with the increasing demand for highly qualified conference interpreters, natural talent *alone* has increasingly started to be deemed unreliable due to growing developments in international communication (Moser-Mercer 1994b: 57), hence on the one hand the need for training that has been felt as early as 1941 when Professor Antoine Velleman, himself a CCIr, founded the Geneva School of Interpreters which was the first school to specialise in conference interpreting training (Bowen and Bowen 1984: 26), and on the other the belief that ‘interpreters are made not born’ (Mackintosh 1999: 67; see also Lambert 1992: 264).

Furthermore, the importance of training in interpreting can be seen in the development of criteria of rating and quality for interpreter training programmes such as the criteria of ‘best practice’ set by AIIC<sup>27</sup> (e.g. 2006) and those by the EMCI Consortium which was set up in 2001 in cooperation between fifteen European universities, the European Commission’s Joint Interpreting and Conference Service and the European Parliament’s Directorate of Interpretation (cf. Donovan 2006: 4ff). The importance of training is also seen in recent

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<sup>27</sup> See AIIC (1993; 2002a; 2006) for a list of such criteria and Mackintosh (1995) for a discussion of the rationale behind these criteria.

discussions<sup>28</sup> on training interpreter trainers (Mackintosh 1995: 120/128f; 1999: 74f; Seleskovitch 1999: 65). The points discussed below concern aptitude testing, interpreting curricula and the sequence of CCI and SI training.

#### **2.2.2.5.1 Student selection and aptitude testing**

Most schools offering interpreter training programmes, especially those at the postgraduate level, impose tests to measure individuals' aptitude for interpreting before they are admitted to courses. A 10-week monolingual introductory course is applied at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, using a set of exercises and a test at the end of the course to determine the candidates' interpreting aptitude with the rate of progress being the main criterion for admission to the interpreting course proper (Moser-Mercer 1984; 1985). Thus, there is a distinction between short-duration (2-8 hours) and long-term testing (weeks or months) according to clearly defined criteria (Moser-Mercer 1994b: 58).

The rationale behind aptitude tests is, first as mentioned above, the growing demand on high quality performance in international conferences, which means students should be carefully selected (see also Donovan 2006: 12-15); second, market requirements (where there is no demand for interpreters) which impose a selective intake; and, third, to maintain good standards of teaching since the number of conference interpreters available for teaching is limited (Longley 1989: 105f; Mackintosh 1995: 123) when it is taken for granted that interpreter trainers must be practising conference interpreters (e.g. Longley 1989: 106; Mackintosh 1995; 120/124; Seleskovitch 1999: 65; AIIC 2002a; Camilo 2004).

A considerable volume of literature has discussed the issue and nature of aptitude tests (cf. Keiser 1978; Longley 1978; Carroll 1978; Moser-Mercer 1984; 1985; 1994b; Szuki 1988; Gerver et al. 1989; Bowen and Bowen 1989; Gringiani 1990; Lambert 1991; Arjona-Tseng 1994; Pippa and Russo 2002; Donovan 2003, etc.). The first systematic research on aptitude testing has been carried out by Gerver et al. (1989; see also Longley 1989). The pilot study is the first controlled set of aptitude tests that contains a list of definitions of aptitude to be tested in applicants and summarises most studies on aptitude testing:

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<sup>28</sup> For example, the 1989 Trieste Symposium (Gran and Dodds 1989), 1989 Monterey Symposium (MIIS 1989), AIIC series of workshops in Poznan (AIIC 1994).

- 1) Excellent knowledge of A, B, C, languages and cultures.
- 2) The ability to grasp rapidly and to convey the essential meaning of discourse, irrespective of the language spoken.
- 3) A memory which recalls the links between logical sequences of discourse.
- 4) The ability to convey information with confidence, coupled with a pleasant delivery.
- 5) Broad general knowledge and interests, a curiosity and willingness to acquire new information.
- 6) The ability to work as member of a team.
- 7) The ability to work under stress for long periods (Longley 1989: 106).

Testing these parameters usually varies from one course to the other. Most of the tests used to measure aptitude can also serve as training exercises (**2.2.2.5.2.3 Training exercises**) during the course (see also Lambert 1992: 264f).

According to Longley (1989: 106/108), the tests have been so efficient that the correlation between the selective intake, results of the final examinations and subsequent employment have proved satisfactory with an average of 75% pass. Students who have passed the final exams have achieved higher results in the aptitude tests than those who have failed.

Déjean Le Féal (1998: 44) calls for cooperation among schools in producing and comparing statistical data to improve the selection procedures and better judge candidates.

### **2.2.2.5.2 Interpreter training curricula**

The following deal with the theoretical and practical elements of curricula at interpreter training programmes. The focus is on interpreter training models, theoretical components, training exercises and training material (speeches/texts).

#### **2.2.2.5.2.1 Basic models for interpreter training**

Renfer (1992) distinguishes between four basic models for translator and interpreter training: the two-tier system, parallel and Y-models of translator and interpreter training and the postgraduate interpreter training model.

##### *2.2.2.5.2.1.1 The two-tier approach to translator and interpreter training*

This model is built on a translator training programme for three to four years during which students are gradually exposed to theoretical and practical aspects of translation and communication. Students' awareness and command of their working languages are enhanced by theoretical courses on grammar, text analysis, written expression, translation

theory, terminology, lexicography, professional ethics, etc. Their general background knowledge is broadened by lectures on culture, politics, economics, law, social affairs, etc. Students' practical experience is enriched by basic translation exercises which develop further into more specific, market-oriented translation. During this period, tests and examinations are administered to monitor the student's gradual progress. Having passed their translation programmes, students have the choice of entering the market as translators or move on to the interpreting department after an admission test. During the interpreting course, students are trained extensively in CI and SI before they are awarded a certificate in conference interpreting (Renfer 1992: 176-179).

Renfer (ibid: 179f) argues that the two-tier system has many advantages over the other models mentioned below. First, the type of general knowledge, theoretical background and practical experience students must have acquired during the course will enhance their awareness of the translation and communication process necessary for a successful professional career. Second, students will know that they have to develop an interest in current affairs, new developments in technology, science, politics, economics, cultures, etc. Third, they will know how to exploit the tools which will help them in their professional career such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, libraries, word banks, databases and what have you. Finally, the acquisition of language and translation skills early in the course will allow students who move on to the interpreting course to concentrate solely on interpreting techniques and skills such as flexibility, improvisation, oral expression, etc.

#### *2.2.2.5.2.1.2 Parallel translator and interpreter training*

In this model, students have the option to focus on either translation or interpreting. Since the duration of this programme is relatively shorter than the two-tier system, students only have time and capacity to concentrate on practical translation or interpreting because the setting does not allow for theoretical courses on translation/interpreting or general background knowledge. Therefore, such a model is recommended to mature students who have already acquired some background knowledge in linguistics and general knowledge in a previous academic or vocational environment (Renfer 1992: 180f).

#### *2.2.2.5.2.1.3 The 'Y-model' of translator and interpreter training*

This is a combination of the two-tier system and parallel approach. After a common part for

all students (2 years), the programme splits into two branches: one for translation (2 years) and the other for interpreting (2 years). In the common section, the curriculum concentrates on language skills, cultural background, translation theory and practical work on a variety of text types. Students can only have access to the translation or interpreting course after passing an eliminatory intermediate examination (Renfer 1992: 181f).

#### *2.2.2.5.2.1.4 Postgraduate interpreter training*

This type of programme is offered by interpreter training schools and international organisations. Students admitted to such courses do not normally have any prior training in translation or interpreting and attend the same course with those who have already had a certificate in translation. Thus, most of them usually lack the necessary background and theoretical knowledge (ibid: 182).

The only advantage for those who are trained at international organisations is that they are exposed to the real practical aspects of the interpreting process since courses are held on the premises of these organisations. This can make it difficult, though, for graduates to work outside these organisations because such courses are designed to meet the exclusive needs of this or that organisation, to say nothing of students' weakness in their awareness of the theoretical components and communication process *inter alia* (ibid: 183).

Renfer (ibid: 183f) is in favour of the two-tier model because his experience at the Zurich School shows that the failure rate among postgraduates in examinations and on the market is higher than that among students who have gone through a comprehensive translation and interpreting programme. Moreover, Padilla and Martin (1992: 196) argue that training students who have a background in translation as interpreters is easier than teaching those with no knowledge of translation because both translation and interpreting are after all 'concerned with communication', and the essential element is that students should be made aware of the differences between written and oral communication.

#### **2.2.2.5.2.2 Theoretical components in interpreter training programmes**

Several researchers (cf. Viaggio 1992a; 1995; Renfer 1992; Gile 1992; 1995d: particularly chapter 1; Lang 1992: 206ff; Pöchhacker 1992: 219f; Kalina 1994: 224; Donovan 2006: 11) have discussed and stressed the importance of theoretical components in the curricula of

translator and interpreter training programmes. Essentially, the reason behind this is that translators and interpreters alike have to have a sharp awareness of the translation and communication processes. This awareness can only be enhanced by a combination of theoretical and practical training.

Recognising the significance of theoretical components in interpreter training programmes, Gile (e.g. 1992; 1995d) provides a detailed discussion of the nature and sequence of some theoretical components in what he refers to as ‘basic concepts and models’ that are designed to offer students a conceptual framework:

1. *The Communication Model and Quality Concepts*
2. *The Informational Structure of Informative Sentences*
3. *The Effort Models of Interpreting*
4. *The Gravitational Model of Linguistic Mastery*
5. *Comprehension of Technical Speeches* (1992: 186, emphasis in original).

According to Gile (ibid), a number of rules should be observed in the implementation of these components to help optimise efficiency in programmes. First, components should be useful in the sense that they provide answers to problems encountered or likely to be encountered by students. Second, they should be taught after students have been made aware of these problems to increase students’ receptiveness. Third, components should be easy to understand in that they should have a simple and logical structure and require little learning of theoretical concepts and technical terms. Fourth, components should not include more than what students need. Finally, the impact of the components should be made deeper and more lasting by making their practical implications evident to students and repeatedly stressing their importance on the part of instructors during practical interpreting and translation exercises.

Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 21-26) propose a different theoretical foundation represented by their pioneering achievement, the theory of sense, which they deem essential for students if students are to master interpreting techniques (**Chapter 4**).

#### **2.2.2.5.2.3 Training exercises**

Interpreter training programmes usually use a set of exercises before starting actual training on CCI or SI to teach students to properly analyse and understand what they hear

(Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 1). These preparatory exercises cover a certain period and are selected according to the progress students make during the course (cf. e.g. Longley 1978; Van Dam 1989). According to Moser (1978: 361), the rationale behind the use of such training exercises is to develop in students the abilities to deal with linguistic material, carry out two tasks (listening and speaking) simultaneously, retain information in STM and react to stimulus swiftly. Below is a survey of some of the most widely used exercises in interpreter training programmes. Some of the exercises mentioned below apply to both modes: SI and CCI; where a certain exercise is mode-specific, however, a hint will be made as to which mode the exercise applies whenever this is not implied or clear already or if the need arises. Note-taking for CCI is investigated in **Chapter 3 (3.3.2 Note-taking training)**.

#### *2.2.2.5.2.3.1 Listening and memory*

In this exercise, students are instructed to listen to a speech, but are not allowed to take notes. Students are told they will be asked to remember the main points of the speech. The essential purpose behind the exercise is to assess students' abilities to listen, remember and identify the important points without distorting the speaker's message (Lambert 1988: 380; Ballester and Jiménez 1992: 238) first with and then without code-switching (Lambert 1992: 265f). According to Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 3), this means listening for sense in CI without notes. Coughlin (1989: 108) argues that this exercise is useful mostly at the beginning of training on CCI since this precedes training on SI (**2.2.2.5.3 The sequence of CCI and SI training**).

#### *2.2.2.5.2.3.2 Shadowing*

Shadowing is defined as

a paced, auditory tracking task which involves the immediate vocalization of auditorily presented stimuli, in other words, repeating word-for-word, and in the same language, a message presented to a subject through headphones (Lambert 1989: 83).

According to Tonelli and Riccardi (1995: 137), shadowing has been used as a tool in experimental studies on the perception and production of on-line speech (cf. Marslen-Wilson 1973; 1985; Cohen 1980; Lackner 1980, etc.). In IS, shadowing has been used in comparison to SI and CI to determine to what extent the processing of speech in these tasks entails different levels of cognitive load or depth of processing (cf. Triesman 1965; Gerver



1974a; 1976; Lambert 1989). It has also been suggested as a useful tool for evaluating aptitude for interpreting (e.g. Longley 1978: 47; Moser-Mercer 1985: 97; Schweda-Nicholson 1990: 33; Lambert 1991: 587f) and as a training tool for interpreter training programmes (see below). The present discussion looks into the usefulness of shadowing as a training exercise for acquiring the ability to listen and speak simultaneously.

It is here where the controversy among researchers over the validity of shadowing lies. Dodds (cf. Dodds et al. 1997: 91) argues that shadowing has not been scientifically verified or falsified. The reason is the lack of replication of experiments investigating the technique. The result is that researchers are still as much in doubt about its validity as an aptitude test or teaching technique as they were more than a decade ago.

On the one hand, researchers who favour shadowing argue that it is useful, first, for forcing students to concentrate on listening (cf. Moser 1978: 364; Moser-Mercer 1984: 319); second, for making students aware of the mechanism of simultaneous listening and speaking (Longley 1978: 47) as in phonemic shadowing<sup>29</sup>; third, for training students to lag behind the speaker and wait for a meaning unit before speaking as in phrase shadowing (cf. Lambert 1988: 381; 1991: 587) or lag behind the speaker from 5 to 10 words without waiting for a meaningful unit as in adjusted lag shadowing (Schweda-Nicholson 1990: 34); and, finally, for stimulating the SI process generally since shadowing does not involve language transfer and thus students are not threatened by the complex task of SI (ibid: 33).

On the other hand, there are others, mainly the Paris School, who are against the use of this exercise (cf. Thiéry 1989b: 3ff, quoted in Déjean Le Féal 1998: 44; Coughlin 1989<sup>30</sup>: 108; Déjean Le Féal 1997: 617; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 143; Seleskovitch 1999: 62). They dismiss shadowing as a ‘counter-productive’ exercise (Van Dam 1990: 5; Déjean Le Féal 1997: 617; Seleskovitch 1999: 62) or ‘the complete antithesis of everything the

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<sup>29</sup> **Phonemic shadowing** ‘involves repeating each sound as it is heard, without waiting for the completion of a meaning unit, or even a completed word, so that the shadower remains right "on top" of the speaker’. In **phrase shadowing**, ‘subjects repeat the speech at longer latencies – more precisely from 250 milliseconds upwards – and where shadowers wait for a chunk, or meaning unit, before beginning’ (Lambert 1988: 381). In **adjusted lag shadowing**, subjects are asked to consciously stay from 5 to 10 words behind the speaker. Thus, it is more difficult than phonemic shadowing, but it does not require identifying meaning before speaking (Schweda-Nicholson 1990: 34).

<sup>30</sup> Coughlin only favours phrase shadowing because, unlike phonemic shadowing which should be eliminated, phrase shadowing encourages students to process ‘meaningful units’ effectively (1989: 108).

students should do' (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 143) based on their contention that it diverts students' attention from sense and concentrates it on words, which is not the real situation students will be faced with when doing actual SI of live speeches. What is important for these researchers is to keep students from listening to words and have their attention focused on comprehending what is meant. The ability of listening and speaking simultaneously takes only a few minutes and can be taught by alternative ways such as asking students to count backwards while listening to a narrative speech and then express the logic of what they have heard (Seleskovitch 1999: 62).

Kurz (1992: 248) relies on evidence from neuropsychological research to state the futility of shadowing, arguing that the active analysis of the speech input is not represented in shadowing since this active analysis is not required at all for the decoding of simple words or phrases, but is essential for the understanding of the general or underlying meaning of a complex narrative, thus corroborating the position of the opponents of shadowing.

Moreover, Kurz (ibid: 249) has conducted a study of three types of monolingual exercises in search of exercises to replace shadowing. Type A consists of sentences that require only phrase shadowing. Type B consists of 'yes/no questions' and forms a relatively more complex task for it requires subjects to understand the input and relate it to their world knowledge to be able to answer with yes or no. Type C consists of 'why questions' which are the closest to real-life SI for they require deverbalisation of the speech input and the production of spontaneous speech. Sentences of 10-12 syllables in length were presented to students in interpreting booths over a two-hour session every week for a period of four months. Students' performance was recorded on tape. First-year interpreting students were tested on these exercises in two rounds (at the beginning and end of the four-month period) to ascertain the influence of practice on their performance.

The initial results of the study have shown statistically significant improvements in the students' performance. In the first round, 92.67% of the sentences in Type A were repeated correctly. After four months, the score was 96%. Students gave 84% correct answers to Type B questions in the first round, but their score improved to 92%. Students' average number of correct answers to Type C questions improved significantly, rising from 83.33% in the first round to 94% after four months (ibid).

#### 2.2.2.5.2.3.3 *Dual-task training*

This exercise essentially involves asking students to listen to a recorded speech, which is the first task. The second task is designed to serve as a certain kind of distraction from the first task and involves counting backwards or forwards on the part of students either in their mother tongue or B language. To test students' attention to the first task, a recall test in the form of an oral summary of the main ideas of the text is applied (Moser 1978: 363; Moser-Mercer 1984: 319; Lambert 1988: 382).

However, Coughlin (1989: 108f) rejects this exercise, arguing that it involves processes which go counter to successful SI because speaking and listening are interrelated by the process of thought and the continuum of meaning, a view that is shared by Déjean Le Féal (1997: 617f), but, somewhat surprisingly, not by Seleskovitch (1999: 62).

#### 2.2.2.5.2.3.4 *Paraphrasing*

The aim of this exercise is to develop in students the ability to represent the essential meaning of a certain message in another way and in a different sentence structure first in the mother tongue and then in the second language. The speed of paraphrasing and the difficulty of the material should be increased gradually (Moser 1978: 362f; Moser-Mercer 1984: 319; Lambert 1988: 382).

According to Coughlin (1989: 109), paraphrasing is a natural thing in CCI. It is not preferable, however, in SI because searching for synonyms or different syntactic structures may force students to focus attention on the form of what they are listening to rather than its content (see also Déjean Le Féal 1997: 618).

#### 2.2.2.5.2.3.5 *Abstracting*

According to Van Dam (1989: 171f), summarising the main idea of a speech is needed when the interpreter falls behind the speaker to return to the 'optimum start-up distance'. This must be carried out in a four-phase process. First, in the *consecutive summary phase*, students listen to each sentence and sum up the main idea without notes. Such unessential details as subordinate clauses, prepositional phrases, adjectives, etc. are deleted and only the subject, verb and object of each sentence are kept. Second, in the *main idea phase*, the same exercise of the same speech is repeated but simultaneously and with a distance of one

meaning unit behind the speaker. Students identify and interpret the main idea of each sentence. Third, in the *simultaneous mode phase*, the details which have been omitted in the second phase are reintroduced, and students interpret the speech a number of times in full. Fourth, in the *quick speaker phase*, students interpret as much as they can from the speech as it is delivered at a remarkably quicker pace. If they lag uncomfortably behind the speaker, they use the abstraction technique to return to the optimum start-up distance.

However, since interpreting one sentence only at a time seems to be frustrating to interpreters, Coughlin (1989: 109) argues that this exercise can be more useful if pauses take place at the end of a longer meaning unit than sentences such as paragraphs.

#### 2.2.2.5.2.3.6 Clozing

According to Garibi and Islas (1990: 647), clozing was first proposed by Wilson Taylor (1953) based on Gestalt's psychology theory of the 'close' premise which postulates humans' 'tendency to complete incomplete forms' (Garibi and Islas *ibid*).

This exercise involves the deletion of certain words from a speech and replacing them by a beep to indicate the place of the omission (Lambert 1988: 383). The missing words should be inferred depending on linguistic and world knowledge and/or immediate context (Viaggio 1992b; Kalina 1992: 265; 1994: 222). Students are asked to write down the fillers before they are asked to perform the same task orally and then shadow the entire text and fill in the gaps simultaneously. The chronology of A-A and then B-B language should always be the case (Lambert *ibid*). To perform the task successfully, the candidate has to perceive the surface and deep structures of the text (Moser-Mercer 1994b: 64).

Coughlin (1989: 110) argues that this exercise is helpful in evaluating the student's language proficiency on the one hand, and creating shadowing exercises that represent a challenge to students on the semantic level on the other (cf. also Lambert 1991: 588ff).

#### 2.2.2.5.2.3.7 Sight translating<sup>31</sup>

This exercise involves the oral translation in one language of a text written in another

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<sup>31</sup> Pöchhacker (2004: 19) argues that this variant of SI is better called 'sight interpreting' if it is practised 'in real time for immediate use by an audience'.

language. The essential benefit students should get out of this exercise is flexibility of expression, oratory and public speaking (**3.3.1 Public speaking skills**), anticipation and chunking of ideas, ability to express themselves coherently, etc. (Keiser 1978: 19; Lambert 1988: 384; 1991: 590f; Kalina 1994: 222).

According to Weber (1990: 50), this exercise is therefore an ideal preparation for CI and SI, since interpreting already written texts is a reality in conference interpreting<sup>32</sup>. In CI, it will help students to read their notes smoothly, thus avoiding hesitations or uncomfortable pauses. In SI, when written texts are delivered at a noticeably high speed, the interpreter will have to rely on the written text in addition to the speaker's oral signal to keep up with the speaker's pace, hence the importance of training in sight translation. Another advantage for training in sight translation is when interpreters are asked to translate a document or press communiqué orally (Coughlin 1989: 110; Gran 1990).

#### *2.2.2.5.2.3.8 Digit processing*

Moser-Mercer (1984: 320) argues that from an information processing perspective, processing numbers is different from processing continuous texts since numbers are unpredictable, which means the interpreter's entire attention has to be devoted to the incoming message. Thus, the occurrence of numbers within a text forces the interpreter to change his/her processing procedure. This change is usually reflected in such signs as hesitations, pauses, restarts, etc. in the interpreter's output.

Exercises are usually composed of material made of numbers and document titles only to texts including large amounts of numbers. Students are asked to simultaneously shadow the recorded texts and jot down the numbers and document titles. To gain sufficient insight into students' performance, their papers are compared with their shadowing performance (ibid).

#### *2.2.2.5.2.3.9 Lag exercises*

The primary purpose of such exercises is to force students to lag behind the speaker. According to Lambert (1988: 385), the difficulty of the exercise results only from the simultaneity of speaking and listening. First, students are asked to shadow single words,

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<sup>32</sup> See **2.2.2.4.2.1.1 Spontaneous vs. non-spontaneous speech** and **2.2.2.5.2.4.2 Training on SI with text**.

one at a time, so that when they hear the word, they say it simultaneously. Then students are asked to stay behind the speaker by shadowing every second word: when they hear the first word (e.g. class), students remain silent and hold the word in their STM; note-taking is not permissible. Once the second word (e.g. teacher) is delivered, students should utter 'class' at the same time as they hear 'teacher'. Once students master this task, they are asked to let two words pass before shadowing. For example:

| <u>Input: Instructor's voice</u> | <u>Output: Students' voice</u>         |
|----------------------------------|--|
| "class"                          | - (silence)                            |
| "teacher"                        | - (silence)                            |
| "beautiful"                      | "class"                                |
| "chairman"                       | "teacher"                              |
| etc.                             | etc. (Adapted from Lambert 1988: 385). |

Lambert (ibid) argues that the difficulty of the exercise can be gradually increased by increasing the time distance between the instructor's input and the students' output. This can be achieved by asking students to interpret the lexical items once they have mastered shadowing, by introducing technical or conference terminology as part of the lexical items, and finally by introducing short sentences instead of lexical items, varying from simple word-for-word translations to more subtle transforms (for another approach, see also the distance exercise in Van Dam 1989: 170f).

Opposing lexical processing in favour of semantic and contextual processing, Coughlin (1989: 111), however, does not favour this type of exercise because it encourages students to focus on the retention of words rather than of senses. Instead, students should be trained to discard words and concentrate on images and concepts elicited by context.

#### 2.2.2.5.2.3.10 *Anticipation exercises*<sup>33</sup>

In this exercise, students are asked to listen to, shadow or simultaneously interpret a speech. At some point, the instructor stops in mid-sentence, leaving it uncompleted as if some noise has prevented the interpreter from listening to the end of the sentence (e.g. somebody coughing near the speaker). Students are expected to anticipate what the end of that sentence might have been and deliver their output accordingly (Lambert 1988: 386).

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<sup>33</sup> See also 2.2.2.1.6.2.4 **The anticipation strategy**.

Van Dam (1989: 172-175) distinguishes between three anticipation exercises. The first is *anticipating the speaker* where students should perform anticipation based on their knowledge of the speaker which they develop as the speaker starts delivering his/her speech. The speech is introduced with a minimal amount of information on the speaker (his/her name and title). Watching and listening for clues as the speech is delivered, students should start understanding his/her position or educational, political and social background, adjust to his/her style, etc. In the second exercise, students are taught to rely on their common sense in *anticipating the logic of the message* by not letting them hear certain words in the same way Lambert's exercise above is developed. In the third exercise, students should *anticipate part of the incoming message depending on the speech patterns or structures* which could be speaker-specific or language-specific such as the verb-end sentence structure in German (cf. also Wilss 1978).

Such exercises are useful in helping train students to 'grasp the context fully' (Coughlin 1989: 111), or develop 'meaning-oriented' listening (Kalina, 1992: 256) or what is called 'active listening' (Van Dam 1989: 172).

#### **2.2.2.5.2.4 Training material (speeches/texts)**

Considerations of the types of speeches used for training students, how to be presented and when are among the different methods that, if followed, can contribute to successful accomplishment of the training task.

##### *2.2.2.5.2.4.1 Speeches*

Certain considerations of the selection of speeches, among other things, should be taken by the instructor to ensure the success of training. The present argument is a generalizing one; therefore, considerations should apply to CCI and SI.

According to Schweda-Nicholson (cf. Dodds et al. 1997: 100), the first consideration is that speeches should be of gradual difficulty. The instructor should try to strike a balance between challenging students and giving them confidence to ensure the smoothness of the training process. Similarly, Seleskovitch (1989: 79ff) argues that the instructor should begin with narrative speeches, then argumentative, followed by descriptive, and then

oratory speeches. This is because every type of speech<sup>34</sup> will need certain techniques to be gradually mastered by the student. Whereas the first two will serve to consolidate the interpreting techniques in students, the third and fourth will demand more advanced requirements from students such as fluency of expression, elevated style, oratory, controlling the speed of delivery, etc.

Second, the topic or content of the speech should also be selected carefully and for a purpose. Coughlin (1989: 107) insists that speeches should be chosen primarily for their informative content and communicative quality to sharpen the trainees' mental agility and linguistic dexterity. For example, Weber (1989b: 161f) argues that commercial speeches train students to focus on sequential logic and accurate terminology. In technical speeches, trainees focus on pictorial representation and accurate terminology. Political speeches teach students to pay attention to the words used, nuances of meaning, tone of speech, etc. Multilateral negotiations offer students the chance to learn to speak as delegates and as interpreters at the same time, to practice the interpreting of opening and closing statements, argument and counterargument, drafting sessions, etc. The other advantage of multilateral negotiations is that they offer students the chance to practice relay interpreting since negotiations take place in all the languages taught in the programme.

Finally, the way the speech is delivered has a bearing on the subject. In **2.2.2.4.2.1.3 SL input rate**, it has been found that the optimal SL input rate in SI is between 100 and 120 words per minute and that every increase above this limit will have a detrimental effect on quality. The rate of the practice material should thus not exceed this rate. According to Schweda-Nicholson (cf. Dodds et al. 1997: 101), delivery should also run smoothly with normal pauses, no false starts or hesitations so that students are not confused. Repetitions can also have a positive effect in that they contribute to reducing the processing load.

#### *2.2.2.5.2.4.2 Training on SI with text*

Professional interpreters and researchers alike stress the need for interpreters to prepare for conferences (**7.5.4.3.3.2 Preparation**) as one of the most important factors that contribute

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<sup>34</sup> See also Hatim and Mason (1997: particularly chapter 11) for insightful implementation of text typology in curriculum design (for translator/interpreter training) and Nolan (2005) for detailed discussions and ample exercises and techniques on how to deal professionally with many types of texts/speeches in various occasions or discourse types (political, diplomatic, economic, etc.) in CISs.



to quality performance. Since speeches read from already written texts in conferences are becoming the rule rather than the exception, especially in scientific and technical conferences (Seleskovitch 1978a: 132; Lederer 1981, quoted in Jumpelt 1985: 83; Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 163; Weber 1990: 48), the need for preparation on the part of professionals and trainees alike becomes more pressing.

From a pedagogical point of view, many researchers (cf. Keiser 1978: 23; Schweda-Nicholson 1989; Weber 1990: 45) stress the importance of training students on how to deal with written texts before and during interpreting assuming they receive the text of the speech or any documentation material in advance to prepare for their assignment. In a form of 'do's and don'ts', Schweda-Nicholson (1989: 169-176), for example, proposes some practical suggestions to be followed by trainees when preparing for a text for interpreting. The rationale behind these suggestions is to teach students to be efficient in dealing with the material at hand and to do their own research (when there is little or no material provided) to gain more background knowledge on the subject in question, speakers, audience, organizations involved, etc. by making use of libraries, glossaries, specialised journals, encyclopaedias and what have you, which will at the end contribute, with other techniques and skills, to success in achieving the task (cf. also Altman 1984; Schweda-Nicholson and Tuinder 1984: 383ff).

Keiser (1978: 23) and Schweda-Nicholson (1989: 168f) argue that exposing students to written texts should take place at a later stage of the training programme. First, interpreting is a complex task that requires splitting attention between such demanding processes as decoding, analysis, translation, encoding, etc. The addition of a written text can contribute to dividing trainees' attention further. For students, this has some undesired repercussions because they will adhere more to the written signal than the oral-aural signal. Besides, the visual element (eye contact with the speaker or audience, gestures, facial expressions, etc.), which is a very important extra-linguistic means of aid (Bühler 1985; Jumpelt 1985: 84; Jones 1998: 71; Besson et al. 2005), will not be utilised because students will be looking at the text most of the time, forgetting all about this invaluable commodity. Second, if trainees are introduced with texts at a very early stage, there is the fear that they might be tied to word-for-word translation and forget about sense, and that there are always many ways of conveying a certain meaning (Schweda-Nicholson *ibid*).

### 2.2.2.5.3 The sequence of CCI and SI training

This section deals with the methodological controversy over the sequence that should be followed in training on CCI and SI. On the one hand, there are researchers (cf. Seleskovitch 1975b<sup>35</sup>: 128; 1989: 37f; 1999: 63f; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 27/110; Wilss 1977: 123; Weber 1989b: 162; 1990: 50; Coughlin 1989: 106f; Thiéry 1989c: 262; Kalina<sup>36</sup> 1992: 255; 1994: 220ff; Donovan 1993: 215f; Ilg and Lambert 1996: 73/76f; Déjean Le Féal 1997: 618f, Gile<sup>37</sup> 2001c) who favour starting training with CCI, maintaining that CCI is itself an ideal exercise for SI and that students who do well in CCI can make good simultaneous interpreters since they will be able to *transfer* the principles they have learned through CCI easily to SI. The main reason this group of researchers cite for their preference of starting training with CCI is the proximity of the two languages which comes about as a result of the overlapping between perception and re-expression in SI and thus might well cause students to fall into the trap of unconsciously parroting or ‘transcoding’ what the speaker says instead of performing real interpreting which must come as a result of real analysis and genuine understanding. CCI, with this natural separation of the two processes of perception and re-expression in its process due to the inevitable longer time lag, allows for the deverbilisation stage to occur very easily and gives students the chance for performing proper analysis of the speech input, thus grasping the sense of the original and then re-expressing this sense in the TL.

On the other hand, there are some researchers who argue that CCI and SI should be taught at the same time, citing different reasons. Keiser (1978: 22) argues that the rigorous entrance examination and highly qualified professional teachers can make introducing SI at an early stage successful. Longley (1978: 51) prefers starting training for SI *with* CCI because of the interaction between the two modes and because both achieve the same purpose. Aarup (cf. Dodds et al. 1997: 99) argues that it is a waste of time to teach CCI before SI because experience in teaching shows that students who are not taught SI until a later stage of their training feel frightened of it.

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<sup>35</sup> This is an English translation of part of Seleskovitch (1975a). It is treated here as a separate reference and is given a separate entry in the bibliography in order not to be confused with the original one which is in French.

<sup>36</sup> Despite agreeing that CCI should be taught first, Kalina demands that exercises preparing for SI be offered to students in parallel with CCI teaching.

<sup>37</sup> Gile also agrees that training in CCI is essential and should come at the beginning of the course even for markets where there is no need for CCI, but he does not accept making it ‘a mandatory requirement’ for obtaining a degree in conference interpreting.

As mentioned in **2.2.2.1.4.1 Working memory and interpreting** and **2.2.2.1.4.2 Long-term memory (LTM) and interpreting**, many empirical studies have shown that simultaneity and divided attention, which are more outstanding in SI, impair or reduce recall abilities. Of these, an interesting study (cf. Lambert 1989) has compared the subjects' performance under listening, CCI, SI and shadowing. Subjects have been asked to recall the information they have processed immediately after each task. Listening has yielded the highest recognition scores. CCI has yielded higher recognition scores than SI and shadowing because CCI involves a complete overt rehearsal of the text, longer exposure to information, visual cues provided by the notes, and oral feedback provided by the delivery. CCI and listening have been found to represent a deeper level of processing than SI and shadowing because only CCI and listening allow the interpreter to process information 'in silence' (Ilg and Lambert 1996: 85). Thus, Lambert (1989: 90) argues that 'consecutive delivery is a form of rehearsal which is beneficial for, rather than detrimental to, subsequent recall' and that 'a strong argument can be made that consecutive processing may enhance learning and memory' (Ilg and Lambert 1996: 84).

Given the more coherent argument put forward by the first group of researchers cited above and the results of Lambert's and many other empirical studies on shared attention and its negative effects on recall abilities particularly in SI and the benefits CCI offers to memory and information retention, it seems preferable to start with training on CCI before SI.

## Chapter 3: Consecutive conference interpreting (CCI)

The preceding chapter has discussed basic concepts in IS and a literature review of conference interpreting. This chapter is devoted to CCI, the mode specifically chosen for research in this thesis<sup>1</sup>. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first traces the evolution of CCI since it emerged as a recognised mode of (conference) interpreting in 1919 and introduces its various aspects. The second part presents different accounts of the CCI process based on some theoretical models and studies the role of such elements in the CCI process as note-taking, attention and memory. The final part deals with CCI training.

### 3.1 History of CCI

As mentioned in **2.2.1 Historical overview**, the type of present-day conference interpreting only came into being in 1919 during the Paris Peace Conference following World War I and was carried out in the *consecutive* mode.

CCI continued to dominate the scene of international conferences even after SI was introduced for even though CCI into two or more languages meant a great loss in terms of the time needed to reach agreements in meetings, SI was still not trusted because delegates could not check translations, and CCI was still considered by some delegates to be more accurate (e.g. Herbert 1978: 7f). Following the introduction of Russian, Spanish and Chinese to the UN and technical improvements in broadcasting, though, SI was sure to 'gain ground' (Herbert 1978: 8; Bowen and Bowen 1984: 25) so much so that its use has come to account for 98% of conference interpreting (Weber 1989b: 162), if not 99%, at least in Western Europe since the use of CCI is still widespread in other parts of the world, namely Eastern Europe and Asia (Gile 2001c; Lim 2003: 155f).

At present, CCI is used in *bilingual* round-table talks or small meetings, ceremonial occasions such as after-dinner speeches and guided tours and/or visits (Setton 1999: 1; Gillies 2005: 3f). According to Weber (1989b: 162), since it is characterised by a higher level of accuracy than SI, CCI is still preferred in high-level political meetings, meetings of drafting and legal committees, press conferences when statements made may be quoted in full on later occasions, and whenever conference proceedings and their translations are

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<sup>1</sup> See **1.1.3 Mode of investigation** for the rationale behind choosing this mode in this thesis.

transcribed into the written form. Weber also reports that CCI is resorted to whenever SI technical equipment breaks down (1989b: 162).

Based on the above and the importance of CCI training as a good preparation exercise for SI (**2.2.2.5.3 The sequence of CCI and SI training**) and contrary to the claim of the futility of teaching an ‘antiquated’ (Francis 1989: 251f) mode (reference to CCI), it may be argued that CCI still has a great deal to offer to multilingual communication even in the Western European context; the mode has not faded away and it will continue to play a significant role in international bilingual communication (cf. also Gile 2000a: 305).

Unlike SI, in CCI there is no limit for the duration of the original discourse which can range from a one-word utterance to longer chunks or even the entire speech (Pöchhacker 2004: 18). Thus, in the literature (e.g. Bowen and Bowen 1984: 25; Pöchhacker 2004: 19), there is a distinction between short and long CI. The former involves rendering the original information on a sentence-by-sentence basis and without notes. However, this form which usually exists in community-interpreting encounters is not considered ‘true’ CI (Seleskovitch 1989: 65; Gile 2001a: 41). The latter form is usually referred to as ‘classic’ CCI (Pöchhacker 2004: 19) or ‘consecutive interpreting proper’ (Dam 1993: 311) and involves a constant use of notes (**3.2.2 The strategy of note-taking**).

The duration of the CCIr’s rendition of the original speech should not exceed 75% of the time taken by the speaker (Herbert 1952: 71; Viaggio 2002: 243). CCIrs can cut the time needed to complete their renditions by *condensing* the content of the original (Dam 1993; Kohn and Kalina 1996: 129) through cutting down complementary sentences and redundant or ‘unintentional’ repetitions (Herbert *ibid*). CCIrs can also achieve this by speaking more rapidly than the speaker as they take their cues from what they have actually heard (*ibid*).

The CCI process can be described as one in which the CCIr takes notes while listening to a SL segment/speech and delivers the TL rendition of the speech/segment using notes and memory after the speaker pauses. Then he/she pauses allowing the speaker to resume for another segment to be delivered in the TL by the CCIr after the speaker’s pause and so on. The details of this process are the subject of the following lines.

## 3.2 CCI process

Most of the process models proposed to account for the interpreting process have been oriented towards describing the SI process. Only a few models have dealt with the CCI process<sup>2</sup>. The following discuss a representative sample of CCI process models, the note-taking strategy and the role of attention and memory.

### 3.2.1 CCI process models

The earliest account of the processes of CCI and SI has been proposed by Herbert (1952) who has identified the three stages of ‘understanding’, ‘transference’ and ‘speaking’ (ibid: 10). However, as Pöchhacker (2004: 97) argues, Herbert’s account is too general since it only touches on language-related issues and practical interpreting techniques and suggestions without venturing much into the mental aspects underlying the process. More detailed models have later been proposed by several other researchers. Among these are Seleskovitch’s theory of sense, Gile’s Effort models and Weber’s model which are the subject of the present discussion in the following sub-sections. The list of models chosen here is by no means comprehensive, but is only selected as a representative sample since there are other researchers who have suggested more or less similar models or stages of the process either in passing (cf. e.g. Henderson 1976: 108; Dam 1993: 297) or with detailed discussions (cf. Jones 1998). It is representative in that each one of these models approaches the issue from a different perspective or point of emphasis. The list is thus intended to reflect this variety.

#### 3.2.1.1 Theory of sense

A more cognitive-oriented model than Herbert’s has been proposed by Seleskovitch (e.g. 1986a: 375). The theory of sense, as the model is known, identifies three stages in the translation process: the ‘apprehension’ of a SL message delivered by means of the words and structure of the SL, ‘deverbalization’ of the *sense* of the SL message in the interpreter’s mind, and ‘expression’ of that sense in the TL. Seleskovitch (ibid) argues that the distinctive feature of the model is its universality across language-pairs and discourse types, thus moving emphasis away from language, grammar or style to the interpreter’s mind. See Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995) and **Chapter 4** for a detailed account of this model.

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<sup>2</sup> See **2.2.2.1 Cognitive issues** for relevant information on general aspects of the interpreting process.

### 3.2.1.2 Effort Models

Gile (e.g. 1997) has proposed the 'Effort Models' originally for the SI process and has later extended them to CCI. Gile identifies two stages: 'a listening phase', during which the interpreter listens to the SL message and takes notes, and 'a reformulation phase', during which the interpreter delivers the SL speech in the TL with the help of notes and memory (ibid: 202). The listening and analysis phase is represented as follows:

$$\text{Listening} = L + M + N + C$$

where L refers to the listening and analysis, M to STM, N to note-taking and C to the coordination efforts. The listening and analysis effort involves comprehension-related operations including the analysis of sounds forming the SL speech, the identification of words and any decisions made about the meaning of the SL sentences. The STM component occurs between the reception of the SL information and the time this information is jotted down, the moment the interpreter decides not to note it down, or the moment this information fades away from the STM. The note-taking effort consists of decisions as to which information to note and how to note it (as complete words or abbreviations, in the TL or SL, as symbols or drawings, etc.) and the execution of these decisions. The coordination effort refers to the set of operations intended to create harmony between the other decisions involved and their implementation (ibid).

The reformulation phase is represented as follows:

$$\text{Reformulation} = \text{Rem} + \text{Read} + P$$

where Rem refers to the operations involved in recalling information from memory, Read to reading information from notes, and P to the implementation of the speech plan (ibid).

The sum total of the efforts involved in the process should not at any stage exceed the interpreter's processing capacity limits; otherwise, problems are bound to occur. Gile thus argues that the Effort Models have the power to explain the occurrence of failures, errors or omissions not related to interpreters' weakness in the SL/TL proficiency, world knowledge or interpreting skills, but to a heavy cognitive load resulting from processing capacity deficit and/or mismanagement (ibid: 197/205ff).

### **3.2.1.3 Weber's model**

Weber (1989b: 163) argues that there are five stages involved in the CCI process: the hearing, listening, analysis, memorisation and/or note-taking and interpreting phases. The first phase is the most automatic one as it cannot be consciously interrupted, but it is not enough to make the interpreter understand the meaning of the original speech.

The listening phase, however, is fully conscious and requires the CCIr's constant and utmost concentration not on the form or words of the original, but its meaning and should thus eliminate from the next phase any unnecessary elements to the full TL rendition.

The analysis stage overlaps with the listening phase. In this stage, the interpreter understands the original speech in its details and consciously chooses what to relay to the TL audience and in what way.

The memorising and/or note-taking stage involves the interpreter's conscious choice of parts of the original to be memorised and others to be taken down. This conscious decision varies from one interpreter to the other and relies on such variables as the subject matter, stress, language combination, training, personal preference or experience.

The last phase is the interpreter's actual TL rendition of the SL message. This phase becomes more automatic and requires a lesser amount of effort if the interpreter has invested more effort in the preceding stages.

### **3.2.2 The strategy of note-taking**

This section discusses note-taking as a strategy (**2.2.2.1.6 Interpreting strategies**) in what has been referred to above as 'classic' CCI. For training, see **3.3.2 Note-taking training**.

Ever since Rozan published his 1956 seminal and 'classic' textbook (Ilg and Lambert 1996: 71; Pöchhacker 2004: 32) on note-taking, an influx of works on note-taking has followed to the extent that there is hardly a publication on CCI which does not touch on note-taking<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive bibliography, see Ilg and Lambert (1996).



There is a consensus among researchers that note-taking is, in Jones's (1998: 43) words, 'a means to an end', that end being *to aid the CCIr's memory* (e.g. Herbert 1952: 35; Weber 1989b: 165; Seleskovitch 1989: 76; 1999: 64; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 28; Kohn and Kalina 1996: 128f; Ilg and Lambert 1996: 78; Rozan 2002: 25; Pöchhacker 2004: 124; Ahrens 2005: 2). This implies that CCIrs do not take down all the SL information. The role of memory is essential, and it is impossible for the CCIr to depend solely on notes without a good memory, proper understanding, analysis and re-expression (Jones *ibid*).

Indeed, many researchers warn against the risks of falling into the temptation of taking too many notes, relying too much on notes, or teaching students to rely too much on their notes. First, noting as much information as possible in a form that is too close to the form of the original discourse might influence the way the CCIr produces the TL version of the original in that the rendition will be a form of 'transliteration' and not a 're-expression' of ideas (Jones 1998: 43). Second, relying too much on notes will force the CCIr to give very little attention to 'genuine' understanding/analysis or 'logical thinking' during the listening phase, which might lead to errors, contradictions, etc. (Weber 1989b: 165; Jones *ibid*). Third, if students take too many notes, their rendition will be more of 'a *reading* and *deciphering* process than a *speaking* one' (Schweda-Nicholson 1985: 150, emphasis in original; see also Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 33).

According to Kohn and Kalina (1996: 128), since the CCIr is not advised to take too many notes or rely too much on them, he/she will have to *consciously* and *strategically* decide on what information to note down or memorise and how to note it down. In particular, he/she will have to decide on parts of the speech that might be difficult to retrieve from memory during production and so note them down. If the SL discourse has a cohesive and coherent structure, the CCIr may decide on a little amount of well-chosen notes, but if it has a weak structure or is full of names or figures, the CCIr may decide to take very precise notes. Moreover, the CCIr might decide to arrange his/her notes in a different order from the original either because coherence demands this or to create a better basis for memorisation. Finally, the CCIr might decide to completely exclude certain SL discourse segments from notes and memory such as repetitions, multiple starts or redundancies (*ibid*).

### 3.2.3 Attention, memory and CCI

It follows from the discussions of the CCI process models and note-taking that *simultaneity* and *attention-sharing* (2.2.2.1.2 **Attention**) between various mental tasks are not characteristic of SI only but are also present in CCI as the CCIr is simultaneously involved in listening to the SL discourse, analysing its segments, deciding what to note down and in what form and what to memorise (Seleskovitch 1975a: 120f, quoted in Pöchhacker 2004: 124; Kohn and Kalina 1996: 128). Besides, divided attention does exist during production because the CCIr has to simultaneously deliver his/her rendition and monitor his/her output. However, splitting attention in the production phase is less demanding in CCI than SI since in the former there is no input from the speaker (Kohn and Kalina 1996: 129).

The above argument is supported by the results of an experimental study involving 14 professionals and 14 students by Andres (2002, quoted in Pöchhacker 2004: 124f) who has found evidence of processing overload resulting from insufficient attentional resources particularly in the receptive phase even at a low SL input rate. Her time-coded video recordings have shown that note-taking especially by students has not been sufficiently automatic and has made extensive demands on attentional resources. Students have tended to lag behind in their note-taking by more than six seconds and have tried to catch up by leaving gaps in their notes, and these gaps have also been reflected in their TL renditions.

According to Darò (1997: 627), even though there might not be any direct phonological overlapping clearly felt in CCI between two distinct linguistic codes as in SI, simultaneous listening, analysis, decisions on what to note and store in memory and actual note-taking might interfere in the working of memory and thus reduce the CCIr's recall abilities.

She also argues (ibid) that some form of phonological interference can be assumed to exist when writing under dictation (during note-taking) based on the assumption of the presence of an inner phonological rehearsal of the sounds heard before transcribing them into a written format. To support her view, Darò uses Baddeley's (1990) working memory model. Baddeley has found a significant decrease in recall abilities in subjects who have been asked to read and memorise English words during articulatory suppression, that is, concurrent overt utterance of irrelevant syllables like 'the, the, the'.

Darò (1997: 627), therefore, suggests that noting words as symbols might reduce phonological interference between oral and written material because symbolic representations of verbal utterances may not require an inner rehearsal or articulation of the phonological form of symbols while noting them and may thus allow the working memory to function with fewer constraints thereby facilitating LTM storage of verbal utterances.

However, it might be argued that note-taking in CCI is clearly not the same as writing a dictation since, as mentioned in **3.2.2 The strategy of note-taking**, the CCIr does not transcribe the speech he/she hears, and his/her notes are or should be short and serve only as memory aids (see also Seleskovitch 1989: 76; 1999: 64; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 28). Moreover, Darò's suggestion of using symbols instead of words is a *tentative* one that is not based on any scientific evidence; therefore, further cognitive research in this area is needed to assess the validity of this suggestion.

Furthermore, Lambert (1989; **2.2.2.1.4.1 Working memory and interpreting**) who has conducted an experimental study comparing recall abilities after listening, shadowing, SI and CCI, has arrived at completely contradictory conclusions to Darò's suggestion of phonological interference when writing under dictation or note-taking. Listening has yielded the highest recognition scores, followed by CCI, SI and shadowing, respectively. The results of the experiment have provided a strong argument in favour of a significant role played by note-taking in enhancing memory and learning since note-taking itself provides the interpreter with a form of overt rehearsal of the speech and longer exposure to information provided by the visual reinforcement of notes. Thus, it has been argued that listening and note-taking in CCI do not interfere with one another and may even reinforce one another and that simultaneous listening and writing in CCI may not be as 'disruptive' as listening and speaking in SI and shadowing (ibid: 90; Ilg and Lambert 1996: 85). Taylor (cf. 1989c) has conducted different experiments but has arrived at a similar conclusion.

Besides, the interaction between LTM and note-taking in CCI is *positively* described as one of the 'most salient aspects of the interpreting process' (Pöchhacker 2004: 124) for, according to Kirchoff (1976a: 118), unlike SI, in CCI data are basically stored in LTM. In a sense, the CCIr performs 'semantic chunking' (Pöchhacker 2004: 124) of the message and stores the larger amount of data in his/her LTM and a smaller amount in the form of

notes. The assumption of the positive interaction between LTM and note-taking in CCI is thus based on the belief that notes are taken first and foremost to aid the CCIr's memory by serving as both '**external storage** devices' for elements that are difficult to retrieve from memory such as names or numbers and '**retrieval cues**' for stored/memorised conceptual structures of sense (Pöchhacker *ibid*, emphasis in original; see also Jones 1998: 44).

Pöchhacker argues that this mechanism of eliciting information from LTM has been studied by several researchers but the most up-to-date explanation for this cognitive mechanism has come from Ericsson and Kintsch (1995, quoted in Pöchhacker 2004: 124) who have proposed a form of 'long-term working memory' or 'retrieval structures' that make available a LTM subset that is linked to a cue in the STM. For more information on the role of memory and recall in interpreting, see also **2.2.2.1.4 Memory**.

### **3.3 CCI training**

It has been argued in **2.2.2.5.2.3 Training exercises** that some preliminary exercises are usually administered before starting actual training on a certain interpreting mode to develop in students the abilities to deal with linguistic material, perform multiple tasks simultaneously, retain information in memory, etc. Ilg and Lambert (1996: 73) argue that this is because teaching CCI right from the start 'presupposes' students' ability to transfer messages across languages, which is not often the case as training will not be needed if students already possess such abilities. Thus, they (1996: 73-77) suggest *a preparatory phase* of exercises with written texts and improvised speeches; in one language and then involving two or more languages to develop in students the ability to consider not words, but larger units of meaning such as sentences and paragraphs (*ibid*: 74).

They argue that starting with this preparatory phase offers instructors an opportunity for assessing students' abilities of quick and efficient processing and analysis of verbal material of different types, well or poorly structured, clearly or badly delivered, with or without a regional, social or foreign accent, delivered at a high speed or at a low presentation rate, and so on (*ibid*).

According to Ilg and Lambert (*ibid*: 74f), students should then be made aware of, and

taught, anticipation and prediction to learn how to detect the procession and final outcome of statements in various situations and speech comprehension and production to enhance active listening and organise their thoughts to produce convincing and meaningful statements. Memory exercises without notes can then be introduced for students to be made aware of how their memories function and how they could develop strategies for efficient STM and LTM storage. Afterwards, trainees should be made aware of public speaking skills and phraseology and master public speaking conventions before applying them in mock conferences or specific settings such as eulogies, after-dinner oratory, etc.

Ilg and Lambert argue that note-taking techniques and CCI proper can then be introduced and practised. They argue that investing some time in this preparatory phase will lead to a faster acquisition of CCI skills and yield successful results (1996: 75).

Ilg and Lambert's above sample of how training in CCI should proceed from beginning to end is identical to a large extent with that of Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995) who provide a rather more detailed presentation.

Concepts to describe the interpreting process (attention, analysis, re-expression, memory, etc.) and preparatory exercises (paraphrasing, sight translating, anticipation, etc.) have been discussed in some depth in this and the previous chapter; therefore, the following sections focus only on public speaking and note-taking training.

### **3.3.1 Public speaking skills**

According to Herbert (1952: 59) and Capaldo (1980: 244f), like anyone involved in public relations (e.g. academics, business representatives or statesmen), the CCIr ought to have a pleasant voice and good public speaking skills. Weber (1989b: 164) argues that excellent public speaking skills are interpreters' 'safety net' when difficulties arise because if CCIrs possess such skills, they can devote full attention to solving problems if they occur or might even be able to hide the presence of problems. Schweda-Nicholson (1985: 149) argues that the way interpreters deliver their rendition reveals their verbal and non-verbal behaviour which is a significant factor that contributes to the audience's impression of the delivery.

Thus, teaching trainees public speaking skills should form an essential component of CCI training courses. Schweda-Nicholson (1985: 148) argues that students should be taught how to present accurate and complete information, speak clearly with a steady and well inflected voice at a normal presentation rate, have self-confidence and composure, and maintain good eye contact with the audience (cf. also Nolan 2005: 8f).

Besides sight translating (cf. **2.2.2.5.2.3.7 Sight translating**), other methods have been proposed to teach students public speaking skills. One method is ‘a special course in Public Speaking’ offered in parallel with the CCI course at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (Weber 1989b: 164). During the course, students are taught to speak in front of an audience and enhance their language flexibility. In the first four weeks, trainees read written texts in the form of presentations which are varied according to the subject matter. During the second half, students paraphrase original texts from English to English by conveying the message of the original through changes in structure and vocabulary. Moreover, students are asked to complete projects in vocabulary and text analysis (ibid).

The use of videotapes is suggested by Schweda-Nicholson (1985: 148f) as another method for teaching public speaking skills. In this technique, students listen to a short speech and take notes. They are then given a few moments to examine their notes before rendering the original one by one while they are videotaped. The instructor makes comments on students’ performance after playing back tapes and then allows students to give their own comments. Students’ recorded performance is judged on the basis of their overall delivery (e.g. eye contact with the audience, voice inflection, poise, etc.), correct rendition, thoroughness and fidelity (see also Kurz 1989b: 214; 2002b: 70f).

According to Schweda-Nicholson (ibid: 149), the technique should be used at an early stage in the course because this helps students identify their weak and strong points in their style from the start and thus pay attention to the areas where improvement is needed. She argues that because it gives students the opportunity to see themselves as they will be seen by the audience, the technique has proved irreplaceable in drawing students’ attention to the problems their performance suffers from. Among the most common of these are students’ overreliance on notes, halting and slow delivery, low voice and monotonous delivery, use of ‘cover-up tactics’ like speaking very quickly or swallowing words in the hope of not

being understood when unsure of a particular point, and confused facial expressions which tend to appear when students are unsure of some information.

At the University of Salford, ‘vocal training’ is incorporated into the conference interpreting training programme with the help of vocal specialists and specific focus on

- voice projection in large rooms
- delivery (consistency of pace, rhythm, intonation)
- breathing exercises (avoidance of the ‘head voice’)
- general voice care
- performance-related vocal stress (Tipton 2006, personal communication).

### **3.3.2 Note-taking training**

In **3.2.2 The strategy of note-taking**, note-taking has been discussed as a strategy. This section looks into note-taking from a didactic point of view. It discusses researchers’ views on how students should be taught to master note-taking in terms of when to start taking notes and the content and form of notes.

#### **3.3.2.1 When to start taking notes?**

According to Herbert (1952: 35f), beginners should be taught to start taking notes as soon as the speaker starts delivering his/her speech because in some situations what might look like a few words may unexpectedly end up as a very long discourse.

Almost 60 years on and this professional view has not changed because Jones (1998: 67-70) argues that although it is true that interpreters deal with ideas not words when taking notes, the CCIr should start note-taking as soon as possible insofar as he/she can be sure where an element fits in the notes. For example, if the CCIr hears *The Prime Minister attacked the leader of opposition for being opportunistic over the issue of the war*, he/she should note down *The Prime Minister* only when he/she hears the verb *attacked*, thus realising that this noun phrase functions as a subject and not an object because the sentence may well be a passive sentence: *The Prime Minister was attacked by the opposition leader ...*. In such a case, *The Prime Minister* will obviously be in the object position.

Jones states why it is important for the CCIr not to take the risk of lagging too long behind the speaker by drawing a comparison between CCI and SI. First, the simultaneous

interpreter can always be in a better position than the CCIr if he/she lags behind the speaker since the former can catch up with the speaker by accelerating delivery, but the CCIr will be taking notes, and it is obvious that writing notes takes more time than speaking. Second, the simultaneous interpreter's choice about his/her final delivery is a decision that directly determines what his/her audience will hear unlike the CCIr whose decision is only about the notes which are only a means to an end (Jones 1998: 67f), and some of the words might not even be included in the final rendition (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 31).

### **3.3.2.2 Content of notes**

Most researchers argue that the CCIr should note the idea (sense), not words or phrases (cf. e.g. Seleskovitch 1989: 76; Ilg and Lambert 1996: 79; Rozan 2002: 15f; Ahrens 2005: 2).

Jones (1998: 45-49)<sup>4</sup> provides a detailed discussion of two types of information that should be noted down. The first refers to chunks of the original that should be noted to help in 'jogging' (ibid: 44) memory. The other kind refers to parts which are taken down to *relieve* memory because the CCIr cannot or does not want to remember them (ibid: 46). Borrowing Pöchhacker's (2004: 124) terms, the former are referred to as 'retrieval cues' and the latter externally stored information. Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 32f) also emphasise noting down first and last statements. The following sub-sections discuss these three categories.

#### **3.3.2.2.1 Retrieval cues**

According to Jones (1998: 45f), the types of information under this heading are, first, the main ideas of the original noted on the basis of a subject-verb-object analysis because this provides the CCIr with 'a skeleton outline' of the original speech, which in turn will help the CCIr detect the sequence of ideas, thus allowing him/her to reproduce the original moving quickly from one idea to the next without hesitation instead of searching for the next idea in his/her mind (cf. also Ilg and Lambert 1996: 79). Having the form of speech on notes can also force the interpreter to analyse the speech and help memory (Jones ibid: 44). Second, the CCIr should detect how ideas are related to each other or separated from one another and thus note down the links and separations between ideas. Third, the CCIr's notes should contain a reminder of the point of view being expressed because it may not be

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<sup>4</sup> See also Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 29f) and Gillies (2005) for similar presentations.



feasible to represent it faithfully without some help from the notes. Fourth, the tenses of the verb should be reflected on the notes because delegates are always keen to know ‘what happened when’ (Jones 1998: 46). Finally, modal verbs should be noted because of their crucial influence on the function of other verbs and overall meaning of the sentence (ibid).

#### **3.3.2.2 Externally stored information**

As mentioned above, information under this heading is noted down to relieve the CCIr’s memory as this information is difficult to remember. Jones (ibid: 46-49) identifies three types of such information. First, numbers and dates should be given top priority because they are abstract and too difficult to remember especially if they are part of a list or delivered quickly (ibid 46f). Second, proper names (of people, places, organisations, etc.) can also be very difficult to remember if they are not known to the CCIr (ibid 47f). Finally, lists (of chemicals, countries, products, etc.) should always be noted thoroughly, and if the CCIr misses one or more items in the list, the notes should clearly show the missing items because he/she might need to ask the speaker to repeat the list, so identifying missing items can help the CCIr to put the question quickly and correctly to the speaker (ibid: 48).

#### **3.3.2.3 First and last statements**

According to Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 32f), students should be made aware of the importance of noting down the first and last statements of a speech. First or introductory statements are not part of an idea being developed in the speech and thus have no ‘cognitive context’. Therefore, they can be forgotten quickly. It is also important to note down the last statement of a speech because the final statement usually carries the conclusion that the speaker has arrived at. Students should thus be taught to note it down though this could force the CCIr to lag behind the speaker and thus delay the delivery for a couple of seconds.

#### **3.3.2.3 Form of notes**

This discussion concerns training students on *how* to take notes in terms of the language of notes, symbols and abbreviations and the layout of notes.

##### **3.3.2.3.1 Language of notes**

Researchers have varying and contradictory positions over language choice in note-taking.

Alexieva (1994b: 205) gives two reasons why the SL should be chosen. First, opting for the TL means adding interlingual transfer to listening, note-taking and memory operations, thus complicating things further as this involves working with the signs of the SL and TL and executing interlingual transfer before note-taking. Second, the reliability of interlingual transfer in the absence of the following context is questioned since decisions taken may not be warranted by what comes next, which may lead to incorrect notes.

Gile (1995d: 182f) calls for empirical research to give the final say on this issue, but he seems to support the above position. According to his Effort Models, taking notes in the TL theoretically requires more processing capacity than in the SL because conversion requires more processing capacity. However, it might be argued that at least the same amount of processing capacity for conversion will still be needed in the production phase.

However, Herbert (1952: 38) argues that dealing with the problems of translation while the notes are being taken helps facilitate the reading of notes, thus improving production. Seleskovitch (1989: 76) and Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 37ff) give another reason arguing that taking notes in the TL when an idea cannot be noted in symbols helps make sure from the start that students are not noting words they hear but reminders of what they have *understood* (sense). They (1995: 31) argue that this will help students dissociate the two languages, thus producing a less literal translation (cf. also AIIC 1994). Then, students gradually develop their own methods of note-taking. However, Seleskovitch and Lederer argue that if the right TL term does not come to mind immediately as is the case with 'transcodable items' (e.g. figures), it should be noted in the SL because thinking about it might take a long time and cause the CCIr to miss parts of the original (1995: 31).

Jones (1998: 66f) gives a 'slight preference' to the TL, but argues that the issue should be addressed in a 'pragmatic, non-dogmatic, way' because, first, much of the notes could be written in a metalanguage (symbols and/or abbreviations) which is neither the SL nor TL. Second, some words might be noted in either the SL or TL, but the final form of the notes might be 'cryptic' or ambiguous with the words not necessarily being related to one another in a way that adheres to the grammar or syntax of either language. Third, CCIrs might write their notes in both the SL and TL or a third language because its words are shorter, easier to note or just come naturally to mind.

Dam (2004a) has empirically found that the choice of language depends more on the *A-B distinction* than on the 'traditional' SL-TL dichotomy. Two tasks were carried out by four subjects, the first three of whom have Danish and Spanish as their A and B languages respectively, and the fourth has Spanish and Danish as her A and B languages respectively. Subjects were first asked to consecutively interpret a text from Spanish into Danish. Thus, the first three subjects have interpreted from their B into A, and the fourth from her A into B. Subjects have then been asked to consecutively interpret another text from Danish into Spanish. Thus, the first three subjects have interpreted from their A into B, and the fourth from her B into A. In both cases, Dam has found that the subjects' A languages are dominant in their notes regardless of whether their A languages are the SL or TL. Dam (ibid: 12) therefore suggests that the choice of language in note-taking is *mainly* governed by the A-B language dichotomy though not discarding the role of the TL-SL distinction altogether since there has been a slight shift from the A language preference among subjects when the B language is the SL.

Dam (ibid: 13) uses Gile's effort models (1997; **3.2.1.2 Effort Models**) to explain these results, arguing that in order to keep efforts to a minimum and save processing capacity for listening and analysis, CCIrs are more likely to take notes in any language that is easier to them, thus taking notes in a faster way. Writing in one's A is easier and faster than B. The SL-TL distinction can also influence ease of processing and writing since taking the notes in the SL is theoretically easier and faster than the TL. Thus, although the CCIr is opting for a more demanding task during the reformulation stage, the SL option is still less demanding since he/she will not be working with two codes simultaneously.

However, it must be argued here that the CCIr will *definitely and necessarily work with two different codes simultaneously in the production phase*, thus bringing linguistic interference closer to the CCIr's rendition, which could be more disruptive to the final delivery.

Dam (ibid) concludes that theoretically, the question should not be whether to take notes in the SL or TL as much as in the *A language or SL*. The latter are likely to be the 'competing parameters'. This may be because no correlations have been found in this study between A-to-B interpreting or TL/B language notes. When the two factors representing ease and speed in note-taking (the SL and A language) coincide (the A language happening to be the

SL), this language can be the choice for the code of notes. If the situation changes (the A language becomes the TL and the SL is a B language), the interpreter will be faced with a challenging choice between two factors providing ease and speed, an A functioning not a SL, but a TL, and a SL which is a B, not an A language. The notes analysed in Dam's study have shown that students have generally preferred the A language to the SL.

Dam's results are interesting, but they cannot be solid findings as they are obtained from an experimental performance of four students, and more so because in another experiment involving five professional interpreters, Dam (2004b: 257) has found 'a strong preference' for using the TL for notes in all respects (72% overall and 58% to 87% individually). Thus, as Dam herself suggests, there is a need for more empirical research in this area.

### **3.3.2.3.2 Symbols and abbreviations**

CCIRs usually use symbols and abbreviations in their notes to help save time during note-taking. However, despite the obvious benefits of applying an efficient system of symbols and abbreviations for note-taking, only a small number of researchers (cf. e.g. Becker 1972; Matyssek 1989, both quoted in Ilg and Lambert 1996: 71f) favour teaching students a specific note-taking system, and the majority (cf. Herbert 1952: 35; Henderson 1976: 109; Keiser 1978: 23; Longley 1978: 50; Seleskovitch 1989: 76; 1999: 64; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 30; Weber 1989b: 166; AIIC 1994; Ilg and Lambert 1996: 81; Jones 1998: 54ff, Ficchi, 1999; Nolan 2005: 294; Lim 2006: 106, etc.) argue that students should be encouraged to develop their own ways of taking notes though, as Capaldo argues (1980: 245), some basic symbols referring to such concepts as emphasis, questions, exclamations, etc. might be suggested to students as general guidance.

Like all researchers who reject teaching a ready-made system of note-taking, Herbert (1952: 35) emphasises the individuality of notes, arguing that some people may remember details, others the sequence of ideas. Thus, notes should be taken based on individual needs.

Henderson (1976: 109) and Jones (1998: 55) stress that any system developed by a student or interpreter should be constructed of features that are 'meaningful' to him/her because what might be logical or meaningful to one interpreter might not necessarily be to another.

Keiser (1978: 23) reports on students who could faithfully reproduce long speeches without notes and tell stories backward solely from memory without missing any element during an introductory course to CCI, but after six months, they were lost in notes and symbols after being taught a note-taking system and never became conference interpreters. Similarly, Longley (1978: 50) argues that unless a student has a mind that thinks in symbols and shortcuts, lists of symbols learnt by rote can only be a barrier to quick note-taking because they will not be spontaneous (cf. also Schweda-Nicholson 1985: 150).

Seleskovitch (1989: 76) is a staunch opponent of teaching a specific note-taking system because she believes this means adding another system or ‘artificial language’ (1999: 64) to the two language systems involved, thus making things even more difficult for students.

The Poznan Workshops for interpreter trainers (cf. AIIC 1994) have concluded that students should know that no system is superior to the other and different types of discourse may require different note-taking strategies (cf. also Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 30).

Ficchi (1999) proposes an autonomous, or ‘self-directed learning’ (ibid: 204), approach to CCI (note-taking) based on the results of an experimental study involving eleven beginners by means of three testing phases over six months. The results have indicated the effectiveness of this approach which has been clearly reflected in the improvement in students’ performance over the six-month period (ibid: 212).

The results of Ficchi’s study confirm the opinion of the overwhelming majority of researchers who stress the individuality of CCI notes.

### **3.3.2.3.3 Layout of notes**

The layout of notes has also been taken up by some researchers out of their belief that the layout of notes on the page could facilitate the recall of the information of the original. Ilg and Lambert (1996: 82) argue that students should endeavour to develop a layout that ‘carries meaning’. The position of signs, symbols and abbreviations on the page should reflect some additional meaning such as parallelism, precedence, subordination, cause-effect relations, origin-destination, etc. This helps the CCIr pick up the chain of reasoning of the message to be reproduced in the TL (cf. Jones 1998: 44f; Nolan 2005: 295).

Jones (1998: 49-54) discusses three principles for achieving such an effective layout of notes: the diagonal layout, left-hand margin and vertical lists.

### 3.3.2.3.3.1 Diagonal layout

The idea of the diagonal layout has originally been suggested by Rozan who has called it ‘shift’ (2002: 21f). Jones (1998: 49f) explains in detail why the diagonal layout should be used because Rozan only states that it helps producing an ‘accurate and full version of the text’. Jones (ibid) argues that noting the main ideas on the basis of subject-verb-object structure should be reflected on the page clearly in the form of a diagonal axis moving from left to right<sup>5</sup> and from top to bottom (see the diagram below). First, this forces the CCIr to separate the sentence components on the page in a way that eliminates confusion, offering a natural movement of the eyes from left to right (or from right to left as in Arabic) and from top to bottom when the CCIr produces the rendition. Second, if two or more ideas are noted on the same page, the beginning of each idea will be clearly shown by the back movement to the left-/right-hand side of the page. Third, writing horizontally might tempt the CCIr to take too much information in a way that may confuse ideas. Gillies (2005: 44) argues that the diagonal layout helps further in avoiding syntactic interference by forcing the CCIr to use the TL word order and in providing space for additions of details if needed.

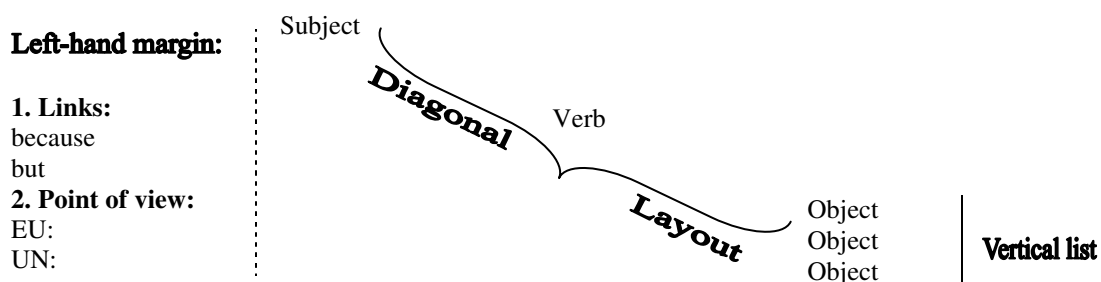


Figure 3-1: Layout of CCI notes (left-to-right, English example), based on Jones’s (1998) ideas

### 3.3.2.3.3.2 The left-hand margin<sup>6</sup>

According to Jones (1998: 50-53), the left-hand margin can be used for noting two important elements in a speech: links between ideas and points of view. Logically speaking, a link will fall outside the subject-verb-object presentation and should thus have a separate

<sup>5</sup> This arrangement suits interpreting that involves languages with the left-to-right system of writing; interpreters into Arabic, for example, might well, and indeed do, choose the right-to-left direction.

<sup>6</sup> Again, this could well be the right-hand margin for some interpreters.

place on the page, but a place that makes them easy to find and does not confuse them with the subject of the sentence. The most appropriate place is the left-hand margin since following the diagonal layout by the CCIr will force him/her to go from left to right when starting a new idea. Points of view can also be placed on the left-hand margin to stand out clearly and be picked up easily by the CCIr (see the diagram above).

It is worth mentioning here, however, that some of the suggestions in the two principles mentioned above can only apply to some, not all languages as Jones himself acknowledges (1998: 50) for in addition to the fact that some languages, such as Arabic, use the right-to-left system of writing, there is the problem of word order. For example, Arabic uses the verb-subject-object structure. The problem of word order is found even in western languages which use the left-to-right system such as German with its verb-last structure. A parallel diagram involving Arabic can therefore look like the following:

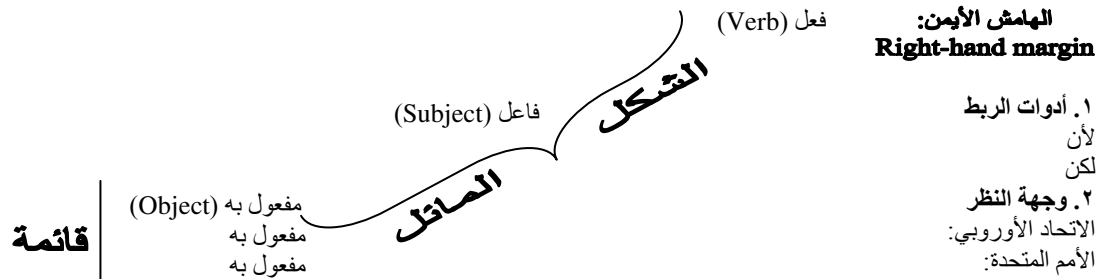


Figure 3-2: Layout of CCI notes (right-to-left, Arabic example), based on Jones's (1998) ideas

### 3.3.2.3.3 Vertical lists

Jones (ibid: 53) argues that the vertical lists rule is an exception to the diagonal layout rule since elements in any list have the same value and should thus be given the same place in notes. A list can occur in the subject, verb or object position (see the diagrams above).

The following chapter contains a presentation of the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis to approach the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator.

## Chapter 4: Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis for approaching the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator. The theoretical framework draws on two cognitive models: the theory of sense (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995) and relevance theory of communication (RT) developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995). The first two parts of this chapter present the two models, and the third seeks to reconcile the different concepts and mechanisms proposed by each model in order to create a unified (cognitive-pragmatic) 'model' that will form the basis for an account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator.

### 4.1 Theory of sense

The theory of sense<sup>1</sup> was developed by the founder of the Paris School, Seleskovitch, in the late 1960s. It was later adopted as a research foundation by other members of the Paris School (ESIT<sup>2</sup>) of the University of Paris III/Sorbonne Nouvelle (Salama-Carr 2001: 112; Pöchhacker 2004: 35). According to Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002: 97), the theory of sense has been originally proposed for CCI and has later been extended to SI by Lederer who has also been active in extending it to written translation (cf. Lederer 2003). Delisle (1988) is another prominent example of applying the theory to translation. The theory currently informs the practice of conference interpreting at the EU institutions.

According to Salama-Carr (2001: 113), the basic point the theory offers is the distinction it makes between explicitness and implicitness (see also Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 80/224f), where the former refers to what speakers *say* and the latter to what they actually *intend* to say as opposed to what they want to perform (see also Seleskovitch 1977: 31; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 227-231). Sense is a combination of both, but, as is shown below, full comprehension of sense hinges on the presence of a sufficient level of shared knowledge between interlocutors, and without this level of shared knowledge, this combination of the surface structure of the text or speech and cognitive structures will fail to trigger off sense in the mind of the listener.

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as the 'Interpretive Theory of Translation' (Seleskovitch 1999: 56/61) or IT (Pöchhacker 2004: 68), the interpretative or interpretive theory (Seleskovitch 1986a: 373; 1999: 61, respectively), the interpretive or interpretative approach (Salama-Carr 2001: 112) and the interpretive model (Lederer 2003).

<sup>2</sup> This refers to École Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs.



One of the most fundamental methodological principles strongly advocated by proponents of the theory is that research and scientific inquiry into the interpreting process must be undertaken in real interpreting situations by observing speech as it unfolds in the communication act through recordings and transcriptions of speeches and their renditions in different languages, but not in the laboratory, thus invalidating experimentation and experimental results since these can in no way be representative of real interpreting situations (Seleskovitch 1978a: 146; Lederer 1978: 323).

The following are meant to be an account of the theory of sense through a discussion of the specific concepts of the theory.

#### **4.1.1 Understanding for sense**

Proponents of the theory of sense have been forerunners in contending that language comprehension is a dynamic process that occurs/can be established whenever units of linguistic meaning are merged with prior (extralinguistic) knowledge (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 23) to ‘make sense’ (Seleskovitch 1986a: 371). Thus, the interpreter receives linguistic units that carry context (verbal and situational), that is, utterances spoken by a person whose position, nationality, interests, etc. are known to the interpreter and other intended listeners. The message borne in an utterance intended to specific listeners, therefore, differs from a sequence of words chosen at random or considered in isolation in that the former does not only evoke the linguistic meaning of this utterance but also facts and knowledge shared between all interlocutors in the communication event: the speaker, intended receivers and interpreter (Seleskovitch 1976: 99; 1978a: chapters 2 and 3).

Ambiguity can only occur when the listener lacks the *relevant* extralinguistic knowledge. Thus, any doubts the interpreter might have about the speaker’s intended meaning are the result of a lack of ‘prior inside knowledge’ of the subject under discussion (Seleskovitch 1976: 103), which points to the importance of documentation and preparation for conferences by interpreters (**2.2.2.3.2 Documentation; 7.5.4.3.3.2 Preparation**).

##### **4.1.1.1 Cognitive complements**

The theory of sense refers to this type of extralinguistic/world knowledge as ‘cognitive

complements' (Seleskovitch 1978b: 334; Lederer 1990: 53), that is, 'the knowledge of things that changes language meanings into author's [or speaker's] meaning or sense' (Seleskovitch 1988: 87). Cognitive complements refer to verbal, situational and cognitive contexts and world/encyclopaedic knowledge (Lederer 1990: 56). Verbal context refers to the continuous stream of words wherein each word contributes to the meaning of the other words and becomes more specific by the surrounding words, thus doing away with polysemy. Situational context includes the event, participants and their roles, and again helps produce relevant meanings to prevent polysemy or ambiguity (ibid). Cognitive context refers to what has been said previously that interpreters remember and use to understand what is being said at the point of translating. Usually, remembering what has been said is not a verbatim matter especially if what has been said consists of large chunks of speech because words said previously tend to lose their verbal shape (see deverbalisation below). It is cognitive because it does not have a verbal shape, and contextual because it arises from things previously said (ibid: 57). Encyclopaedic knowledge is the sum total of one's knowledge whether acquired through experience or learning. The speech chain musters the relevant parts of encyclopaedic knowledge to contribute to overall understanding (ibid: 58).

Cognitive complements interact with 'units of meaning' (or 'segments of sense' which are 'the synthesis of a number of words present in short term memory associating with previous cognitive experiences or recollections') to make sense, thus allowing for comprehension of the incoming message and identification of the intended interpretation of the original (Lederer 1978: 330; see also Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 215f/221ff).

Sense may thus be defined as

a cognitive construction made by the addressee on the basis of the sounds received from the addresser's mouth; he adds to them such cognitive remembrance as fits the sounds, and such additional knowledge, whether from his long or medium term memory, that fits the whole of a clause or sentence (Seleskovitch 1978b: 335).

#### **4.1.2 Deverbalisation**

Deverbalisation refers to the process during which SL words lose their linguistic shape within three or four seconds of reception (Seleskovitch 1977: 30) and change into a non-

verbal sense in the interpreter's mind (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 24f), thus reverting back to a state that is similar to the state in which the message has existed in the speaker's brain before having been uttered by him/her (Seleskovitch 1978a: 98). This process is natural not only in interpreting, but also in monolingual communication since as humans, we remember the content of what has been said, not the exact words used to express that content. In interpreting, where at least two languages are involved, deverbalisation becomes indispensable for an accurate and intelligible TL rendition of the SL message (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 25), all the more so where the SL information is delivered at an average presentation rate of 150 words a minute to be restated in the TL within an average time lag of three to four seconds which is roughly the same duration of time the acoustic shape of the SL message stays in the mind (Seleskovitch 1977: 30f). Thus, it is not linguistic meanings, but deverbalised sense that makes it possible and easier for the interpreter to come up with *natural* and spontaneous expression in the TL (ibid) provided that he/she possesses perfect command of the SL and TL, sufficient knowledge of the subject matter and the requisite interpreting and intellectual skills (Seleskovitch 1986a: 375; 1989: 65).

Thus, remembering the speech on the part of the interpreter is not the result of 'rote learning but of comprehension'. This is why the term 'cognitive memory' is used to refer to the '*nonverbal remembering*' of the contents of speech (Seleskovitch 1978b: 336, emphasis in original).

The deverbalisation process is therefore said to exist whenever the interpreter is engaged in interpretation (understanding) of the original message, which is to be distinguished from 'transcoding' of 'translatable' words such as figures, proper names and words which in a given field refer to things or concepts that have identical definitions in both languages and therefore have linguistic equivalents. Such words can be translated immediately, that is, before they lose their linguistic or acoustic shape (Seleskovitch 1976: 111).

Seleskovitch (1978a: 98f) argues that from a theoretical point of view, there is no reason why the interpreter's version of the non-verbal sense should show that it has originally been expressed or stated in another language, which means what the interpreter says is basically independent from the SL because his/hers is an expression of part of a pre-verbal thought

(intended message of the original) that is stored in a non-verbal form in his/her mind (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 227-231).

Naturally, proponents of the theory of sense (e.g. Seleskovitch 1977: 28f; 1986a: 374f; 1999: 59ff) argue that the fact that this sense is non-verbal is evidence that it can be expressed in any language and in many ways in the same language because it is independent of linguistic form, hence the universality of the theory of sense which can be applied to any discourse type and language combination, thus standing in opposition to translation theories that are based on linguistic theories or contrastive linguistics because linguistic differences or the study of such differences are irrelevant to interpreting and translation and also because languages ‘do not form the same messages with the same semantic components’ (Seleskovitch 1977: 30). This position which is often contrasted with the position maintained by followers of the Leipzig School (cf. Wilss 1978) and theorists in the information processing paradigm (cf. Moser 1976) has been supported by the results of a recent empirical analysis (Setton 1999) of authentic corpora involving languages with ‘left-branching’ or ‘verb-last structures’ (Chinese and German) which are often cited by theorists in the latter group as examples where interpreting into or out of them depends to a large extent on language-specific factors. Setton (1999: 126f) has found that the analysis of speeches and interpreters’ versions ‘reveals patterns which cannot be accounted by a structure-driven analysis’ and suggests ‘a complex process in which inferences and external knowledge, traceable in the output, confirm the use of information from various sources’ (see also **2.2.2.1.6.2.4 The anticipation strategy**).

Based on the deverbalisation process and what it entails, the theory of sense places an emphatic rejection of literal, word-for-word translation or what is referred to as ‘form-based’ processing (Setton 2003b: 150) in favour of meaning-based processing, a position that, according to Setton, is the ‘strongest in the literature’ (ibid: 151).

### **4.1.3 Expression**

The theory of sense does not provide a detailed description of the production phase in that it emphasises the possession of full command of the two working languages and familiarity with the subject matter which will enable interpreters to automatically re-express the SL

message in the TL once they grasp the sense of the original. This means that interpreters are conscious of the sense they obtain from the original and of their intention to express this sense, but their choice of the form of expression is unconscious in that their (unconscious) knowledge of the TL words, grammatical rules, etc. is automatically geared towards achieving this goal, that is, expressing the sense in the TL (Seleskovitch 1978b: 336), hence the mantra '*Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves*' (Lewis Carroll, quoted in Seleskovitch 1977: 27, emphasis in original).

Thus, the translation process involved in interpreting is not a direct conversion of the SL linguistic meaning to the TL; it is rather a conversion from the SL discourse to cognitive sense and an expression of this sense in the TL. This is evidenced by the natural presence of deverbalisation as an intermediate stage between perception of the original discourse and expression of this discourse in the TL (Seleskovitch 1977: 28).

This clear cognitive separation between the two streams of languages provided by deverbalisation plays a significant role in helping eliminate any possible linguistic interference which more often than not results in linguistic borrowing of SL structures and/or expressions, which in turn will result in the use of a hybrid form of language that Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 25f) describe as a 'bastardized' form of the TL language that is unintelligible to the TL audience.

More importantly, Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 220/229f) argue that deverbalisation and dealing with sense rather than individual words provide the interpreter with a great deal of latitude of expression that allows the interpreter to be faithful to both content and form of the original message in his/her TL expression. Being not tied to the actual *words* of the original allows the interpreter to be faithful to its content by expressing *clearly and precisely* in the TL the content of the original message up to a level that cannot be achieved by merely replacing corresponding terms or words. This latitude also allows the interpreter to be faithful to the form of the original by respecting the speaker's style and register, restating naturally in the TL what has been naturally said in the SL.

The following part is a presentation of the second model, RT, which has a great deal in common with the theory of sense.

## 4.2 Relevance theory of communication (RT)

Sperber and Wilson (1995: vii) argue that human ‘cognitive processes [...] are geared to achieving the greatest possible cognitive effect for the smallest possible processing effort’. In order for this to be achieved, hearers must focus their attention on what appears to be the most relevant information, and the communicator guarantees in return that the information he/she communicates is relevant. This is called the *Communicative Principle of Relevance* (henceforth principle of relevance). Sperber and Wilson (1995: vii) argue that this principle is necessary for explaining communication and is enough on its own to explain the interaction of linguistic meaning and contextual factors in the interpretation of utterances.

RT is an elaboration of Grice’s analysis of inferential communication which has been found by Sperber and Wilson (ibid: 21) to be defective, but a sufficient one to be considered as the point of departure for an inferential model of human communication, RT.

### 4.2.1 Grice’s conversation analysis

Sperber and Wilson (1995: 24) argue that Grice’s account of communication provides the original idea that meaning and communication can be defined in terms of publishing and recognising intentions, but the account suffers from problems of definition and explanation.

#### 4.2.1.1 Problems of definition

These concern Grice’s definition of meaning. Grice (1957: 385) defines meaning in terms of the communicator’s intentions where:

‘[S] meant something by  $x$ ’ is (roughly) equivalent to ‘[S] intended the utterance of  $x$  to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention.

Strawson (1971: 155, quoted in Sperber and Wilson 1995: 21) has reformulated Grice’s analysis by separating out the three sub-intentions involved. Hence, to mean something by  $x$ , someone ( $S$ ) must intend

- (1) (a)  $S$ ’s utterance of  $x$  to produce a certain response  $r$  in a certain audience  $A$ ;  
(b)  $A$  to recognise  $S$ ’s intention (a);  
(c)  $A$ ’s recognition of  $S$ ’s intention (a) to function as at least part of  $A$ ’s reason for  $A$ ’s response  $r$ .

Sperber and Wilson (ibid: 28f) argue that communication can be successful even when only the audience's recognition of the speaker's intention is fulfilled (1b) without the effect being produced in the audience (1a) and/or without the audience's recognition of the speaker's intention functioning as part of the audience's reason for their response (1c). Consider the following example where Sarah says to Jad:

(2) I worked as a head teacher between 2002 and 2007.

Based on the reformulation in (1), Sarah's utterance and intentions may be formed as:

- (3) Sarah intends
- (a) her utterance (2) to produce in Jad the belief that she worked as a head teacher between 2002 and 2007;
  - (b) Jad to recognise her intention (a);
  - (c) Jad's recognition of her intention (a) to function as at least part of his reason for his belief.

According to Sperber and Wilson's argument above, when Sarah utters (2), her specific intention is to produce in Jad the belief that she worked as a head teacher between 2002 and 2007, but what if Jad recognises this intention but does not believe her? In this case, only her intention (3b) is fulfilled, which means even though Sarah has failed to convince Jad, she has succeeded in communicating to him what she has meant. Thus, intention (3a) is not an intention to communicate since communication can succeed without it being fulfilled. Therefore, Sperber and Wilson prefer to call it an 'intention to inform' or an 'informative intention' which is 'to inform the audience of something' (1995: 29) or 'to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions' (ibid: 58). Intention (3b) is the true 'communicative intention' which is 'to inform the audience of one's informative intention' (ibid: 29) or 'to make it mutually manifest to audience and communicator that the communicator has this informative intention' (ibid: 61). Intention (3c) cannot in principle be fulfilled when the informative intention (3a) is not, and since the fulfilment of (3a) is unnecessary for successful communication, the fulfilment of (3c) is likewise unnecessary.

#### **4.2.1.2 Problems of explanation**

These relate to Grice's inadequate explanation of communication (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 32). Grice (1975: 45) argues that communication is governed by a 'co-operative principle' which he develops into four categories of 'maxims of conversation' (quantity, quality, relation and manner), each including a number of other more specific maxims and

sub-maxims. The category of quantity refers to the amount of information to be provided, and under which fall the following maxims:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required (Grice 1975: 45).

The category of quality comprises a super-maxim and two more specific maxims:

Super-maxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence (ibid: 46).

The category of relation comprises only one maxim: 'Be relevant' (ibid).

The category of manner comprises a super-maxim and four other maxims:

Super-maxim: Be perspicuous.

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly (ibid).

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995: 34f), Grice's co-operative principle and conversational maxims help the addressee choose the intended thought that the speaker is trying to communicate in that the addressee can eliminate any incompatible thoughts a sentence uttered could be taken to represent on the assumption that the speaker is obeying the co-operative principle and maxims. Consequently, the remaining thought will be inferred by the hearer as the one which the speaker is trying to communicate. Moreover, the co-operative principle and maxims can help the hearer choose the implications that are explicitly conveyed from among the implications of the explicit content of an utterance.

However, Sperber and Wilson (1995: 36) argue that some essential concepts mentioned in the maxims are left completely undefined such as the notion of relevance. Besides, the view of implicatures suggested by Grice raises a list of more basic questions on the rationale behind the cooperative principle and maxims, whether there are only these nine maxims suggested by Grice or, in other words, whether they can be expanded or reduced, and finally how the maxims could be used in inference. Furthermore, Sperber and Wilson (ibid: 37) argue that since an utterance in a context carries particular implicatures, it is possible on



the basis of the context, utterance and general expectations about speakers' behaviour to justify the choice of a given interpretation, but not the exclusion of another interpretation that has not been chosen where there may be a series of interpretations that meet all the standards of truthfulness, informativeness, relevance and clarity.

Sperber and Wilson (1995: 38), therefore, argue that there is a need for developing Grice's analysis of inferential communication into an explanatory model by means of a rethinking in psychologically realistic terms of some basic questions on the type of shared information available to human beings and how such shared information is exploited in communication, on the nature of relevance, how it can be achieved, and the role played by the search for relevance in communication. The basic concepts<sup>3</sup> of such model are discussed below.

## **4.2.2 Basic concepts of RT**

The concepts considered below are context, inference, optimal relevance and descriptive and interpretive dimensions of language use.

### **4.2.2.1 The inferential nature of communication**

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995: 54), ostensive-inferential communication consists in ostension<sup>4</sup> (by the communicator) and inference (by the audience) where the communicator produces a stimulus and the addressee should infer the communicator's communicative intention from a set of other possible assumptions more often with the help of 'procedural' elements (such as discourse connectives, prosody, modals, markers of coordination and subordination, etc.) that put constraints on relevance, thus guiding hearers to the correct/relevant context for processing the new information, which will enable them to infer the intended interpretation (cf. Blakemore 1987; Wilson and Sperber 1993; Setton 1999: 8/11). Ostensive-inferential communication is thus defined as

the communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 63).

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<sup>3</sup> See Blakemore (1992) for a more detailed presentation of basic concepts of RT and pragmatics in general.

<sup>4</sup> Sperber and Wilson (1995: 49) define ostensive behaviour or ostension as 'behaviour which makes manifest an intention to make something manifest'.

Consider the following exchange:

- (4) Jad: Will the exam be difficult?  
Sarah: John will prepare the questions (Al-Zahran 2003: 11).

In this example, Sarah does not answer Jad directly, but provides an indirect answer that communicates and makes manifest a set of assumptions. In this case, the set of assumptions contains at least three assumptions that give rise to three possible yet different interpretations. Depending on Jad and Sarah's 'mutual cognitive environment' (see context below), Jad has to infer the strongest/correct assumption out of the possible three. The first is that the exam will be difficult if Sarah and Jad share the idea that John's questions are usually difficult. The second interpretation is that the exam will be easy if both Sarah and Jad know that John usually prepares easy questions. The last assumption is that Sarah does not know whether the exam will be difficult or easy if the communicators share the context that John is a new teacher and the exam they are talking about will be prepared for the first time by John whose questions are yet to be discovered.

For communication to succeed between Jad and Sarah, they must share a cognitive environment. In order for Jad to be able to infer the assumption Sarah wants him to choose, Sarah must have knowledge of his cognitive environment and consequently the assumption he is likely to entertain (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1995: 46). In this case, that Jad knows, depending on the situation, that John's questions are difficult, easy or that he does not know the nature of John's questions because John is a new teacher. In other words, there is little importance for the hearer to identify the proposition expressed by an utterance unless he/she can realise its effect on what he/she already believes. Equally, there is little reason for the speaker to offer the hearer information unless the former has a strong basis to think that it will have some effect on the latter's existing assumptions (Blakemore 1988: 239). Otherwise, Jad might just infer the wrong assumption by bringing another context that is not envisaged by Sarah, which most probably will lead to misunderstanding and possibly a communication failure (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 16) because utterance interpretation depends not only on the semantic representation of the utterance but also on the inferential combination of the utterance and context, which explains why some utterances can have contradictory interpretations such as Sarah's reply in (4) above (Gutt 1998: 42).

### 4.2.2.2 Context

From a relevance-theoretic perspective, context has the following essential characteristics. The first is that it is

a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world. It is these assumptions, of course, rather than the actual state of the world, that affect the interpretation of an utterance. A context in this sense is not limited to information about the immediate physical environment or the immediately preceding utterances: expectations about the future, scientific hypotheses or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general cultural assumptions, beliefs about the mental state of the speaker, may all play a role in interpretation (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 15f).

All this is part of what Sperber and Wilson (1995: 38) call the 'cognitive environment' which is 'a set of assumptions which the individual is capable of mentally representing and accepting as true' (ibid: 46). Thus, an individual's cognitive environment consists in the external or physical world, the stored or memorised information and inferences made from the two (ibid: 39). Moreover, they call any shared cognitive environment in which it is manifest which people share it a 'mutual cognitive environment' (ibid: 41).

The second characteristic of context is that it is selected from a number of other potential contexts because such cognitive environmental factors as memory and encyclopaedic contents and inferences yield a range of potential contexts (ibid: 141).

The third characteristic of context is that since in any environment some assumptions are more accessible than others (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 40) and not all layers of encyclopaedic information are accessible at any certain moment of time (ibid: 138), what determines the selection of the right context from the range of available contexts is 'the search for relevance' (ibid: 141) which can be explained by the fact that humans usually try to spend the smallest possible amount of effort for achieving a certain task and at the same time expect benefits for the effort they spend (ibid: 123-132/141f). Sperber and Wilson call these benefits 'contextual effects' which have three types ('contextual implications', 'contradictions' and 'strengthenings') and affect the context by modifying and improving it as a result of the interaction between new and old information (1995: 108-117). Using relevance as a means to an end, the audience will be motivated to choose the most easily reached context to maximise relevance for the assumption being processed (ibid: 142).

### 4.2.2.3 Optimal relevance

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995: 156ff), the most important factor that contributes to the success of communication is the search for optimal relevance by the communicator and addressee. The presumption of optimal relevance of any act of ostensive communication can be achieved when:

- (a) The set of assumptions [...] which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus.
- (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate [the set of assumptions] (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 158).

The presumption of optimal relevance can be achieved by the principle of relevance which stipulates that: 'Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance' (ibid). This principle can be explained in terms of a 'cost-benefit' relation (ibid: 123) where the cost is the least processing effort and the benefit is the greatest possible contextual effects (ibid: 141f/147). In other words, the communicator forms his/her utterance in such a way that it provides the greatest possible contextual effects (because the more contextual effects an assumption provides, the more relevant the assumption is) in return for the addressee's least processing effort (because the lesser the effort required to process an assumption, the more relevant the assumption is). Accordingly, a communicator 'guarantees' that what he/she communicates is supposed to be optimally relevant to the addressee who will consider as the communicator's intended interpretation the first interpretation that conforms to the principle of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 157f; 1998: 192-197).

### 4.2.2.4 Descriptive and interpretive dimensions of language use

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995: 231), there are two dimensions of language use, descriptive and interpretive. A mental representation of a state of affairs can be used descriptively when its propositional form is true of that state of affairs, a description of a state of affairs in the real world, or a description of a desirable state of affairs.

It can be used interpretively when it is a representation of some other thought or representation with a propositional form because of a *resemblance* between the two propositional forms, when it is an interpretation of some ascribed thought or utterance, or

when it is an interpretation of some thought which is or will be desired to be entertained in a certain way (see also Wilson and Sperber 1988). Consider the following example:

- (5) (a) Sarah: 'Jad is a brilliant CCIr'.  
(b) Nasr: 'Sarah said, "Jad is a brilliant CCIr"'.

The utterance 'Jad is a brilliant CCIr' is included in both (5a) and (5b). In (5a), Sarah *describes* what she sincerely believes to be true, that Jad is a brilliant CCIr. It can therefore be said that Sarah uses the utterance *descriptively*. Consequently, Sarah can only be wrong if Jad is not that brilliant CCIr. In (5b), however, Nasr only reports what Sarah has said or maintained to be true. In other words, Nasr does not necessarily maintain that Jad is a brilliant CCIr. He thus uses the utterance *interpretively*. Consequently, Nasr can only be wrong if Sarah has not produced this utterance.

#### 4.2.2.4.1 Interpretive resemblance

According to Gutt (1998: 44f), interpretive resemblance between a certain utterance and its representation is a key element in interpretive use. Wilson and Sperber define interpretive resemblance as a relationship between propositional forms where

two propositional forms *P* and *Q* (and, by extension, two thoughts or utterances with *P* and *Q* as their propositional forms) *interpretively resemble* one another in a context *C* to the extent that they share their analytic and contextual implications in the context *C* (Wilson and Sperber 1988: 138).

However, Gutt (2000: 46) suggests that interpretive resemblance between utterances be defined in terms of assumptions shared between the intended interpretations of these utterances since the main purpose of utterances is to convey the set of assumptions which the communicator intends to convey. Since the set of assumptions intended by an utterance consists of explicatures and/or implicatures<sup>5</sup>, Gutt argues that two utterances interpretively resemble each other to the extent that they share their explicatures and/or implicatures.

In (5b) above, the direct quotation demonstrates the highest degree of resemblance to the original utterance provided that it is interpreted in the context of the original as demanded by the above definition of interpretive resemblance. Moreover, as Wilson and Sperber

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<sup>5</sup> An explicature is an assumption that is 'explicitly communicated' and one which is 'a development of a logical form' encoded by an utterance (Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 182). An implicature is 'a contextual assumption or implication which a speaker, intending her utterance to be manifestly relevant, manifestly intended to make manifest to the hearer' (ibid: 194f).

(1988: 137) argue, (5b) shows that interpretive resemblance is not a guarantee of truthfulness as much as of *faithfulness*. They (ibid) argue that when producing an utterance, the speaker ‘guarantees that her utterance is a faithful enough representation of the original: that is, resembles it closely enough in relevant respects’. As discussed above, what Nasr maintains is not a true description of the state of affairs (Jad is a brilliant CCIr), but a report of Sarah’s belief. Nasr’s utterance is thus intended to be not a description of the state of affairs but a faithful enough representation of what Sarah believes or maintains to be true.

Furthermore, the degree of faithfulness embedded within the notion of interpretive resemblance is governed by the principle of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 229). Consider the following two exchanges where two employees (E1 and E2) ask the manager about the latest meeting of the company’s board of directors. The context in (6) is the company’s announcement of redundancies among some employees to cut spending, and E1 fears being one of those who will be made redundant while the context in (7) is E2’s new plan which he has recently suggested for attracting new customers. The manager, already aware of the two contexts, gives different answers to the same question:

- (6) E1: What’s happened at the meeting?  
Manager: Don’t worry, you won’t be made redundant.
- (7) E2: What’s happened at the meeting?  
Manager: You’ve just been promoted to Head of the Customer Services Department.

From the perspective of RT, the manager’s reply in (6) can be viewed as a faithful enough representation of the discussion of redundancies at the meeting because it ‘resembles it closely enough in relevant respects’. Obviously, what E1 is interested in is whether he will be made redundant. The manager has communicated the most relevant information E1 wants to hear in return for E1’s least processing effort as the manager has not conveyed to E1 the details of the meeting which clearly include more, but irrelevant, information to E1. The same holds true for the exchange in (7).

### **4.3 The cognitive-pragmatic approach (CPA)**

The two theories discussed above which form the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis (henceforth the cognitive-pragmatic approach, CPA) have many points in common, although each theory uses more or less different terminology. First, both theories are

concerned with communication and language use in a given situation/context where cognitive complements/environments of the communicators in a certain communication event play a significant role in discourse comprehension.

Second, both theories are mainly concerned with top-down processing where extralinguistic and contextual knowledge (whether in the form of cognitive complements, cognitive environment assumptions or contextual effects) contributes significantly to the identification of the intended interpretation of the original.

Third, the two theories discuss explicitness and implicitness where an utterance consists of explicatures and implicatures, both of which form the sense of the utterance, the correct interpretation of which depends on the presence of a sufficient amount of contextual and extralinguistic knowledge and can be achieved through inference.

Fourth, the concept of deverbalisation the theory of sense offers is very similar to RT's notion of interpretive resemblance where faithful representation of the original does not depend on resemblance in linguistic form, surface structure or semantic meaning, but upon resemblance in sense in its cognitive shape. What RT offers more to complement the theory of sense, however, is that it provides and explains in detail the principle of relevance which imposes further constraints on interpretive resemblance between utterances, thus guiding the listener to the intended interpretation of the original. In the model proposed here, the principle of relevance is used to guide the interpreter to abstract the sense of the original and the TL audience to the intended meaning of the original as relayed by the interpreter.

The CPA as proposed here is an incomprehensive 'model' being only concerned with comprehension and translation (transfer) without accounting for other processes such as production. Thus, it can fit into the category of translational process models discussed by Pöchhacker (2004: 97). Moreover, the model can be described as a cognitive-pragmatic one. It is cognitive because it deals with cognitive (or non-verbal) sense and pragmatic because it deals with what speakers *intend* to say (Salama-Carr 2005, personal communication; see also Seleskovitch 1977: 31; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 227-231; Garcia-Landa 1990; 1995: 388).

The whole model (Figure 4-1) can be summarised by the notion of interpretive resemblance which, theoretically, reflects the translating process since presumably interpreters aim in translating at a rendition that does not necessarily resemble the original in linguistic form, surface structure or semantic meaning, but one that interpretively resembles the original.

Thus, the CCIr listens to and receives the speaker's output (S. OUTPUT) which is the product of the speaker's cognitive environment (SCE) that comprises an individual's perception of the world and knowledge/assumptions he/she can entertain including, but not limited to, knowledge/assumptions about culture(s) and the receiver's cognitive environment (RCE), (extra-)linguistic knowledge, experiences, memories, inferences, situation, (immediate) context, etc. (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 38f/46; **4.2.2.2 Context**).

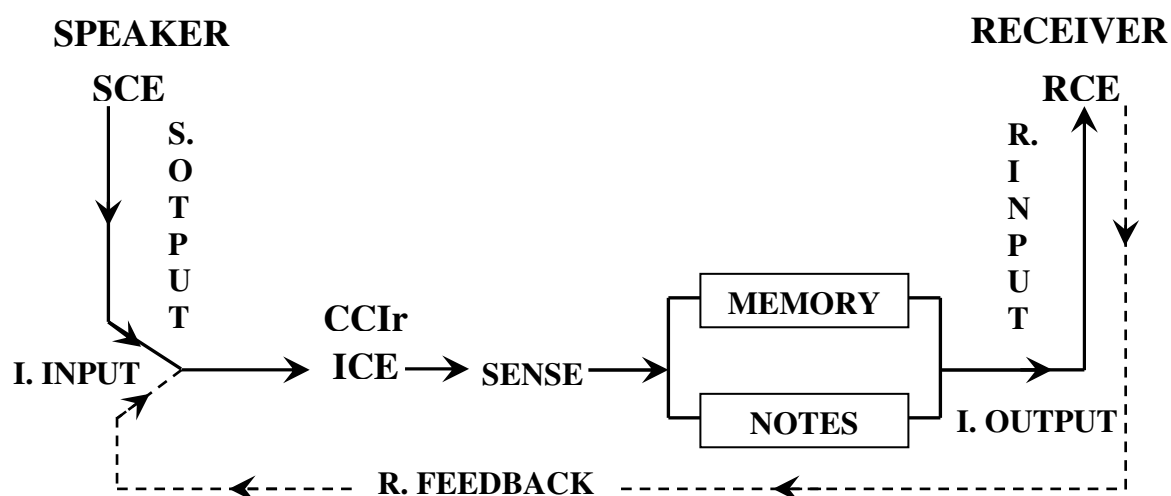


Figure 4-1: Illustration of the CCI process based on the CPA

The CCIr then processes the S. OUTPUT using any relevant cognitive complements (e.g. Lederer 1990: 53; **4.1.1.1 Cognitive complements**) from his/her cognitive environment (ICE) while taking notes. Determining which information to use and context to select is governed by his/her search for optimal relevance, which will help him/her identify the speaker's intended meaning through inference. This process results in a non-verbal sense that interpretively resembles the original. The sense is stored partly in the CCIr's memory and partly in his/her notes depending on the CCIr's decisions in this regard.

The following stage, which can overlap with listening and understanding, is the stage of



translating/converting the cognitive sense into an appropriate verbal output in the TL (I. OUTPUT). This is a very critical stage since in a similar way to the decisions he/she has made to abstract the sense of the S. OUTPUT, the CCIr will have to make decisions on the TL words, expressions, structures, concepts, etc. he/she should use to create a rendition that interpretively resembles the original and contains the greatest contextual effects in return for the audience's least processing effort to enable the audience to detect the intended interpretation of the original through the search for optimal relevance and inference. By making assumptions on the receivers' cognitive environment (RCE), the CCIr strategically decides on the most appropriate procedure (**Chapter 6**) to achieve this.

The broken line in the figure above is the receiver's feedback to the CCIr's rendition and thus forms another source of I. INPUT for the CCIr who, unlike the simultaneous interpreter, can very easily inject into his/her output more (cultural) information as deemed appropriate to facilitate the receivers' task in arriving at the intended interpretation of the original. This is one of the reasons for the choice of CCI for investigation of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator in the current thesis (**1.1.3 Mode of investigation**).

If the input the audience receives (R. INPUT) interpretively resembles the S.OUTPUT, then one cycle of successful communication can be said to have been achieved, and so on.

The CPA as described above allows for developing an account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator (**Chapter 5**). The CPA suggests that the CCIr as intercultural mediator is unlikely to impose his/her own ideas, ideological belief or opinion, cultural perceptions, projections or otherwise to what he/she interprets simply because he/she does not initiate speeches (cf. Seleskovitch 1978: 62), but is rather more likely to try to represent what he/she hears as faithfully as possible by aiming for interpretive resemblance, which is governed by the principle of relevance, implies the process of deverbalisation offered by the theory of sense, and offers a guarantee of faithfulness to the original. Besides, since interpreters deal with languages and cultures, CCIrs cannot but perform intercultural mediation even in CISs which are characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than other interpreting settings such as community or court interpreting to bridge the cultural gap and thus establish understanding and communication among participants of different cultures, the diversity of which could put obstacles in the way of understanding.

Faithfulness to the original, neutrality and the interpreter's role in general are concepts that are debated in the literature on conference interpreting since they are problematic and controversial concepts that have attracted varying and sometimes opposing views by researchers in the field of conference interpreting. In-depth treatment of these concepts through various descriptions of the interpreter's role by various researchers in the field of conference interpreting and the present researcher can be found in the following chapter.

In the following chapter, *Hypothesis A (Central Hypothesis)* is developed based on the definition of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator which has been derived from the principles of the CPA. The hypothesis and the principles of the CPA will be tested through data obtained mainly from a survey of professional CCIrs in **Chapter 7** and examples from interpreters' actual performance in authentic interpreting situations in **Chapter 6**. The analyses in both chapters seek to determine whether the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator as proposed by the present researcher in **Chapter 5** can be seen as a reflection of the role CCIrs really assume when interpreting or conforms to how CCIrs define their role in the communication process.

## **Chapter 5: The interpreter's role**

As mentioned in **Chapter 1**, research into the interpreter's role as intercultural mediator is a relatively under-researched area of academic investigation in CISs although academics and professionals in the field of conference interpreting are widely in agreement on the essential role culture plays in the theory and practice of translation/interpreting.

Moreover, the little research undertaken so far has produced mostly inappropriate definitions of the interpreter's role because the definitions do not explain clearly the role interpreters usually assume when interpreting or are in conflict with the rules of faithfulness to the sense of the original, accuracy, neutrality or accessibility that are associated with translation and interpreting due to the fact that academics, professionals and users of conference interpreting are all in agreement on the indispensability of these concepts for translation and interpreting, which sheds doubts on the validity of those definitions.

There is thus a need for a clearer definition of the interpreter's role, a definition that describes the actual role interpreters usually assume when interpreting. The present researcher contends that such an account can be sought within the framework of the CPA. The account is elaborated in this chapter following a review of a number of other definitions of the interpreter's role in CISs. The discussion focuses on the CCIr's role only in terms of his/her translational performance. It is thus not concerned with the interpreter's power, non-interpreting behaviour or performance seen from the perspective of the social, socio-cultural or interactional context(s) in which conference interpreters operate.

### **5.1 Research into the conference interpreter's role**

The debate over the CCIr's role in practical situations was documented as early as 1919 during the Paris Peace Conference following World War I. Colonel Stephen Bonsal<sup>1</sup> reports being asked by one of the 'Big Four'<sup>2</sup> to suggest to Colonel Lawrence of Arabia, Emir Faisal's<sup>3</sup> interpreter, to

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<sup>1</sup> Bonsal (1865-1951) was the U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's interpreter (Bowen et al. 1995: 248).

<sup>2</sup> This is a reference to the (representatives of the) four superpowers at the time, United States, Britain, France and Italy (Microsoft Encarta Reference Library Premium 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Emir Faisal is son of Sherif Hussein of Mecca. He became the King of Syria in 1920 (Bonsal 1946: 32).

soften the impact of some of Faisal's words that were giving offence in influential quarters [...] and follow the precedent of Professor Mantoux, the official interpreter at the plenary sessions of the Conference, who smoothed out so many rough places in the impassioned appeals of the nationalistic speakers (Bonsal 1946: 33).

Lawrence is reported to have declined this suggestion:

I see the point and I have the greatest respect for this gentleman [...] but I cannot follow his suggestion. You see, I am an interpreter, I merely translate. The Emir is speaking for the horsemen who carried the Arab flag across the great desert from the holy city of Mecca to the holy city of Jerusalem and to Damascus beyond [...] and] the thousands who died in that long struggle. He is the bearer of their last words. He cannot alter them. I cannot soften them (Bonsal 1946: 33f).

Obviously, a certain degree of 'appropriateness' (Viezzi 2003: 153; 2005, personal communication) might be preferred by some interpreters to avoid offending TL delegates, but this should not be done at the expense of relaying the sense of the original.

However, it is not difficult to understand Lawrence's argument since he, as a CCIr, may not be in a position to 'soften' Faisal's words not least because the latter is not only aware of the strength and assertiveness of his words and intends to convey them in a forceful manner to the other delegates, but is also aware of the situation including his and other delegates' positions. If speakers do not intend to convey their words in a forceful manner, they will not utter them in the first place and then wait for interpreters to soften them. Speakers have reasons for choosing their words and the tone of the words. The question is what if the interpreter softened the speaker's words and the speaker objected to that? The interpreter would most probably be accused of misinterpreting the speaker's words not only by the speaker but also possibly by the audience. Softening speakers' statements might do much more damage than good, and certainly it is not in any interpreter's interest to be blamed for such damage. Kondo (1990: 62) argues that by watering down politicians' statements, conference interpreters might 'inflict long-term harm to genuine mutual understanding by acting too much like diplomats'. Similarly, Nolan (2005: 130) observes:

When a speaker intends to be blunt or abrasive, the interpreter is not helping the listeners by smoothing down the rough edges.

Kondo et al. (1997: 160f) cite the example of a Chinese way of polite refusal signified by the phrase 'kaolu kaolu' which means 'I/we (implied) will (implied) think it over', arguing that to render it into English as 'we will think about it' would be too blunt, and 'your

proposal needs further thought’ suggests mere postponement. Hence, they suggest ‘I am afraid we cannot agree at this time’ as an appropriate choice because in trying to avoid it completely, the interpreter runs the risk of conveying to the foreigner a different message from what these words would mean to a Chinese person. Obviously, when a speaker expresses his/her refusal, this refusal should be conveyed to the TL receiver despite potential consequences of expressing the refusal; otherwise, misunderstanding is more likely to occur. The following comments by one of the respondents to the survey of conference interpreters (**Chapter 7**) serve as a good example to support the above idea:

Your job is to allow the listener to have the same impression of what the speaker has said as if he had understood the original himself. If the speaker is rude, the listener should feel it.

The following lines review several concepts proposed by various researchers in the field of conference interpreting to describe the interpreter’s role in the communication process.

### **5.1.1 The interpreter as intermediary**

Seleskovitch’s (1968/1978a<sup>4</sup>: 112) discussion of the ‘interpreter’s presence’ could be cited as the earliest detailed account of the interpreter’s role as a cultural mediator<sup>5</sup> since the 1950s. She (1978a: 112) argues that the interpreter is an ‘intermediary’ whose ‘task is to help participants understand each other’s cultural differences rather than pretend that they do not exist’. The interpreter is thus as actively present as the other participants and his/her role is as pivotal as that of the other participants in the communication process.

At the same time, however, Seleskovitch stresses that the interpreter’s active role in the dialogue should only be confined to relaying the message in a way that ensures communication is established among delegates without

saying anything that would run counter to his role or over-involve him in the dialogue to the point where he would color the message with his own ideas (ibid: 113).

Thus, the interpreter’s licence for intervention does not mean he/she assumes ‘a delegate’s role’ (ibid: 114), but rather means that the interpreter should intervene only to establish

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<sup>4</sup> These are the French original (1968) and English translation (1978a) of Seleskovitch’s book. The original and translation are given separate entries in the list of references. Page numbers are from the English version.

<sup>5</sup> The term cultural mediator itself was only introduced in 1981 (**5.2 The cultural mediator**).

understanding and communication among participants while at the same time remaining accurate and faithful to the speaker's message.

Moreover, Seleskovitch (1978a: 114ff) argues that because the interpreter's role is to achieve understanding and communication, the degree of his/her intervention is relative, depending on the knowledge that interlocutors have on one another and, more importantly, on how different and remote their cultural and linguistic backgrounds are perceived to be.

Seleskovitch's view is important due to the significant implications it has for the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator as proposed by the present researcher (**5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator**) because on the one hand Seleskovitch is the proponent of one of the theoretical models (the theory of sense) forming the CPA (**Chapter 4**) adopted in this thesis to approach the interpreter's role, and on the other hand her work is based on solid and extensive experience in interpreting and the training of students having been herself a conference interpreter and interpreter trainer. A survey of the opinions of a wide population of conference interpreters on this issue can be found in **Chapter 7**.

Hatim and Mason (1990) have a similar view, arguing that due to his/her bilingual abilities and bi-cultural vision, the translator/interpreter is a mediator who mediates

between cultures (including ideologies, moral systems and socio-political structures), seeking to overcome those incompatibilities which stand in the way of transfer of meaning (1990: 223).

Hatim and Mason also stress that '[i]deological nuances, cultural predispositions and so on in the source text have to be relayed *untainted by the translator's own vision of reality*' (ibid: 224, emphasis added).

### **5.1.2 Identification with the client**

Anderson (1976; 1978) approaches the study of the interpreter's role from three perspectives: bilingualism, role conflict (ambiguity) and power structure. The present discussion is only concerned with the first two aspects because on the one hand the interpreter's power in the communication event is irrelevant to the current investigation as stated in **Chapter 1** and at the beginning of this chapter, and on the other hand Anderson

himself (1976: 218) limits the particular discussion of the interpreter's power to non-CISs which, again as mentioned earlier, are not the concern of investigation in the present thesis.

According to Anderson (1976: 210), the order in which bilinguals have learned the languages they command, linguistic dominance of their languages, and relationship between the language systems (distinct or merged) can influence bilinguals' behaviour and thus shed light on the interpreter's role. Anderson (ibid: 212) argues that the first language learned is more likely to be the bilingual's mother tongue or A language which he/she is more likely to identify with. The consequence for the interpreter is that, other things being equal, there is a greater possibility that he/she will 'identify with' speakers of his/her mother tongue than speakers of other languages.

Linguistic dominance of one language<sup>6</sup> over the other(s) in the bilingual's language combination has a similar effect in that the interpreter is more likely to identify with clients speaking his/her dominant language (ibid: 213).

The relationship between the two linguistic systems in the brain of the bilingual individual also has its effect. Bilinguals with two distinct linguistic systems are said to be coordinate bilinguals, and those with merged linguistic systems are called compound bilinguals (ibid). Generally, coordinate bilinguals are referred to as bicultural and compound bilinguals monocultural, where biculturalism refers to the bilingual's ability to interpret experiences in a way that is appropriate to either culture while monoculturalism refers to an ethnocentric interpretation irrespective of the language or context of the interpreted experiences (ibid: 215). It follows that a compound bilingual is more likely to identify with the client whose culture he/she shares while a coordinate bilingual's identification with a client, if any, is very hard to predict. Thus the coordinate bilingual is more likely to be neutral (ibid: 216).

According to Anderson (1978: 220), the interpreter's identification with the client is significant if it affects interpreting quality. The present researcher argues that identification

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<sup>6</sup> It is not always true that the mother tongue is the dominant language since some people may spend a great deal of their lives using the second language to the extent that they may forget their mother tongue. In this case, the second language becomes the dominant one (cf. Anderson 1976: 212). A situation like this can obtain when for example an Arabic speaker married to an English-speaking spouse lives and works permanently in the UK with very few contacts with Arabic speakers.

with the client *does affect interpreting quality if the interpreter adopts such a concept*, but as argued in the remainder of this and the following chapters, the concept of identification with the client does not apply to the role interpreters usually play when interpreting in conferences not only because it does have a negative impact on interpreting quality, but also because CISs are too transparent to allow the interpreter to identify with one or more clients or deviate from the principles of faithfulness, accuracy, neutrality or accessibility.

Take the following example which is an interpretation of a cultural reference mentioned by Khaled Meshal, the leader of the Palestinian movement, Hamas, during an interview with BBC's Newsnight programme (Newsnight 2004a). Meshal refers to operations carried out by Hamas members as *عمليات استشهادية* (martyrdom operations), glorifying the doers as martyrs defending their land against the occupiers.

The aim of this argument is to investigate a clear interpretation problem. What is surprising is that the interpreter renders Meshal's '**martyrdom operations**' as '**suicide bombings**'! The fact that the interpretation of this expression is so easy and straightforward that a literal translation would have been sufficient for an appropriate interpretation is clear evidence that the interpretation of this term in this way is the result of a lack of neutrality and thus a lack of faithfulness to the original either by the interpreter or the broadcaster who might well have censored the interpreter's output concerning the interpretation of this particular expression since the programme, unlike live broadcasting, can be subjected to editing by the producer. However, if the interpreter (not the client/broadcaster) was responsible for the lack of neutrality and faithfulness, it would be very difficult if not impossible to ascertain the reasons behind the lack of neutrality and faithfulness, which points to the need for empirical testing of Anderson's suggestions.

At any rate, it is safe to argue that the current interpretation of the above expression does affect interpreting quality. On the one hand, there is not any degree of resemblance between the two expressions. On the other hand, the way the expression was interpreted leads to a confusion and contradiction since in the original the speaker uses one of the most positive designations to describe these types of operations in his culture while the English term, suicide bombings, is notoriously and negatively associated with terrorism in the English and western cultures, which cannot be defended let alone glorified.



Some might argue that the term suicide bombings is used in English to refer to the same operations Meshal refers to, but these specific operations are controversial since most people in the west regard them as suicide bombings and most Arabs and Muslims consider them as martyrdom operations. They are thus, in Hatim and Mason's (1990: 224) words, an 'ideological nuance' that has to be 'relayed untainted by the translator's own vision of reality' (ibid). More importantly, the speaker refers to these operations in a specific way, and this specific way should be faithfully reflected in the interpretation. On the one hand, it is in the TL audience's interest to know what the speaker is exactly saying, how he refers to these acts, or what his position is on this controversial subject. On the other, it is in the speaker's interest to convey his opinion to the TL audience clearly and without any such radical modification. Otherwise, the interpreter runs the risk of misrepresenting the original, thus masking or making inaccessible a very important piece of information to the TL audience. Obviously, the same could be said if the term 'suicide bombings' was originally used in English and interpreted into Arabic as 'عمليات استشهادية' (martyrdom operations) and not 'عمليات انتحارية' (suicide bombings).

This is why *it is not acceptability* but *accessibility* that should occupy the interpreter in addition to faithfulness to the sense of the original.

The second aspect Anderson discusses is ambiguities and conflicts of the interpreter's role. According to Anderson (1976: 216ff), essentially the interpreter is there to serve two clients and therefore has obligations to both of them as he/she is 'the man in the middle' (ibid: 216), but these obligations may not always be compatible, which, coupled with the lack of an objective definition of the interpreter's role, can create a role conflict and ambiguity as to what position should the interpreter precisely adopt or, in other words, should he/she be the speaker's echo, advisor or ally?

The answer to Anderson's question is probably neither of the above roles for the same reasons cited above concerning the concept of identification with the client.

### **5.1.3 Ghost of the speaker versus intruder**

Kopczyński (1994) has addressed a survey to delegates of international conferences

(speakers and/or audiences) to address interpreting quality and the interpreter's role in the communication encounter from a user-oriented perspective. What concerns the present argument is the section of the survey that deals with the interpreter's role. A total of 57 respondents (20 in the field of humanities, 23 in the field of science and technology, and 14 diplomats) (1994: 193) have been asked whether they prefer the interpreter to assume what Kopczyński refers to as the 'ghost' or 'intruder' role. In particular, delegates have been asked whether they prefer the interpreter to empathise with the speaker, imitate the speaker's tempo, intensity of voice, gestures, etc., keep in the background or be visible, correct the speaker if he/she makes a mistake, summarise the speech, and add his/her own explanation to what the speaker says (ibid: 194).

All respondents have favoured interpreters to adopt the ghost role, and most of them have indicated that interpreters should empathise with the speaker and imitate his/her tempo and voice intensity, but not gestures. However, the majority would prefer interpreters to correct the speaker and add their own explanations, which is contradictory to the preference of the ghost role (ibid: 195). These results have motivated Pöchhacker (2004: 149) to argue that such varying and contradictory views point to the limits of survey research on role expectations and call for a detailed analysis of interpreters' actual performance.

However, it can be argued that the results of this user-oriented survey are of particular interest to the subject of this thesis and the survey of professional conference interpreters (**Chapter 7**) because although these results may prima facie seem to be contradictory, they offer a very important insight into what clients expect from the interpreter and how and when the interpreter is given licence to intervene especially when it comes to cultural differences. These results can be translated as follows: the interpreters' task is to convey the message of an original based on their linguistic and cultural knowledge which both speaker and audience lack. If the original message contains important cultural information that is unknown or inaccessible to the TL audience, then they expect the interpreter, their communication specialist, to make accessible this cultural information to them. Thus, the results lend support to Seleskovitch's view mentioned above and to the account of the CCIr as intercultural mediator which is developed along the lines of the CPA by the present researcher in this thesis (**5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator**).

The concepts ‘ghost of the speaker’ and ‘intruder’, however, need some kind of reconsideration since from the point of view of the account of the CCIr’s role as intercultural mediator alluded to above, the two concepts do not express the actual role which the interpreter assumes in the communication process. The interpreter cannot be described as a ghost of the speaker because he/she serves both speaker and audience, and the interpreter is not a representative of or loyal to the speaker, but is more likely to be loyal to the original speech. The interpreter cannot be described as an intruder either because assuming the intercultural-mediator role or explaining cultural differences when deemed necessary to achieve understanding does not mean intruding on the communication process since, as discussed earlier, it is the interpreter’s own responsibility to establish communication between the primary parties, and such an understanding sometimes cannot be established except by performing cultural mediation.

#### **5.1.4 Loyalty to the speaker**

According to Gile (1995d: 28f), the interpreter in principle works for the sender, receiver and client whose intentions and purposes may not always be compatible. For example, a sender may try to persuade a receiver who does not want to be persuaded or a chairperson may want the interpreter to summarise parts of a speech by a speaker who has the intention of including these parts in his/her message. In these situations, the interpreter will be caught between incompatible or conflicting interests. Thus, Gile argues that the question of professional loyalty is a real one as it is an ethical issue.

However, Gile argues that because such conflicts are rare in conference interpreting, the most widely accepted view is that the interpreter is an ‘alter ego’ of the speaker. According to Gile, ethically this implies that the interpreter should consider the speaker’s aims and intentions as his/her own aims and intentions and act accordingly even against the receiver’s interests because as long as the interpreter speaks in the first person, thus formally identifying him/herself with the speaker, the interpreter is under an ethical obligation to adopt what Gile calls ‘the Sender-loyalty’ principle (ibid: 31). Accordingly, Gile argues that if in a conference the interpreter works alternately for opposing speakers, his/her position should be one of ‘*rotating side-taking*’, that is, always shifting loyalty to the speaker, rather than a neutral one as it usually is defined. Gile stresses that in most

situations, including political ones, the rotating side-taking or sender-loyalty principle can be applied by the interpreter without difficulty (Gile 1995d: 29f).

Gile's view is compatible with the view maintained in AIIC's *Practical Guide...* where what is considered to be as 'quality interpreting', 'professional ethics' and 'fidelity' demand that the conference interpreter's

**primary loyalty [be] always owed to the speaker** and to the communicative intent that the speaker wishes to realize, whatever the speaker's position or point of view (AIIC 2004, emphasis in original).

However, it is clear from Gile's and AIIC's arguments that the sender- and primary-loyalty principles mean loyalty to the person of the speaker and suggest that the interpreter is somehow the speaker's spokesperson or representative, which is not really the case because the interpreter serves the speaker and audience, but a spokesperson serves only the speaker. More importantly, since the speaker's intentions and purposes might be different from *what he/she intends to say* (Salama-Carr 2005, personal communication; see also Seleskovitch 1977: 31; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 227-231), the interpreter cannot identify with the speaker as the former deals not with speakers' intentions but what speakers *intend to say*. Thus, interpreters need not be loyal to or identify with either speaker or audience; if there is any loyalty involved at all, interpreters' loyalty<sup>7</sup> should be to the original, not to the person who utters or is to receive the information because it is both commonsensical and logical to argue that the mere existence of interpretation itself relies only on that of an original. Moreover, since the mere existence and ultimate aim of the interpreting service is to ensure understanding between the primary parties, loyalty to the original ensures that the interests of both speaker and audience in understanding and communication are very well served.

Similarly, Viaggio's notion of the 'fully fledged mediator' as opposed to the 'mere translator' (2005: 84; 2006: 170) cannot be accepted either because he demands from the mediator things that fall beyond the conference interpreter's brief:

[The interpreter should be able to] analyse motivations, intentions, arguments, positions, stakes – and not simply the specific *LPIs* [intended speech percepts] and their verbalisations that speakers resort to in order to communicate "officially" with each other as a function of all of the above (2005: 91).

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<sup>7</sup> Loyalty as used by the present researcher in this thesis corresponds to the concept of faithfulness to the sense of the original as defined by the CPA.

However, it can be argued that interpreters can only work with what is explicitly stated or implied; anything else would be mere speculation that is not always based on sound knowledge or full awareness of situations because even delegates can entertain wrong assumptions about the situation or the other party's motivations, intentions, etc. especially if the latter are politicians or diplomats who tend to keep what they know and actually intend to themselves. The interpreter might be able to analyse and perfectly understand a delegate's own intentions but might not be aware of the delegate's desire to hide these intentions on a particular occasion. What will the interpreter's position be if he/she makes explicit these intentions and goes beyond what is intended to be 'officially' communicated? Thus, for the interpreter, keeping to the sense of what is/has been said and leaving what speakers actually intend (as opposed to what they intend to say) to the audience is the best and safest policy (see also Seleskovitch 1989: 77; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 229).

### **5.1.5 Interpreters' visibility**

Angelelli (2004) reports on a comparative analysis of interpreters' perception of their role in conference, court and community settings. The study investigates the interpreter's visibility at the societal, interpersonal and discourse levels (2004: 29). Angelelli (*ibid*) defines visibility as interpreters' intervention in the communication process, but she considers any instance of intervention by the interpreter as a lack of neutrality, which is not really the case as is shown in this and the following sections and chapters.

She argues that social factors such as ethnicity, race, gender, age, status, power, socioeconomic status, and/or solidarity (*ibid*: 24/30) of the interpreter and other interlocutors in the communication process have a role to play in the way interpreters perceive their role and conduct their interpretation, which, according to Angelelli (*ibid*: 29), makes it difficult for interpreters to maintain a *neutral* stance and produce *accurate* interpretations. According to Angelelli (*ibid*: 20), this creates a tension between the role prescribed by professional organisations in their codes of ethics and even by interpreter training programmes on the one hand, and the reality of the interpreter's role on the other<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> See Dragovic-Drouet (2007) for a discussion of tensions between translation and interpreting 'prerequisites' or 'international professional norms' and translation and interpreting practice in *conflict situations*.

However, ‘unsolicited comments’ by conference interpreters participating in her survey have suggested that they believe that Angelelli’s survey does not apply to them, that they deem neutrality to be an essential part of their job, that they would give different responses if they were court or community interpreters, and that they are not constrained by power differentials between interlocutors (Angelelli 2004: 77-81). These responses are strong evidence that her ideas, proposals and societal factors are irrelevant to CISs that are too transparent to allow such factors to affect conference interpreters’ performance as is shown in the remainder of this chapter and the following chapters (see also Gile 1995d: 29f).

What is really completely unusual, however, is Angelelli’s patronising comments on conference interpreters’ ‘unsolicited comments’:

Interestingly, some respondents thought that their setting could be immune to the interplay of social factors [...] (Angelelli 2004: 78).

These interpreters seem convinced of their ability to monitor the interaction of social factors [...] (ibid).

The myth of the invisibility (and neutrality [...]) of the interpreter appears to be very real to these interpreters. These comments reflect the professional ideology that remains unchallenged and is shared between professional associations and practitioners [...] (ibid 78f).

Some conference interpreters appear to be unaware of power differentials between the interlocutors with whom they work [...] (ibid: 80), etc.

As if that was not enough, and seeing that these comments truly undermine what she is already convinced of and argues for throughout without being really prepared to change it in the light of data from her own survey, Angelelli resorts to what she describes conference interpreters’ ‘lack of familiarity’ with research and findings in their and other fields and interpreters’ unawareness of the alleged impact of power differentials on communication (Angelelli 2004: 80). However, we do know that power differentials do not exist in conference interpreting (see also Mason 1999: 148); for the conference interpreter, a head of state is a head of state whether the latter represents a developed or developing country.

The question one has to put to Angelelli in this regard is the following: what is the use of addressing surveys to practitioners if we do not take them seriously or believe in what they say, and why should we take the trouble of carrying out research if we absolutely believe in

something without being prepared to alter our belief if our own empirical methods and their results prove the opposite of, or do not support, what we believe in?

The other problem in Angelelli's discussion is the fact that she takes the interplay of the above social factors to mean intercultural mediation and takes intercultural mediation and visibility to mean the exact opposite of neutrality (**5.2 The cultural mediator; 5.2.1 Neutrality versus partisanship**). For example, she describes one of the conference interpreters who sent unsolicited comments as the 'only one [who] was clearly aware of the social issues affecting his role as interpreter' (Angelelli 2004: 81) when the things that this particular respondent does in his interpretation and mentions in the abridged (ibid: 81) and complete (ibid: 107-110) texts of his letter do not go beyond establishing communication between speaker and audience or have anything to do with social factors:

[...] I have learned that, very often, I have to explain, simplify, repeat, check and double-check [...] Some terms, ideas and concepts need to be explained, simplified and put in a form that the other party is able to understand. I have discovered that in every aspect of interpreting the interpreter is in charge, even in very formal meetings. He decides what word to choose, what is culturally appropriate, what needs to be explained [...] (quoted in Angelelli 2004: 81).

Obviously, every interpreter is expected to do the above if the interpreter's task is to achieve understanding and communication among the interlocutors, and if the interpreter does this, he/she is clearly going to be visible, active, present and an intercultural mediator, but there is nothing at all that suggests that doing this means identification with the client, lack of neutrality or departure from faithfulness to the sense of the original by the interpreter.

Based on this apparently deliberate mixing and confusion between concepts, Angelelli (ibid: 85/98) concludes that interpreters perceive their role as being visible in all interpreting settings and are thus unable to be neutral or impartial vis-à-vis their clients despite the compelling evidence offered by conference interpreters' unsolicited comments.

## **5.2 The cultural mediator**

According to Katan<sup>9</sup> (1999: 12), the term 'cultural mediator' has been first mentioned in

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<sup>9</sup> Katan (1999: 1/11-15) calls for translators/interpreters to assume the cultural-mediator role for more understanding between cultures (ibid: 12f/15/66f), but his contribution does not add any thing new to, for

Bochner's (1981a) *The Mediating Person and Cultural Identity* where the focus is on the cultural mediator in a variety of roles and functions such as an arbitrator, go-between, intermediary, moderator, referee, facilitator, negotiator, missionary, trader, diplomat, tourist guide, ombudsman, representative of ethnic minorities on a government board, etc. as well as the translator and interpreter (Bochner 1981c: 303; McLeod 1981: 38ff; Taft 1981: 54).

Bochner (1981a: 3) distinguishes between two types of cultural mediators: the 'mediator-as-translator' whose purpose is to 'represent one culture to another faithfully and thereby contribute to mutual understanding and accurate cross-cultural knowledge' and 'mediator-as-synthesizer' whose purpose is to 'reconcile disparate cultural practices, this type of mediation having special relevance to exchanges from which action is to follow'. Thus, while the mediator-as-translator's responsibilities involve the neutral, faithful and accurate representation of one culture to another *and stop there* (Bochner 1981b: 18), the mediator-as-synthesizer's brief extends representation to taking actions and beyond (ibid: 19).

Bochner (1981b: 18) argues that if the mediator-as-translator is faced with two sets of 'incompatible demands' requiring an active response, 'the translation of cultures breaks down' because 'the neutral, faithful representation of one culture's stance to another is less likely to promote mutual understanding', hence the need for the mediator-as-synthesizer role which can provide 'creative reconciliation of the two opposing points of view' (ibid).

Bochner (1981b: 18f) cites a hypothetical example on technology transfer from an industrial to agrarian society. Both parties commission native but bicultural representatives in the mediator-as-translator role. The Western mediator has been instructed to install an assembly line in rural Asia, but he/she knows that the proposed factory will break such local cultural traditions as religious practices, which forbid people to handle raw material without ritual purification; extended family obligations, which dictate that all physically able men, women and children participate in gathering the harvests when crops are ripe; the

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example, Bochner's (1981a: 3) concept of the mediator-as-translator (see below) in the sense that it does not contain any specific understanding or different definition of the interpreter's role as intercultural mediator from Bochner's concept. Even his call for a more active role for the translator as cultural mediator is defined in terms of obtaining or asking for more information (Katan ibid: 66f). He constantly refers to intercultural mediation in the business world (ibid: 7f/11/13/15), but this does not give any indication as to which specific interpreting setting (conference or non-conference) his views apply to. The main contribution of his book as far as the present argument is concerned is the type of cultural knowledge a cultural mediator should be cognizant of to be able to mediate between cultures as Katan himself mentions (ibid: 1).



allocation of jobs to different castes, which may lead to a shortage of local labour in certain sections of the manufacturing process besides the lack of infrastructure and suitable fuel to operate the machines. Bochner (ibid), argues that the ‘conscientious’ mediator-as-translator provides his/her employers with this cultural information and his/her responsibilities stop there as he/she considers it someone else’s job to address the problems indicated.

The Eastern mediator has been given instructions to travel to Detroit to place an order for an assembly line that must include a unit for ritual purification; can be operated at seasonal intervals in harmony with the gathering of harvests; provides most of the jobs for the most numerous caste in the area; can be operated by different fuels especially charcoal and cow dung; and can be maintained or repaired by the village’s bicycle mechanic. Again, the mediator who has a degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is aware of the unlikelihood of finding a machine manufacturer in Detroit who is willing or able to supply this order. Being a conscientious mediator translator, he/she explains to his/her Eastern employers the theory and practice of assembly-line industry, but his/her responsibility stops here, and his/her job is done after representing one culture to the other.

Bochner (1981b: 19) argues that the precise interpretation of the mediator-as-translator’s role cuts off the process where it might have the strongest effect or action could be taken because the mediator-as-translator is excluded from action, but the mediator-as-synthesizer is more likely to see his/her role extend beyond mere cultural representation to taking action and beyond. According to Bochner, the mediator-as-synthesizer’s behaviour in this example might involve designing a factory that fits together the best features of both cultures based on the strengths of the existing social system and appropriate ingredients of modern technology. For the integration of the exogenous technical into the indigenous social system to take place, both culture and technology may have to undergo some type of modification. Bochner argues that the mediator-as-synthesizer’s responsibility is therefore to make sure that this integration takes into account the region’s cultural and material aspirations, and that the donor society finds the result rewarding.

However, it may be argued that although Bochner’s example is hypothetical, it helps spell out in strong terms why the mediator-as-synthesizer concept cannot be applied to CISs. First, it is doubtful whether conference delegates are willing to abandon their role (making

decisions, taking actions, accepting/refusing proposals, etc.) and commission interpreters to assume these responsibilities on their behalf; otherwise, the interpreter will become a conference delegate with the added task of interpretation.

Second, even if delegates were willing to abandon their role to interpreters, which is unlikely anyway, it is unlikely that interpreters would be willing to take this responsibility. Third, even if interpreters were willing to do so, it is doubtful whether they would actually be able to assume this role since interpreters are interlingual and intercultural communication specialists, not leaders, politicians, statesmen, scientists, etc. It is the lack of *sufficient* inside knowledge even in specialist interpreters let alone the majority of interpreters who are generalists that will make it difficult if not impossible for interpreters to accept the responsibility or be able to make decisions, take actions, accept or refuse proposals, or assume delegates' roles. And if an interpreter possesses such abilities and sufficient inside knowledge that qualify him/her to assume a delegate's role, the case will be the exception rather than the rule (see also Kondo 1990: 64).

It can therefore be safely argued that it is not the concept of the mediator-as-synthesizer, but mediator-as-translator that can fit well in conference interpreting.

Besides, although the mediator-as-translator's role is limited to faithful cultural representation, the mediator-as-translator can still create mutual understanding between two or more (representatives of) cultures because if the interpreter merely represents the two cultures to each other faithfully, accurately and in a neutral manner, each side will have an understanding in the form of increased knowledge and awareness of the culture of the other as mediated by the interpreter. In this case, mutual understanding is established because without this mutual understanding neither side will be able to work out a compromise if conflicting goals, motives or differences surface between the two opposing sides. Indeed, McLeod (1981: 41) argues that 'the presence and actions of a true mediator should have some positive influence on the general populations, or significant sectors of the populations' of the cultures between which he/she mediates and that this positive influence should be measured in terms of 'increased knowledge, respect, and empathy on the part of members of the two cultures for each other'.

Obviously, if the above hypothetical example was an instance of conference interpreting and the cultural information applicable to each side was relayed by a CCIr, the two sides, having been acquainted with the relevant cultural information of the other side, would be in a better position than the CCIr to judge the situation, that is, either reach a compromise to solve the problems they have encountered or decide not to proceed with the project and abolish it altogether because they are in possession of more inside/specialised knowledge of what can(not) be done and/or compromised than their CCIr. Nevertheless, their CCIr can still be considered a cultural mediator because the interpreter acting as a mediator does not necessarily mean working to eliminate political, economic or diplomatic differences inherent in the stances of the two clients because the purpose of his/her mediation, cultural or otherwise, is to achieve understanding by breaking the language and cultural barriers, which is in the interests of the two clients who, despite the interpreter's mediation, might still not be able to solve their differences. Herbert anticipated this over 50 years ago:

*The mission of the interpreter is to help individuals and communities to acquire a fuller knowledge and a deeper understanding of one another, and [...] to come to an agreement if they should want to do so (1952: 3, emphasis in original).*

In the example of 'martyrdom operations' discussed in **5.1.2 Identification with the client**, if Meshal refuses to consider his organisation's operations as suicide bombings or terrorist acts, and his western interviewer and all westerners equally refuse to believe that these operations are martyrdom operations, the interpreter cannot, rather is not expected to, do anything about this apart from clarifying each party's position. If the two parties want to solve their differences, then they themselves can make up their differences or work out a compromise based on their understanding and perception of the situation and culture of the other as mediated by the interpreter. As mentioned earlier, conference interpreters cannot act like diplomats or assume delegates' roles, and there is a danger that if they do, they may cause more harm than good to the immediate communication process and possibly to the long-term relations between clients, countries or cultures.

Bochner's distinction between the mediator-as-translator and mediator-as-synthesiser helps shed light on how the terms 'cultural mediation' and 'cultural mediator' are understood by some IS researchers since some equate intercultural mediation with going beyond creating understanding or acting like delegates, thus in effect arguing that intercultural mediation

means assuming the mediator-as-synthesiser's role. For example, the concept of 'cultural mediator' has been the subject of a workshop on culture, its role in interpreting and the interpreter's role involving a number of well-known scholars in the field of conference interpreting during the Turku Conference (cf. Gambier et al. 1997). However, the discussion as reported in Kondo et al. (1997), reveals varying views on the interpreter's role and contradictory interpretations of the real meaning of intercultural mediation, cultural mediator and the necessarily relevant concept of the interpreter's 'neutrality' (**5.1.5 Interpreters' visibility; 5.2.1 Neutrality versus partisanship**). The 'general view tends to be that the interpreter should aspire to be a cultural mediator' (Kondo et al. 1997: 150).

Based on Stenzl's (1983) and Kirchhoff's (1976b) works, Dam (cf. Kondo et al. 1997: 158) argues that the cultural perspective of human beings is reflected in their text production and linguistic output and expectations as text receivers. The presence of two or more different cultural systems in interpreted communication can give rise to disparities between the receiver's textual and linguistic expectations on the one hand, and the way the sender chooses to relay his/her message on the other. Therefore, the intercultural factor is considered as a source of potential noise in the communication channel (Kirchhoff 1976b: 26, quoted in Kondo et al. 1997: 158). Zalka (cf. Kondo et al. 1997: 153f) puts forward a similar argument. If the interpreter's ideal function is to ensure smooth communication between speaker and audience, then the interpreter's role is to remedy the potential cultural noise by adapting the culture-bound peculiarities of the original to the receptor's culturally determined expectations (Kirchhoff 1976b: 24, quoted in Kondo et al. 1997: 158). Thus, Dam (ibid) argues that the interpreter's ideal role is that of a cultural mediator.

Alexieva (Kondo et al. 1997: 158), Setton (ibid: 160), Katan (ibid: 161) and Zalka (ibid: 164) all argue that the interpreter should be a cultural mediator.

However, Kondo (ibid: 161) warns about what he calls 'dangers' in performing intercultural mediation because the interpreter's efforts at intercultural mediation could in some contexts involving Japanese be construed as mis-/over-translations or cases of 'over-interpreting' (Kondo 1990: 63) for which the interpreter may be censored and possibly sacked although he calls for creating awareness of such issues in trainees to be able to be cultural mediators (Kondo et al. 1997: 165).

Kondo seems to argue that cultural mediation as carried out by interpreters is tantamount to assuming delegates' roles. He (1990: 63) argues that interpreters can only render what is said, but not what is left unsaid. He (ibid: 64) cites the example of a Japanese businessman negotiating a deal with someone from another business. The former wrongly assumes that the latter would use the bank of the former to handle the business but finds too late that the latter has another bank in mind. Kondo argues that if the interpreter anticipates this, he/she should not be expected to remind the delegates about the potential misunderstanding.

However, the present researcher argues that while it is true that interpreters should not and cannot assume delegates' roles as mentioned above, intercultural mediation does not mean assuming a delegate's role (**5.1.1 The interpreter as intermediary**) because as is shown further on, intercultural mediation in (conference) interpreting is the use of the interpreter's cultural knowledge to create understanding; it does not mean imposing one's own opinion or intervening in the discourse the way delegates do.

Moreover, it is well-known that utterances/messages consist of explicit (said) and implicit (unsaid) information (**Chapter 4**; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 80/224f; Kondo 2003: 84f). If the interpreter is to be faithful not to the linguistic/surface structure or semantic meaning, but to the sense of the original message, then both explicit and implicit (cultural or non-cultural) information should be relayed to the TL audience; otherwise, misunderstanding is more likely to occur. Thus, Kondo's argument that interpreters can only render what is expressed can only be right if what is assumed or left unsaid by delegates is not implied by what is actually said in the communication process. Interpreters can only include in their renditions any assumptions (cultural or otherwise) contained in what is actually said, and it is wrong to assume that interpreters could render assumptions that are not implied by what delegates say simply because delegates have many assumptions concerning many things which do not necessarily have to do with the point of discussion. What makes these assumptions directly relevant to the very point of discussion is whether they are implied at all by what delegates actually say.

In Kondo's example, if the assumptions about the bank have been implied by what has been said, the interpreter should relay this information because it has been said in one way or another, and if these assumptions have been of a cultural nature and the interpreter has

relayed them to the TL audience, he/she will have performed intercultural mediation without assuming a delegate's role. If the assumptions about the bank have not been implied or explicitly stated, then it is not the interpreter's brief to relay these assumptions, and if he/she does not relay them, this should not mean that he/she is not a cultural mediator.

### 5.2.1 Neutrality versus partisanship

The other problematic point in the above workshop is the juxtaposition of 'neutral' and 'cultural mediator' as two incompatible concepts: 'One point of the debate is whether the interpreter should be a cultural mediator or a more neutral, pure language transmitter' (Kondo et al. 1997: 150; **5.1.5 Interpreters' visibility**; **5.2 The cultural mediator**). On the one hand, if 'neutral' is meant to be the equivalent of 'passive' or 'inactive', then the present researcher argues that the interpreter, whether assuming the linguistic- or intercultural-mediator role, is as actively present in the communication process as the other participants not least because he/she performs a highly complex task and thus communication is not possible without his/her *active*<sup>10</sup> participation (see also **5.1.1 The interpreter as intermediary**). On the other hand, if 'neutral' is taken to mean the opposite of 'biased' or 'partisan', then there is no reason why the interpreter should not be a faithful, accurate and *neutral* (non-biased/non-partisan/impartial) cultural mediator at once, which is what the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator proposed by the present researcher in the following part is all about.

Indeed, in his attempt to distinguish a mediator from other agents at the interface between two cultures in terms of the purpose of the actor or of the intent and effect (partisan, neutral or bipartisan), Bochner (1981c: 302f) cites translators/interpreters as *neutral* actors based on his distinction between the mediator-as-translator and mediator-as-synthesizer discussed above. According to Bochner (ibid), the partisan actor is chiefly interested in furthering the interests of his/her own culture, the neutral actor is disengaged or not interested in furthering the interests of either culture while still engaged in the communication process itself (which is the sense in which the concept 'neutral' is used in this thesis), and the bipartisan actor is concerned with furthering the interests of the two cultures. More importantly, Bochner (ibid: 304) states that 'a mediator is not a mediator when he is being

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<sup>10</sup> The meaning of 'active' here is restricted to active in interpreting decisions only.

partisan in intent and effect' because the criterion for the distinction between mediating and non-mediating transactions depends on 'whether there is some intent of mutuality'. Obviously, no mutuality is involved in a transaction by a partisan actor (e.g. an advocate, diplomat, representative, spokesperson, etc.). Thus, a partisan cannot be a mediator as his/hers is a 'pseudo- or one-way mediation' (McLeod 1981: 40f).

This does not only show that 'neutral' and 'cultural mediator' are compatible, but also complementary and interdependent. Interpreters cannot assume the cultural-mediator role without being neutral individuals. In other words, if the interpreter is a cultural mediator, he/she is a neutral individual by default and necessity, which stands in contrast to the juxtaposition made in Kondo et al. (1997:150) between 'neutral' and 'cultural mediator'.

Based on Bochner's (1981c: 302ff) definitions of the concepts of neutral and bipartisan actors, it can be argued that the interpreter as cultural mediator is a neutral actor in the sense that he/she is disengaged from the primary parties' interests, which might be conflicting in nature, but a bipartisan individual when it comes to understanding what is said because the essential aim for almost any interpretation encounter is to create understanding and communication among the two primary parties.

The concept of the neutral, non-partisan, faithful mediator-as-translator as proposed by Bochner (1981a; 1981b) is developed within the framework of the CPA to account in a more detailed description for the CCIr's role in the following part.

### **5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator**

In this section, Bochner's concept of the 'mediator-as-translator' is developed into an account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator within the framework of the CPA which, as mentioned above, allows for the development of a concept of the CCIr's role as a neutral, faithful intercultural mediator because it explains the communication process not only in monolingual, but also bilingual and bicultural settings, thus providing a clear account of the CCIr's usual position in the communication process.

According to Gutt (1998: 46), translation and (by extension) interpreting fall naturally

under the concept of interpretive use of language (**4.2.2.4 Descriptive and interpretive dimensions of language use**). Interpretive use by necessity entails the reporting or ascribing to a person (Y) by an intermediary of an utterance/thought originally said, uttered or entertained by someone else (X). The interpreter's situation in any communication process is a replica of this situation with one important exception, this being the fact that the interpreter's report is in a different language. The interpreter's position is to a great extent identical to that of a newspaper/TV reporter in monolingual situations. For example, having met a political figure to ask for his/her opinion about a certain state of affairs, the reporter will report to his/her audience not what the reporter him/herself believes, but *what he/she believes the political figure has actually said*. This means that the reporter is not giving his/her opinion about a certain state of affairs but what he/she believes is the speaker's opinion about the state of affairs.

Because the reporter is involved in interpretive use, his/her account of what the speaker has said is intended to interpretively resemble what the speaker has actually said and comes with a guarantee not of truthfulness, but faithfulness (Wilson and Sperber 1988: 137f). This means the reporter does not maintain that what the speaker has said is true, but naturally and more often unconsciously maintains that what he/she him/herself says is a *faithful representation of the original*. Whether the original is right or wrong, accepted to the audience and/or reporter or not is not important (not relevant); what is important is that the reporter's version interpretively resembles the original.

This is the usual position of the interpreter who, through his/her interpretation, 'guarantees' (ibid: 137) that his/her interpretation is a faithful account of what the speaker says and that this account interpretively resembles what the speaker believes, says, or maintains to be true. Whether the interpreter agrees with the speaker, believes in what he/she says or not is not important because the audience does not need to know what the interpreter believes; they need to know what the speaker believes or has to say about a certain state of affairs.

When speakers want to communicate information, they might use concepts, words, or expressions that are culturally bound or refer to entities or facts that are well known in their cultures, but are absent from the TL culture or unknown to the TL audience. What the interpreter can do in this situation is simply to treat this cultural information as an integral



part of the overall sense of the original. Thus, any cultural information necessary for the understanding of the original whether implied or explicitly stated is considered as part of the overall sense of the original. The interpreter uses his/her encyclopaedic knowledge and knowledge of the situation/context, that is 'cognitive complements' which he/she adds to meaning (e.g. Lederer 1990: 53) from his/her cognitive environment (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 38f/46) and 'contextual effects' (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 108) obtained from the immediate context, to extract the sense of the original including any culture-specific information that is implied or stated explicitly. Determining which information to use and context to select is governed by the interpreter's search for optimal relevance, which will help the interpreter identify the speaker's intended meaning through inference. This process results in a cognitive sense that interpretively resembles the original.

The following stage, which can overlap with listening and understanding, is the stage of translating or converting this cognitive sense into an appropriate verbal output in the TL. This is a very critical stage since in a similar way to the decisions he/she has made to abstract the sense of the speaker's output, the CCIr will have to not only make decisions on the actual words, expressions, structures, concepts, etc. he/she should use in the TL, but also on what cultural information the original contains to include or not, partly or completely, in the final rendition to create a rendition that again interpretively resembles the original and provides the greatest contextual effects in return for the audience's least processing effort, which will enable the audience to detect the intended interpretation of the original through the search for optimal relevance and inference. In particular, making assumptions on the audience's cognitive environment and, based on this, strategically deciding on the most appropriate procedure (**Chapter 6**) to achieve understanding.

If the interpreter realises that the original message contains cultural information that needs to be supplied or deleted partly or completely in the final rendition for effective understanding and accessibility of the original by the TL audience, he/she is said to have culturally mediated between speaker and audience. Of course, initially, the interpreter brings this additional cultural information to understand the speaker's message, but whether or not this information is important or, in other words, relevant to the TL audience is determined on the basis of the interpreter's knowledge of or assumptions on his/her audience's cognitive environment because the audience expect that what the interpreter will

relay to them is what they deem worth their while. After deciding on the relevance of this culture-bound information, the CCIr will have to make a strategic decision on *how* to deal with it by deciding on an appropriate procedure to achieve his/her goal, that is, a procedure that ensures effective rendition of this material which, because it is culture-specific, needs to be dealt with through what might be termed cultural mediation procedures (**Chapter 6**). Consider the following example:

Amidst speculations on the former US Secretary of State Collin Powell's intention to step down, a State Department spokesperson responded to news reports that there had been no basis for these reports, saying: 'It must be August' (BBC News Online 2003). The speaker wanted to say that these reports were only rumours. To communicate this, the speaker used a figure of speech to achieve his purpose. Obviously, instead of indirectly implying that the reports were rumours, the speaker could have simply said directly that these reports were mere rumours, thus saving his audience some processing effort, but the speaker had a purpose, that is, to strengthen his denial of these reports rather than just simply say that these reports were rumours. Thus, the audience's expenditure of this effort was not in vain; it was rewarded with the worthwhile strengthening of the denial of the reports.

What is more important for the purpose of the present discussion is that this figure of speech carries a cultural element that is easily accessible to the SL audience (especially those involved in politics such as politicians, media figures, etc.) and achieves what the speaker intends to say, namely the strengthening effect of the denial of the truthfulness of these reports, but this cultural element may well be difficult to access by the TL audience because of their unfamiliarity with American politics which is part of American culture. The cultural information embedded in this figure of speech is that in the context of American politics, August is the month when American Congress is in recess; therefore, there is usually a shortage of news that motivates newspapers or news reporters to spread political rumours (Asharq Alawsat 2003).

Having listened to the speaker's utterance, the interpreter brings to the context this cultural knowledge to understand what the speaker intends to say. After coming to the conclusion that the speaker intends to say that these reports are rumours, the interpreter will have to make a decision on how to relay what he/she has understood to the TL audience. Part of the

CCIr's knowledge of the target culture or assumptions on the TL audience's cognitive environment is that this cultural knowledge which has been necessary for him/her to understand the metaphor and consequently infer what it means in that context in the first instance is more likely to be inaccessible to them, which means they, unlike the interpreter, will not be able to use it to understand the message. The CCIr will have to decide whether or not to include this cultural knowledge in the final rendition. His/Her decision is solely based on the question of whether this information will help the TL audience understand the message effectively. If yes, then the question that follows will be: Is this feasible, taking into account the constraints of time and memory? If the answer is still yes, then the question that follows will be: What is the best procedure to achieve this? Is it explanation, paraphrase, addition, etc.? Alternatively, a second scenario, if the answer to the second question (namely whether it is possible to relay this cultural information under the circumstance) is negative, then the procedure will be to omit this additional (embedded) information and simply say in the TL that these reports are rumours, thus saving the TL audience time and effort in arriving at the intended interpretation of the original by providing the best possible translation of the expression under the circumstance though the strengthening of the denial of the truthfulness of the reports will be lost if the CCIr does not compensate for it in some way.

Omission of the cultural information in the second scenario is, however, not a complete one since the essence of the original has been preserved and relayed to the TL audience, namely the fact that these reports are not more than rumours. What has been omitted here is only the embedded cultural information that has guided the SL audience and the interpreter to arrive at the intended meaning of the original in the first instance, but since this information is unlikely to be useful to the TL audience (due to their unfamiliarity with American culture) as it is less likely to guide them to infer the intended meaning of the original, the interpreter has intervened to prevent a potential communication breakdown. This is why a third scenario such as interpreting the above statement into say Arabic as *لا بد وأنه آب* (literally, It must be August), would definitely lead to a communication breakdown because without intervention of any type by supplying the background cultural information or the conclusion the interpreter has arrived at (that these reports are rumours), the CCIr would run the risk of producing a rendition that is unintelligible to the TL audience.

It can be argued that in either of the first two scenarios above, the interpreter has performed cultural mediation. In the first scenario, he/she has transferred some SL cultural knowledge and added it to the TL audience's knowledge. In the second scenario, there is no cultural transfer as such (Ivir, 1987: 38), that is, the TL audience have not been given the implied cultural information about American politics which the interpreter used to infer the meaning of what the speaker had wanted to say, so why can this still be considered an instance of intercultural mediation though there is not any instance of cultural transfer that has benefited the audience with any cultural knowledge? The answer is because the interpreter's ultimate aim is to achieve understanding and communication across cultures. The TL audience will have been faced with cultural information that is inaccessible to them, so the interpreter, with his/her cultural knowledge and through his/her intercultural mediation, has smoothed or filtered out this information and made it accessible to them because and despite of their unfamiliarity with the SL culture. In fact, the above discussion shows that the CCIr cannot but assume the intercultural-mediator role because translators and interpreters deal not only with languages, but also with cultures (Casagrande 1954: 338, quoted in Ivir 1987: 35; see also Pöchhacker 2004: 59).

The three scenarios above could be described using Hatim and Mason's (1997: chapter 9) concepts of 'maximal mediation' for the first scenario, 'partial mediation' for the second and 'minimal mediation' for the third scenario. In the current example, it can even be argued that the third scenario represents zero mediation, because لا بد وأنه آب (It must be August) does not mean anything for an Arabic-speaking audience in the context envisaged for the original; therefore, it should be excluded. What distinguishes the maximal mediation in the first scenario from the partial mediation in the second scenario is the fact that the latter is more feasible given the constraints on the interpreter's time and memory resources although the former is still possible and, like the latter, can still be accepted as long as addition, omission or intervention in general is motivated by and 'compatible with easy intelligibility' (Hatim and Mason 1997: 161), which means the only acceptable scenarios in the present example are the ones that have involved intercultural mediation by the interpreter. This is why interpreters are intercultural mediators by necessity.

Although the reporter in monolingual or multilingual settings uses expressions like someone said, declared, believed, etc., interpreters are not expected to do the same and can

still be considered as speaking on someone's behalf, not as representatives or spokespersons, but as linguistic and cultural aides. On the one hand, the interpreter's presence itself hinges on that of a speaker and whenever there is a bilingual or multilingual meeting and an interpreter or a group of interpreters are present, it is taken for granted by all delegates that what interpreters say is not what they say or maintain, but is an interpretation of what a speaker has said:

The translator<sup>11</sup> is, of course, both a receiver and a producer. We would like to regard him or her as a special category of communicator, one whose act of communication is conditioned by another, previous act [...] (Hatim and Mason 1997: 2).

On the other hand, for the interpreter to keep saying that the speaker said, wanted to say, believes, etc. is a waste of invaluable time and resources for something already known or taken for granted by the audience, namely that interpreters relay what someone else says. This stands in contrast to what Gile argues (1995d: 31; **5.1.4 Loyalty to the speaker**), namely that when the interpreter uses the first person singular, he/she in effect identifies him/herself with the speaker, so the interpreter should either use the third person singular or make it clear from the beginning that what he/she says is an interpretation of the speaker's speech. The question that readily comes to mind is why should the interpreter be required to do so when it is already known that an interpreter is a person who interprets, not initiates speeches? (cf. Seleskovitch 1978a: 62).

Based on the above discussion, it can be argued that the CPA allows for developing an account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator, which may be proposed as a better alternative to many of the concepts discussed above because such an account puts the interpreter in his/her usual position as an intercultural communication expert whose role is to achieve understanding and communication between the primary parties while remaining in a neutral position and, more importantly, faithful to the original. The account suggests that because interpreters are involved in interpretive resemblance, their product is a faithful account of the original and is by no means their own opinion or belief because they are not the initiators of speech but do only report in one language what a speaker says in another language to an audience who does not share the speaker's language/culture by aiming for interpretive resemblance, which is governed by the principle of relevance, implies the

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<sup>11</sup> In the preface to their contribution from which this excerpt is taken, Hatim and Mason argue that what they argue for in their book applies to all kinds of translation including interpreting.

deverbalisation process, and offers a guarantee of faithfulness to the original. This is significant because faithfulness to the sense of the original message is one of the most important principles in translation and interpreting alike.

Moreover, the flexibility of the notion of interpretive resemblance does not only make provisions for the essential principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original, but also for another equally important principle in translation and interpreting, that is, accessibility of the TL rendition of the SL message to the TL audience (what Hatim and Munday (2004: 14) refer to as ‘comprehensibility’) because the interpreter’s ultimate aim is to achieve understanding and communication. Seleskovitch (1986b: 236) points to the importance of accessibility of the interpreter’s rendition to the TL audience, stating that the ‘chain of communication does not end in the booth!’. In the discussion of a survey she has carried out to investigate the interpreter’s role in the communication process, Altman (1990: 23) reports that a great majority of her respondents believe that breakdowns in communication at international conferences can occur when an interpreter fails to convey a certain point. As for the reason why such a breakdown occurs, a small majority of interpreters blame speakers for not making allowances for the interpreter’s presence, but a larger number believe that interpreters are themselves sometimes to blame for this breakdown in a situation where a recipient fails to apprehend the speaker’s message through the interpreter’s rendition, which points to the importance of holding the principle of accessibility on an equal basis with faithfulness. When producing an utterance, the speaker ‘guarantees that her utterance is a faithful enough representation of the original: that is, resembles it closely enough in relevant respects’ (Wilson and Sperber 1988: 137). This makes faithfulness a relative concept that has to be weighed against accessibility.

Besides, because they work across languages and cultures, CCIrs are by necessity intercultural mediators who would simply treat any culturally bound information embedded within the original message as part and parcel of the sense of the original and use procedures to relay this information in a way that ensures understanding by audiences who are unfamiliar with this cultural information. By doing this, the CCIr will have performed intercultural mediation. Furthermore, because they are ‘faithful reporters’ and due to the specific setting of conference interpreting which is too transparent to allow for deviations from faithfulness to the original message, conference interpreters are unlikely to impose

their own opinions, ideas, ideological beliefs, cultural perceptions, projections, stereotypes or otherwise on their interpretation to serve a certain ideology or because they identify with a client since intercultural mediation simply means positive intervention, so to speak, by the CCIr to achieve understanding and communication among delegates belonging to different cultures; it does not mean or it cannot be used as a pretext for intervention to distort or misrepresent the original. Based on this account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator, the following hypothesis can be put forward:

*Hypothesis A: CCIrs do perform intercultural mediation despite the cultural transparency that characterises discourse in international CISs, and the motive behind intercultural mediation as carried out by CCIrs is to achieve understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds while remaining neutral, accurate and faithful to the sense of the original and without imposing their own opinion on what they interpret.*

This hypothesis, which is henceforth referred to as the *Central Hypothesis* or *Hypothesis A* to distinguish it from other secondary hypotheses, is the subject of investigation in the following chapter where a number of cultural mediation procedures that can be used by CCIrs are discussed with reference to authentic interpreting examples and in **Chapter 7** where it is tested in the light of data from the survey of conference interpreters.

The account proposed above is largely compatible with and supported by the opinions of many researchers who are viewed as authorities in the academic and professional domains of conference interpreting such as Herbert (cf. **5.2 The cultural mediator**), Seleskovitch and, in the academic field, Hatim and Mason (**5.1.1 The interpreter as intermediary**), and Pöchhacker who argues that:

The interpreter's two clients, as incumbents of particular roles, have their own intentions and expectations in the communicative interaction. More often than not, these will come into conflict and will force the interpreter to take action as a 'mediator' – *not as a broker or conciliator in a negotiation, but as an agent regulating the evolution of understanding* (2004: 59, emphasis added).

**Chapter 7** contains the analysis of data from the survey of conference interpreters to test the validity of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator from the point of view of a wider population of professional conference interpreters. Before this, however, a survey of possible ways and methods professional CCIrs are likely to use to achieve intercultural mediation is carried out in **Chapter 6**.

## Chapter 6: Cultural mediation procedures

This chapter aims at discussing some of the most common procedures used by translators to overcome cultural differences in translation. The discussion focuses on procedures borrowed mainly from three<sup>1</sup> contributions in the field of Translation Studies, Newmark (1981; 1988) and Ivir (1987), due to the lack of a detailed treatment of the issue in the field of IS in general and CCI in particular. The only exceptions the researcher is aware of are Marrone (1990: 73) who refers to the procedure of the ‘common denominator’ (**6.2 Functional equivalent/Deculturalising**) and Kohn and Kalina (1996: 128) who put forward ‘strategies’ of ‘elaboration’ and ‘deletion’.

The treatment of the procedures in this chapter and in the context of the survey of conference interpreters (**7.5.4.2 Questions 13 & 14; 7.5.4.3 Question 15**) serves to assess the validity of the *Central Hypothesis* and thus the proposed account of the CCIr’s role as intercultural mediator (**Chapter 5**) by seeking to answer the question of whether there is a case for intercultural mediation in CISs and assessing the validity of the interpreter’s involvement in the communication process as described in the proposed account.

Before introducing the procedures, it is worth making a distinction between the two concepts of procedures and strategies which are sometimes used synonymously by some writers in the literature on conference interpreting in the sense that some operations (e.g. anticipation, segmentation, deletion) are similar to the procedures discussed below, but are referred to generally as strategies in IS. Following Ivir (1987: 37f) and Mailhac (1996: 148), a *cultural mediation procedure* is used in this thesis to refer to any operation carried out by the CCIr when dealing with any term or concept that poses a problem due to cultural differences between source and target cultures in order to bridge the cultural gap, thus achieving better cultural understanding and communication among the primary parties. A *cultural mediation strategy*, however, is used to refer to the interpreter’s strategic decision

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<sup>1</sup> There are of course other contributions in Translation Studies that discuss translation procedures, such as Hervey and Higgins (1992), Mailhac (1996), Martin (2000) and, the particularly interesting reference for Arabic-English translation, Dickins et al. (2002), but they propose or discuss procedures that are more or less already covered by Ivir and Newmark or use terms for procedures that more or less refer to the procedures suggested earlier by Ivir and Newmark. Thus, they could be seen as applications of the same procedures with reference to different language combinations. Moreover, in most of these works, procedures are discussed in the context of literary translation with examples from literary works, a type of discourse that is considered too far from discourse in CISs. Also Chesterman’s (2000) detailed treatment of ‘strategies’ does not necessarily concern procedures to deal with problems brought about by cultural differences, elements or gaps.



of the need to implement a certain cultural mediation procedure in a certain situation. In other words, a cultural mediation strategy is an expression or statement of *why* a certain procedure is to be used in a certain situation or context.

Based on this distinction, Kohn and Kalina's (1996: 127) expression of 'cultural adaptations' and Viezzi's (2003: 153; 2005, personal communication) term of 'appropriateness' are better described as strategies rather than procedures because they are too general and could be performed through such specific procedures as substitution, omission, etc. Indeed, Kohn and Kalina (ibid: 127f) argue that cultural adaptations could take the form of deletion or elaboration which, though they are called strategies by the authors, are referred to here as procedures based on the above distinction and discussed in the context of **6.7 Omission** and **6.5 Paraphrase & Explanation**, respectively.

The distinction holds true even at the text/speech level. Hatim and Mason's (1997: chapter 8; see also Hatim 1989; 1997: chapters 4, 5 and 14) notion of 'argumentation across cultures' is better described as a strategy while operations translators/interpreters may execute to abide by cultural argumentation norms can be treated as procedures. Hatim and Mason's (1997: 135f) discussion of the need to turn an implicit English counter-argument into an explicit one in Arabic to abide by Arabic textual norms, thus doing away with the difficulty of understanding the Arabic translation (strategy) by adding (procedure) the 'suppressed connector' (however, but, etc.) is a good example in this regard.

The basis on which the procedures are selected from original sources for discussion here and inclusion in the survey of conference interpreters in **Chapter 7** is twofold. First, the choice of any written translation procedure to fit or be easily deployed during CCI depends first and foremost on whether or not it is feasible for the CCIr to apply the procedure given the constraints of time and memory which, though not as extreme as in SI, can still impose limits on what procedures the CCIr can possibly use. It is thus extremely doubtful whether the CCIr can use 'lexical creation' (Ivir 1987: 45) which, as Ivir himself argues, is less frequently used even in written translation, let alone CCI.

Second, the choice of any translation procedure for CCI also depends on whether or not the result of applying the procedure leads to a readily accessible rendition to the TL audience.

The CCIr needs to provide a rendition of a certain SL term for a TL audience that needs to understand it in real time because they cannot do research on the spot to understand what is meant and may not be able to ask the speaker or interpreter for clarification except in extreme or rare cases when a conference is halted due to a communication breakdown (cf. Altman 1989: 75; **7.5.4.3.1.5 Interruption of conference proceedings**). In this context, it is doubtful whether ‘borrowing’ or ‘importation’ (Ivir 1987: 39), also known as ‘transference’ (Newmark 1988: 81), would lead to effective understanding if it was used. It is easy for the CCIr to deploy the procedure of borrowing, but its use can have repercussions on understanding the message by the TL audience who, because of their unfamiliarity with the SL and culture, need the interpreter to do more than just borrowing. This is why Newmark and Ivir argue that borrowing is often coupled with definition or substitution. Thus, borrowing has been included in the discussion below as well as in the survey despite the above argument.

No specific order for the presentation of the procedures is followed except when the nature of examples provided to support the arguments forces a certain arrangement. Moreover, since calque or loan translation is a form of literal translation (Newmark 1988: 84), it does not feature separately in the following discussion, and the discussion on literal translation below is deemed sufficient to apply to both literal and loan translation. The same applies for gloss/explanation and paraphrase which are discussed under one heading due to the great resemblance between the two procedures. Interpreting examples from authentic interpreting situations are discussed to illustrate the use of the procedures.

## **6.1 Borrowing/Importation & Description/Definition**

The two procedures are discussed together under one heading for the sake of convenience because the example discussed below applies to the two procedures when used together by the CCIr in a certain interpreting situation.

According to Ivir (1987: 39), borrowing of a SL expression ensures a very ‘precise transmission of cultural information’. To use the terminology of the CPA, this means complete or the highest degree of resemblance to the original. However, Ivir stipulates that the knowledge of extralinguistic information carried out by the term in question should be

assured in some other way such as definition, visual representation, direct experience, etc. This is why, according to Ivir, borrowing is usually combined with definition or substitution (see also Newmark 1988: 81f).

Besides, Ivir argues that there are further restrictions<sup>2</sup> on the use of borrowing. First, there should be a sufficient need for borrowing to ensure the borrowed item is not for single use because the success of borrowing depends on the TL audience's repeated exposure to the borrowed item to be able to absorb the form and content of the expression. Second, the form of the SL term can be easily integrated into the phonology and morphology of the TL because strange-sounding words or those which are not easily manipulated in such cases as gender, number, etc. stand less chance of acceptance in the TL (Ivir 1987: 39).

Description or definition depends on what members of the TL culture know to try and make them aware of what they do not know although it is important to know that no definition can provide all the information and that the translator's definition should be formed in such a way that it focuses on what is relevant during a given communication act (ibid: 40).

Moreover, Ivir argues that there are two disadvantages to this procedure. The first is its 'unwieldiness', and this is why definition is often used as a complementary procedure to another procedure (e.g. borrowing). The second is that unlike corresponding non-definitional SL expressions, definitions are 'communicatively too heavy' (ibid).

It can also be argued that in CCI, definitions can be costly in terms of time management and resource allocation given the constraints which are characteristic of the interpreting process except if the CCIr is very familiar with the expression in question or has readily available information about the expression, which makes it less costly in terms of time, memory and attentional resources since the interpreter does not actually need to invest much time or effort in scanning memory for relevant definitional information. A combination of borrowing and definition can also be described in terms of a trade-off between the ease of borrowing and lack of it in definition.

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<sup>2</sup> See also Ivir (1998: 138-141) for more constraints on the use of borrowing.

The following example, although not a cultural reference as such, is taken from the present researcher's own professional practice, but for reasons of confidentiality, no context can be provided, and the discussion focuses only on the term itself. The example concerns the English term 'bismuth', a metallic element. During the interpretation, the CCIr had to borrow the term into Arabic because of his unawareness of any Arabic equivalent to the term. Then the interpreter coupled borrowing with definition by adding the Arabic equivalents of 'metallic' and 'element' and integrated the foreign term into the expression by inserting it in the middle, which abides by Arabic syntactic rules and results in 'عنصر البزموت الفلزي' (back translation: 'the metallic element of bismuth'). Integration of the foreign term has been ensured further by the addition of the Arabic definite article (الـ) to the foreign term which accepted the definite article as any Arabic word would.

As mentioned above, from the perspective of the CPA, a borrowed item provides the highest degree of resemblance to the original, but borrowing is not tolerated by the CPA because using borrowing could force the audience to expend unnecessary processing effort, which is not rewarded with anything worthwhile anyway if the TL audience are unfamiliar with the borrowed term, thus significantly reducing or eliminating accessibility. However, the interpreter in the current example was not aware of any direct TL (Arabic) equivalent to the term which refers to a specific and important element in the original context, and therefore, it had to be accounted for in the TL rendition and omission was not at all possible. The interpreter therefore used borrowing and combined it with definition, and this was deemed sufficient given the interpreter's awareness of the TL audience's extensive specialised knowledge of the subject matter in general and the term itself in particular, which eliminated any potential intelligibility problems.

## **6.2 Functional equivalent/Deculturalising**

According to Newmark (1988: 83), functional equivalent or deculturalising involves the use of a 'culture-free' term as an equivalent to a SL cultural one, thus neutralising, generalising or deculturalising the peculiarity of the SL cultural term. Therefore, this procedure occupies the middle or universal position between the SL and TL cultures.

Marrone (1990: 73) discusses what he refers to as the 'common denominator' which is

similar to the procedure of deculturalising where the peculiarity of a SL term can be reduced by providing a neutral, commonly-known or culture-free equivalent. He argues that appropriate equivalents to different national institutions when interpreting between, say, Italian and English can be found in the EU institutions and terminology which can provide this common denominator since they are more accessible and known to interpreters as a result of the European community harmonisation which has created a ‘conceptual corpus’ that has ‘smoothed out’ a number of national differences.

The following example is taken from a Press Conference by President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Bashar al-Assad, and British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in London on 16 December 2002. The Prime Minister starts the press conference by welcoming the Syrian President and his wife to ‘Downing Street’ (10 Downing Street Official Website 2002). Of course, it is very well-known that Downing Street refers to 10 Downing Street, the official residence of the British Prime Minister which is also frequently used to refer to the Prime Minister himself or the British Government in general especially in the English media.

The Arabic transcript of the press conference (Syrian Radio and TV Official Website 2002) refers to Downing Street as ‘مقر رئاسة الوزراء البريطانية’ which literally means ‘the residence of the British prime ministry’ and sounds very natural in Arabic political discourse.

What is particularly noticeable about this way of dealing with the reference is that it has achieved accessibility without compromising faithfulness to the sense of the original and for no purpose other than establishing more effective communication with the TL audience. Deculturalising Downing Street in this way and context does not seem to have any undesirable effects or to have come about as a result of the interpreter’s partisanship or identification with one at the expense of the other client.

### **6.3 Recognised (or generally accepted) translation**

According to Newmark (1988: 89), the official or generally accepted translation of any institutional term should normally be used because the translator/interpreter might run the risk of causing confusion if he/she opts for a different translation.

Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995: 91) discuss ‘established corresponding terms’ as one type of transcodable terms which have a fixed meaning regardless of context (ibid: 90). The term they use is similar to the name of this procedure and includes titles and names, book and film titles, established expressions used within certain organisations or groups, etc. which should be used by the interpreter to avoid causing confusion or general disapproval, sounding ignorant, or providing a translation that sounds absurd (ibid: 96f).

The following example is taken from the verbatim record of the UN Security Council 4846<sup>th</sup> meeting<sup>3</sup> on the situation in the Middle East and Palestine (UN 2003):

I thank **Sir** Kieran for his comprehensive briefing. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on this subject.

أشكر السير كيران على إحاطته الإعلامية الشاملة، ووفقاً للتفاهم الذي تم التوصل إليه في مشاورات المجلس السابقة، أود الآن أن أدعو أعضاء المجلس إلى إجراء مشاورات غير رسمية لمواصلة مناقشتنا هذا الموضوع.

As is clear from the highlighted word in the Arabic interpretation, the interpreter uses the recognised translation of the title which is a mere borrowing of the original term (the Arabic term ‘السير’ is only a transcription of ‘Sir’). Since ‘السير’ has become an established borrowing, the above rendition can still be called recognised translation.

Again here, the way the interpreter has dealt with the title is unlikely to cause any comprehension problems to the TL audience because the borrowed item is easily accessible; Arabic history books are full of references to the title as dealt with by the interpreter in this example such as the reference to the well-known ‘Hussein-McMahon Correspondence’ between Hussein bin Ali of Mecca and *Sir* Henry McMahon, the British high commissioner in Egypt, following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I (Microsoft Encarta Reference Library Premium 2005). Other better known examples of recognised translations in Arabic include ‘الكونغرس الأمريكي’ for ‘American Congress’ and ‘مجلس العموم البريطاني’ for ‘the House of Commons’.

## 6.4 Literal translation

Ivir (1987: 41) argues that literal translation is usually considered the procedure for filling

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<sup>3</sup> It is well-known that UN Security Council meetings are conducted with SI, but this example can still be used for the purposes of the current argument since the term can occur in a CCI situation.

cultural and lexical gaps because it is one of the common ways of cultural transference and the spreading of influence from one culture to another together with borrowing. Ivir argues that the principal value of literal translation is its faithfulness to the original and ‘transparency’ in the TL. Newmark (1988: 69) argues that literal translation is ‘correct and must not be avoided, if it secures referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original’<sup>4</sup>.

The following example has been taken from an interview by BBC’s Newsnight programme (Newsnight 2004b<sup>5</sup>) with Professor Yousuf al-Qaradawi in Qatar in June 2004. The programme was broadcast on 7 July 2004 during Qaradawi’s visit to London to participate in the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the European Council of Fatwa and Research, a visit that was met with much controversy because of Qaradawi’s position on ‘martyrdom operations’:

الأمر الثاني، إنني أعتبر أن هذه العمليات الاستشهادية هي من دلائل العدل الإلهي [...].

Secondly, I consider this type of **martyrdom operation** as indication of justice of Allah the Almighty [...].

The CCIr’s choice of literal translation in interpreting the controversial concept highlighted in bold type is successful and has resulted in an appropriate rendition of the concept. To borrow Newmark’s words, this interpretation secures referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original<sup>6</sup> and, above all, is easy to understand. The referential equivalence is secured by the fact that the concept of martyrdom is represented in the TL by the English term ‘martyrdom’. The pragmatic equivalence is again secured in this interpretation because the use of the term ‘الاستشهادية’ (martyrdom) in the original points to the intention of showing this act as a justifiable and preferable act, one that is to be celebrated and glorified, not condemned. Similarly, in the target culture (English) and in most other national cultures, martyrdom and martyrs are respected and dignified.

From the perspective of the CPA, this interpretation shows almost complete interpretive resemblance to the original, but does not impose any unnecessary processing effort on the

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<sup>4</sup> See also Ivir (1998: 142f) for more constraints on the use of literal translation.

<sup>5</sup> The bibliographic entry for this reference contains links to two locations on the BBC website that contain information on the interviews and online access to a video clip of the report which was broadcast on Newsnight on 7 July 2004. All examples from Qaradawi’s interviews have been taken from this video clip.

<sup>6</sup> Hatim and Mason (1990: 6) argue that pragmatic equivalence ‘is frequently at variance with referential equivalence’, but in this example, it is not.

TL audience in that the interpretation is easily accessible to them despite the fact that there is a term used in English and western cultures in general (suicide bombings) to describe the act being discussed in the above excerpt.

As mentioned in the discussion of a different interpretation of this concept in **5.1.2 Identification with the client**, these acts are controversial because many (mostly in western cultures) view them as suicide bombings, but others (mostly in the Arab-Muslim world) as martyrdom operations brought about by the current political context. Moreover, the fact that supporting, justifying or condemning these acts lies in the centre of this interview and the political and media controversy around it makes it a must for the interpreter to provide an accurate rendition of the concept to make this distinction obvious. Applying literal translation, the CCIr has mediated to the TL audience cultural information that represents a fact of the original culture or at least a fact for a speaker who belongs to the original culture, and it is up to the TL audience to agree or disagree with the speaker, to accept or refuse to believe that these acts are martyrdom operations. What the CCIr has tried to achieve, and achieve he did successfully, is to clarify the speaker's position on this controversial issue although the CCIr himself might not agree with the speaker, which is in the interests of the speaker and his audience since in the same way the speaker would very much like to get his message across to the TL audience, the TL receptors are keen to know what the speaker has to say regarding this particularly controversial issue.

Opting for a different procedure (e.g. substitution), would result in an identical interpretation to the one discussed in the section referred to above, 'suicide bombings', which has been found to be problematic and detrimental to interpreting quality for two important reasons. Firstly, substituting 'martyrdom operations' by 'suicide bombings' would be the result of a lack of neutrality by the CCIr since merely assuming or knowing for sure that the TL audience considers these acts as 'suicide bombings' or 'terrorist acts', thus disagreeing with the speaker, does not justify unfaithfulness to the original.

Secondly, and more importantly, the term 'suicide bombings' does not carry any degree of resemblance to the original, interpretive or otherwise. It does not secure referential or pragmatic equivalence to the original either. The reference it carries (suicide) is not only different from, but is also in conflict with, that of the original (martyrdom). It does not



secure pragmatic equivalence to the original because the speaker's use of 'العمليات الاستشهادية' (martyrdom operations) underlies a pragmatic intention to refer to an act that is to be justified and glorified while the use of 'suicide bombings' implies a reference to a notorious and terrorist act that is to be strongly condemned and utterly denounced.

Therefore, if the CCIr opted for 'suicide bombings', he/she would run the risk of either masking the intended interpretation of the original, thus making inaccessible some very important SL cultural information to the TL audience, or, worse, causing confusion and contradiction, which would motivate the TL audience to question the interpretation and its quality since they cannot believe that the speaker calls these operations suicide bombings (a term which is associated with terrorism) and defends them at the same time.

## 6.5 Paraphrase & Explanation

This may take the form of amplification (Newmark 1988: 90), gloss (Altman 1990: 25) or elaboration (Kohn and Kalina 1996: 128) to explain a linguistic or cultural element that is difficult to interpret in the TL due to the absence of an appropriate TL equivalent.

Consider the following example which is taken from a second interview with Professor Qaradawi by BBC Newsnight programme (Newsnight 2004b) on the fringes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the European Council of Fatwa and Research. The second interview can be considered as a follow-up for the first BBC interview with him reported above in the example on literal translation because the reporter says 'So we went back to the Sheikh for a clarification of his views'. The reporter asks if 'suicide bombing was legitimate in Iraq'. In the video clip, there is no Arabic interpretation for the question by the interpreter, nor is Qaradawi's reply in Arabic heard, but what is heard is the following reply by the interpreter to the above question: 'In Palestine, the need is there, in Iraq today the need is not there'. Then, the discourse proceeds as follows:

Reporter: And who decides if the need is there? Who makes that decision?

Interpreter: من الذي يقرر إذا ما كانت الضرورة قد حصلت أو لم تحصل؟ [Arabic interpretation of the question above].

Qaradawi: أهـ أهل الرأي وأهل الحل والعقد في القضية.

Interpreter: **The influential figures within a given community, the leaders and the scholars**, they meet and decide.

Qaradawi uses ‘أهل الحل والعقد’, a standard classical Arabic expression that is mostly used in or associated with religious discourse to refer to community leaders. The CCIr uses paraphrase and explanation to render this cultural reference which is in fact a metaphor that literally means ‘the people who loose and bind’, hence the interpretation of the metaphor.

To judge the CCIr’s performance in his attempt to interpret the above expression, it would be useful to draw a comparison between the CCIr’s rendition of this expression and a (written) translation of the same expression by a translator. The translation of the expression is taken from a translated transcript of an audiotape attributed to Osama Bin Laden and broadcast by al-Jazeera satellite channel on 4 January, 2004:

The honest people who are concerned about this situation, such as the ulema, leaders who are obeyed among their people, dignitaries, notables and merchants should get together and meet in a safe place away from the shadow of these suppressive regimes and form a council for **Ahl al-Hall wa al-Aqd [literally those who loose and bind; reference to honest, wise and righteous people who can appoint or remove a ruler in Islamic tradition]** to fill the vacuum caused by the religious invalidation of these regimes and their mental deficiency (BBC News Online 2004).

As is manifest from the highlighted text in the above excerpt, it has taken the translator *four* procedures and all the highlighted rendition of only a three-word Arabic expression to actually be satisfied that the expression is rendered in such a way that makes it easily accessible to the TL audience. The translator first uses a written translation-specific procedure, that is transcription, then literal translation which is incidentally not enough on its own in this context, followed by paraphrase and explanation, and finally addition of the information that those people ‘can appoint or remove a ruler in Islamic tradition’.

Indeed, the comparison with the written translation of the expression points clearly to a highly professional performance by the CCIr in dealing with this highly culture-specific reference given the nature of the expression and the constraints imposed on the CCIr and inherent in the CCI process which deprives CCIrs from the luxuries translators enjoy.

## 6.6 Cultural equivalent/Substitution

According to Newmark (1988: 82f), a cultural equivalent, also called ‘substitution’ by Ivir (1987: 43), is a close, approximate, or not accurate translation where a SL cultural term or expression is translated by a TL cultural term.

According to Ivir (1987: 43), substitution can be carried out when a SL element does not correspond to an empty slot in the TL, but to a TL item that is similar to the SL element. He argues that the advantage of substitution is that the substitute would represent a total linguistic and cultural transparency, which makes it easier to understand by the TL audience. However, he argues that the procedure has the disadvantage of identifying elements which are not completely identical and eliminating the foreignness of the SL culture by treating SL elements as though they were TL elements.

The following example is taken from a speech by Fadwa Barghouti (Palestinian lawyer and wife of the renowned Palestinian political prisoner, Marwan Barghouti) and the English CCI of this speech. The event was organised by Manchester Palestine Solidarity Campaign in Manchester in September 2004. The speech is about the situation of Palestinian political prisoners in general and her husband, Marwan Barghouti, in particular in Israeli prisons. It lasted around 31 minutes including the interpreter's output, followed by a question-and-answer session which lasted for 40 minutes. The speech was fully improvised by the speaker. In this example, the speaker, talking about the harsh treatment of Palestinian women prisoners in Israeli prisons, uses a specific SL expression to refer to a specific area in Palestine's West Bank, but the CCIr replaces the SL expression by another TL expression to refer to that same place:

وموجود خلال هذا العدد من الأسرى ١١٠ نساء [...] يتعاملوا معهم بوحشية وهناك ثنتين من هؤلاء الأخوات وضعوا مولودهم في السجن وتمت عملية الولادة بدون رعاية طبية بأي حالة كانت، وبعد أن تفيق المرأة الأسيرة من البنج ترى نفسها مقيدة اليدين والقدمين دون أي رعاية طبية وهذا تم بحث عليه من قبل مؤسسات عاملة في منطقة ٤٨ وواضح الخرق لحقوق الطفل وحقوق المعتقل وحقوق الطبيبة للمرأة في هذا الموضوع.

Out of the 8,000 political prisoners there are 110 women and Israel treats them with a lot of savagery, and two of these women have given birth and while they gave birth they were all the time in shackles or while they give birth and after birth and a lot of organisations, human rights organisations, **inside the Green Line** have carried out research on this issue and come to the conclusion that this is a breach of the child right, woman right and human right in general.

As is clear from the highlighted expressions in the original and its English interpretation, the speaker uses Arabic 'منطقة ٤٨' (literally the region of 48 or the 48-region, where 48 is short for the year 1948) while the interpreter uses 'inside the Green Line'. Obviously, linguistically and semantically, 'inside the Green Line' does not mean 'the 48-region' or 'the region as existed before 1948', but in fact historically, geographically and thus interpretively, it does in this context because whereas the SL and TL expressions are

different, they refer to one and the same thing in this context. The 48-region refers to the West Bank as was known up to the year 1948. The Green Line is the boundary of the West Bank as known up to 1948. The line was established by the 1949 Armistice between the Israelis and Arabs following the 1948 War (Microsoft Encarta Reference Library Premium 2005). This substitution can be attributed to the idea that the CCIr, aware of his audience's cognitive environment, has decided that the '48-region' is rather vague or less accessible to his audience than 'inside the Green Line'<sup>7</sup> as the boundary of the West Bank has come to be known for the international community in general.

In addition to illustrating a clear instance of the procedure of substitution, this example shows that CCIrs do act as intercultural mediators to further understanding between speaker and audience. Moreover, the example lends support to the principles of the CPA in that the original and its interpretation interpretively resemble each other, that is, resemble each other 'closely enough in relevant respects' (Wilson and Sperber 1988: 137). The CCIr has culturally mediated to his audience relevant and even more easily accessible information than the original version without compromising faithfulness to the original.

The application of substitution in this example is also successful and appropriate because the CCIr's sole motive behind using substitution is to make it easy for his audience to understand what the speaker is referring to. This is very different from the hypothetical situation discussed in the example on literal translation above where it has been argued that using the procedure of substitution to interpret the term 'العمليات الاستشهادية' (martyrdom operations) would have been counter-productive because in that example, there is a real need to show the difference between two, not similar, but fundamentally opposing positions on a controversial issue, which is why literal translation, not substitution, has been deemed appropriate there and why substitution is totally accepted in the current example.

## 6.7 Omission

This procedure can be used if the SL item to be deleted is 'marginal to the text' (Newmark 1981: 77) or if it is 'redundant or not acceptable in the target discourse culture or has not even an approximate equivalent there' (Kohn and Kalina 1996: 128). However, Ivir (1987:

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<sup>7</sup> This can also be used as an example of deculturalising (by substitution) since the 'Green Line' is an internationally recognized term while reference to 'the 48-region' is mostly made by Arabs in the region.

46) argues that this procedure is not required based on the nature of the SL element, but on the nature of the communicative situation in which such an element occurs in that the translator might decide that translating the SL element might communicatively cost him/her more than contributing to the faithfulness of the translation.

In the following example from Barghouti's speech introduced above, the speaker draws a comparison between what the Israelis claim and what they actually do, using the term 'the oasis of democracy', and the CCIr uses omission but for a different reason:

وفي هذا العدد كمان ٤٥٠ طفل فلسطيني أقل من ١٨ عام ولكن حينما نتحدث عن طفل فلسطيني نجد هناك البعض عمره لا يتجاوز ١٢ عام موجود داخل السجن، وإسرائيل التي تدعي بأنها واحة الديمقراطية في الشرق الأوسط تحتجز من هم ١٢ عام وهناك عدد كبير. كمحامي وأتواجد داخل المحكمة رأيت عدد كبير من الأطفال اللي أعمارهم لا تزيد عن ١٢ عام وكانت التهم الموجهة إليهم بأنهم يسكنون في منزل على طريق المستوطنة أو في مدرسة يتعلمون في مدرسة تقع على طريق المستوطنة وفي بعض الأحيان حينما تمر سيارات المستوطنين يلقوا حجارة على هذه المستوطنات، المستوطنات التي أخذت من أراضيهم من أراضي آبائهم وبنى عليها هؤلاء المستوطنين بيوتهم ويمروا في طرق من منازلهم ومدارسهم ويعاقب هذا الطفل لأنه ألقى حجر على هؤلاء الذين أخذوا منزله.

Out of these prisoners, there are 450 children under 18 year old, and when I say under 18 year old, some of them are 12 year old, and as a lawyer, I saw cases of children who are in prisons who are not over than 12 year old. Their their charge is that they live in a house which is on the main road or they are they go to school which is on the main road which is used by the settlers and stone throwing take [sic] place from the school or from the area near the house and all the children of that area will be arrested as a result of that, so this is a grave injustice because those settlements are built on lands which are taken from these people's fathers and grandfathers and they are illegitimate and when the children very innocently throw stones on those people who [took] their grandfather's land and father's land, they are punished in this savage way.

It is clear from the above that all the highlighted part (a complete sentence) in the Arabic original is missing from the interpreter's version. The missing information reads as follows:

[...] and Israel which claims to be the oasis of democracy in the Middle East imprisons a large number of 12-year olds [...] (my translation).

While the speaker refers to 12-year olds being detained by the Israelis three times, the interpreter refers to them twice. Thus, the reference to 12-year olds in the missing sentence is still an instance of omission. In any case, a complete idea is missing in the interpretation, that the Israelis claim one thing (oasis of democracy in the Middle East), but behave differently (imprison a big number of 12-year olds just for throwing stones at the settlers).

Instances of omission in interpreting can occur due to different reasons (**2.2.2.1.5.2 Error analysis**). They might occur due to a processing overload (Gile 1991: 19f; 1997: 200f) which results in a situation where the interpreter cannot catch up with the speaker and is

thus forced to omit some information or because of a LTM or STM failure. Omission might also be used by the interpreter as a cultural mediation procedure when realising, for example, that the interpretation of some cultural information would do more harm than good if it was interpreted into the TL language by obscuring the meaning rather than making it clearer or easier to understand by the TL audience.

In this instance, it can be argued that the omission of this information by the CCIr is not an error but a procedure used strategically by the interpreter although this missing clause is vital for the proposition the speaker has been trying to build. The speaker has been trying to convince the audience that the Israelis claim that they are a democracy, but they still imprison 12 year olds only for throwing stones at the settlers. Since this information is essential for the meaning, the question is why the interpreter should choose to omit this vital information. Although the chunk of speech is rather long, the CCIr did not seem to be under pressure so that he did not catch up with the speaker because the missing information is near the beginning of the chunk (the second sentence), and it has been clear from watching the video that the interpreter was taking abundant notes. In a sense, the reason behind this omission cannot be attributed to a processing overload in the STM, but possibly to a LTM failure: the interpreter simply could not retrieve the term 'oasis' and his strategic response has been to omit this information probably in order not to cost him the loss of other subsequent parts of the speech if he invested more time and attention trying to retrieve 'oasis', the equivalent of Arabic 'واحة'. This will have a significant implication for the applicability of procedures during the communication process (**6.10 Results**).

Omission of vital information is not tolerated by either the CPA or any other theoretical framework because not only there is no cultural transfer (Ivir 1987: 38), but also there is zero-resemblance or no communicated information at all, which in some cases could prove detrimental to the communication process (cf. Altman 1990: 23). It can therefore be argued that the instance of omission in the current example cannot be considered as a cultural mediation procedure as such because, as argued above, it is only a response to a problem, that problem being the 'difficulty in finding the correct contextual equivalent for a given lexical item' (Altman 1994: 34), a problem that is inherent in the interpreting process which imposes certain constraints on what interpreters can do under certain circumstances, but not inherent in this or that theoretical framework. Had the missing information been irrelevant

(such as a non-intentional repetition) or found to have been deemed irrelevant by the interpreter, one could have argued that the interpreter has strategically decided to omit this irrelevant information, thus using omission as a cultural mediation procedure, but the missing information is very important for what the speaker has been trying to say, and on two occasions the interpreter has compensated for this loss by supplying the missing information where appropriate (see below), and he has been successful. What points to the CCIr's success in his task is that in the question-and-answer session following the speech, all members of the audience who asked questions seemed to have grasped the speaker's message fully, and no misunderstanding has been detected.

## 6.8 Compensation

According to Newmark (1988: 91), in the event of a loss of meaning, metaphor, sound or pragmatic effect in a sentence, compensation can be used by the translator, and indeed by the interpreter as in the example discussed below, to compensate for such a loss in another part of the sentence or in a following sentence (or chunk of speech).

It has been argued in the discussion of the example on omission above that the CCIr has chosen to delete a piece of information that is very important to the proposition that the speaker has been trying to build, namely the idea that 'the Israelis claim that Israel is the oasis of democracy in the Middle East, but they still imprison 12-year olds for throwing stones at the settlers'. The following two chunks from Barghouti's speech and their rendition show clearly how the CCIr has compensated, not once but twice, for that loss by supplying the missing information from the first instance:

(١) [...] وإسرائيل واحة الديمقراطية التي تدعي بأنها في الشرق الأوسط واحة الديمقراطية كذلك هي الدولة الوحيدة التي شرعت تعذيب الأسرى والمعتقلين [...].

[...] And Israel which claims that **it's the only democracy or the oasis of democracy**<sup>8</sup> in the Middle East has legalised torture of the political prisoners [...].

(٢) [...] في بعض الأحيان ترى البعض يقول أن إسرائيل ديمقراطية، هل تسمح بدخول صحيفة إلى السجن؟ هل تسمح بدخول راديو إلى السجن أو غير ذلك؟ [...].

[...] Israel which claims to be **a democracy and the oasis of democracy** in the Middle East is denying Palestinian prisoners newspapers and radios in their prisons [...].

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<sup>8</sup> Incidentally, this example, namely the interpretation of the Arabic phrase 'واحة الديمقراطية' as the 'oasis of democracy', can also be used as an example of literal translation.

In the second chunk, the speaker does not even mention ‘oasis’ or the ‘Middle East’, but only says ‘Sometimes you see people saying that Israel is a democracy ...’. However, the CCIr supplies for the second time the full information that he has omitted in the first instance because perhaps he has been keen on compensating for that loss.

On the two occasions when the interpreter has tried to compensate for the first loss, the contexts are roughly the same: ‘someone says something, but acts differently’. The first proposition is ‘Israel claims to be the oasis of democracy, but imprisons 12-year old children just for throwing stones on the settlers’. The second is ‘Israel claims to be the oasis of democracy, but has legalised torture of political prisoners’. The third is ‘some people say that Israel is a democracy, but it is denying prisoners newspapers and radios in their prisons’. This points to the CCIr’s success in deploying compensation where appropriate.

Moreover, the above discussion lends support to the assumption made in the discussion of omission, that the omission of this information is the result of a LTM failure that has prevented the interpreter from retrieving ‘oasis’. It is only after retrieving the word that the CCIr takes the decision to compensate for the information which he has omitted in the first instance. The incident of forgetting or failing to retrieve information and then remembering the forgotten information could actually happen to any interpreter or anybody else where after failing to recall a certain piece of information, the mind works in the background (subconsciously) scanning memory for the forgotten information until it comes back to consciousness. In this instance, the interpreter has been lucky because sometimes this process might take a long time until the forgotten information is recovered.

## **6.9 Addition**

The addition of some relevant cultural information left unsaid or implied by the original discourse might be considered as a necessary procedure if the CCIr realises that this additional information is necessary or can contribute to better understanding by the TL audience who does not share the same cultural knowledge or background with the speaker (Ivir 1987: 46; Newmark 1988: 91; Kohn and Kalina 1996: 127).

However, Kohn and Kalina (ibid: 128) urge caution when embarking on such a procedure



especially in the case of community interpreting in that the interpreter has to make sure that in supplying the additional information, he/she does not run the risk of ‘triggering reactions not entirely compatible with the speaker’s intentions’. Therefore, the two authors stipulate the possession by the interpreter of an excellent cultural cognisance and awareness of differences between the source and target cultures for such a procedure to be successful.

In fact, this applies to all the procedures discussed above because if the interpreter is to perform intercultural mediation, he/she has to have cultural or ‘bicultural competence’ which does not only consist of knowledge of both the source and target cultures, but also of the ability to judge the clients’ knowledge (or otherwise lack of knowledge) of one another’s culture (Witte 1994: 71f). According to Witte (ibid), it is by having this bicultural competence that the interpreter can achieve cultural understanding among the parties involved and eliminate the effects of improper cultural projection which manifests itself in people’s tendency to interpret or view foreign behaviour in accordance with or in the context of their own cultural rules or patterns of behaviour (ibid: 70).

Consider the following example from Barghouti’s speech:

يعني لسوء حظهم أنه لا يوجد كاميرا لتصويرهم وتصور تماما كما حصل في أبو غريب و كما يحصل في السجون الإسرائيلية منذ عام ٦٧ إلى هذه اللحظة ولكن للأسف لم يستطع أحد أن يلتقط هذه الصور لإذلال أبناء الشعب الفلسطيني في السجون الإسرائيلية.

They are so unlucky that there are there’s no one to take photographs like what happened in Abu Ghraib **prison in Iraq** to take photographs of the humiliation, frequent humiliation of the Palestinian political prisoners which has been taking place since 1967 [...].

In the original, the speaker mentions only ‘Abu Ghraib’ (the notorious Iraqi prison under Saddam Hussein and later during the American occupation of Iraq). Yet although the treatment of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers in that prison has gained much notoriety worldwide and that most members of the audience are likely to be aware of this, the CCIr has felt the need to mediate some cultural information by adding to the term institutional and geographical dimensions as part of the history and culture of that area, the fact that ‘Abu Ghraib’ is a prison in Iraq as is highlighted in bold type in the interpreter’s version.

The interpreter’s addition of this cultural information might probably be motivated by the assumption that the CCIr wants to emphasise the distinction between this Iraqi prison and Israeli prisons since the main subject of the whole speech is about Palestinian prisoners in

Israeli prisons, which might tempt some members of the audience who might lack this cultural knowledge to assume that this prison is an Israeli prison and not an Iraqi one. Thus, the additional information in this example can only contribute to more accessibility and better understanding in that it is highly unlikely that the additional cultural information would trigger any reactions that are not compatible with what the speaker intends to say.

## 6.10 Results

The above discussion of the procedures has the following implications and results concerning the use of procedures by CCIrs and the *Central Hypothesis* put forward based on the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator (**5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator**), which is in turn derived from the principles of the CPA (**Chapter 4**).

First, the discussion reveals a clear pattern in the way cultural mediation procedures may be applied by the CCIr when faced with cultural elements that need special attention and treatment (intercultural mediation) by the CCIr to achieve communication between speaker and audience. The discussion indicates that it cannot be safely claimed that a certain procedure is valid for all or most situations. The application of any procedure is governed by the nature of the SL cultural element, communicative situation in which the element is used including the immediate and larger cultural contexts, and TL audience's knowledge of the SL culture or the CCIr's assumptions on his/her audience's cognitive environment. All these play an equally significant role in guiding the CCIr to build his/her strategic decision in favour of one procedure over the other to serve his/her current communicative purposes in each individual case as each individual case has its own merits and should be viewed and treated as such. Literal translation has been considered an appropriate solution for 'martyrdom operations', but substitution has been rejected due to potentially damaging consequences on communication if it has been used. Nevertheless, substitution has been considered as an appropriate procedure to deal with the '48-region' because it has resulted in 'the Green Line' which is easily accessible and yet interpretively resembles the original.

More importantly, the nature of the CCI process with its constraints on time, memory and attention as opposed to written translation has a significant role to play in guiding, and sometimes forcing, the CCIr to formulate his/her strategic behaviour on which the choice of

any procedure will be based according to the situation in which he/she finds him/herself and not according to a ready-made order of preference. For example, a certain procedure might look as though it is the best way to deal with a given cultural element in a certain situation, but the constraints inherent in the CCI process might well force the CCIr to change his/her strategy and opt for another procedure in response to an unforeseen problem.

The discussion of the example of omission is a case in point where it has been argued that the CCIr has decided to omit a whole idea ('Israel which claims to be the oasis of democracy in the Middle East imprisons a large number of 12-year olds for throwing stones on the settlers') due to a LTM failure which has prevented him from retrieving 'oasis'. Therefore, his immediate strategic response has been to use omission for fear that investing more time and attentional resources trying to retrieve the term might cost him the loss of other parts of the speech. Even if this omission has been due to a processing overload which has prevented him from noting down the missing information, the argument remains valid because processing overload is another constraint that imposes itself on the CCIr. These constraints (LTM failure, STM processing overload, the need for time and concentrated attention to follow speakers, storing information in notes or memory, etc.) which are inherent in the CCI process as opposed to written translation force the interpreter to change strategy and therefore procedure. Had it not been for one of these constraints, the interpreter would have opted for literal translation as he actually does when compensating for the missing information twice as mentioned in the discussion on compensation. For the translator, such a minor problem would only require a dictionary consultation.

It follows that there cannot be an order of preference available for the CCIr to depend on when dealing with the cultural problems he/she faces except of course for the two procedures of borrowing and omission which, for obvious reasons, should be avoided as much as possible and treated only as a last resort. The CCIr decides on each procedure according to the individual situation in which he/she finds him/herself, namely whether a procedure is useful to deal with a certain cultural element and, above all, whether this procedure can actually be used under the circumstance.

The above discussion thus confirms Ivir's (1987: 47) conclusion concerning unmatched cultural elements, that no uniform treatment of them can be effective for all communicative

situations and that no specific treatment of a given cultural element that could be used each time the cultural element appears, except of course for a limited number of expressions whose meaning is context-independent, such as the concept of ‘martyrdom operations’ which can be utilised in English as a valid equivalent for ‘العمليات الاستشهادية’ regardless of the context or communicative situation the concept appears in.

However, the above discussion does not lend support to Ivir’s (1987: 47) claim of the availability of an order of preference for the use of procedures with reference to written translation, let alone CCI. Ivir provides an order of preference based on whether the translator intends to show or mask cultural differences, arguing that while borrowing, lexical creation, literal translation and definition (in this order) will make the TL receiver aware of the source-culture content, substitution and omission will mask this cultural content, and addition explicates implicit, or unsaid, information in the source discourse.

While it is true that the application of any procedure would have its effect by showing or masking cultural differences, what matters for the CCIr, and indeed for the translator, is not to show or mask the SL cultural content (except perhaps in literary translation where the foreignness of the SL culture could be an important element). TL audiences do not actually need to be told that they are reading/hearing a translation/interpretation of a discourse in different linguistic and cultural contexts because they are already aware of this in interpreting situations and to a lesser extent in the case of translation. What really matters first and foremost is to achieve communication between speaker and audience. To do this, the CCIr needs to strive for a faithful, accurate and easily accessible representation of the original. This and the constraints inherent in the CCI process as mentioned above make it impossible to come out with an order of preference and force the interpreter to deal with each case on an individual basis depending on context.

Second, the discussion of the examples confirms the two assumptions of the *Central Hypothesis*: the case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting and the interpreter’s involvement in the communication process. The discussion has shown that CCIrs do perform intercultural mediation between speaker and audience whenever they believe this helps them achieve understanding and communication although the examples discussed above are only a few, which points to the need for further investigation of the

issue by the analysis of a much bigger amount of data and representative corpora (**8.3.2 Further research**). This would help assess the validity of this and other results. It can therefore be argued that the analysis of this little amount of data suggests that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting despite the assumption that conference interpreting is characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than other interpreting types such as community or court interpreting.

The discussion also shows that intercultural mediation from the interpreter's perspective does not mean imposing one's own views on the material being interpreted; it rather does mean using one's knowledge of both the source and target cultures whenever appropriate and necessary to establish communication between speakers and audiences of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds while at the same time abiding by the rules of accuracy, neutrality and faithfulness to the sense of the original. In all the interventions and decisions the interpreters have made in the interpreting instances, they have aimed for interpretive resemblance because their interpretations have been sense-based rather than form-based and interventions have been motivated by keenness on representing the SL discourse as faithfully as possible and making the interpretation as easily accessible as possible. They have not been targeted towards imposing the interpreters' own views, beliefs or ideology.

This is significant because this result has helped put a strong argument against Kopczyński's (1994; **5.1.3 Ghost of the speaker versus intruder**) concept of 'intruder' as one of two possible roles interpreters can assume. If the interpreter has to be faithful to the original, and if the original contains implicit or explicit cultural information that is inaccessible to the TL audience but important for understanding the message, then it is the interpreter's responsibility to account for this cultural information to be able to establish understanding and communication between the primary parties. Thus, in such a situation, it is the interpreter's responsibility to act as an intercultural mediator, and if it is his/her responsibility to do so, he/she cannot be described as an intruder anymore.

At the same time, the result provides evidence against Angelelli's (2004) concept of interpreters' visibility (**5.1.5 Interpreters' visibility**) because interpreters can intervene in the communication process or be visible, but their intervention and visibility in the above examples has not necessarily done away with neutrality or caused them to be biased or

unfaithful to the sense of the original since in all the instances, the purpose of interpreters' interventions has been to achieve more accessibility of information without compromising accuracy as mentioned above. Inevitably, this goes against Viaggio's (2005: 84; 2006: 170; **5.1.4 Loyalty to the speaker**) concept of the 'fully fledged mediator' because the concept demands from interpreters unwarranted over-involvement when their renditions have been the result of an effort to strike a balance between faithfulness and accessibility based on what has been said by speakers.

Moreover, it is not clear from the way the interpreters have dealt with the cultural references in the above examples whether they have identified with either speaker or audience (Anderson 1976; 1978; **5.1.2 Identification with the client**) or adopted Kopczyński's (1994) concept of 'ghost of the speaker' (**5.1.3 Ghost of the speaker versus intruder**), Gile's (1995d: 28-31) 'sender-loyalty' and 'rotating side-taking' principles or AIIC's (2004) concept of 'primary loyalty to the speaker' (**5.1.4 Loyalty to the speaker**). What is clear, however, is that interpreters have aimed for faithfulness to the sense of the original and accessibility of their renditions to the TL audience, and because the end-result in each situation has been appropriate, these two principles are adequate on their own to help interpreters deal appropriately with cultural and indeed linguistic elements for producing high-quality interpretation, which means that in effect there is no need for the interpreter to identify with the client, be a ghost of or (primarily) loyal to the speaker. Moreover, there is no guarantee that identifying with, being a ghost of or loyal to the speaker, etc. will result in more effective performance. It is hoped that a verdict concerning the validity of these concepts can be reached through the analysis of the survey of conference interpreters (**Chapter 7**).

The discussion therefore lends support to the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator which has been derived from the CPA and proposed in this thesis as an alternative to the above definitions of the interpreter's role. It shows that the CPA can largely be considered to be a reflection of the real interpreting (translational) process, putting the CCIr in his/her usual position as an agent facilitating understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different languages and cultures because in most of the interventions and decisions the interpreters have made, they have aimed for interpretive resemblance. Their interpretations have been sense-based, not form-based, and their

interventions have been motivated by keenness to represent the original as faithfully as possible and make the interpretation as easily accessible as possible. They have not been motivated by the interpreters' intention to impose their own views, beliefs or ideology.

Thus, the above results and proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator are compatible with the arguments in **5.1.1 The interpreter as intermediary** by Seleskovitch (1978a: 112-116) and Hatim and Mason (1990: 223f), in **5.2 The cultural mediator** by Herbert (1952: 3), and in **5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator** by Pöchhacker (2004: 59) on the interpreter's involvement as an agent for understanding.

As shown above, most of the examples discussed have been accounted for by the CPA which can even be used to account for most of the procedures themselves since it provides the interpreter with a set of principles to depend on when deciding which procedure is the best one to deploy in a given situation or can help give an account of why a certain procedure deployed by the interpreter has been successful or not according to the context or communicative situation in which the instance occurs.

For example, in the absence of a clear equivalent to a SL expression in the TL, deculturalising, definition, paraphrase, gloss, explanation, compensation and addition generally allow the interpreter to increase the contextual effects (the benefits) to increase resemblance and relevance, thus leading to the expending of a lesser processing effort by the audience, which will optimise the communication process and create a situation wherein the audience spends the least processing effort for the greatest possible contextual effects because, according to the CPA, the more contextual effects an assumption contains, the more relevant the assumption is, and the lesser the effort required to process an assumption by the audience, the more relevant the assumption is. The criteria on which the CCIr depends when choosing one of these procedures over the others or indeed when deciding on a certain interpretation over the other regardless of his/her knowledge of or otherwise unfamiliarity with the procedures, the CPA or interpreting research in general are faithfulness and accessibility, that is, the interpretation which achieves the greatest resemblance to the original and the easiest accessibility to the audience in a given situation.

This is significant because it shows once again that no order of preference is available for

the interpreter since addition might be the best solution to deal with a cultural element in a certain situation, and paraphrase in another, and so on. Then the role of the communication process comes into light manifesting itself in whether the procedure chosen can be used under the circumstance, which is yet again another piece of evidence that no order of preference for the procedures is available for the interpreter since even if a procedure achieves the best resemblance and accessibility at the same time, it might not be possible to be deployed by the CCIr because of one or more of the constraints discussed above.

Recognised translation and cultural equivalent (substitution) are the procedures for accessibility. If the SL discourse refers to an entity in the SL culture that is known to the TL audience by a certain (recognised) TL expression, then this represents a golden opportunity for the interpreter because it represents a ready-made and easy-to-understand expression. Similarly, a TL expression which has a very close similarity to a SL expression can be an appropriate equivalent to its SL counterpart. However, not all cultural entities or elements have recognised translations or cultural equivalents; and if the interpreter is faced with one that has a recognised translation or cultural equivalent, the question is whether the interpreter is aware of it or not; and if he/she is, can he/she retrieve it from his/her LTM to make the appropriate match at the very moment when the equivalent is needed?

By contrast, literal translation is the procedure for resemblance and faithfulness which is in itself not sufficient alone. Thus, it can be used if the interpreter is faced with an expression, the literal translation of which is transparent and easily accessible to the TL audience. This, as usually is the case, depends on the other variables involved, namely the nature of the SL expression, communicative situation in which the element is used including the immediate and larger cultural contexts, and TL audience's knowledge of the SL culture or the CCIr's assumptions on his/her audience's cognitive environment.

Borrowing and omission should always be considered as accidental procedures that can be used by the CCIr as a last resort due to the negative effects the application of these two procedures might have on the communication process. Borrowing provides an equivalent with complete resemblance, but this comes at the expense of understanding and accessibility since the TL audience might be completely unfamiliar with the SL expression, which explains why this procedure is used with other complementary procedures (e.g.



definition) to increase accessibility. Omission, on the other hand, is a contravention of faithfulness and accuracy because omission does not obscure the meaning, but it actually denies the TL audience access to the omitted information. For this reason, these two procedures should only be considered by the interpreter as a last resort.

What also indicates the ability of the CPA to be considered as a reflection of the real interpreting process is that it has helped account for the procedures and their use in the previous examples although it is highly unlikely that the interpreters are familiar with academic studies on the procedures, the CPA or interpreting research in general or have even been working with these specific procedures in mind. It can generally be assumed that regardless of their knowledge or unfamiliarity with the procedures or academic research into interpreting, interpreters subconsciously aim at finding an accurate and easily accessible rendition for a given SL segment, utterance or cultural element, which is in effect what the CPA implies: striking a balance between faithfulness to the sense of the original and accessibility of renditions to the TL audience.

Finally, the above discussion shows that one is justified to talk about *interpreting* cultural mediation procedures as opposed to translation procedures, a subject in its own right that deserves further investigation from an IS point of view (**8.3.2 Further research**).

A survey of professional conference interpreters is presented, and a detailed analysis of the survey data is carried out in the following chapter.

## Chapter 7: Survey analysis

In the previous chapter, an analysis of interpreting examples has substantiated the claim that interpreters do perform intercultural mediation in CISs although conference interpreting discourse with its international aspect is generally characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than other settings such as community or court interpreting.

The results of the analysis have also been found to support the definition of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator which has been based on the principles of the CPA (**Chapter 4**) in **Chapter 5 (5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator)**. In all the instances examined above, the interpreters' intercultural mediation has been motivated by an effort to achieve understanding and communication between speaker and audience; it has not appeared to be motivated by a desire to impose the interpreters' own belief or perception of reality to their interpretations or assume delegates' roles. The analysis has revealed that the interpreters have been keen on striking a balance between faithfulness to the original and accessibility of renditions to their TL audiences, using interpreting cultural mediation procedures.

This chapter is devoted to an analysis of the survey of conference interpreters (**Appendix 1**) which aims at assessing the validity of the *Central Hypothesis* and thus the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator from which the *Central Hypothesis* is derived. The discussion of the interpreting examples and a wealth of literature support the hypothesis that conference interpreters act not only as linguistic but also intercultural mediators. The survey has been developed to investigate the issue from the perspective of a wide population of conference interpreters. The analysis is also used to assess the validity of secondary hypotheses about possible effects of variables such as professional status, experience and language direction on interpreters' ability to perform intercultural mediation and shed light on the use of cultural mediation procedures (**7.5 Survey data and analysis**).

The account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator hinges on the concept of interpretive resemblance which is governed by the principle of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 158), which in turn is a trade-off between the benefits the audience will obtain during communication through inference and the cost they are willing to expend for assimilating the new information. Communication can be said to be optimal when the

communicator (interpreter) forms his/her utterance (TL rendition) in such a way that it contains the greatest possible contextual effects (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 108-117) in return for the TL audience's least processing effort. It is a balance between faithfulness to the original and accessibility of the rendition to the TL audience. Faithfulness does not mean faithfulness to the linguistic or semantic meaning or surface structure of the original, but to *the sense of the original in its cognitive shape* (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 24f). Accordingly, the *Central Hypothesis* has been formulated in **Chapter 5**:

*Hypothesis A: CCIrs do perform intercultural mediation despite the cultural transparency that characterises discourse in international CISs, and the motive behind intercultural mediation as carried out by CCIrs is to achieve understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds while remaining neutral, accurate and faithful to the sense of the original and without imposing their own opinion on what they interpret.*

## **7.1 Methodology**

Surveys of conference interpreters and users of the profession of conference interpreting have been considered and frequently used by researchers as one of the empirical methods of investigation into various aspects of the interpreting activity. A vast literature of survey research has been devoted to the widely debated issue of interpreting quality from the professional- and user-oriented perspectives (for literature reviews, see Pöchhacker 2001; 2002; Kurz 2001; **2.2.2.4 Quality issues**). Other studies using surveys have dealt with such issues as 'true bilingualism' in conference interpreters (Thiéry 1978; **2.2.2.1.1 Bilingualism**), stress and fatigue (Cooper et al. 1982; AIIC 2002b; **2.2.2.3.5 Fatigue and stress**), interpreters' knowledge and specialisation (Schweda-Nicholson 1986; **2.2.2.3.1 Interpreter knowledge and specialisation**), and interpreters' perception of their contribution to the success of the communication process (Altman 1989; 1990). Thus, the use of surveys as a method of investigation in this thesis has its basis in the literature on conference interpreting as one of the empirical methods of scientific investigation.

Moreover, the subject under discussion is the CCIr's role in the communication process; a survey of interpreters is therefore justified based on the assumption that interpreters are the agents who are actively playing this role as facilitators of communication, and their opinions constitute an important source of data that could shed light on the subject.

Furthermore, using surveys for studying the interpreter's role is based on the assumption that surveys can give answers to questions that a corpus analysis, for example, cannot provide such as the effect of interpreters' professional status (freelance versus staff) on their decision to perform intercultural mediation because staff interpreters might usually be given more freedom by their employers than freelancers, which would allow them to assume the intercultural-mediator role should they wish to do so. Surveys can also indicate whether interpreters' professional experience has a role to play in their ability to perform intercultural mediation and whether the language direction of interpreting has an effect on interpreters' ability to perform intercultural mediation.

Besides, surveys (or interviews) are the only method that can tell if conference interpreters identify themselves as intercultural or linguistic mediators. This is significant because if interpreters identify themselves as intercultural mediators, for example, this means they are actively engaged in intercultural mediation when interpreting in conferences, which can help determine if there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting.

## **7.2 Distribution of the survey**

An electronic version of the survey (Word Document in a Form Field Format) was distributed to potential respondents between November 2005 and February 2006 as an attachment by email. 295 responses were received before the deadline (May 2006).

Formal requests have been made to some professional bodies (AIIC, World Arab Translators' Association) and international political and financial institutions such as the UN offices in New York, Geneva and Vienna, EU institutions (European Parliament, Court of Justice and Commission), NATO, Arab League, International Monetary Fund, African Development Bank and some Syrian governmental institutions.

In the case of AIIC interpreters, group emails of 40–60 contacts have been sent to their individual emails which have been obtained from the AIIC Interpreter Database published on the AIIC website. The database includes 2,734<sup>1</sup> conference interpreters in 87 countries

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<sup>1</sup> All figures and statistics on the AIIC Interpreter Database are correct as of 14 December 2005 up to 15 February 2006. Therefore, these figures and statistics should only be read with this date in mind because the situation might have changed since that date.

(2,430 freelancers and 304 staff interpreters, the latter being employed by 61 international or governmental organisations). Their language combinations cover 46 different languages.

Most AIIC interpreters have been sent the survey except for a substantial number of them whose email addresses have not been published on the AIIC Interpreter Database and/or who do not have English in their language combinations. Some staff interpreters have not been sent the survey because they are employed by organisations that have already responded by saying that their staff work exclusively in SI. Other interpreters have been sent the survey but have not actually received it because of problems in their emails that have prevented the survey from reaching to their email inboxes.

Because far more responses have been received from freelance interpreters (which is normal as staff interpreters are fewer than freelancers), attempts have been made to approach by phone staff interpreters who have not been possible to contact by email.

### **7.2.1 Problems encountered when distributing the survey**

Some problems have been encountered in distributing the survey. These problems deserve mention here because they have reduced the number of responses. First, since the survey deals with the CCIr's role, many interpreters have chosen not to complete the survey or have not been asked by their institutions to complete it because they work exclusively in SI.

Second, technical problems have prevented many other interpreters from receiving or completing the survey due to problems in their email accounts or phone lines, unavailability to answer calls after several attempts or inability to complete and send the electronic form of the survey due to their basic computer literacy.

Third, since a number of AIIC interpreters do not have English in their language combinations, it has been deemed inappropriate to send the survey to them although some might be able to speak English but not to the extent of having it as a working language.

Fourth, many AIIC interpreters have not been possible to contact because their email addresses have not been published on the AIIC Interpreter Database.

The above bring the number of potential respondents who have not received the survey or have fallen outside the target group to 578. This figure should be deducted from the total number of AIIC interpreters when calculating the response rate.

### **7.2.2. Response rate**

It has not been possible to ascertain the response rate because it is impossible to know the number of interpreters who have actually received the survey. First, the survey has not been distributed to a specific group of conference interpreters, but has been targeted to all conference interpreters the researcher could reach through personal or official channels.

Second, the consecutive mode, on which the survey is based, has not only reduced the number of respondents, but has also made it impossible to ascertain the response rate because the institutions that have agreed to distribute the survey to their staff interpreters have distributed it only to those who work regularly in CCI without saying their numbers.

However, since the majority of the respondents are AIIC members (258, 87%, out of 295), one can attempt to work out a partial response rate from the number of AIIC interpreters who have been sent the survey based on the statistics given in the previous sections.

The AIIC Interpreter Database lists 2,734 interpreters, but 578 interpreters have fallen outside the target group of potential respondents as explained above. This brings the number of AIIC interpreters who have actually received the survey to 2156. Bearing in mind that 258 AIIC interpreters have responded to the survey, the response rate for AIIC interpreters who have participated in the current survey is 12%.

However, what really matters is not the response rate (which still allows for a significant number of responses considering the large number of the target group), but the final number of responses actually received which, among other things, is an important criterion for assessing the representativeness of the survey and its results. To determine the representativeness of the survey in terms of the actual number of responses, responses to this survey can be compared with the number of responses to other conference interpreters surveys reported in the literature on conference interpreting (see below).

## 7.3 Respondents

Respondents to this survey represent a wide population and thus a representative sample of conference interpreters since, first, the survey has been distributed to conference interpreters all over the world, and responses have actually been received from conference interpreters worldwide: the Americas, European, Asian, African and Arab countries.

Second, this has meant that their working languages are as varied as their countries of residence/origin, which means any results achieved can be said to be universal and apply to all languages and language combinations.

Third, most respondents have solid and extensive working experience as conference interpreters (**7.5.1.3 Question 3**). Some are head, senior and chief interpreters. Many others have worked as freelance or staff interpreters for some of the largest employers of conference interpreters worldwide such as the UN, EU, NATO, International Monetary Fund, African Development Bank, and other governmental institutions and organisations.

Fourth, some of the respondents are interpreter researchers who have academic and professional experience in the field of conference interpreting as researchers, professional interpreters and interpreter trainers.

Fifth, the majority of respondents (258, 87%) are AIIC members, the only international association of conference interpreters that makes up the largest homogeneous population of conference interpreters all over the world (**7.5.1.2 Question 2**).

Moreover, the survey can be considered a representative sample of conference interpreters in terms of the number of responses to this survey (295 respondents). This is because if compared with the number of responses to other well-known conference interpreters' surveys reported in the literature, the number of responses to this survey exceeds by far the number of responses to most of other surveys. For example, Thiéry (1975) has had 34 respondents, Bühler (1986) 47 respondents, Schweda-Nicholson (1986) 56 respondents, Altman (1989) 40 respondents and Altman (1990) 54 respondents.

The only exceptions the present researcher is aware of are Cooper et al. (1982), AIIC (2002b; 2005) who have had 826, 607 and 931 responses, respectively. It should be stressed here that the three contributions are collective efforts that are bound to generate more responses than individual efforts. Moreover, these contributions have been addressed to conference interpreters who do CCI and SI and have been concerned with professional issues which concern all conference interpreters (stress, burnout and the portrayal of the profession of conference interpreting) whereas the present survey is specifically concerned with the *CCIr's* role. This has meant that only interpreters who have worked in the consecutive mode in CISs have participated in the survey, which has had a reducing effect on the final number of responses as it is well known that most conference interpreters are specialised in SI nowadays and only a relatively small number do CCI.

## **7.4 Structure of the survey**

The survey consists of two sections: a covering letter and the questionnaire (**Appendix 1**). The covering letter asks interpreters to help in completing and returning the survey, gives background information on intercultural mediation and the interpreter's role, and assures respondents of anonymity and confidentiality with regard to their personal details.

The second section consists of the questionnaire (see **7.5 Survey data and analysis** for analyses of responses to each of the questions). The questionnaire can be divided into four parts. Part I comprises the first three questions which ask respondents for such background information as their professional status (freelance versus staff, and AIIC status) and the years of experience they have had when completing the survey.

Part II consists of the fourth and fifth questions which ask for interpreters' opinions about the effects of cultural differences and perceived cultural distance between source and target cultures on successful communication, thus paving the way to the introduction of the issue of the *CCIr's* role as intercultural mediator in the following part.

Part III comprises the sixth to eleventh questions which ask respondents specific questions about the *CCIr's* role, how *CCIs* define their role (linguistic versus intercultural mediators) in the communication process, and about interpreters' understanding of intercultural



mediation. CCIr's responses to these particular questions will have straightforward implications for the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator as proposed by the present researcher in **Chapter 5 (5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator)**.

Part IV contains questions 12 to 15 that ask interpreters about the effect of language direction on the CCIr's ability to perform intercultural mediation and the use of cultural mediation procedures when interpreting into each direction (A and B).

## **7.5 Survey data and analysis**

The following sections and sub-sections contain detailed presentations of the questions of the survey, and conference interpreters' responses to each individual question are analysed based on the two criteria of professional status and experience.

### **7.5.1 Part I: background information**

This part consists of the first three questions that elicit interpreters' responses on such background information as their professional status (freelance versus staff and AIIC status) and the years of experience they have had when completing the survey.

#### **7.5.1.1 Question 1**

*Are you:*

*Freelance interpreter*

*In-house (permanent) interpreter*

The assumption here is that the respondents' answers to the question and the questionnaire in general could reveal whether conference interpreters' professional status has an effect on their decision to perform intercultural mediation because staff interpreters might usually be given more freedom by their employers than freelancers, which will allow the former to assume the intercultural-mediator role should they wish to do so.

Gile (1995d: 38f) and Altman (1984: 83) argue that conference interpreters' professional status could play a decisive role in their ability to have access to speakers and/or documentation to prepare effectively for conferences. It has been argued in **2.2.2.4.2.4 Interpreters' professional status** that this distinction, 'high status' or 'low-level linguistic

staff' (Gile 1995d: 38f) and freelance as opposed to staff interpreter (Altman 1984: 83), could be considered as one of the factors that might positively or negatively affect the quality of interpreters' performance in that the more interpreters enjoy access to speakers, texts or any form of documentation, the better the quality of their performance will be, and vice versa. By the same token, it can be argued that the freelance-staff distinction might have a role to play in interpreters' perception of their role as linguistic or intercultural mediators based on their freedom to perform intercultural mediation as given or withheld by the client. Indeed, one of the respondents to the present survey (a staff interpreter with more than 24 year's experience) remarks as follows:

[...] If the interpreter is trusted and appreciated by his "client" the latter will ask him about the cultural aspects and how they can together - 'client' and interpreter - get the message across. The interpreter does not always know everything [sic] better than delegates. He/she definitely also needs to consult with delegates before he/she simply "mediates between cultures" without his clients' knowledge [...] In my specific case, some of the delegation members would always understand the other language, i.e. [TL], and stop me if I changed the wording - however right I may have been.

There is another basis in the literature on conference interpreting that justifies the assumption that interpreters' professional status might have an effect on their performance and contribution to the communication process in general. Altman, who has addressed a survey to conference interpreters working for the EU in Brussels on their role in the communication process, calls, inter alia, for the freelance-staff distinction to be utilised in future investigations on the interpreter's role to determine whether this distinction has an effect on the interpreter's performance (1989: 82).

Based on the above, the following hypothesis has been put forward:

*Hypothesis B: Staff interpreters are more likely to identify themselves as intercultural mediators and thus assume the intercultural-mediator role in practice than freelancers as the former are likely to enjoy more freedom than the latter.*

Chart 7-1 below shows that freelance interpreters represent more than three quarters of the total number of respondents compared to staff interpreters<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> All percentage figures have been rounded up/down to the nearest whole number.

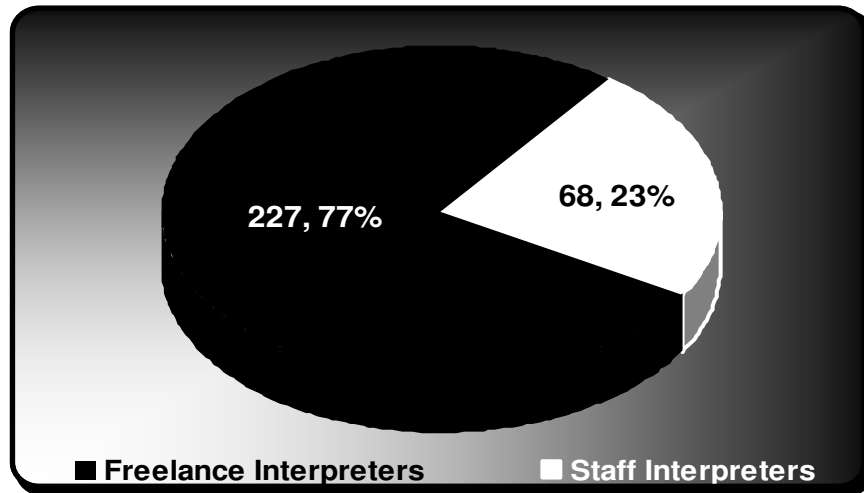


Chart 7-1: Value and percentage of freelance and staff interpreters

### 7.5.1.2 Question 2

*Are you a member of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC)?*

Yes

No

This question helps further define the respondents' profile. Chart 7-2 shows AIIC members make up 87% of the total number of respondents compared to non-AIIC interpreters.

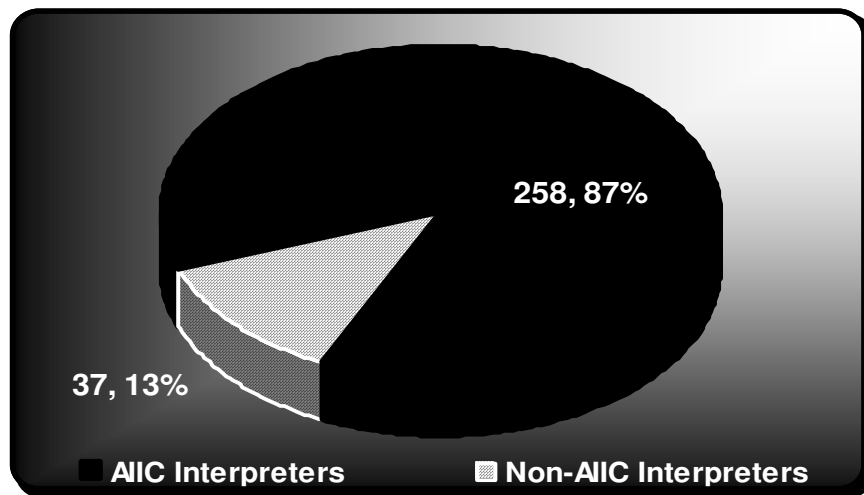


Chart 7-2: Value and percentage of AIIC and non-AIIC interpreters

### 7.5.1.3 Question 3

*How long have you worked as a professional conference interpreter?*

Less than five years

More than five years

In the original version of the survey, respondents have been asked to choose the number of their years of experience up to the point when completing the survey from a scale ranging from 'one year' to '24 years or more', though some interpreters (who have completed the survey over the phone) have given numbers that exceed by far the maximum point on the scale (40 and 45 years). However, for the purposes of the current analysis, respondents have been divided into two groups according to their professional experience: less than five years and more than five years. The former are henceforth referred to as the novice group/interpreters and the latter the experienced group/interpreters.

Classifying respondents into these two categories is based on the assumption that interpreters with less than five-year experience belong to the category of young or novice interpreters who are on a learning curve, still learning and have gaps in their knowledge and techniques. AIIC stipulates in its admission requirements that for an applicant to join AIIC, he/she must have worked for 150 days as a conference interpreter (Luccarelli 2000). Five years therefore represent a suitable period of time for this experience to be acquired given the nature of the profession of conference interpreting.

This distinction has originally been intended to be used in the analysis to determine whether professional experience can be treated as a factor that could affect the interpreter's ability/willingness to perform intercultural mediation as opposed to the narrow notion of linguistic mediation by comparing the responses of the novice group and those of the experienced group. It has been considered commonsense to assume that interpreters with more experience are more likely to identify themselves as intercultural mediators and assume the intercultural-mediator role in practice than novices. Based on this assumption, the following hypothesis has been put forward:

*Hypothesis C: The more experienced the interpreter, the more will he/she be inclined to perform intercultural mediation in practice and identify him/herself as an intercultural mediator.*

However, after sorting the responses according to the interpreters' years of experience, it has become immediately apparent that such a comparison could not be carried out because the number of the novices is so small (five, 2%) compared to that of the experienced (290, 98%) that the comparison would not be deemed valid or representative.

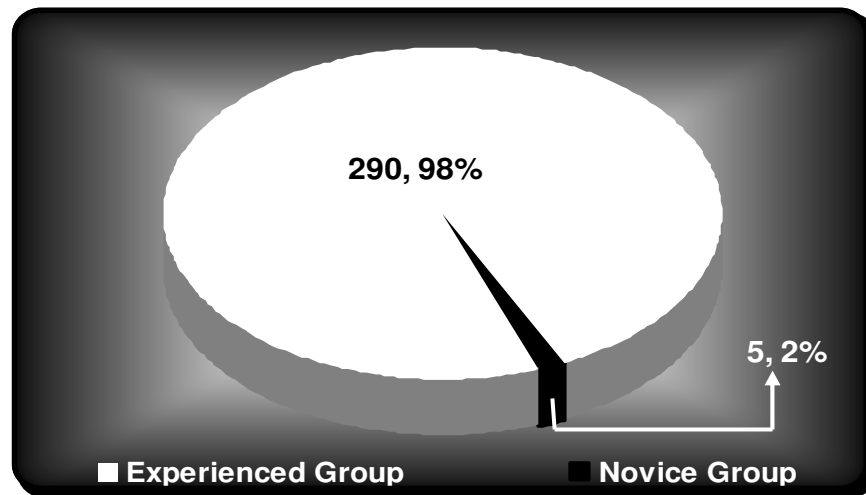


Chart 7-3: Value and percentage of novice and experienced interpreters

Therefore, it has been decided that the analysis be carried out only on the experienced interpreters' responses without comparing them with the novices' responses based on the argument that the more experienced the interpreter, the more valid will be his/her perception of his/her work in general and role in particular. By carrying out part of the analysis in this way, the above hypothesis can still be tested depending on the experienced interpreters' responses to the questionnaire. Moreover, the results can be considered conclusive and somehow more valid and representative as they are based on the answers of respondents with extensive and solid professional experience.

## 7.5.2 Part II: cultural differences

The questions in this category are concerned with cultural differences, perceived cultural distance and their possible effects on communication.

### 7.5.2.1 Question 4

*Do you think that cultural differences, cultural gaps, or culture-specific references can constitute obstacles, difficulties or breakdowns to successful communication?*

Yes

Yes, sometimes

No

This and the following question help introduce intercultural mediation. Interpreters' responses to the two questions can reveal if there is a case for intercultural mediation in CISs depending on whether the respondents believe that cultural differences, gaps or elements can cause difficulties or breakdowns to successful communication.

As argued in the introduction to the thesis (**Chapter 1**), a wealth of literature suggest that translation and interpreting are two processes of interlingual and intercultural communication since cultural differences, like linguistic ones, could cause difficulties for successful communication due to the interrelationship between language and culture.

Moreover, Altman (1989; 1990), who has addressed a survey to interpreters working for the European Commission in Brussels (40 respondents), has found that over two thirds of them believe that even in the context of the European Commission, cultural differences between speaker and audience form a greater obstacle to communication than linguistic<sup>3</sup> ones (Altman 1990: 23), an opinion that has also been shared by 54 AIIC interpreters residing in the UK who have participated in an almost identical survey by Altman (1990: 25).

It may be argued that this result is not surprising because the fact that most European countries are EU members does not mean or justify arguing that all their cultural differences have been totally eliminated or their cultures have become identical. It can be argued, however, that the existence of the EU has created what might be termed a common European culture as opposed to non-European cultures but still without the elimination of diversity among the different cultures within the EU itself.

It is not surprising either to see that the sweeping majority of respondents to the present survey believe that cultural differences, gaps and elements can constitute obstacles to successful communication even in the context of conference interpreting, thus largely confirming the above arguments and findings. As is clear from Chart 7-4 below, an impressive 99% of the 68 staff interpreters believe wholly (41%) and partly (58%) that cultural differences, gaps and elements can cause obstacles to successful communication. The responses of freelance and experienced interpreters and those of all the respondents have returned an almost identical result to the result of staff interpreters' responses. Charts 7-5, 7-6 and 7-7 below show that a majority of 98% of respondents in each of the three groups believe wholly (40%) and partly (58%) that cultural differences, gaps and elements can cause difficulties to successful communication.

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<sup>3</sup> This might also be explained by the very high linguistic competence of interpreters working for the EU institutions.

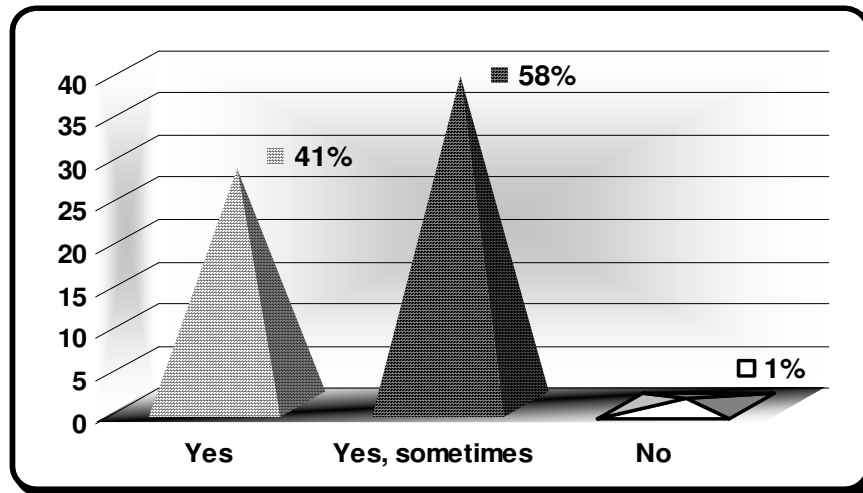


Chart 7-4: Staff interpreters' responses to question 4 in values and percentages

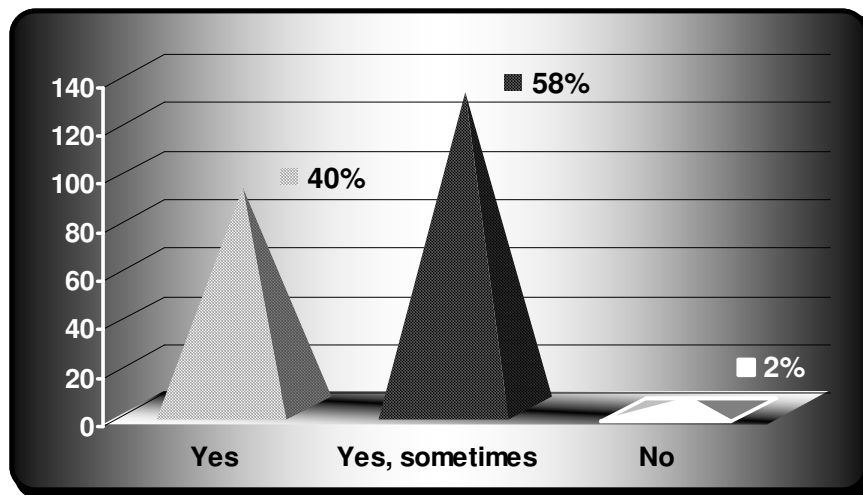


Chart 7-5: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 4 in values and percentages

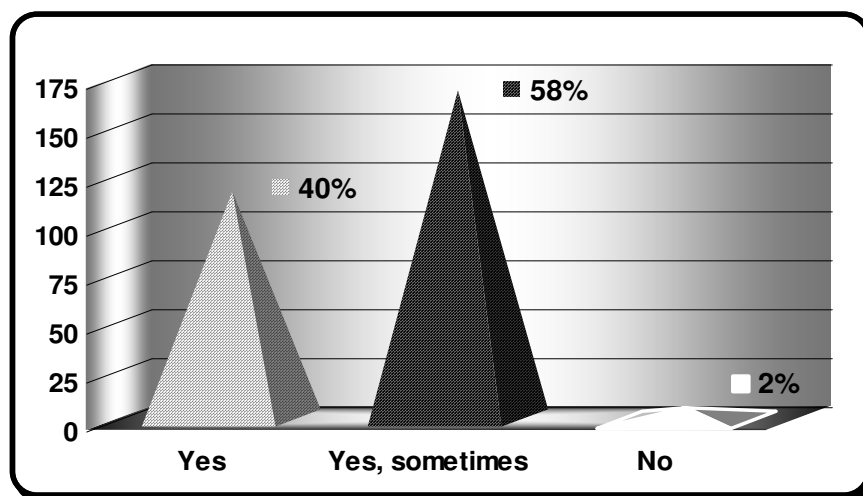


Chart 7-6: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 4 in values and percentages

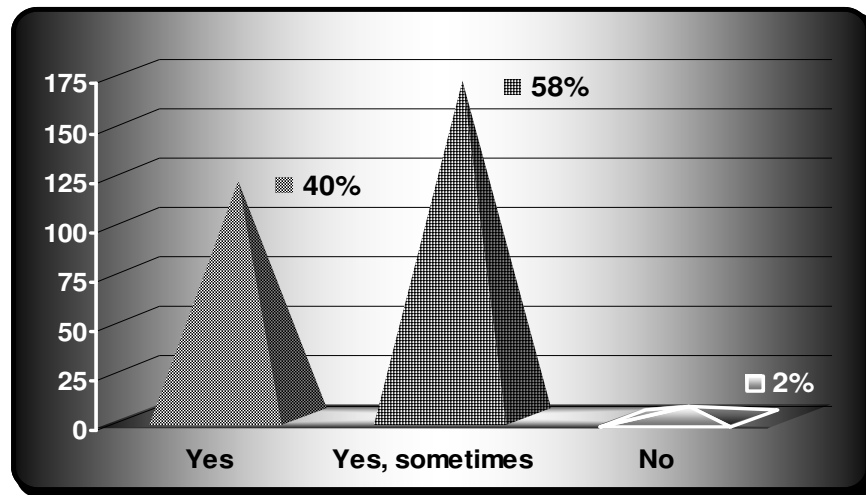


Chart 7-7: All responses to question 4 in values and percentages

Thus, the sweeping majority of respondents strongly support the argument that cultural differences and elements can cause obstacles to successful communication in CCI, which will have implications for the definition of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and the *Central Hypothesis* because these results mean that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting and thus a need for CCIrs to assume the intercultural-mediator role to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps that exist between speaker and audience.

### 7.5.2.2 Question 5

*If your answer to the above question is 'Yes', do you think that this difficulty becomes greater when the source and target cultures are perceived to be too distant?*

Yes

No

The degree of intercultural mediation differs according to the 'perceived' (Salama-Carr 2005, personal communication) cultural distance or depending on how wide the gap is between cultures (cf. Seleskovitch 1978a: 114ff; Ivir 1987: 37; Crevatin 1989: 22; Altman 1990: 25; Hatim 1997: xivf). Interpreters are thus more likely to sense the need for assuming the intercultural-mediator role when interpreting between two remote languages and cultures such as Japanese/Arabic and English than between English and French (see also Kondo 2003: 89-92). Crevatin (ibid) even considers 'cultural distances' in terms of the acceptability of certain types of behaviour or rhetoric as an 'interference factor'. It is therefore hoped that responses to this question can help determine if this argument can be substantiated or whether there is in fact such a thing as perceived cultural distance.



Results largely support the above view as the majority of respondents believe that there is such a thing as perceived cultural distance and that this distance has an effect on the interpreting process. Of the 66<sup>4</sup> staff interpreters who have answered this question, 82% believe that the difficulties in dealing with cultural elements become greater when the two cultures are perceived to be too distant. Only 18% do not hold such a belief (Chart 7-8).

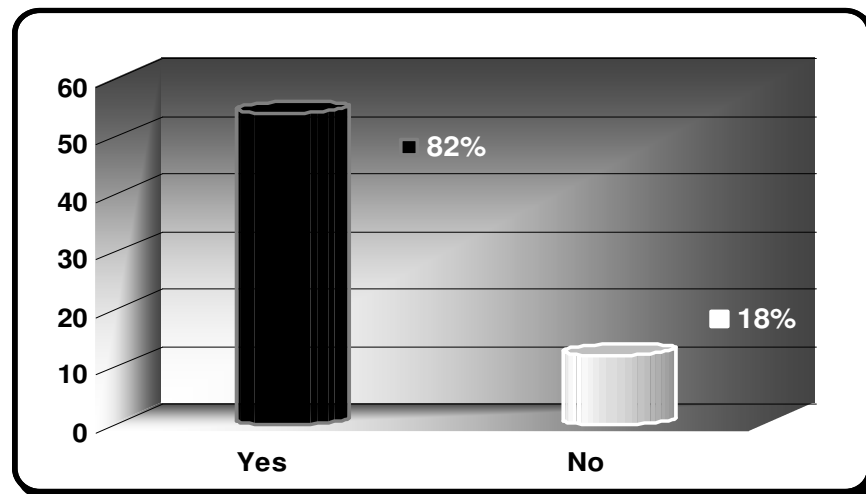


Chart 7-8: Staff interpreters' responses to question 5 in values and percentages

A total of 217 freelancers have answered question 5, and an impressive 85% of them share the view of their staff counterparts that perceived cultural distance between the source and target cultures can be a reason for an increase in the difficulty in dealing with cultural difference, elements or gaps when interpreting (Chart 7-9).

A similar trend can be detected through the analysis of experienced interpreters' responses and those of all the respondents who have answered this question because yet again the sweeping majority (84%) of respondents in each of the two groups believe that the difficulty of dealing with cultural differences, gaps and/or elements can increase with the increasing perceived distance between the two cultures, which supports the argument by the researchers cited above who argue that the degree of the conference interpreter's mediation is a relative one and differs depending on how different and remote the interlocutors' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are perceived to be (see the three charts below).

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<sup>4</sup> Two respondents have not answered question five because it does not apply to them if they have replied with 'No' to question four or have simply chosen not to answer the question. The same applies to respondents in the other groups in their responses to this and other questions because some interpreters have chosen not to answer certain questions.

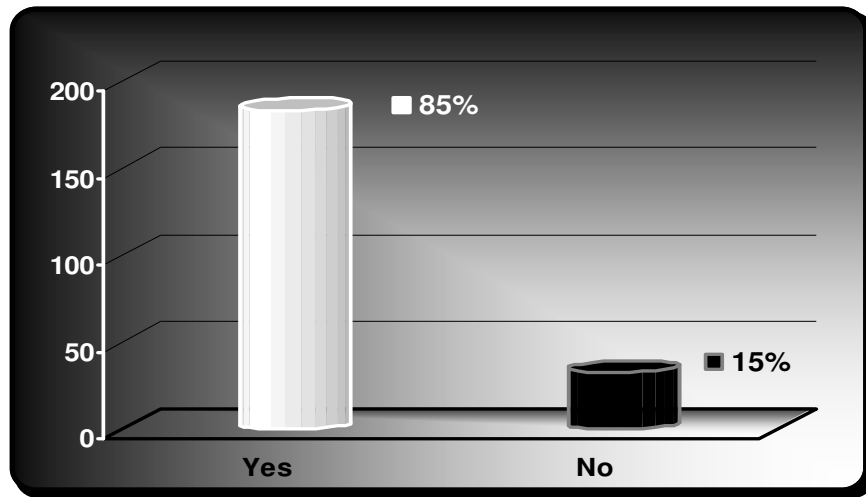


Chart 7-9: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 5 in values and percentages

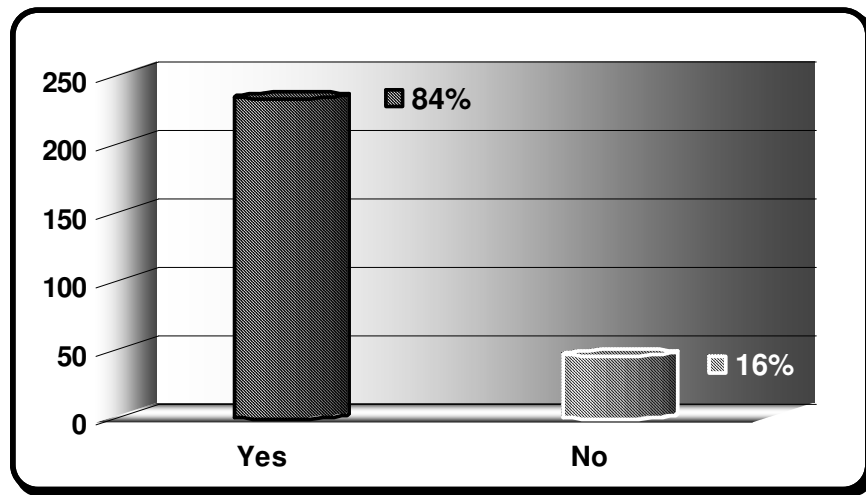


Chart 7-10: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 5 in values and percentages

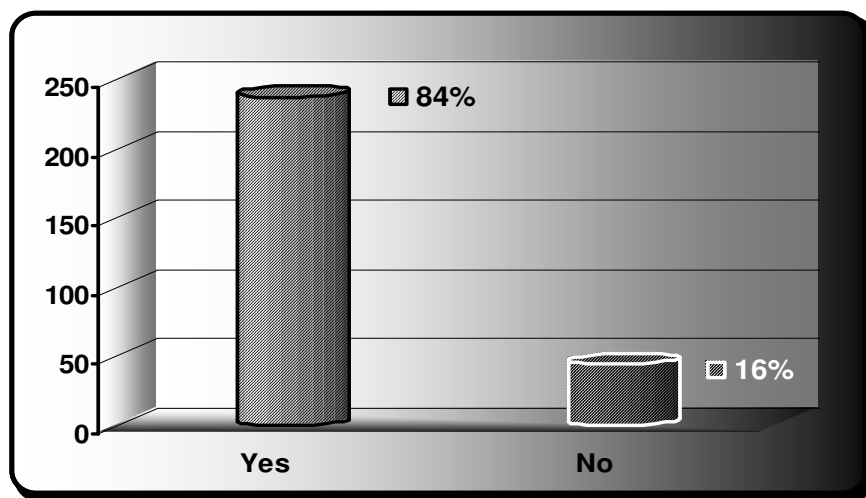


Chart 7-11: All responses to question 5 in values and percentages

The analysis of conference interpreters' responses to the fourth and fifth questions does not only support the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting, but can also give some clues as to what interpreters' answers to the following questions might be like. With the above results in mind, it can be argued that all or most of the assumptions of the *Central Hypothesis* are likely to be confirmed by the respondents' answers to the following questions because if the majority of interpreters believe that cultural differences, gaps and references have an effect on the communication process and that the need for intercultural mediation increases with the increase in the remoteness between the two cultures in question, thus in effect confirming the case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting, then conference interpreters are more likely to define their role as intercultural mediators.

Moreover, the results can give an indication as to the validity of *Hypothesis B* which is unlikely to be confirmed since staff and freelance interpreters alike believe that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting, a result that has been confirmed by the analysis of the responses of all the respondents and those of experienced interpreters, which can also indicate that the assumption in *Hypothesis C* concerning the role of experience in the interpreter's perception of his/her role as intercultural mediator is more likely to be confirmed since the majority of the experienced group believe that cultural differences, gaps and elements and perceived cultural distance have an effect on the communication process, thus confirming the assumption that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting. It is therefore commonsense to believe that their responses to the following questions are likely to indicate a preference of the intercultural-mediator role, thus confirming *Hypothesis C*.

### **7.5.3 Part III: intercultural mediation and the interpreter's role**

The questions in this part are concerned with conference interpreters' perception of their role in the communication process (whether they perceive their role as linguistic or intercultural mediators or both) and also attempt to explore conference interpreters' understanding of the issue of intercultural mediation. As mentioned above, interpreters' responses to these questions will have straightforward implications for the *Central Hypothesis* and the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator.

### 7.5.3.1 Question 6

*How do you define your role as a consecutive interpreter?*

*Linguistic mediator*

*Intercultural mediator*

In the electronic version of the survey, potential respondents have been given only two options to answer this question (linguistic or intercultural mediator), and no other option has been given to interpreters such as 'both linguistic and intercultural mediator', an option that would have attracted the majority of responses had it been incorporated into the form as another possible option. It has not been possible either for respondents to choose both options because the original version of the survey has been designed in such a way as to allow respondents to choose only one answer: either linguistic or intercultural mediator. This has been done not because the two concepts are incompatible or one excludes the other. Nor has it been done based on a distinction between two types of interpretation (linguistic and intercultural) as some respondents seem to have approached the question:

Q 6 Which leaves me with a problem: as a "theoretically aware professional" or amateur scholar I know that no matter how you call it, there is some cultural mediation involved in all translation. However, the social context and institutions that produce discourse on interpreting/cultural mediation keep assuming that there is a major distinction between the supposedly linguistic Translation and fully cultural "mediation". That's why I find it difficult to answer your question: if I keep within the societal limits, then what I do is "linguistic mediation". If I look at the actual practice involved, it's full of cultural dimensions. And here is possibly my main doubt concerning your otherwise well thought-over design: with your questionnaire are you not actually reinforcing the assumption that there is such a thing as "just interpreting" and that it can be easily distinguished from "mediation"?

I find that you make a too sharp difference between linguistic and cultural mediation; both cannot be separated as you seem to do it (I refer mainly to question 6. where the answer is of course "both")

However, rather than arguing that there are two types of interpretation, it can be argued that interpretation itself carries an element of intercultural mediation that is present regardless of the setting of the interpreted encounter due to the inseparability between language and culture, and the distinction between linguistic and intercultural mediation is only a theoretical distinction between two specific concepts or notions within the general concept of interpretation rather than a distinction in the practice of interpretation itself because the essence of the argument in this thesis hinges on the assumption that interpreters are not only linguistic mediators, but also intercultural mediators and that interpreters are intercultural mediators by default, an opinion that has been echoed in the following comments by some respondents:

On question 6, [...] I wanted to tick both choices, which wasn't possible. I opted for "intercultural mediator" but really believe that one (linguistic) won't work without the other (intercultural).

The interpreter's role will always have to contain an element of intercultural mediation [...].

Moreover, this theoretical distinction has also been made because it is a fact that the term intercultural mediator comprises linguistic mediator since language is part of culture, but not vice versa. In a way, the question aims at knowing whether respondents will make such a distinction or not:

As for Q: 6: culture IS language and language is culture so I guess it will be all of the above (emphasis in original).

Furthermore, respondents have had the choice to add any comments in the space provided for the last question as many actually have done. And because a number of respondents have chosen to identify themselves as *both linguistic and intercultural mediator* (as is clear from the above and many other comments by many respondents) by mentioning this in the space provided for the last question and comments, over the phone by staff interpreters who have completed the survey over the phone, or through communication by email; another category (both linguistic and intercultural mediator) has been added to the two categories in the analysis to reflect interpreters' choices despite the fact that, as mentioned above, intercultural mediator means an intercultural and linguistic mediator.

Again, responses to this question can help determine whether there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting and whether the results of the analysis of responses to questions 4 and 5 which have proved such a case can be confirmed. Respondents' preference for the intercultural-mediator role can be considered strong evidence for the case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting because this will mean that conference interpreters do perform intercultural mediation when interpreting; otherwise, they would opt for the linguistic-mediator role.

Staff interpreters' responses to this question are decisive: 67% of them identify themselves as intercultural mediators (64%) or both linguistic and intercultural mediators (3%), and 33% describe their role as linguistic mediators only (see Chart 7-12 below). However, despite this majority, data from the staff interpreters' responses are not enough alone to validate *Hypothesis B* (reproduced below for convenience):

*Hypothesis B: Staff interpreters are more likely to identify themselves as intercultural mediators and thus assume the intercultural-mediator role in practice than freelancers as the former are likely to enjoy more freedom than the latter.*

The analysis of the responses of freelance and experienced interpreters and all the respondents could be vital in determining, inter alia, whether *Hypothesis B* can be validated or not. The responses of experienced interpreters and all the respondents are also relevant for the purpose of the current discussion because freelancers are a majority in both groups.

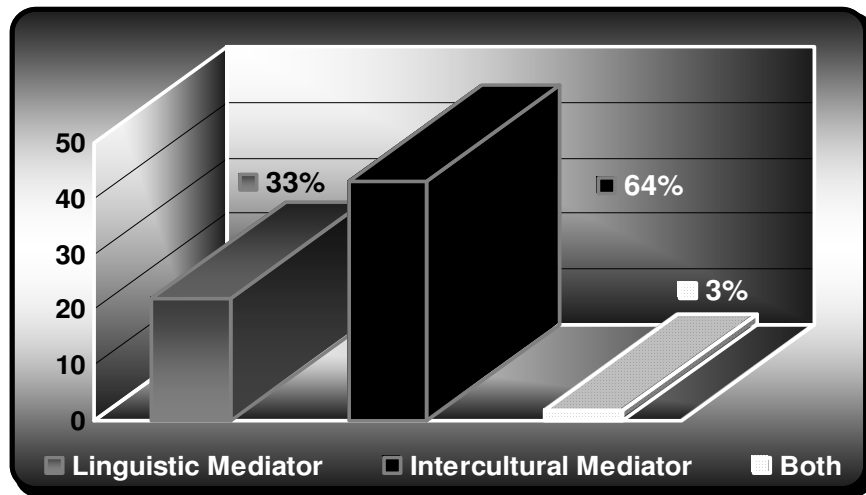


Chart 7-12: Staff interpreters' responses to question 6 in values and percentages

Freelancers' responses have rendered the same result as that of staff interpreters' responses because 67% of freelancers define their role as intercultural mediators (Chart 7-13).

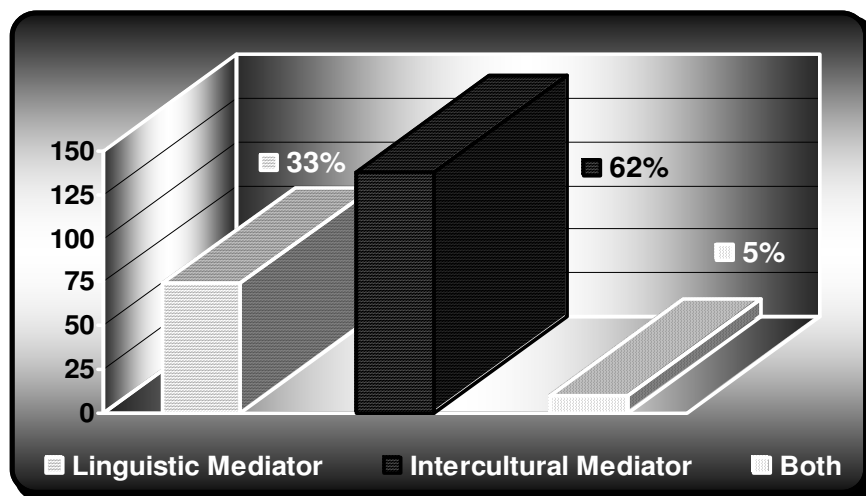


Chart 7-13: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 6 in values and percentages

Thus, this result contributes to the validation of the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that argues for a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting despite the cultural transparency that characterises discourse in international conferences based on the argument that interpreters' definition of their role as intercultural mediators means that they actually perform intercultural mediation in practice or strive to do so.

However, the current result makes it impossible to validate *Hypothesis B* because the same number of freelance and staff interpreters describe their role as intercultural mediators.

Moreover, the experienced interpreters' responses further invalidate *Hypothesis B* because 66% define their role as intercultural mediators (Chart 7-14). It can thus be argued that interpreters' professional status does not seem to affect their perception of their role.

However, the experienced interpreters' responses contribute to the validation of the claim in the *Central Hypothesis* that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting and also to the validation of *Hypothesis C* that the more experienced the interpreter, the more likely will he/she be inclined to describe his/her role as intercultural mediator and perform intercultural mediation in practice.

As Chart 7-15 below shows, the result of the responses of all the respondents highly correlates with the results of the responses of interpreters in the first three groups because a majority of 67% of all the respondents define their role as intercultural mediators.

Therefore, it can be argued that the answers of all the respondents contribute to the same results, in particular confirming the assumption that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting, thus confirming the part of the *Central Hypothesis* that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting despite the greater degree of cultural transparency that characterises conference interpreting discourse than discourse in community or court interpreting. The result of the present analysis also confirms Altman's conclusion that all respondents to her survey 'consider it to be part of their role to explain both linguistic and cultural phenomena at times' (1989: 80).

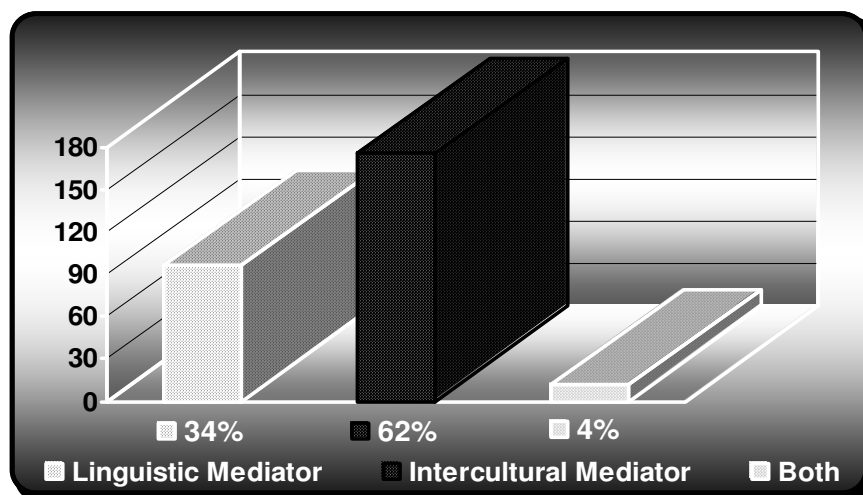


Chart 7-14: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 6 in values and percentages

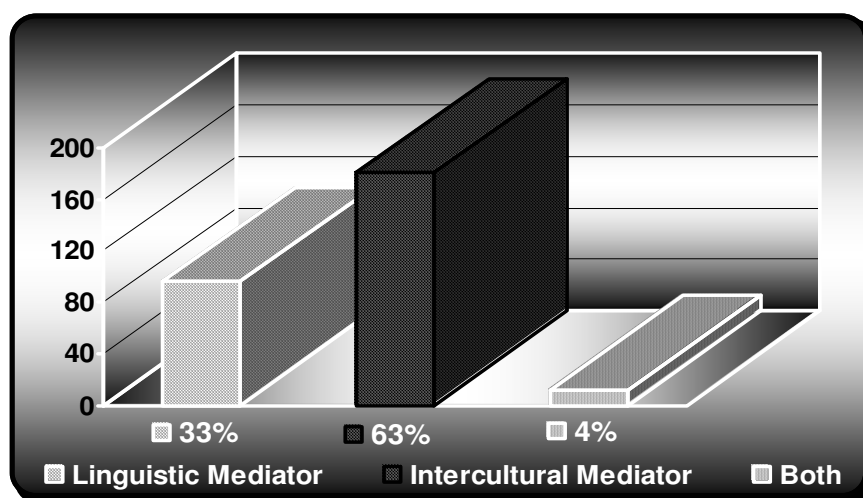


Chart 7-15: All responses to question 6 in values and percentages

However, although the majority of respondents in all groups define their role as intercultural mediators, there is still a problem in the 33% of staff and freelance interpreters and all the respondents and the 34% of experienced interpreters who have described their role as linguistic mediators. These percentages are relatively higher than expected since it is well-known and widely agreed that interpreters deal not only with languages but also with cultures. Interpreters in fact do perform intercultural mediation in actual practice as shown in the previous chapter and the discussion of the previous questions in the present survey where conference interpreters' responses to the fourth and fifth questions have revealed that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting.

One possible explanation is that some of the choices by interpreters who have identified



themselves as linguistic mediators may have been influenced by their distinction between different types of discourse and situational contexts because the degree of intercultural mediation varies from one type of discourse or situational context to the other:

By the way, re question 6, I would consider an interpreter should try to be both a linguistic and intercultural mediator, depending on subject and context.

This has been clearly reflected in more than one comment by many respondents such as the following comments by two interpreters who distinguish between the legal type of discourse (which does not usually make allowances for interpreters to fully assume the intercultural-mediator role) and general type of discourse on the one hand, and the actual interpreting work and the background situation on the other:

[...] there are certain times, such as during depositions, when you cannot be a cultural mediator as you are not the lawyer and you do not have the right to change questions or answers - you can only mediate around the interpretation process but not during.

I distinguish between the background situation and the actual interpreting work. Firstly, when I am interpreting depositions, I am not allowed to explain to the witness what is meant. If he does not understand, it is up to him to ask the lawyers and for them to provide the explanation. I was once reprimanded for adding my own explanation and therefore scrupulously avoid doing so now, even at the expense of limited communication. Secondly, before a large audience, I try to keep my translation as close as possible to the original, but explain to my listeners what was meant. A specific example was when a minister was addressing a large group of dignitaries about the Munich Royal Palace and made some remarks on Bavarian history and culture which would have been unintelligible without a brief explanation. The third situation is when I have a small audience and things are moving quickly. There, I would usually provide a fairly literal translation and explain any unfamiliar references in the coffee break [...].

The other distinction some respondents have made is between technical and non-technical discourse in that some who have identified themselves as linguistic mediators could be working exclusively in technical conferences and dealing all or most of the time with technical discourse where cultural differences or elements are unlikely to surface in the first place (cf. Alexieva 1997: 226f). Altman (1989: 80) uses this assumption to explain why the majority of her respondents have shown readiness to provide more linguistic than cultural explanations based on an opinion by one of her respondents: 'I mainly work at technical meetings'. This has been echoed by one of the respondents to the present survey:

For question 6, I would define my role as BOTH linguistic and cultural mediator, but the degree varies again with the textual and situational context [...] For many purely technical/informational settings, where cultural influences are minimal (eg medical research interpreting, environmental reporting, economic [sic] descriptions, computer technology reporting, etc.) the interpreter is mainly a linguistic mediator, but in other settings the cultural factor could be much more important.

Another possible explanation could be the assumption that conference interpreters regard themselves primarily as linguistic mediators, but will perform intercultural mediation when needed as some of the respondents to the present survey remark:

I would define myself as BOTH, but clearly linguistic mediator comes first (emphasis in original).

I SEE my role as linguistic mediator, but can't prevent it from shifting to intercultural sometimes (emphasis in original).

The interpreter's role will always have to contain an element of intercultural mediation, but if I have to choose between the two options for answers, I would go for the linguistid (sic) mediation.

This in fact is a strong argument because although intercultural mediation and the role of culture are there in translation and interpreting, it is misleading to believe that interpreters, especially in international conferences, deal all the time with cultural references or face problems brought about by cultural differences. Indeed, the very essence of the argument in this study suggests that intercultural mediation is usually carried out only when the interpreter feels the need for intercultural mediation for effective communication.

### 7.5.3.2 Question 7

*Consecutive interpreters play the role of intercultural mediators because they deal not only with languages, but also with cultures*

Completely true

Partly true

Completely false

This question and the following questions intend to explore the respondents' understanding of intercultural mediation by asking about specific points related to the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator. Answers to this question will also help to prove/disprove the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* concerning the case for intercultural mediation in CISs due to the inseparability of language and culture that makes the presence and effects of culture on communication an inevitable consequence.

The analysis of interpreters' responses to this question as represented in Charts 7-16, 7-17, 7-18 and 7-19 below shows that an impressive 100% of respondents in each of the four groups unanimously believe entirely and partially that CCIrs do perform intercultural mediation because they deal with languages and cultures.

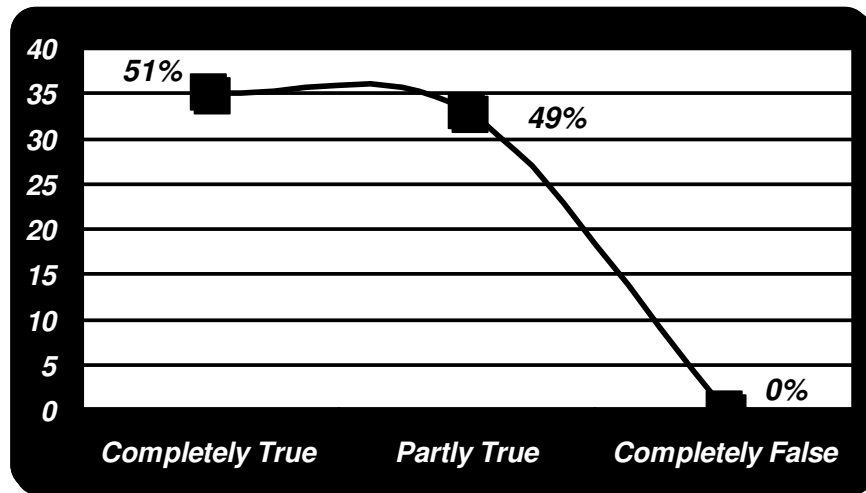


Chart 7-16: Staff interpreters' responses to question 7 in values and percentages

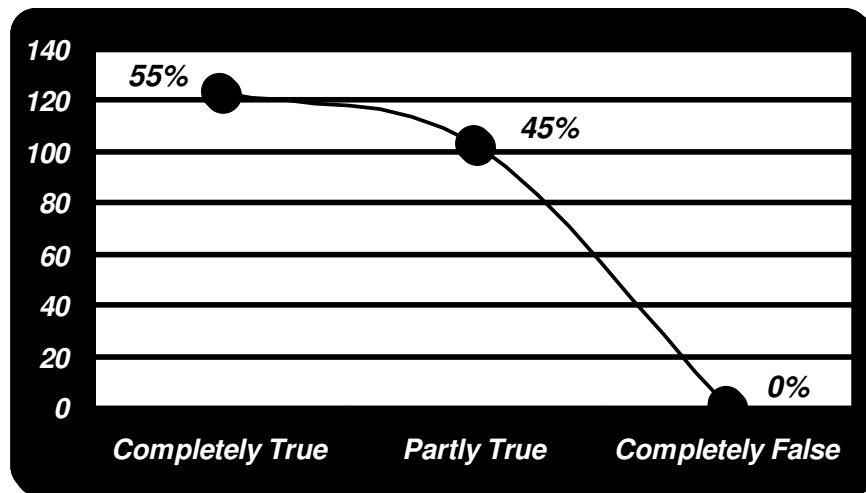


Chart 7-17: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 7 in values and percentages

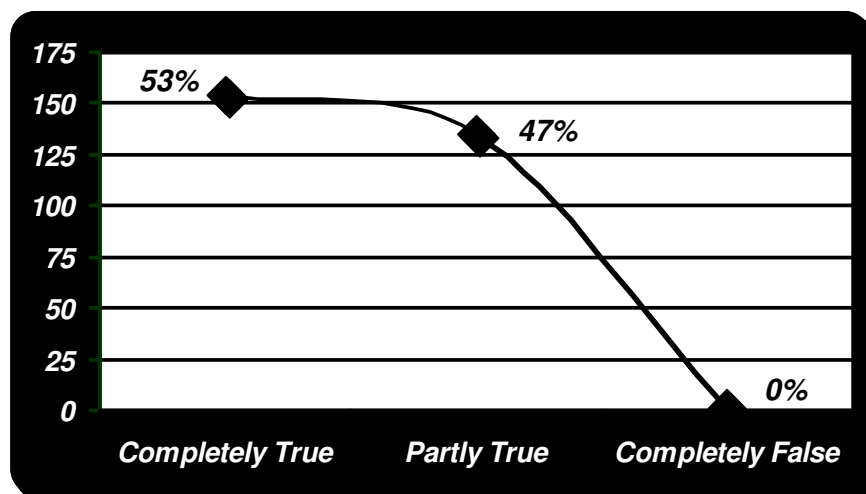


Chart 7-18: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 7 in values and percentages

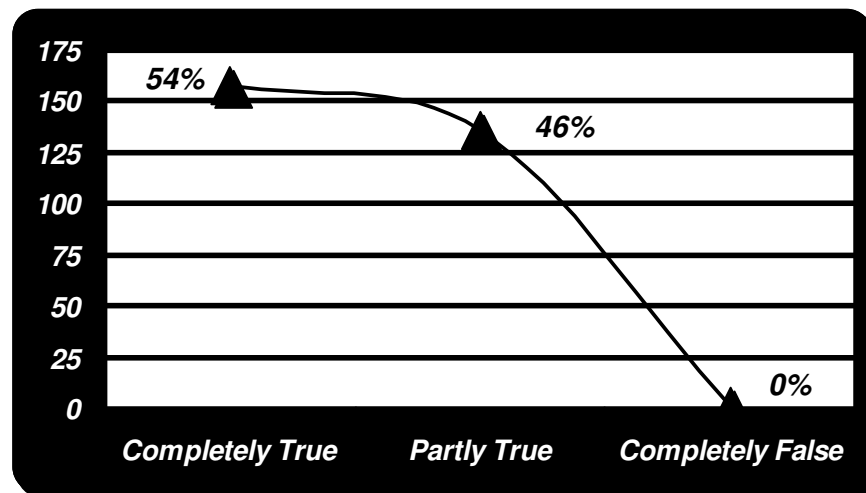


Chart 7-19: All responses to question 7 in values and percentages

However, the question is whether these results contradict interpreters' choices in the previous question as the maximum percentage of respondents who have replied to the statement in question 7 with 'completely false' does not exceed 0% in any of the responses of any of the groups as shown by the illustrations above, but when asked how they define their role as CCIrs in question 6, 33% of staff interpreters, freelancers and all the respondents and 34% of experienced interpreters have described their role as linguistic mediators. Can this be considered a contradiction on the part of the respondents?

The answer is probably negative. It may also be argued that the analysis of interpreters' responses to question 7 can even be used as evidence to support the two assumptions offered as explanations for the unexpectedly high percentages of the minorities of interpreters who have identified themselves as linguistic mediators in response to question 6, namely the assumptions that some of the respondents who have described their role as linguistic mediators might be working exclusively in legal and technical meetings and others think of themselves primarily as linguistic mediators but are prepared to do intercultural mediation if the need for intercultural mediation arises, two circumstances that could have played a big role in motivating some of the interpreters to describe their role as linguistic mediators in their response to question 6.

It can therefore be argued that the result of interpreters' responses to this question confirms the result of their responses to the previous question about how interpreters define their role as CCIrs. Inevitably, the result confirms the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that

argues for a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting due to the inevitable effect of culture on the communication process brought about by the inextricable relationship between language and culture.

Moreover, the current result further invalidates *Hypothesis B* (that staff interpreters are more likely to identify as intercultural mediators and perform intercultural mediation in practice than freelancers) since staff and freelance interpreters alike believe that interpreters assume the intercultural-mediator role because they deal with languages and cultures.

However, the result further supports *Hypothesis C* which states that the more experienced the interpreter, the more will he/she be inclined to define his/her role as intercultural mediator and perform intercultural mediation in practice because 100% of respondents in the experienced group share the belief that CCIrs assume the intercultural-mediator role because they deal with languages and cultures.

### 7.5.3.3 Question 8

*Do you think that the consecutive interpreter can perform intercultural mediation while still remaining faithful<sup>5</sup> to the meaning of the original?*

*Yes*

*Yes, to a certain extent*

*No*

Also in this question, interpreters' understanding of intercultural mediation in relation to the essential concept of faithfulness to the sense of the original is sought. This concept is also one of the most important principles that the CPA and thus the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator as proposed in this thesis are based on.

Essentially, the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator suggests that intercultural mediation as performed by the interpreter is not intended to mean departing from the basic principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original; it is rather intended to mean using the interpreter's linguistic and cultural knowledge to create better understanding while continuing to be faithful to the sense of the original, making use of the notion of interpretive resemblance which is a flexible concept that allows for dealing with faithfulness to the sense of the original as a *relative* concept that has to be weighed against

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<sup>5</sup> The word 'faithful' is used here to mean faithful or faithfulness to the *meaning or sense* of the original as it is frequently used in the literature.

the concept of accessibility of the interpreter's rendition to the TL audience, thus striking a balance between the two concepts since the essential aim of translators and interpreters alike is to relay as faithfully and accurately as possible an original to a TL audience by providing the most easily accessible rendition.

Responses to this question and the following questions in this category will not only help determine whether the definition of the concept of intercultural mediation provided in the *Central Hypothesis* can be supported by the results of the current survey or not, but will also help develop a precise definition of intercultural mediation which is *wrongly assumed to be a cause or pretext for departing from the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original (Chapter 5)* as if it was through linguistic mediation only that interpreters can be faithful mediators as one of the respondents to the present survey comments:

Interesting subject and interesting survey, but I certainly hope that it does not aim at or end up altering the principle of our professional ethics which is: faithful linguistic mediation.

Data from the survey do not support the view that only linguistic mediation can ensure that the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original can be met. In fact, data strongly prove just the opposite of the above view because the absolute majority of respondents believe that intercultural mediation can be performed by the CCIr without compromising faithfulness to the sense of the original. Staff interpreters *unanimously* believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation while continuing to be entirely (54%) or partially (46%) faithful to the sense of the original.

The responses of freelancers, experienced interpreters and all the respondents have rendered more or less the same result as that of staff interpreters' responses with only very slight and insignificant difference as 99% of respondents in the three groups believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation while continuing to be entirely or partially faithful to the sense of the original. See the four charts below.

Responses to this question show that intercultural mediation cannot be viewed as a cause or pretext for unfaithfulness to the sense of the original as they show that intercultural mediation and faithfulness are compatible and neither concept excludes the other.

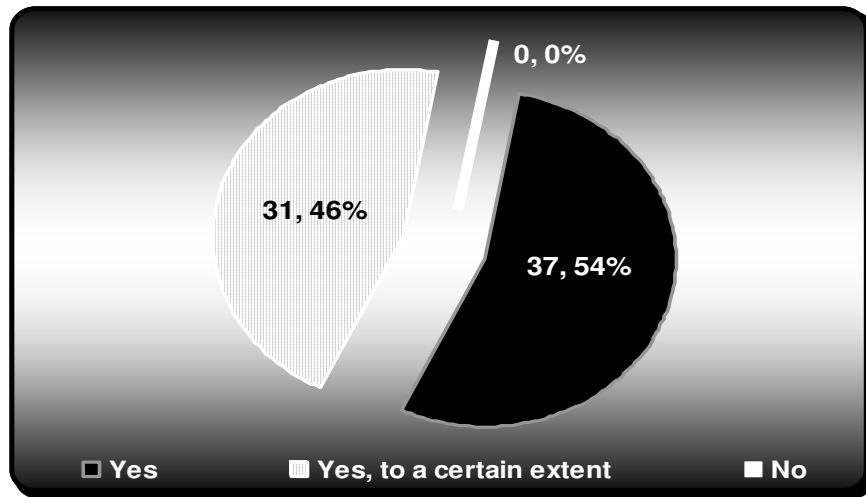


Chart 7-20: Staff interpreters' responses to question 8 in values and percentages

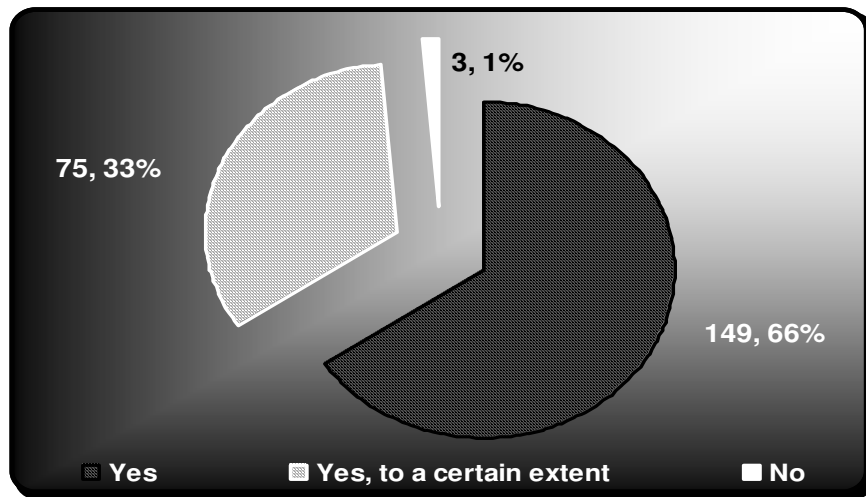


Chart 7-21: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 8 in values and percentages

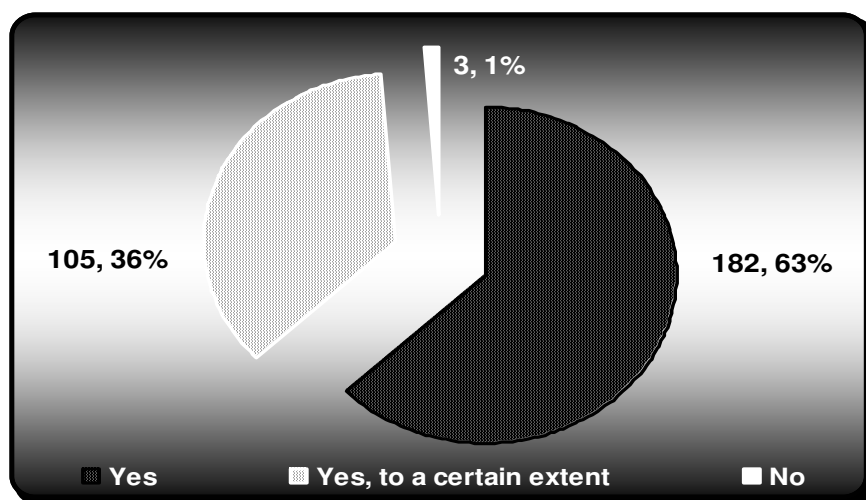


Chart 7-22: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 8 in values and percentages

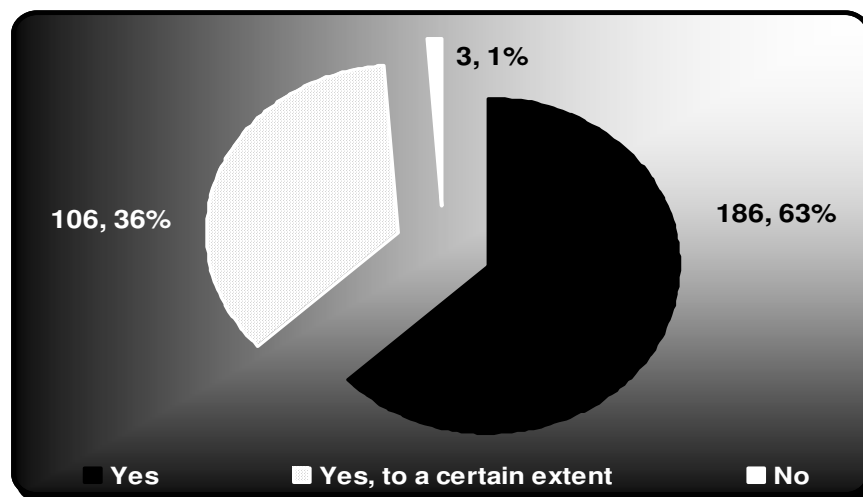


Chart 7-23: All responses to question 8 in values and percentages

Moreover, the fact that these are absolute majorities with very high correlations in the responses of conference interpreters in all groups is indicative of the belief that the coexistence in the communication process of intercultural mediation and faithfulness is taken for granted by conference interpreters.

Consequently, this result supports the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* and the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator that intercultural mediation as performed by CCIrs does not mean a deviation from the indispensable principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original. The result which spells out in clear terms the nature of the relation between intercultural mediation and faithfulness provides a very important idea that must be borne in mind and utilised in developing a clearer and more precise definition of the concept of intercultural mediation in CISs. However, prior consideration should be given to the conference interpreter's involvement in the communication process.

#### 7.5.3.4 Question 9

*Do you think that the consecutive interpreter as intercultural mediator should faithfully interpret information even when he/she does not agree with what the speaker is saying?*

- Yes       Yes, certainly       Yes, sometimes but not always       No

This question also aims at exploring conference interpreters' perception of intercultural mediation and the interpreter's role with particular reference to the concept of faithfulness to the sense of the original and the interpreter's role as intercultural mediator as a



disinterested player whose sole responsibility is to establish understanding between speaker and audience whether or not the interpreter agrees with what the speaker says.

According to the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator, the interpreter's position is identical to that of a 'faithful reporter' who reports to the audience what someone else (the speaker) has said whether he/she agrees with the speaker or not because the mere concept of reporting logically means that the reporter tells the (TL) audience, not what he/she him/herself believes, but what someone else believes or maintains to be true, and for this belief to be communicated to the TL audience effectively, it should be communicated faithfully even if the interpreter does not share the speaker's beliefs. He/She is thus there to report, not to agree, disagree or give his/her own opinion on what is said despite assuming the intercultural-mediator role.

In a sense, it is hoped that interpreters' responses to this question can help determine what it really means for the interpreter to assume the intercultural-mediator role: does it mean assuming a delegate's role by agreeing or disagreeing with or giving an opinion on what is said, or does it only mean using one's linguistic and cultural knowledge to help achieve understanding and communication between the primary parties? According to the proposed account of the CCIr's role, the interpreter cannot be over involved in the communication process to the extent of choosing to interpret only what he/she likes or agrees with and omitting what he/she does not like or agree with.

Based on conference interpreters' responses to this question, it may be possible to determine whether the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that explains the interpreter's involvement in the communication process can be confirmed or not.

Conference interpreters' responses to this question are conclusive because clear majorities of respondents in the four groups (94% of staff interpreters, 100% of freelance interpreters, and 99% of experienced interpreters and all the respondents) believe that the CCIr as intercultural mediator is a disengaged agent whose responsibility is to render the sense of what he/she hears as faithfully as possible even if he/she does not agree with what the speaker says. See the following four charts.

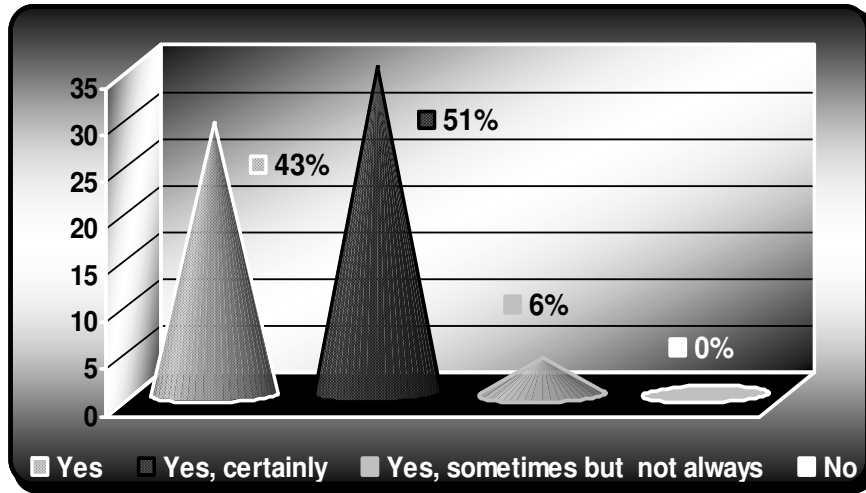


Chart 7-24: Staff interpreters' responses to question 9 in values and percentages

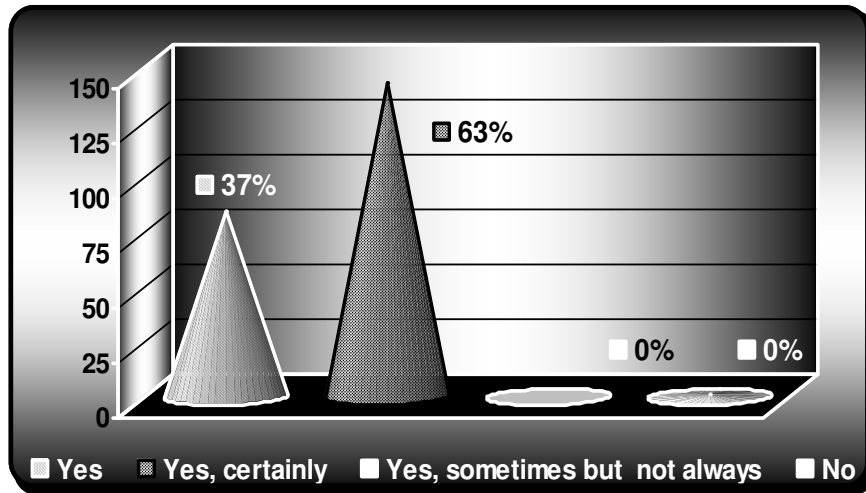


Chart 7-25: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 9 in values and percentages

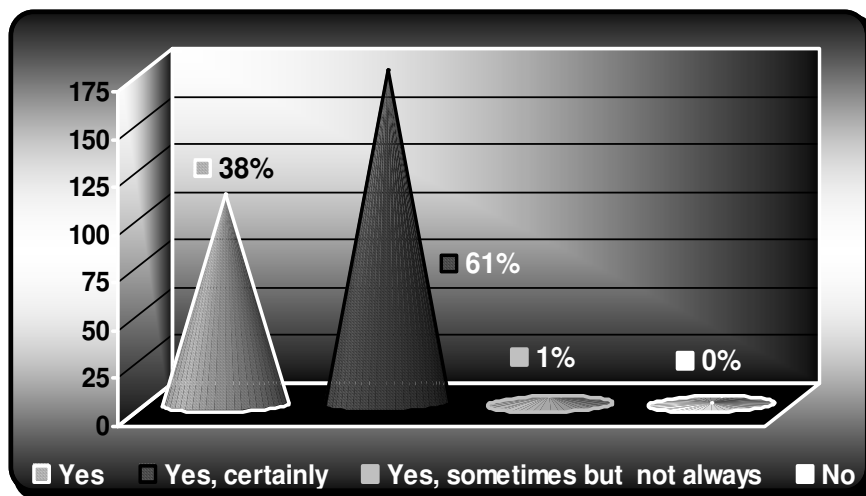


Chart 7-26: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 9 in values and percentages

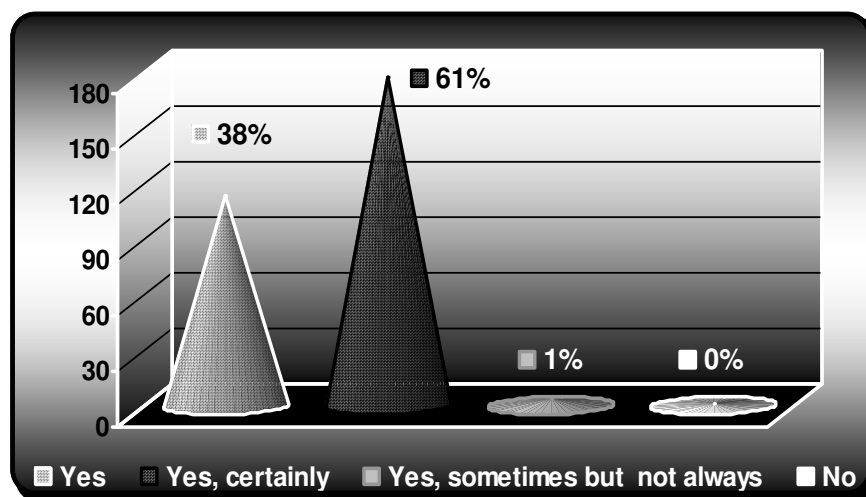


Chart 7-27: All responses to question 9 in values and percentages

It may be argued that this result is not surprising simply because speakers in international conferences do not say what they say to interpreters, but through interpreters to other delegates who cannot understand the speaker's language and culture.

The fact that all respondents in the four groups believe that the CCIr as intercultural mediator should interpret information faithfully even if he/she does not agree with the speaker strongly supports the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that discusses the conference interpreter's disinterestedness or disengagement from the interests of the primary parties in the communication event except, of course, for their interest in understanding and being understood effectively.

Therefore, this result points significantly to a strong argument that can be put forward in favour of the proposed account of the CCIr as a faithful and neutral intercultural mediator. More importantly, this result confirms the result obtained through the analysis of conference interpreters' responses to the previous question about the compatibility of intercultural mediation and the indispensable principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original; it does not only show that intercultural mediation can be carried out by the CCIr who can nonetheless be faithful to the sense of the original, but also that the CCIr can be a *faithful intercultural mediator* even if he/she does not agree with what the speaker says.

Moreover, unlike the results obtained through the analysis of the interpreting examples in the discussion of the procedures (6.10 Results) where no final conclusions have been

reached concerning the validity of some concepts proposed by other researchers, the current result provides a strong verdict that can be used against the validity of those concepts. The result shows that Anderson's (1978) concept of identification with the client (**5.1.2 Identification with the client**), Kopczyński's (1994) 'ghost of the speaker' (**5.1.3 Ghost of the speaker versus intruder**), Gile's (1995d: 28-31) 'sender-loyalty', AIIC's (2004) 'primary loyalty to the speaker' (**5.1.4 Loyalty to the speaker**), or Angelelli's (2004: 29) concept of the interpreter's visibility as opposed to neutrality (**5.1.5 Interpreters' visibility**) cannot be supported by interpreters' responses. The interpreter cannot be loyal to and in disagreement with the speaker at the same time if the former has to abide by the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original even if he/she disagrees with the latter.

This result confirms the arguments by the present researcher against these concepts in the sections hinted at above, namely the view that because the interpreter is there to serve both speaker and audience and because interpreters deal not with speakers' intentions but with what speakers *intend to say* (Salama-Carr 2005, personal communication; see also Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 227-231), interpreters cannot identify with or be loyal to the speaker and that interpreters' visibility as intercultural mediators does not necessarily mean or entail a lack of neutrality or departure from faithfulness to the sense of the original. Consequently, it can be argued that the above concepts cannot be supported because they do not reflect the actual role conference interpreters assume when doing their job. Thus, the concepts of a neutral mediator and faithfulness/loyalty to the original can better describe the actual role interpreters assume when interpreting than the other concepts.

Again, the result helps complete part of the definition of the concept of intercultural mediation to be developed in the light of the current analysis in that it shows clearly that when assuming the intercultural-mediator role, the CCIr does not act like mediators in non-interpretational situations such as those mediating to end disputes who can be involved or be allowed by the primary parties to be involved or even over involved in non-interpretational decisions. It shows that intercultural mediation in CISs means using one's knowledge of the two languages and expertise in their corresponding cultures to help the primary parties understand each other effectively through faithful transposition of this linguistic and cultural knowledge to the primary parties whether or not the interpreter, who can be seen as an agent for understanding, agrees with what is said.

### 7.5.3.5 Question 10

*Do you think that intercultural mediation means going beyond establishing understanding between speaker and audience?*

No

Absolutely not

Yes

This question also seeks to explore further the respondents' understanding of the concept of intercultural mediation with particular reference to the purpose of intercultural mediation as carried out by the CCIr. According to the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and the *Central Hypothesis*, the sole purpose for assuming the intercultural-mediator role is to achieve effective understanding between delegates of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Intercultural mediation in CISs cannot be used as a pretext for imposing the interpreter's own opinion, ideas, ideological beliefs, cultural perceptions, projections, stereotypes or otherwise to what he/she interprets in order to serve a certain ideology or promote a given cause.

The reason for this is the nature of communication events in international conferences which is so transparent that it does not usually allow for any such deviations to go unnoticed or unchecked by delegates since delegates are all present in the same place at the same time, and therefore immediate effects of interpreters' unwarranted intervention (that is not aimed at achieving understanding) are bound to surface in the discourse. Indeed, delegates are usually sensitive to any deviations from the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original particularly delegates who have some knowledge of the other language or are already aware of what the other interlocutor has to say about or what his/her position is on a certain point as shown by the comments of one of the respondents to the present survey whose comments have been quoted earlier, and part of whose comments is reproduced here for convenience:

[...] In my specific case, some of the delegation members would always understand the other language, i.e. [TL], and stop me if I changed the wording - however right I may have been.

The situation in conference interpreting is thus very different from written translation (literary translation in particular) where there is usually a significant distance in terms of place and time between the original piece and its translation which is addressed to secondary audiences anyway, unlike CISs where the initiator of speech addresses specific and, above all, primary audiences who interact with their communicator in real time, a

situation that enables the interlocutors to detect any perceived irregularities or misunderstandings and makes it virtually impossible for the conference interpreter to venture any such unwarranted intervention.

It can therefore be assumed that CCIrs perform intercultural mediation only for creating understanding and communication between the primary parties. Moreover, results obtained from the analysis of responses to the previous two questions show that respondents overwhelmingly believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation while continuing to be faithful to the sense of the original message and, more importantly, that the interpreter should abide by the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original even if he/she does not agree with what speakers say. It can therefore be assumed that respondents will mostly choose 'No' and/or 'Absolutely not' in response to this question, thus believing and at the same time proving that the purpose of intercultural mediation as carried out by conference interpreters is to achieve understanding between speaker and audience and nothing more.

As expected, conference interpreters' responses to the present question support the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that intercultural mediation as carried out by conference interpreters does not mean going beyond establishing understanding and communication between speaker and audience. The following four charts show that this view is held by a majority of 76% of respondents in all four groups.

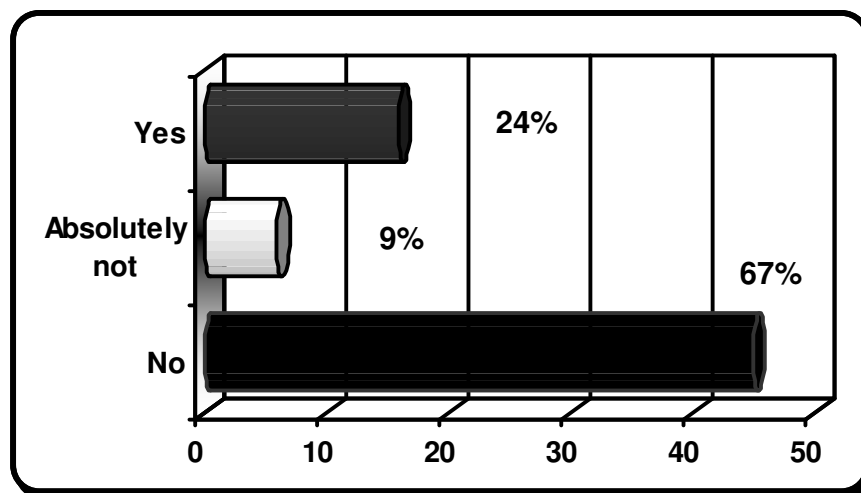


Chart 7-28: Staff interpreters' responses to question 10 in values and percentages

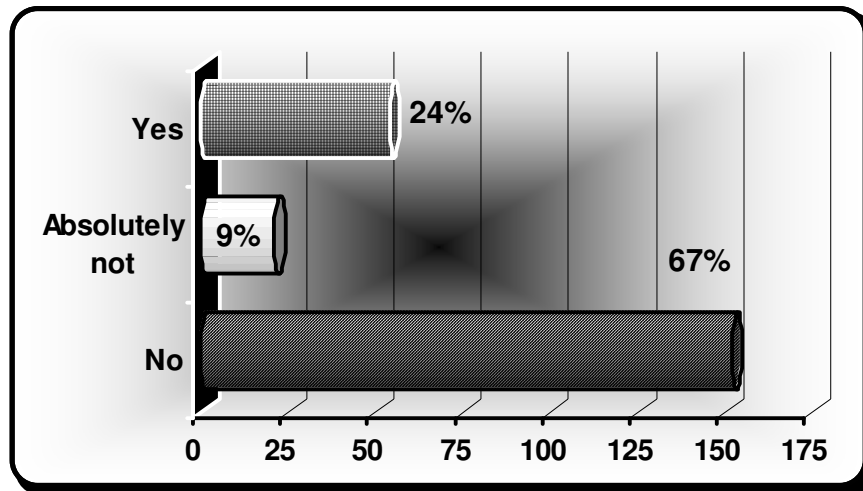


Chart 7-29: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 10 in values and percentages

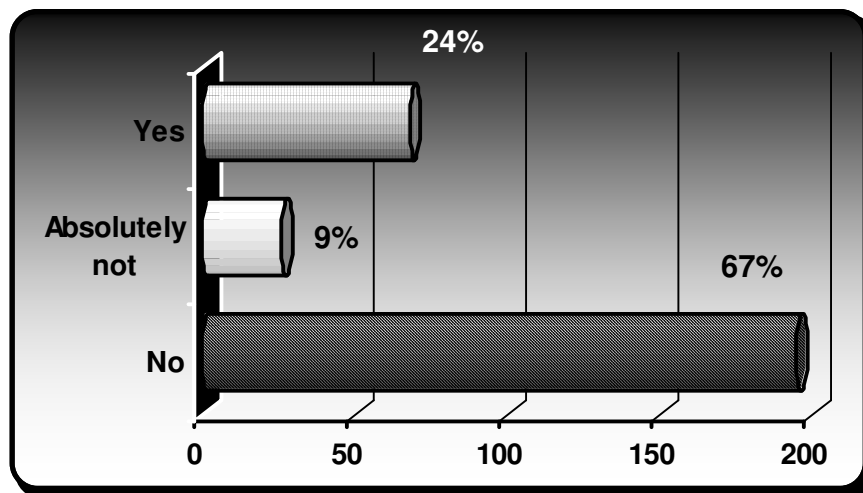


Chart 7-30: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 10 in values and percentages

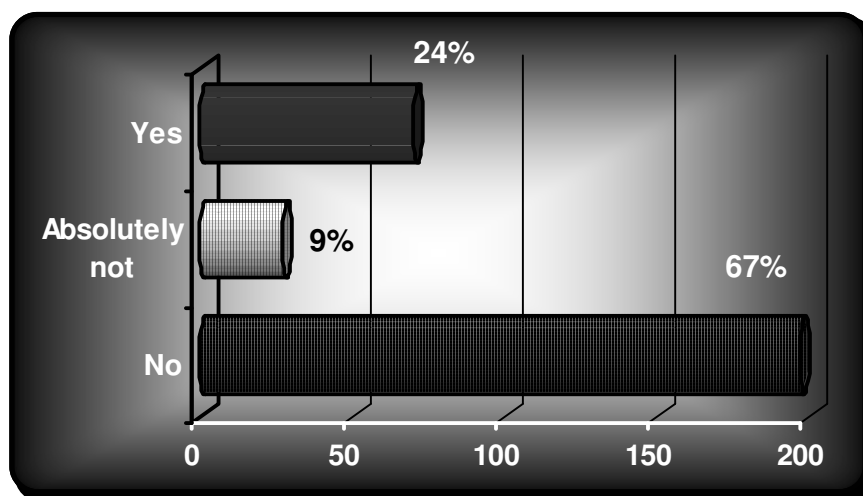


Chart 7-31: All responses to question 10 in values and percentages

Although the majority of respondents in the four groups believe that intercultural mediation in CISs means facilitating understanding only, the percentage of the minorities of respondents (24%) who have answered this question with ‘yes’ are slightly higher than expected, which tempts to try to know what it is that they do beyond establishing understanding during the communication process. It is unfortunate that although many interpreters have commented on some questions and the survey in general, no interpreter has made any comment on this question, which has made it impossible to obtain any clues as to what the interpreters who have replied with ‘yes’ actually mean with their answer.

At any rate, the current result is significant enough to invalidate Angelelli’s (2004: 29) concept of interpreters’ visibility which she juxtaposes against neutrality and accuracy (**5.1.5 Interpreters’ visibility**). The result shows that interpreters’ visibility as intercultural mediators does not mean a departure from neutrality or faithfulness to the original, but an effort towards achieving more effective understanding among delegates.

#### 7.5.3.6 Question 11

*Do you think that the interpreter as intercultural mediator should identify with either of his/her clients?*

*Yes*

*Yes, occasionally*

*No, not at all*

Intercultural mediation is wrongly associated with partisanship (cf. Kondo et al. 1997: 150) as if the interpreter would not be a neutral mediator if he/she opted for the intercultural-mediator role. However, based on the definition of the CCIr’s role as intercultural mediator as proposed in this thesis, there is no reason why the interpreter should not be a faithful, accurate and neutral intercultural mediator because to be an intercultural mediator in an interpreting situation is to use one’s cultural knowledge to achieve better cultural understanding when needed between the primary parties; it does not mean assuming a delegate’s role or being involved in non-interpretational decisions.

Besides, the discussions in **5.1.5 Interpreters’ visibility** and **5.2.1 Neutrality versus partisanship** do not only show that intercultural mediation and neutrality are compatible, but also that the two concepts are *interdependent* because mediators cannot be (cultural) mediators if they are not neutral, and there is the fear that if interpreters identified with one



or more sides, they would be more advocates for this or other sides than interpreters, which might be a cause for detrimental effects on interpreting quality as shown in the discussion of the interpretation of ‘martyrdom operations’ in **5.1.2 Identification with the client**.

Therefore, the interpreter need not identify with either speaker or audience because his/her responsibility is to effectively communicate to a TL audience what a SL speaker says to establish understanding between the two parties. In effect, this means interpreters serve two clients, and to do this properly, the interpreter must be a neutral agent whose loyalty is solely to the original, not to any of the clients, not even to both of the clients because clients’ interests might well be conflicting in nature, and it is not clear how the interpreter can identify with both of them at the same time if the situation involves clients’ conflicting interests, a situation described by one of the respondents as a ‘source of schizophrenia’ that could add extra mental pressure and stress to an already highly stressful task. In this and all other situations, interpreters’ neutrality vis-à-vis their clients and loyalty to the sense of the original are the answer since this does not put any pressure on interpreters who can distance themselves from any other interests or objectives the primary parties might have. Thus, a strong argument can be put in favour of neutrality and loyalty to the original since these are interpreters’ insurance policies, so to speak, that can ensure that the interests of both clients are very well served in any situation.

Based on the above argument, it has been suggested that the interpreter as intercultural mediator is a neutral agent who is disengaged from the interests of the primary parties, which might be conflicting in nature, but a bipartisan individual when it comes to their interests in understanding what is said (the speaker for his/her desire to get his/her message across to the TL audience and the latter for their desire to understand the speaker’s message) because the essential aim for almost any interpretation encounter is to promote understanding and communication between the two primary parties.

The results of the analysis of responses to this question support the above argument because the majority of respondents in the four groups (62% of staff interpreters, 65% of freelance interpreters, and 64% of experienced interpreters and all the respondents) believe that the interpreter as intercultural mediator should not identify with either of his/her clients at all to be able to assume the intercultural-mediator role. See the four charts below.

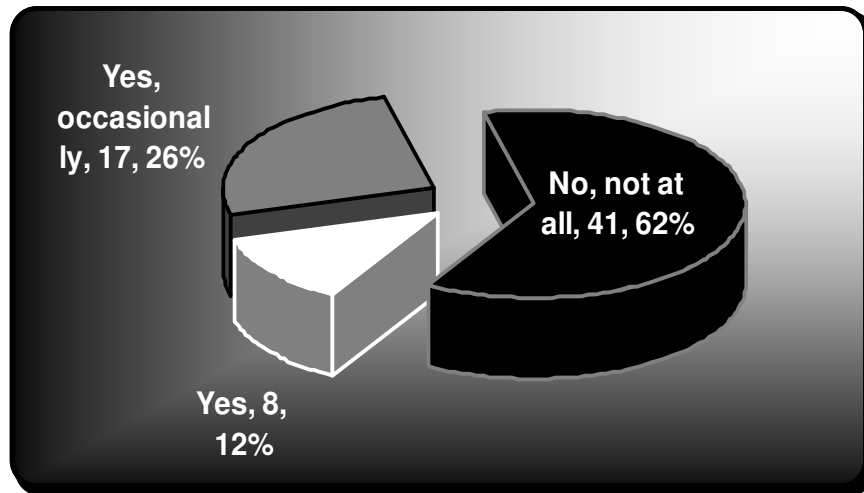


Chart 7-32: Staff interpreters' responses to question 11 in values and percentages

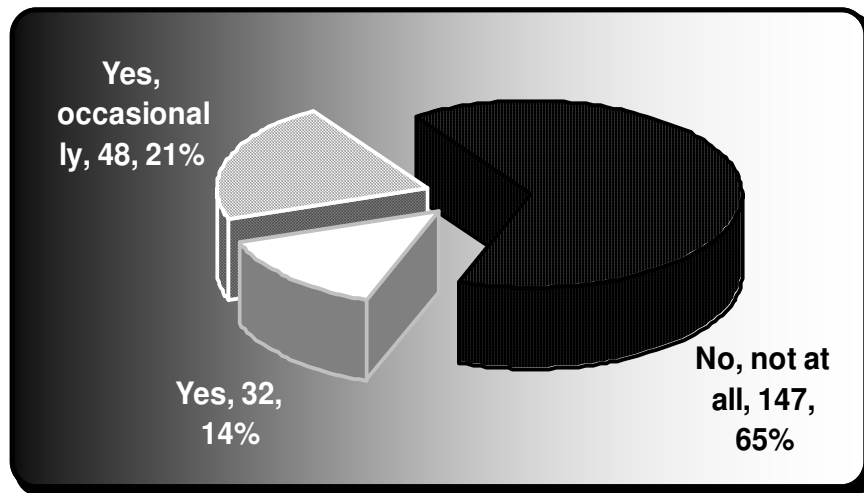


Chart 7-33: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 11 in values and percentages

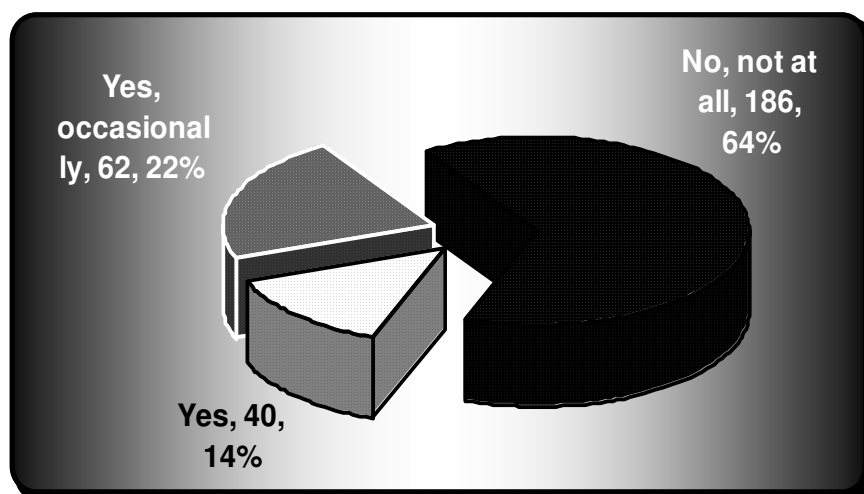


Chart 7-34: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 11 in values and percentages

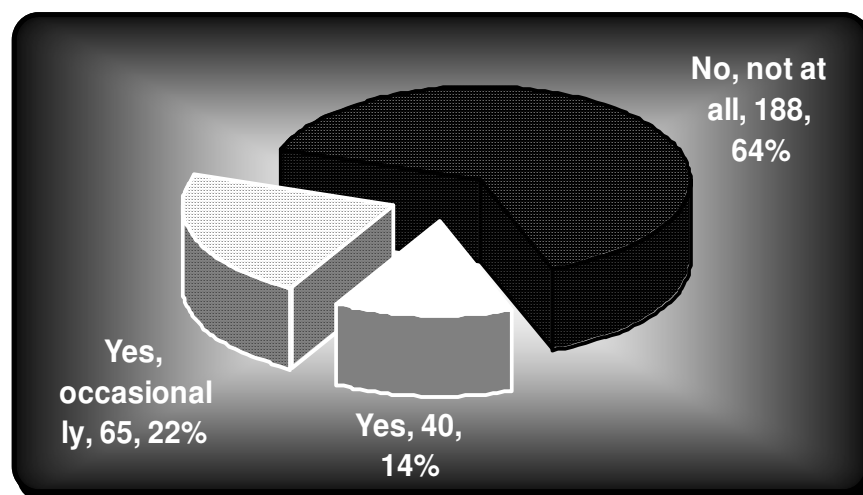


Chart 7-35: All responses to question 11 in values and percentages

This result confirms the results of responses to the previous two questions which have suggested that ‘identification with the client’, ‘ghost of the speaker’, ‘sender-loyalty’, ‘rotating side-taking’, ‘primary loyalty to the speaker’ and ‘visibility’ cannot be supported. The analysis of responses to questions 9, 10 and 11 show that the majority of respondents believe that the interpreter as intercultural mediator is more likely to interpret information faithfully and without going beyond establishing understating or identifying with any of the clients, thus confirming the *Central Hypothesis*, account of the CCIr’s role as intercultural mediator, and arguments in **5.1.1 The interpreter as intermediary** by Seleskovitch (1978a: 112-116) and Hatim and Mason (1990: 223f), in **5.2 The cultural mediator** by Herbert (1952: 3), and in **5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator** by Pöchhacker (2004: 59) on interpreters’ involvement as faithful and impartial intercultural mediators.

Moreover, even though the percentage of respondents who have chosen to identify with one or both<sup>6</sup> clients are relatively higher than expected (see the four charts above), the result can still be regarded significant enough to support the assumption that conference interpreters are less likely to identify with their clients. First, staff interpreters work permanently for their employers. This allows the former to develop with the latter relations that are difficult to establish through a one-off encounter or a limited number of encounters between clients and freelance interpreters. Thus, it is not very unusual for staff interpreters to identify with their employers, even to the extent of appearing to be advocates for their employers.

<sup>6</sup> Some interpreters have mentioned in their comments that they identify with both clients.

However, this argument cannot be used as evidence for a possible effect for interpreters' professional status on their perception of their role because the majority of staff interpreters (62%) *do not* believe that the CCIr as intercultural mediator should identify with one or more of the clients on the one hand, and on the other hand staff interpreters' familiarity with their employers is only given here as a possible explanation as to why the percentage of the minority, not majority, of staff interpreters who believe that the interpreter should identify with one or more of the clients is relatively higher than expected.

Moreover, the fact that there are no significant differences between staff interpreters' responses and freelancers' responses on the one hand and those of experienced interpreters and all the respondents (who are mostly freelance interpreters) on the other does away with the validity of the above argument and thus makes it once again very difficult if not impossible to argue for any effects of interpreters' professional status on their perception of their role in the communication process *in the light of the results of the present survey*.

Second, comments by a number of respondents have shed some light on what identification with clients actually means for respondents who have replied to this question with 'Yes' or 'Yes occasionally' and why they identify with their clients:

[...] Q.11: I try as much as possible to stay on neutral ground. If it may serve the clarity of the outcome, I identify with the speaker [...].

For identification with client: yes in the form of empathy to be able to understand better and make audience understand better [...].

[...] It seems to me that identification with either speaker is both necessary and tricky for a culturally faithful interpretation. It is necessary in order for the interpreter to place him/herself in the speaker's shoes; at the same time, such identification should not in any way "favor" either speaker in detriment of the other [...].

For these respondents, identification with the client does not mean sympathising with, being biased towards or an advocate for the client, but actually means *empathising* with the speaker and putting themselves in his/her position to understand him/her better to be able to provide a better rendition of the original, thus better serving the TL audience, which means such identification with the client is unlikely to lead to any negative effects on interpreting quality. This is in line with Seleskovitch and Lederer's (1995: 59-62) understanding of the concept of identification with the speaker and is also what the majority of users of the

profession of conference interpreting (conference delegates) in Kopczyński's (1994) user-oriented survey on interpreting quality actually expect from conference interpreters.

Third, the above comments and the results of responses to question 9 (where 99% believe that the interpreter as intercultural mediator should be faithful to the original even if he/she does not agree with what the speaker says) and question 10 (where 76% believe that intercultural mediation as performed by conference interpreters does not mean going beyond establishing understanding between speaker and audience) do not tally with the issue of identification with the client because, after all, whether the interpreter is neutral or whether he/she identifies with the client or not is irrelevant; *faithfulness to the sense of the original remains paramount*. If the interpreter abides by the principle of faithfulness, neutrality will automatically be taken care of and the interests of clients in understanding and communication will be very well served, which is itself enough and sufficient on its own because it is not the interpreter's brief to further any interests any client might happen to have other than their interests in understanding and being understood.

#### **7.5.4 Part IV: language direction and cultural mediation procedures**

This part comprises the questions on possible effects the language direction might have on the CCIr's ability to perform intercultural mediation and the use of cultural mediation procedures to overcome problems caused by cultural differences between the SL and TL.

##### **7.5.4.1 Question 12**

*Do you think that the language direction has an effect on whether or not cultural mediation can be performed or, in other words, do you think the consecutive interpreter can better assume the role of intercultural mediator when interpreting into*

- The mother tongue (A Language)*
- The foreign (B Language)*
- The mother tongue or foreign language*

Based on two dominant arguments in the literature on language direction and AIIC's description of interpreters' language combinations, it is possible to assume that in CCI interpreters can work into their A and B languages effectively and with ease. First, the controversy in the literature over interpreting into B concerns the SI process only because in principle many researchers do not mind interpreting into B in CCI (Seleskovitch 1978a: 74/139; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 100; Gile 1995d: 209; 2001c).

Second, the AIIC classification of the interpreter’s working languages considers the B language as one of the active languages in the interpreter’s language combination and one

into which the interpreter works from one or more of her/his other languages and which, although not a mother tongue, is a language of which s/he has perfect command (AIIC 2002a).

It is virtually impossible to have ‘perfect’ command of a language without absorbing its culture. It can thus be argued that the language direction in CCI is unlikely to affect CCIr’s ability to assume the intercultural-mediator role or perform intercultural mediation when working into the A and B languages. Thus, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

*Hypothesis D: The language direction is unlikely to have any significant effects on the CCIr’s ability to perform intercultural mediation since CCIr’s can perform intercultural mediation when interpreting into both of their A and B languages effectively and with ease.*

Chart 7-36 below shows that staff interpreters’ responses to this question do not support this hypothesis because a majority of 58% of them believe that the CCIr can better assume the intercultural-mediator role when interpreting into the mother tongue.

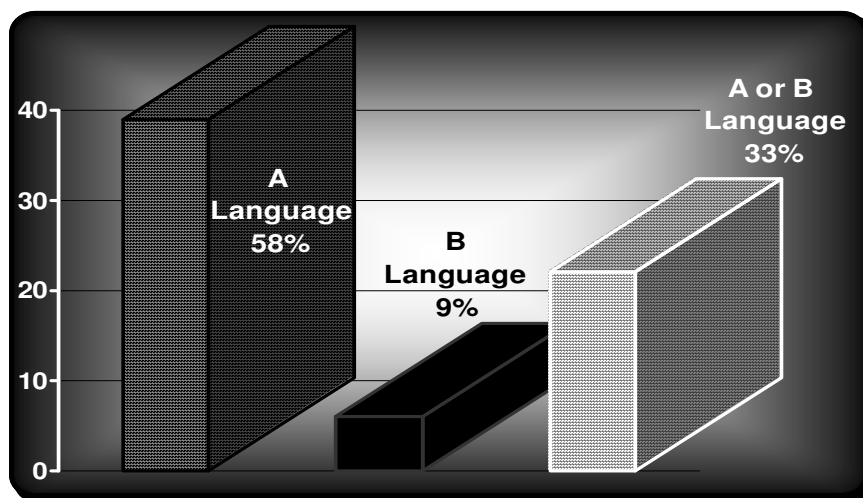


Chart 7-36: Staff interpreters’ responses to question 12 in values and percentages

The above result stands in contrast to the responses of freelance and experienced interpreters and all the respondents because the majority of respondents in the three groups believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation when interpreting into both A and B (see the three charts below).

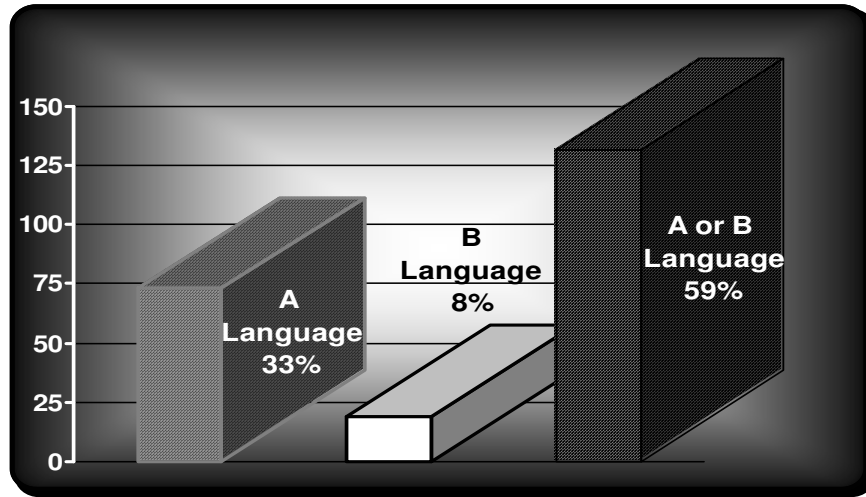


Chart 7-37: Freelance interpreters' responses to question 12 in values and percentages

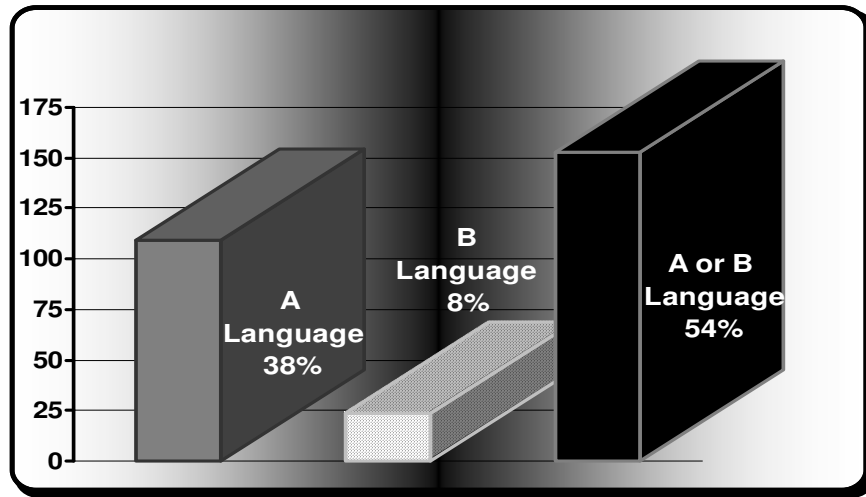


Chart 7-38: Experienced interpreters' responses to question 12 in values and percentages

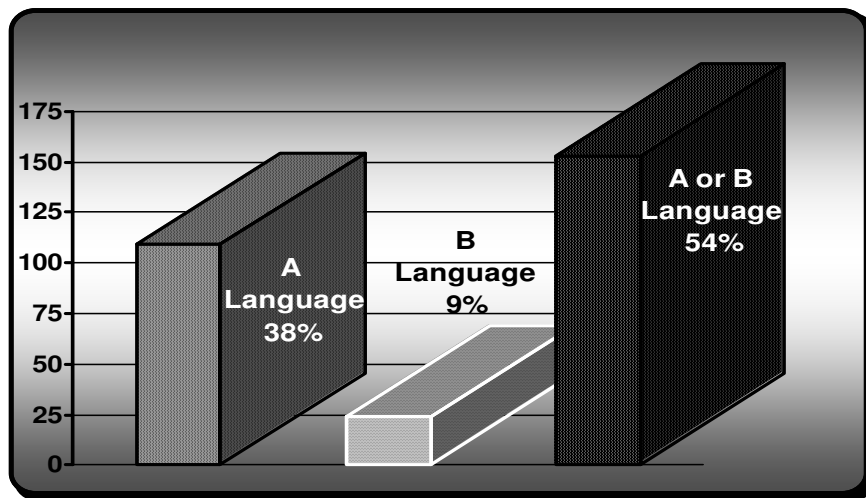


Chart 7-39: All responses to question 12 in values and percentages

As such, the result obtained through staff interpreters' responses is not significant enough to invalidate *Hypothesis D* not only because the majority of interpreters in the other three groups (which are much bigger than the staff group) believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation when interpreting into A and B, but also because staff interpreters' responses may have been influenced by other factors. For example, a number of staff interpreters work for institutions that allow interpreting only into the A language as suggested by a staff interpreter: 'we are not allowed to work into the B language'.

Moreover, even with the relatively high percentage of the minorities of conference interpreters in the remaining three groups who believe that the CCIr can better assume the intercultural-mediator role only when interpreting into A, the hypothesis can still be valid for the following reasons. First, it is commonsense to believe that interpreting into A is always more effective and easier for the interpreter whether during SI or CCI. Second, some interpreters might not have a B language as is the case of some of the respondents to this survey ('I don't have a B language'), which means they will only interpret into their A languages either from their C languages or from another A if they are 'true bilinguals'. Third, some interpreters prefer to work into their A languages only as one of the respondents to the present survey remarks: 'I only work into my mother tongue'.

It can therefore be argued that this result confirms *Hypothesis D*, and thus the dominant argument in the literature on conference interpreting. Consequently, the result makes it possible to argue against any significant effects of the language direction on the CCIr's ability to perform intercultural mediation.

#### 7.5.4.2 Questions 13 & 14

(13) What cultural mediation procedures do you most commonly apply when interpreting consecutively into the **A language**?

(14) What cultural mediation procedures do you most commonly apply when interpreting consecutively into the **foreign language**?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Borrowing/Importation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calque/Loan translation               | <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Equivalent/Substitution      | <input type="checkbox"/> Description/Definition                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Functional Equivalent/Deculturalising | <input type="checkbox"/> Gloss/Explanation                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literal translation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Omission                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrase                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognised/Generally accepted translation |



In addition to trying to know what procedures interpreters most commonly apply in the practice of CCI, these two questions can also help in confirming the result obtained through the previous question about the role of language direction because, for example, merely answering both questions by respondents would mean that conference interpreters usually work into both of their A and B languages in practice, which points to something that is possible because it is being done regularly.

Moreover, the choice of any procedure by respondents would be significant because it would point to an important fact, that conference interpreters do perform intercultural mediation in practice, thus further confirming the results obtained through interpreters' responses to the previous questions in the questionnaire as well as the results obtained through the discussion of the procedures in **Chapter 6** where it has been shown that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting despite the assumption that discourse in conference interpreting is usually characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than community or court interpreting discourse.

Unlike the analysis of all other questions, these two questions are only discussed with reference to the opinion of all respondents to the survey taken as one group irrespective of their professional status or experience or any other classification.

Before presenting the results of interpreters' responses to these two questions, it is worth mentioning that four respondents (one of them has described himself as a 'theoretically aware professional', and another is a prominent IS scholar) have cast doubt about the ability of interpreters who are not familiar with interpreting research to understand some or all of the expressions used to describe the procedures as presented in the survey, which could have repercussions on the validity or representativeness of the results of interpreters' responses to these two particular questions. Indeed, this has been taken into account in the survey design, and this is the reason why many of the procedures have been given synonymous expressions to describe them and thus eliminate any potential intelligibility problems, and this has been deemed appropriate so that the length of the survey could be kept to a minimum. Besides, only nine out of 295 respondents have actually expressed their unfamiliarity with one or more procedures, and three of them have been sent further information about the procedures with examples upon their request, which brings the

number to six respondents (2%), a percentage that cannot obviously be deemed significant enough to do away with the validity of the results of responses to the two questions.

Charts 7-40 and 7-41 show the most commonly used procedures by conference interpreters in CCI into each direction in values and percentages.

The two charts also show that the two questions have been answered by the majority of the respondents (289 respondents, or 98%, to question 13 and 267, or 91%, to question 14), which is significant of the following points. First, the choice of procedures by conference interpreters in response to these two questions means that conference interpreters do engage in intercultural mediation in practice, thus confirming the results of the discussion of intercultural mediation procedures in **Chapter 6**, the results obtained through the analysis of interpreters' responses to the previous questions of the survey and the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that there is a case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting despite the cultural transparency that characterises conference interpreting discourse.

Moreover, the fact that most of the respondents have answered these two questions including the majority of those who have already described their role as linguistic mediators confirms the assumption provided to explain their choice as linguistic mediators, namely that conference interpreters describe their role primarily as linguistic mediators, but will attempt intercultural mediation when needed for effective understanding between the primary parties in the communication encounter.

Second, the result of interpreters' responses to the two questions confirms the result of their responses to question 12 which has indicated that intercultural mediation can be carried out effectively and with ease into both the A and B languages, thus further confirming *Hypothesis D* because most of the respondents have answered both questions, pointing to procedures that they apply into each direction. Again, the fact that procedures have been chosen even by those who do not believe that the interpreter can perform intercultural mediation into both the A and B languages in their responses to question 12 cannot be considered as a contradiction because even though some interpreters believe that the CCIr can *better* assume the intercultural-mediator role when interpreting into, for example, the A language, they might still be interpreting into both directions in practice.

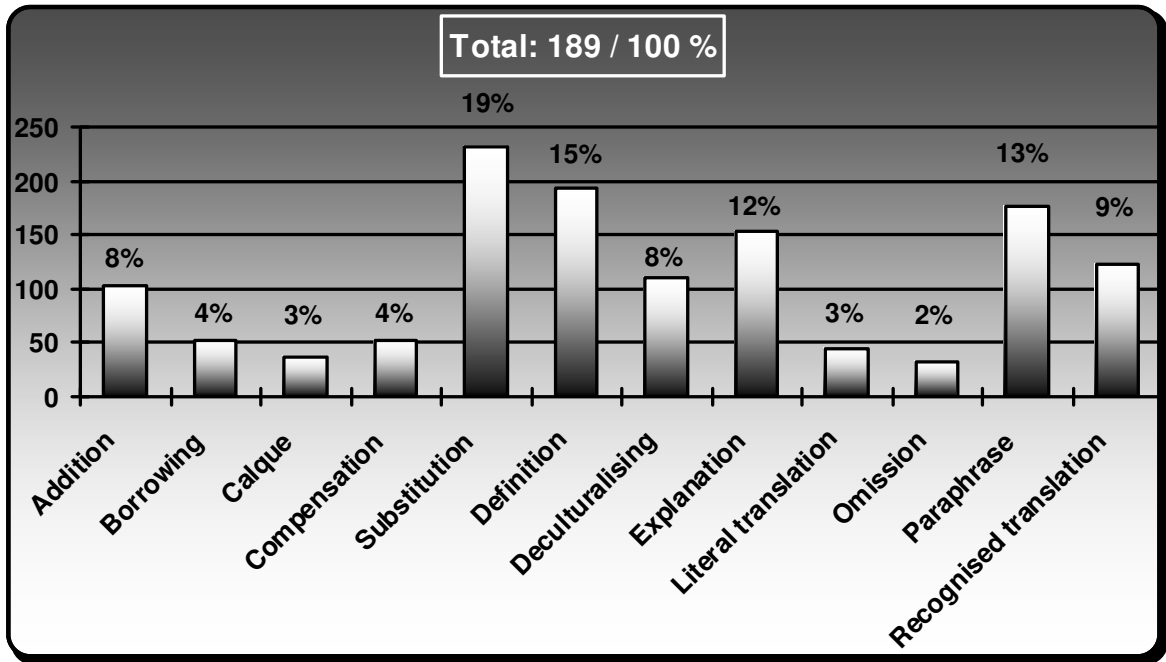


Chart 7-40: All responses to question 13 in values and percentages

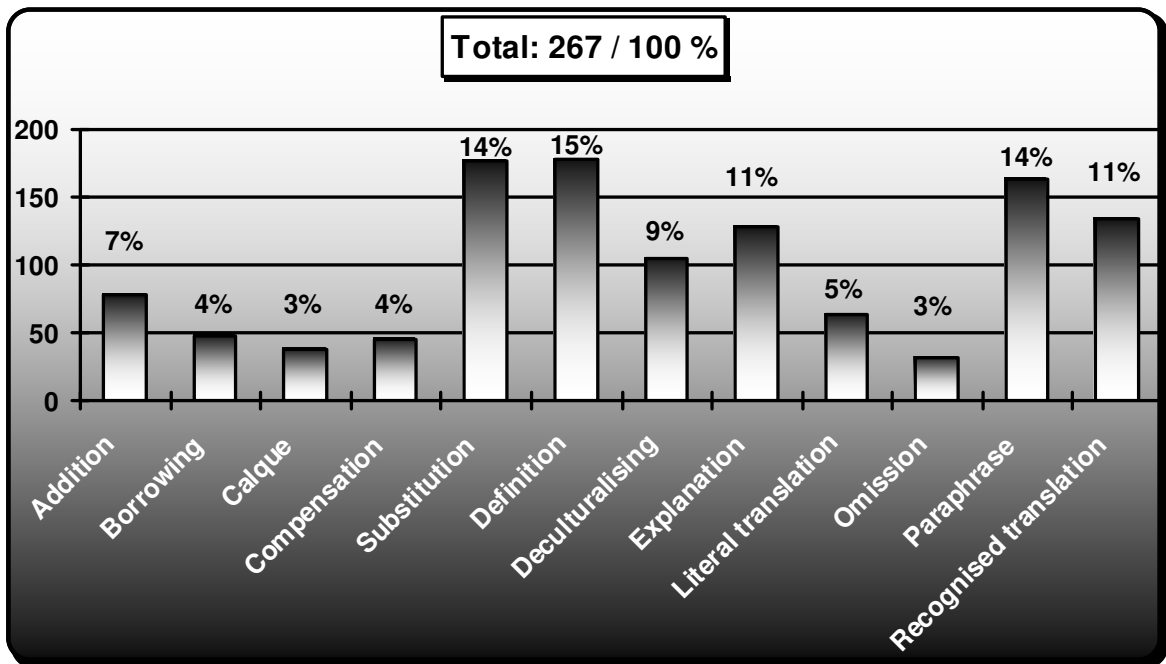


Chart 7-41: All responses to question 14 in values and percentages

Third, as is clear from the two charts above, the analysis of conference interpreters' responses to these two questions reveals that borrowing and omission are among the least used procedures by conference interpreters, which corresponds to the discussions of the two procedures and in **6.10 Results in Chapter 6**, namely the idea that borrowing and omission

should be used only as a last resort due to the repercussions the application of these procedures could have on the communication process where the application of the former could be a contravention to the rule of accessibility by obscuring the meaning or providing potentially inaccessible information to the TL audience, and the latter to the rules of accuracy and faithfulness by denying the TL audience access to the omitted information.

Finally, the fact that these procedures have been identified by CCIrs supports the claim made in the discussion of interpreting examples and procedures, namely that one can talk about interpreting, as opposed to translational, cultural mediation procedures, especially when some translational procedures cannot be applied by interpreters in view of the time and memory constraints the interpreting process imposes on the interpreter.

#### **7.5.4.3 Question 15**

*Do you use any other procedures not mentioned in the above list or combinations of procedures mentioned in the above list? Please give as much detail as possible in the space provided.*

When sending the survey, potential respondents have been advised that the space reserved for answering this question could be used to give any comments on the subject, the survey or any answers to the previous questions because this is the only open-ended question and only location in the survey form where respondents can provide their own answers or can actually type anything in the document.

Not all respondents have answered this question, but a significant number of them have, mentioning procedures they use in practice but not included in the above list of procedures, commenting on some of the previous questions or their answers to some of the questions, and raising many interesting points on intercultural mediation and the survey in general. Some of these points have been vital indeed in providing clues that have helped understand some of the results obtained through the analysis of interpreters' responses to the other questions. The most interesting of these points have been already discussed or referred to in the previous questions. Thus, the following focus only on some procedures or combinations of procedures respondents have mentioned in their answers to this question. These procedures are divided into three categories: verbal, non-verbal and off-line procedures.

However, before presenting and discussing procedures in the three categories, it is worth discussing a point raised by one of the staff interpreters concerning speakers speaking in a foreign language (usually an official language of an institution) and the repercussions this use of the foreign language can have on the interpreter's ability to successfully assume the intercultural-mediator role and on the communication process in general:

Most of my audience uses official/working languages. As such, the cultural mediation function is further complicated by the fact that the speaker may transpose from the mother tongue to the official language. Accordingly, the English or French you hear may not be French or English per se. It will be strongly marked by the background of the speaker. I hope you consider this aspect in your paper. The speaker breaks the initial cultural barrier and in so doing could create another one.

In such a situation the interpreter's task is further complicated though one should distinguish here between two situations. The first obtains when a speaker uses a foreign language and interpretation is made into the speaker's mother tongue such as when a native Arabic delegate speaks in English and his/her speech is interpreted into Arabic (the speaker's mother tongue). In this case, the interpreter's task is relatively easy since he/she is supposed to be already familiar with the source and target languages and cultures in question anyway, which will enable him/her to detect any linguistic interference or cultural transposition made by speakers from their mother tongues to the foreign language.

The second situation arises when a speaker uses a foreign language and interpreting is carried out into another foreign language to the speaker such as when a native speaker of Arabic speaks in English and interpretation is carried out into French. In this case, the interpreter's task is relatively more difficult than in the previous situation except if he/she is familiar with the three languages and cultures involved. General knowledge, knowledge of the speaker's background, etc. also come into play. This situation points significantly towards the need for general cultural knowledge by interpreters, not only of the cultures of their working languages, but also of as many other cultures as possible. Nonetheless, this deserves further investigation (**8.3.2 Further research**).

#### **7.5.4.3.1 Verbal procedures**

In this section, a number of verbal procedures and possible combinations of procedures suggested by some respondents are discussed.

#### **7.5.4.3.1.1 Borrowing and explanation or description**

Borrowing and explanations [sic].

Comment on the last two questions: Box "Borrowing/Importation": Taking the source language word or term as a "verbatim" name or expression to mark it as a special or typical feature of that language or culture which has no direct counterpart/equivalent or else is not a well-known expression/term and expanding on it by way of a description or explanation in the source [sic, target] language if I think that the background knowledge of the source [sic, target] language speakers could benefit ("The Welsh Assembly" to be rendered in German as "the Welsh Assembly which corresponds to our Bundesversammlung") or, e.g., the "native" name of a crop explaining [sic] that it comes under the heading of "grain/cereal" or "vegetable" or "fruit".

This combination of procedures confirms Ivir's (1987: 39) and Newmark's (1988: 81f) suggestions that the procedure of borrowing is usually used with other complementary procedures to ensure understanding is achieved. Again, the fact that more than one interpreter has suggested this combination of procedures confirms the principles of the CPA which does not tolerate borrowing due to the significant repercussions its application could have on understanding and getting the message across to the TL audience. It could force the audience to expend unnecessary processing effort, which is not rewarded with anything worthwhile anyway if the TL audience are completely unfamiliar with the borrowed term and no other complementary procedure is used with borrowing.

#### **7.5.4.3.1.2 Literal translation and explanation or description**

This is another possible combination of procedures suggested by some respondents especially when dealing with metaphors:

Most frequently a combination of literal translation and description.

Some things have to be translated literally, for instance, colloquial expressions or idioms for which there is no equivalent (or so far-fetched that they wouldn't be understood). In such a case, I translate literally and give a mini explanation of what is meant. This is also valid for proverbs. This technique is also useful when an expression is particularly colourful and/or to the point as for instance is often the case with Americans from the Southern states. I find it better to translate the expression literally and explain it than try to change it. The flavour (and part of the speaker's personality) would be lost.

This combination can be used when the application of literal translation alone does not secure the 'transparency' (Ivir 1987: 41) and/or 'referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original' (Newmark 1988: 69) needed for effective understanding of the cultural term by the TL audience. The combination could be one of the possible ways to deal with the figure of speech discussed in **5.3 The CCIr as intercultural mediator**, 'It must be

August', which has been used by a State Department spokesman in response to speculations on the alleged resignation of the former Secretary of State, Collin Powell. Combining literal translation and explanation, the interpreter might choose to provide a literal interpretation of the metaphor and explain that this metaphor means that these speculations are mere rumours because in the context of American politics, August is the month when American Congress is in recess; therefore, there is usually a shortage of news that motivates some news reporters to spread political rumours.

#### 7.5.4.3.1.3 Register shift

If I am interpreting for a person who speaks my mother tongue and I realize that his or her linguistic level is lower than that of the speaker in the foreign language, I use very simple words. For example, I was once interpreting a physician from the WHO visiting a very poor Indian community in rural Mexico. The physician asked a young mother something like: "Would you be able to specify the frequency of diarrhetic stools of your newborn?" My interpretation into Spanish was equivalent to something like: "How many times a day does your baby have watery discharges?"

This procedure, which has been suggested by one of the respondents, is best described as 'register shift'. According to Hatim, register is a term used to refer to

The set of features which distinguish one stretch of language from another in terms of variation in > **Context** to do with the language user (geographical dialect, idiolect, etc.) and/or with language use (> **Field** or subject matter, > **Tenor** or level of formality and > **Mode** or speaking v. writing) (Hatim 1997: 221, emphasis in original)<sup>7</sup>.

Catford, who has been the first scholar to use the term 'shift' (Hatim and Munday 2004: 26), defines shift or shifts as 'departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL' (Catford 1965: 73).

In the above example, the shift is in tenor from the scientific (medical) formal to the informal way of speaking. It can even be a shift from the formal to the colloquial in community and court interpreting situations due to the huge difference in the education level that might exist between, for example, a doctor/solicitor and an illiterate patient/client or a person with a minimal level of education (see also Hatim and Mason 1990: 42; Hale 1997). The question is whether it is better in this example to keep a formal register and run the risk of producing an unintelligible interpretation, or lower the register to the linguistic level the audience can understand and be sure that the interpretation is understood, bearing

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<sup>7</sup> Chapter 3 in Hatim and Mason (1990) contains a detailed discussion of register analysis.

in mind that lowering the register has not compromised faithfulness to the sense of the original message because ‘How many times a day does your baby have watery discharges?’ means ‘Would you be able to specify the frequency of diarrheic stools of your newborn?’.

#### **7.5.4.3.1.4 Asking the speaker for clarification**

Asking the speaker what he meant when what he said is not clear or ambiguous (backtracking).

Sometimes I ask the speaker to clarify a point which may be difficult for listeners to understand due to cultural reasons.

It has happened that I have confessed ignorance and asked for help from my audience! That is the advantage of consecutive work...

This procedure can be used when the interpreter does not know the meaning of a certain word, misses or fails to register an important piece of information on his/her notes (cf. e.g. Seleskovitch 1978a: 94; Jones 1998: 53f; see also **2.2.2.1.6.1.2 On-line strategies**). But, as is clear from the above excerpts by three respondents to the present survey, this procedure can also be used for clarification when what the speaker has said is ambiguous or of a cultural nature that needs clarification by the speaker for effective understanding or when the interpreter is unfamiliar with a certain point, term or cultural expression. This procedure helps illustrate an essential distinction between the two modes of SI and CI in that it is only possible in the latter mode since in the former the interpreter is physically detached from the conference participants although the simultaneous interpreter, like the CCIr, can still use another, but a rare and more radical, procedure to achieve the same purpose, that is, ruling out ambiguity and doing away with (cultural) misunderstandings (see below).

#### **7.5.4.3.1.5 Interruption of conference proceedings**

The most important procedure if a [sic] important cultural misunderstanding arises is that I interrupt the proceedings, step out of my role as a linguistic mediator (see answer to question 6, I SEE my role as linguistic mediator, but can't prevent it from shifting to intercultural sometimes) and announce to both parties that there could well be a cultural misunderstanding and would they both, to rule out this possibility, please explain to the other one what they mean by concept X or answer Y or reaction Z.

According to Altman (1989: 75), halting the conference proceedings or disrupting the normal flow of communication during a conference is a sign of a communication breakdown. Surely, when the interpreter detects the possibility of a communication breakdown during conferences, he/she has to do something about it because it is his/her



responsibility to ensure the smooth running of the communication process, and halting the conference proceedings is one possible way of dealing with communication breakdowns. This procedure can be used by both consecutive and simultaneous interpreters.

### **7.5.4.3.2 Non-verbal procedures**

#### **7.5.4.3.2.1 Using gestures and body language**

A good number of respondents have suggested the use of non-verbal means (such as facial expressions, gestures, body language, nods, etc.) as a possible procedure that can help the CCIr get the message across to the interpretation audience:

I think the body language has to be altered depending on the target language as well. I take the meaning out of the body language of the speaker and relay the text into the target language accompanied by the culturally acceptable and meaningful gestures, mimics and posture. I believe the text without the relevant body language lacks most of the meaning.

[...] the message of a speaker does not only consist of verbal communication tools; for example, body language is very important. I always refer to Consecutive translation as being a theatrical play, whereas simultaneous is radio broadcasting.

Body language, appropriate facial expression, to create trust and understanding; show that what each speaker says is equally important. I sometimes nod when taking notes to indicate speaker is being understood.

In consecutive, part of the message is conveyed by non-language means (facial expressions, hands, etc.) Therefore, the strictly spoken language need not be as precise as in simultaneous, where the "client" cannot see the interpreter.

Again, this procedure, as the last quote suggests, helps illustrate the difference between CI and SI. Whereas the CCIr can benefit from the speaker's body language to help him/her understand what the speaker says and then use his/her own body language to get the message across to the TL audience, the simultaneous interpreter can only benefit from the speaker's body language to help him/her understand the speaker's message as the simultaneous interpreter's body language can not normally be seen by the audience.

### **7.5.4.3.3 Off-line procedures**

A number of respondents have suggested the use of some off-line procedures to help them overcome cultural problems or differences. These are off-line explanations and preparation.

#### **7.5.4.3.3.1 Off-line explanations**

This is a very helpful procedure for the interpreter in that it could help him/her draw his/her

audience's attention to cultural differences that might create communication problems or misunderstandings during the interpreting process, which could help the audience guard against or be alert to these differences and thus avoid the occurrence of misunderstandings. Off-line explanations can be conducted before or after the actual interpreting process and can be used to shed light on general or specific points such as the two examples suggested in the following quote by one of the respondents:

"Off-line procedures" like explaining to Americans that their easy use of first names is not always welcomed by speakers of languages having a kind of "respect or polite language" or grammatical features to that effect (too "familiar" for comfort, overbearing, "only lovers do that") or that humour is largely an intracultural thing and will rarely translate since it is based on social mechanisms and linguistic specificities (British social game of "punning" – only feasible in languages which are homophonic i.e. have words that sound alike but mean different things).

#### **7.5.4.3.3.2 Preparation**

Reading beforehand as much as possible on relevant issues in both languages.

There is no doubt that undertaking research and consulting encyclopaedias, dictionaries, glossaries, conference documentation and other information sources before the start of conference assignments can be of invaluable help to conference interpreters (see also **2.2.2.1.6.1.1 Off-line strategies; 2.2.2.3.2 Documentation; 2.2.2.5.2.4.2 Training on SI with text**). This could be done to research for general as well as cultural information of relevance to the conference topic.

Conclusions drawn from the survey analysis just carried out in this chapter and the analysis of the interpreting examples in **Chapter 6** are discussed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 8: Summary and conclusions**

The present thesis has investigated the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator. This chapter presents a summary of the thesis, the conclusions drawn from the results of the analysis of interpreting examples and the survey of conference interpreters in **Chapters 6** and **7**, respectively, suggestions and recommendations for further research.

### **8.1 Summary of the thesis**

This section and its sub-sections present brief summaries of the chapters of the thesis.

#### **8.1.1 Summary of Chapter 1**

The first chapter has set the scene for the thesis by introducing its main subject of investigation and defining its scope in terms of the subject of investigation (the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator *in/during the communication process*), mode (CI) and setting (CISs); the rationale behind the choice of the subject, mode and setting; and the main objectives much hoped to be achieved through this research endeavour. The chapter has also provided information on the theoretical framework, rationale behind the choice of this particular framework and the two methods of investigation. Besides, the chapter has outlined the other chapters of the thesis.

#### **8.1.2 Summary of Chapter 2**

**Chapter 2** has discussed the definition of the interpreting activity and of some interpreting types according to mode, setting, directionality and modality. The historical overview has accounted for the four stages (Gile 1994a: 149-152) of the development of IS into an academic (sub-)discipline, interdisciplinarity and factors that have led to the growth of IS.

The research profile has reviewed cognitive, language, professional, quality and training issues (after Gile 2000a). In cognitive issues, reaction times have been found to be longer for translation from the dominant into nondominant language in bilinguals (de Bot 2000: 80-86). Researchers broadly agree on the existence of attention-sharing between several tasks in interpreting (Pöchhacker 2004: 115f). Top-down and bottom-up processing have been deemed equally essential for an inclusive account of language comprehension as

proper understanding depends on the interaction between input and existing information (e.g. Hatim and Mason 1990: 226f). Research on memory has focused on the multi-facets of memory (e.g. Darò 1997: 623), their role in recalling information, the detrimental effects of interpreting tasks (listening, CCI or SI) on recall abilities (Gerver 1974a), and the role of practice in overcoming such effects (Bajo et al. 2000). The discussion on production has presented Levelt's (1989) model of language production that has been taken up by interpreting researchers (Setton 1999; de Bot 2000), categories and causes of errors. Three general types of interpreting strategies have been identified: overall task-related strategies (off- and on-line strategies), processing strategies used during a certain phase in the interpreting process, and communicating content strategies such as reductive and adaptive strategies (cf. Pöchhacker 2004: 132-135).

Language issues discussed include AIIC's (2002a) classification of interpreters' working languages into active (A, B) and passive (C) languages, researchers' preparedness to accept SI into B in response to the growing market needs for interpreting from less widely used languages (e.g. Lim 2003: 152), and researchers' preference to restrict language teaching or enhancement to undergraduate training programmes.

Professional issues surveyed concern the importance of interpreters' general knowledge, willingness for specialisation in the future (e.g. Seleskovitch 1978a: 71f), conference documentation (e.g. Altman 1984) and optimal technical working conditions (high quality electronic equipment for better sound quality and good design for fixed and mobile booths). Other issues include the effects of work load, fatigue and stress on interpreters.

In quality issues, empirical studies have identified professional (e.g. Bühler 1986) and user criteria (e.g. Kurz 2001), and high correlations have been detected between professionals and users in their ratings of essential criteria (consistency with the original message, correct terminology and logical cohesion of utterance), but not other criteria (ibid: 398). Thus, calls have been made for adopting specific definitions of criteria, coordination in conducting surveys and a multidisciplinary approach to the evaluation of results (e.g. Shlesinger et al. 1997: 128f). It has been concluded that assessing interpreting quality should be carried out by competent or chief conference interpreters (Seleskovitch 1986b: 236). Factors such as non-spontaneous speech (e.g. Jones 1998: 113), text/speech complexity (Tommola and

Helevä 1998: 179), input rate (e.g. Gerver 1976), slips and shifts (e.g. Déjean Le Féal 1990: 156; Pöchhacker 1995c: 75) and interpreters' professional status (Altman 1984: 83; Gile 1995d: 38f) have been found to have the potential of negatively affecting quality. However, no evidence of a negative impact of relay interpreting on quality has been found (cf. e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 178) though it has been stressed that the systematic use of relay should be avoided and trainees should be prepared for relay.

The discussion of training issues has stressed the importance of testing students' interpreting aptitude, exploring possible methods of testing and abilities to be tested in applicants (cf. Longley 1989: 106). Four basic models (cf. Renfer 1992) for interpreter training have also been discussed, and the importance of theoretical components in training curricula has been emphasised (e.g. Gile 1992). A list of widely used training exercises has been introduced though not all researchers agree on the usability of all exercises especially shadowing (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 143). Besides, the discussion has emphasised the importance of selecting speeches/texts based on gradual difficulty (Seleskovitch 1989: 79ff) and informativeness (Coughlin 1989: 107), normal presentation rate of training speeches (cf. Dodds et al. 1997: 101), effective preparation for written texts (e.g. Schweda-Nicholson 1989: 169-176), and students' late exposure to written texts (cf. Keiser 1978: 23). The final point has stressed the effectiveness of starting with training on CCI before SI because CCI allows for a proper analysis of the original (Seleskovitch 1989: 37f; 1999: 63f) and may thus 'enhance learning and memory' (Ilg and Lambert 1996: 84).

### **8.1.3 Summary of Chapter 3**

**Chapter 3** is dedicated to CCI. The first part has presented a brief historical overview of CCI development and some relevant background information, emphasising the relevance of CCI since it is still preferred in various conference situations/occasions and in training.

The second part has discussed some CCI process models: Herbert's (1952) model, Seleskovitch's theory of sense (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995), Gile's (1997) Effort Models and Weber's (1989) model. The discussion of the strategy of note-taking has shown that researchers unanimously agree that notes are only a means to aid the interpreter's memory, not a verbatim record of the original (e.g. Jones 1998: 43). The interpreter must

thus *strategically* decide on parts of the speech that are difficult to remember in order to note them (and how to take them down: as symbols, drawings, in the SL or TL, etc.) and parts that are easy to retrieve in order to store them in memory (e.g. Kohn and Kalina 1996: 128). Thus, it has been suggested that attention-sharing between many tasks is not exclusive to SI, but exists in CCI as the interpreter has to listen, analyse, decide what to memorise and note down and how, and monitor his/her output during delivery. The positive interaction between note-taking and ability to recall information has been stressed since notes serve as external storage devices and reminders to aid the interpreter's memory (Pöchhacker 2004: 124).

The final part has discussed CCI training and emphasised the importance of preparatory exercises including public speaking skills before exposing students to CCI proper (e.g. Ilg and Lambert 1996: 73-77). Note-taking training has been discussed in terms of when to start note-taking, content and form of notes. It has been found that the CCIr should start note-taking as soon as he/she is sure where an element fits on the notes (Jones 1998: 67-70). Retrieval cues (that aid the CCIr's memory), externally stored information (that are difficult to remember) (Jones 1998: 45-49; Pöchhacker 2004: 124) and first and last statements (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 32f) have been identified as three types of information that should be noted down. The discussion on the form of notes has called for more empirical research to resolve the controversy over the language to take the notes in and found a consensus among researchers suggesting that students should be encouraged to develop their own note-taking systems.

#### **8.1.4 Summary of Chapter 4**

**Chapter 4** has presented the theoretical framework which draws on the theory of sense (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995) and Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) RT. The presentation has included a discussion of the basic principles and concepts in each theory, and a unified cognitive-pragmatic 'model' has been derived from the two theories and referred to as the CPA. The model has been described as an incomprehensive 'translational' (Pöchhacker 2004: 97) model since it concerns only the two processes of understanding and transfer and does not extend to other processes such as production.

The CPA has provided the basis for the development of the *Central Hypothesis* and account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator in **Chapter 5** to be tested through data from the interpreting examples in **Chapter 6** and survey analysis in **Chapter 7**.

### **8.1.5 Summary of Chapter 5**

**Chapter 5** has dealt with the specific topic of intercultural mediation and the CCIr's role in CISs. An account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator has also been derived from the principles of the CPA and proposed by the present researcher as an alternative to the concepts of identification with the client (cf. Anderson 1976; 1978), intruder and ghost of the speaker (Kopczyński 1994), sender-loyalty and rotating-side taking (Gile 1995d: 28-31), primary loyalty to the speaker (AIIC 2004), fully fledged mediator (Viaggio 2005: 84; 2006: 170) and visibility (Angelelli 2004: 29) because the present researcher has considered these definitions as not entirely satisfactory since the definitions do not explain clearly the role interpreters actually assume during the communication process or are in conflict with such established principles as neutrality, accuracy, faithfulness and accessibility.

*Hypothesis A (Central Hypothesis)* has been developed in the light of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator:

*Hypothesis A: CCIrs do perform intercultural mediation despite the cultural transparency that characterises discourse in international CISs, and the motive behind intercultural mediation as carried out by CCIrs is to achieve understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds while remaining neutral, accurate and faithful to the sense of the original and without imposing their own opinion on what they interpret.*

This hypothesis has been tested and indeed validated by the analysis of interpreting examples in **Chapter 6** and survey analysis in **Chapter 7**.

### **8.1.6 Summary of Chapter 6**

**Chapter 6** has discussed some translational procedures that could be used by CCIrs as possible means for overcoming problems caused by cultural differences, elements or gaps. The discussions of borrowing, definition, deculturalising, generally accepted translation, literal translation, paraphrase and explanation, substitution, omission, compensation and

addition have made use of interpreting examples taken from interpreters' actual performance. The discussions have rendered results and conclusions concerning the validity of the *Central Hypothesis* and thus the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and the CPA as well as results concerning the use of cultural mediation procedures in CCI. These are discussed following the summary of **Chapter 7**.

### **8.1.7 Summary of Chapter 7**

**Chapter 7** has discussed the results of the survey of conference interpreters as the main method of investigation of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator. It has included detailed discussions of each of the 15 questions of the questionnaire which have been designed in such a way as to help find answers to questions about the case for intercultural mediation in CIs, validity of the proposed account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator, role of interpreters' professional status on their ability and/or willingness to assume the intercultural-mediator role, role of professional experience on interpreters' ability to perform intercultural mediation, role of language direction on interpreters' decision/ability to perform intercultural mediation and use of cultural mediation procedures.

## **8.2 Conclusions**

The definition of the CCIr as intercultural mediator has been tested through two types of data. The first type is data from some interpreting examples, and the second is data from the analysis of the survey of conference interpreters. Both types of data largely support the *Central Hypothesis* and consequently the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator which has been derived from the principles of the CPA that has been found to be largely considered as a reflection of the real interpreting (translational) process and one that puts the CCIr in his/her usual position as an agent facilitating understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different languages and cultures. First, data from the survey analysis have been found to support all the principles of the CPA which the definition of the CCIr as a neutral and faithful intercultural mediator has been derived from. Second, all the examples in the discussion of the procedures have been accounted for by the CPA which has also been used to account for even most of the procedures themselves. This is because the CPA provides a set of principles which help determine which procedure is the best one to deploy or, more accurately, can help give an



account of why a certain procedure deployed by the interpreter has been successful or not according to the context and communicative situation in which the instance occurs.

Moreover, data from the discussion of the procedures have yielded results concerning the use of cultural mediation procedures when dealing with problems caused by cultural differences/elements during the CCI process. Data from the survey analysis have yielded results concerning the validity of other secondary hypotheses concerning a potential effect for such variables as the interpreter's professional status and experience and the language direction on the CCIr's decision/ability to perform intercultural mediation as well as results concerning the use of procedures by CCIrs during the communication process. These results and conclusions are the subject of the following sub-sections.

### **8.2.1 A case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting**

The results obtained through the discussion of the procedures and analysis of the survey of conference interpreters largely support the assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that there is a case for intercultural mediation in CCI despite the assumption that conference interpreting discourse is usually characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than other interpreting settings. The discussion of the interpreting examples and cultural mediation procedures has shown that CCIrs have felt the need on all occasions for assuming the intercultural-mediator role as necessitated by the situations they have found themselves in and the type of discourse they have been dealing with.

Moreover, the analysis of conference interpreters' responses to the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh questions of the survey of conference interpreters has strongly proved the case for intercultural mediation in CIs. The sweeping majority of respondents (98%) believe wholly (40%) and partly (58%) that cultural differences and elements can cause difficulties for successful communication in CCI (question 4), and 84% believe that the difficulties can increase with the increasing perceived distance between the two cultures (question 5). Furthermore, a majority of 67% define their role as intercultural mediators (question 6), and an impressive 100% believe that CCIrs assume the intercultural-mediator role because they deal with languages as well as cultures (question 7).

Furthermore, in response to questions 13 and 14, respondents have pointed to cultural mediation procedures that they commonly apply when interpreting, thus further confirming the case for intercultural mediation in CISs. Besides, in response to question 15 which has asked respondents to identify cultural mediation procedures or combinations of procedures not mentioned in questions 13 and 14, a number of respondents have suggested and pointed to procedures they use in their interpretation, thus enriching the list of possible cultural mediation procedures that can possibly be used by CCIr's on the one hand, and further confirming the case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting on the other.

Finally, it can be argued that seeing this assumption confirmed by the current results is not at all surprising because this conclusion is only an inevitable consequence of the relation between language and culture which are inextricably interwoven and thus require interpreters to do more than just linguistic mediation for effective understanding. However, as mentioned in the discussion of the results of responses to question 6 in **Chapter 7**, it is important to stress here that the type of discourse and situational context play a significant role in determining the extent to which intercultural mediation might be needed in CISs.

### **8.2.2 Intercultural mediation re-defined**

The analyses of both types of data have also confirmed the second assumption in the *Central Hypothesis* that explains the interpreter's involvement in the communication process and consequently helped to determine *what is and is not* meant by the concept of intercultural mediation in the context of (consecutive) CISs, a concept that has to be re-defined in the light of the current results to accommodate for some of the most established principles in the theory and practice of IS in general and conference interpreting in particular such as neutrality, accuracy, faithfulness to the original and accessibility which form the basis of the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator that has been derived from the CPA and proposed by the present researcher as an alternative to the different concepts or definitions of the interpreter's role offered by various researchers because the latter do not account for or are in conflict with these established principles.

The discussion of the procedures and interpreting examples has shown that assuming the intercultural-mediator role by the CCIr does not mean departing from the principles of

neutrality, accuracy or faithfulness or imposing one's own views or perception of the world. In their interventions, the interpreters have aimed for interpretive resemblance since on the one hand their interpretations have been sense-based, not form-based, and on the other these interventions have been motivated by an attempt to represent the SL discourse as faithfully as possible and make the interpretation as easily accessible as possible.

Similarly, the analysis of responses to the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh questions of the survey of conference interpreters has shown that intercultural mediation cannot be regarded as a cause or, for that matter, pretext for deviating from the basic principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original; for departing from the essential principle of neutrality and non-partisanship; or for being over involved in the communication process to the extent of acting like mediators in non-interpretational situations or assuming a delegate's role by agreeing or disagreeing with what is said or imposing one's own opinion, ideas, beliefs, cultural perceptions, projections, stereotypes or otherwise to what they interpret in order to serve a certain ideology or promote a given cause. The majority of respondents (99%) believe entirely (63%) and partially (36%) that intercultural mediation can be performed by the CCIr without compromising faithfulness to the sense of the original (question 8), 99% believe that the (consecutive) conference interpreter as intercultural mediator is a disengaged agent whose responsibility is to render the sense of what he/she hears as faithfully as possible even if he/she does not agree with the speaker (question 9), 76% believe that intercultural mediation as carried out by conference interpreters does not mean going beyond establishing understanding and communication between speaker and audience (question 10), and 64% believe that the interpreter should not identify with any of the clients when assuming the intercultural-mediator role (question 11).

Thus, intercultural mediation does not mean intrusion on the communication process, and the interpreter as intercultural mediator cannot be described as an 'intruder' (Kopczyński 1994). First, the interpreter plays a very active role in the communication process, without which the interpretation encounter would not have been possible in the first place. Second, the analyses of the two types of data have shown that the interpreter does not perform intercultural mediation as a pretext for imposing his/her own ideas or beliefs, but in effect uses his/her linguistic *and cultural knowledge* to establish communication between speaker

and audience by being faithful to the sense of the original and producing easily accessible TL renditions, which is what interpreters *have to do* anyway.

Nor does intercultural mediation mean adopting the concepts of identification with the client (Anderson 1978), ‘ghost of the speaker’ (Kopczyński 1994), ‘sender-loyalty’, ‘rotating side-taking’ (Gile 1995d: 28-31) or ‘primary loyalty to the speaker’ (AIIC 2004). First, the interpreter serves both speaker and audience. Second, the interpreter cannot identify with or be loyal to and at the same time in disagreement with the speaker if the former has to abide by the principle of faithfulness to the sense of the original even if he/she disagrees with the speaker. Third, interpreters do not deal with speakers’ intentions, but with what speakers intend to say (Salama-Carr 2005, personal communication; see also Seleskovitch 1977: 31; Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995: 227-231). Thus interpreters cannot identify with or be loyal to the speaker, but rather to the original as shown by the results.

Intercultural mediation cannot either be explained in terms of visibility as discussed by Angelelli (cf. 2004: 29) or in terms of Viaggio’s (2005: 84; 2006: 170) concept of the ‘fully fledged mediator’. Conference interpreters’ visibility as intercultural mediators does not necessarily entail departing from the principles of neutrality, accuracy, faithfulness to the original or accessibility, nor does it mean unwarranted intervention by overstepping the boundaries of what is implicitly or explicitly stated as shown by the discussions of the procedures and questions 9, 10, and 11 of the survey of conference interpreters.

*Intercultural mediation rather does mean using one’s knowledge of and expertise in both the source and target cultures whenever appropriate and necessary for the sole purpose of establishing understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds while continuing to abide by the indispensable rules of neutrality, accuracy and faithfulness to the sense of the original discourse without imposing their own ideological belief or opinion on what they interpret.*

*The CCIr as intercultural mediator can thus be described as an agent for understanding, one who uses his/her knowledge of the two languages and corresponding cultures to help the primary parties understand each other effectively through accurate and faithful transposition while continuing to be neutral and disengaged from any interests the clients*

*might happen to have except for the speaker's interest in getting his/her message across to the TL audience and the latter's interest in understanding the original message.*

The above definitions of the concepts of intercultural mediation and the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator are thus compatible with the arguments by Herbert (1952: 3), Seleskovitch (1978a: 112-116), Hatim and Mason (1990: 223f) and Pöchhacker (2004: 59) on interpreters' involvement in the communication process as faithful and impartial intercultural mediators, facilitators and furtherers of understanding between speakers and audiences of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

This particular conclusion stresses the need for accurate definitions of the various concepts used in research into the interpreter's role such as visible, active, neutral, intercultural mediator, etc. because they often mean different things to different researchers. As mentioned in **Chapter 5**, the interpreter is an active participant because performing such a complex task as conference interpreting involves much activity (that does not go beyond the confines of translational decisions). The interpreter is also present and visible both physically and through his/her renditions, but all this does not necessarily mean that he/she is not impartial or faithful to the original.

### **8.2.3 Professional status and intercultural mediation**

The analysis of the survey of conference interpreters has revealed that interpreters' professional status is unlikely to affect the interpreter's decision to identify him/herself as intercultural mediator and thus perform intercultural mediation in practice. As such, *Hypothesis B*, which is reproduced below, has not been supported by the results of the analysis of interpreters' responses to more than a question of the survey:

*Hypothesis B: Staff interpreters are more likely to identify themselves as intercultural mediators and thus assume the intercultural-mediator role in practice than freelancers as the former are likely to enjoy more freedom than the latter.*

The above hypothesis has been based on the assumption that the freelance-staff distinction might have a role to play in the interpreter's perception of his/her role as a linguistic or intercultural mediator based on the freedom to perform intercultural mediation as given or withheld by the client. It has therefore been assumed that staff interpreters might usually be

given more freedom by their employers than freelance interpreters, which could allow them to assume the intercultural-mediator role should they wish to do so.

However, interpreters' responses to the fourth and fifth questions have given the first indication of the unlikelihood of the validation of *Hypothesis B* because the majority of staff and freelance interpreters alike believe in the case for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting as 99% of staff interpreters and 98% of freelancers believe that cultural differences, gaps and references have the potential of causing difficulties to successful communication on the one hand, and 82% of staff interpreters and 85% of freelancers believe that these difficulties can increase with the increasing perceived cultural distance between the target and source cultures on the other, which indicates that both staff and freelance interpreters are likely to describe their role as intercultural mediators.

Then staff interpreters' responses to the sixth question have revealed that 67% of them describe their role as intercultural mediators, but this has not been enough to validate *Hypothesis B* because the validation/rejection of the hypothesis also depends on the responses of freelance and experienced interpreters and all the respondents. It has been argued that the responses of interpreters in the last two groups are relevant for the purpose of this discussion because freelance interpreters represent the majority of both groups.

The responses of freelance and experienced interpreters and all the respondents have revealed that the majority of interpreters in all three groups (67%, 66% and 67%, respectively) describe their role as intercultural mediators, which has rendered the hypothesis very difficult if not impossible to validate as exactly the same percentage of freelance and staff interpreters define their role as intercultural mediators.

Moreover, conference interpreters' responses to the seventh question have contributed to the further invalidation of the hypothesis since the belief that CCIrs assume the intercultural-mediator role because they deal with languages and cultures is held by 100% of staff and freelance interpreters alike and also by experienced interpreters and all the respondents, which is significant since, as mentioned above, freelance interpreters represent the majority of respondents in each of the last two groups.

It has therefore been possible to put a strong argument against any effects of conference interpreters' professional status on their perception of their role in the communication process as linguistic or intercultural mediators not only because *Hypothesis B* (that states that staff interpreters are more likely to describe their role as intercultural mediators) has not been validated, but also because there is no basis to depend on to argue for the antithesis. In other words, there is no basis available to suggest that freelancers are more likely to describe their role as intercultural mediators than staff interpreters.

#### **8.2.4 Professional experience and intercultural mediation**

It has not been possible to determine exactly whether the interpreter's professional experience can be considered as a factor that can potentially have a role to play in the CCIr's ability or willingness to perform intercultural mediation as opposed to the narrow notion of linguistic mediation. It has not been possible to draw comparisons between the responses of the novice and experienced interpreters because the number of novice interpreters has been so small (five out of 295, 2%) compared to the experienced interpreters (290, 98%) that the comparison between the answers of interpreters in the two groups will not be deemed valid or representative.

Nevertheless, the survey analysis has still made it possible to support *Hypothesis C* which has been put forward based on the assumption that professional interpreters with more experience are more likely to identify themselves as intercultural mediators and assume the intercultural-mediator role in practice:

*Hypothesis C: The more experienced the interpreter, the more will he/she be inclined to perform intercultural mediation in practice and identify him/herself as an intercultural mediator.*

This has been done by analysing experienced interpreters' responses only based on the argument that the more experienced the interpreter, the more valid will be his/her perception of his/her work in general and role in particular. The analysis of experienced interpreters' responses to the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh questions has confirmed the validity of the hypothesis since the majority of interpreters in this group (98%) believe that cultural differences/elements could cause difficulties to successful communication in CCI (question 4), and 84% of them believe that these difficulties can increase with the

increasing perceived distance between the two cultures (question 5). Moreover, the majority of experienced interpreters (66%) define their role as intercultural mediators (question 6), and 100% of them believe that CCIr's assume the intercultural-mediator role in CISs because they deal with languages and cultures (question 7).

Furthermore, a strong argument concerning the reliability and representativeness of the results obtained through the current survey analysis can be made with regard to the assumption that the more experienced the interpreter, the more valid his/her perception of his/her work in general and role in particular because these results are based on the answers of respondents with extensive and solid professional experience as conference interpreters. Thus, it can be argued that because the responses of the majority of interpreters in the experienced group have been found to support all the assumptions in the *Central Hypothesis*, a strong argument can be made in support of the account of the CCIr's role as intercultural mediator and thus the above mentioned definition of the concept of intercultural mediation as performed by (consecutive) conference interpreters.

### **8.2.5 Language direction and intercultural mediation**

The current survey analysis has made it possible to conclude that the language direction is unlikely to have any significant effects on the CCIr's ability to perform intercultural mediation in that the CCIr can assume the intercultural-mediator role whether interpreting into A and/or B effectively and with ease, thus confirming with a significant majority the relevant hypothesis (see below) that has been put forward based on the following two dominant arguments in the literature on conference interpreting. The first is that the controversy in the literature on conference interpreting over interpreting into B concerns the SI process only since the prevalent opinion among many researchers and professionals is that the interpreter can interpret effectively into both A and B in CCI. Second, the AII classification of the interpreter's working languages considers the B language as one of the active languages and one of which the interpreter has perfect command:

*Hypothesis D: The language direction is unlikely to have any significant effects on the CCIr's ability to perform intercultural mediation since CCIr's can perform intercultural mediation when interpreting into both of their A and B languages effectively and with ease.*



The hypothesis has been validated by the results of the responses of the majority of freelance (59%) and experienced (54%) interpreters and all the respondents (54%) who believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation when interpreting into A and B.

The hypothesis remains valid although the majority of staff interpreters (58%) believe that the CCIr can better assume the intercultural-mediator role when interpreting into A not only because the majority of respondents in the other three groups believe that the CCIr can perform intercultural mediation when interpreting into A and B, but also because on the one hand staff interpreters are a minority (68, 23%) compared to freelancers (227, 77%), and on the other hand some staff interpreters work for institutions that allow interpreting only into the interpreter's A language as one of the staff interpreters remarks: 'we are not allowed to work into the B language', which could have influenced their choice.

Moreover, some interpreters might not have a B language as is the case of some of the respondents to this survey ('I don't have a B language'), which means they will only interpret into their A either from their C language(s) or from another A language if they are 'true bilinguals', and others prefer to work into A only as one of the respondents to the present survey remarks: 'I only work into my mother tongue'.

The above conclusion has been confirmed by the analysis of interpreters' responses to questions 13 and 14 because most of the respondents have answered both questions, that is, they have pointed to procedures that they apply into each direction on a regular basis.

This renders the result obtained through staff interpreters' responses insignificant enough to invalidate *Hypothesis D* or the dominant argument in the literature on conference interpreting, that the language direction of interpreting is unlikely to have any effects on the interpreter's ability to assume the intercultural-mediator role in CCI. Consequently, it can be argued that the language direction does not seem to have any significant effects on the conference interpreter's ability to perform intercultural mediation in CCI.

### **8.2.6 No order of preference for the use of the procedures**

The discussion of cultural mediation procedures has shown that there cannot be an order of

preference available for the CCIr when dealing with cultural problems except of course for the two procedures of borrowing and omission which obviously are more likely to be avoided as much as possible and treated only as a last resort. The CCIr decides on each procedure (or a certain interpretation of a given cultural element) on an individual basis, depending on whether the procedure is useful to deal with a certain cultural element and, above all, whether this procedure can be used under the circumstance. First, the CCIr's decision is governed by the two principles of faithfulness and accessibility, and producing a faithful and easily accessible interpretation for any cultural element almost always depends on the nature of the cultural element, communicative situation in which the element is used including the immediate and larger cultural contexts, and TL audience's knowledge of the SL culture or the CCIr's assumptions on his/her audience's cognitive environment.

Second, unlike in translation, reference to and the use of the procedures in CCI can only be made in retrospect because the majority of interpreters are unlikely to be familiar with interpreting research in general and/or research on the procedures in particular in the first place, which makes it more precise to refer to an interpretation of a cultural element in a given situation rather than a procedure to deal with a given element.

Third, even if some interpreters were familiar with these procedures or academic research in the field, they would be unlikely to operate with these specific procedures in mind.

Fourth, even if the interpreter was familiar with the procedures and was actually operating with them in mind, the nature of the CCI process with its constraints on time, memory and attention as opposed to written translation would have a significant role to play in guiding the CCIr to formulate his/her strategic behaviour on which the choice of any procedure (or interpretation) would be based according to each individual situation, not a ready-made order of preference, if any.

For example, a certain procedure or interpretation might look as though it was the best way to deal with a given cultural element in a certain context, but the constraints inherent in the CCI process might well force the CCIr to change strategy and opt for another procedure or interpretation as a response to an unforeseen problem.

Consequently, even with the availability of an order of preference for the use of the procedures (which is not available to translators anyway, let alone to CCIrs), such an order of preference would not be of any use to CCIrs for the reasons cited above.

As such, Ivir's (1987: 47) claim of the availability of an order of preference for the use of the procedures in written translation has not been supported by the results not only with reference to CCI, but also written translation itself. Ivir's order of preference is based on whether the translator intends to show or mask cultural differences. While it is true that the application of any procedure could have its effects by showing or masking cultural differences, what matters for the CCIr, and indeed the translator, is not to show or mask cultural content (except perhaps in literary translation where the foreignness of the SL culture could be an important element). The TL audiences do not need to be told that they are reading/hearing a translation/interpretation of a discourse in different linguistic and cultural contexts because they are already aware of this in interpreting and to a lesser extent in translation. What really matters first and foremost is to achieve communication between speaker and audience. To do this, both the translator and CCIr need to strive for a faithful, accurate and easily accessible representation of the original, which is why Ivir's order of preference is not even valid for translation, let alone CCI, the process of which with its constraints as mentioned above also makes it impossible to come out with an order of preference and force interpreters to deal with each case on an individual basis.

Inevitably, the above conclusion supports Ivir's (1987: 47) argument that no uniform treatment of unmatched cultural elements can be effective for all communicative situations and that no specific treatment of a given cultural element that could be used each time the cultural element appears, except of course for a limited number of expressions whose meaning is context-independent such as the concept of 'martyrdom operations' which can be utilised in English as a valid equivalent for Arabic 'العمليات الاستشهادية' regardless of the context or communicative situation in which the concept is used.

### **8.2.7 Borrowing and omission: incidental procedures**

The analysis of the interpreting examples has shown that the two procedures of borrowing and omission are two incidental procedures that should usually be used by the CCIr only as

a last resort because using the two procedures can solve the interpreter's problem but not the TL audience's problem. The two procedures have the potential of standing as barriers to understanding and accessibility of information because borrowing can well be a violation of the rule of accessibility since the TL audience might not be familiar with the borrowed term, and omission a violation of the rules of accuracy and faithfulness since using this procedure represents zero or no communication of part of the original message which can be vital for the argument the speaker is making.

The conclusion has also been supported by the analysis of conference interpreters' responses to questions 13 and 14 where borrowing and omission have been among the least used procedures by conference interpreters as indicated by interpreters' choices of the procedures they most commonly apply in interpreting.

This conclusion is just another strong proof in favour of the validity of the CPA because the application of these two procedures (which have been found to be the least applied procedures) represents a violation of the essential principles of the CPA, faithfulness to the sense of the original message and accessibility of the rendition to the TL audience.

### **8.3 Suggestions and recommendations for further research**

The results of the discussion of the procedures have been found to highly correlate with those obtained through the analysis of the survey of professional conference interpreters. Based on the above results and conclusions, some suggestions and recommendations for further research can be mentioned in order.

#### **8.3.1 Implications for training**

The current results and conclusions strongly support the case for intercultural mediation in CCI despite the idea that conference interpreting discourse is characterised by a greater degree of cultural transparency than discourse in such other interpreting settings as community and/or court interpreting. The results thus indicate a preference by professional conference interpreters to assume the intercultural-mediator role and support all the relevant discussions that have been put forward by the present researcher and the other researchers who call for the need for intercultural mediation in conference interpreting.

All this points to the importance of the cultural component that plays an undeniable complementary role to that of language in achieving the ultimate objective of virtually any interpretation encounter (understanding and communication among the primary parties) due to the relation between culture and the raw material, as it were, of translation and interpreting (language), which in turn points to the need for creating in trainees awareness of intercultural mediation and a 'bicultural competence' (Witte 1994: 71) in both the source and target cultures and ability to judge the clients' knowledge (or otherwise lack of knowledge) of one another's culture (Witte 1994: 71f) because the possession of such awareness and bicultural competence is necessary if conference interpreters were to successfully assume the ideal role as intercultural mediators, thus achieving more effective understanding and communication between speaker and audience.

Therefore, one can only reiterate Kondo et al.'s (1997: 161/165) call for the introduction of the cultural component and the issue of the interpreter's role in the communication process to interpreter training programmes especially when the course involves distant languages/cultures (Setton 1993: 252) because without such an insight into the history of nations and their cultures, effects of culture on the interpreting process, and serious and genuine issue of the interpreter's role, interpreting research in general and the training of would-be interpreters in particular will be lacking a set of indispensable components that could be vital in helping develop in students the skills necessary for making of them cross-cultural communication experts and provide them with the tools (procedures, etc.) to enable them to assume such an ideal role.

In this respect, Bochner's (1981b: 28-31) views constitute a good source that helps draw a picture of how such an introduction of these issues into the training of student interpreters can be made and made effectively to serve the purpose. Bochner argues that the two existing and most common forms of culture-learning (academic sojourn and the instrumental model of culture-learning) have practically failed or not been very effective methods for the training of would-be cultural mediators, the former because the primary interest of the majority of foreign scholars and researchers usually lie in obtaining a degree and advancing their professional goals rather than in learning the foreign culture, and the latter because the task-orientation element in it presents culture as a an obstacle to the achievement of the specific assignment or as 'something that has to be adjusted to, coped

with, defended against, maybe even ignored' (Bochner 1981b: 29), which understates the value of learning a new culture vis-à-vis the main job/assignment and leaves the trainee a monocultural individual in possession of very few superficial cultural skills that he/she learns in order to cope with the situation (ibid).

Thus, Bochner (ibid: 30f) calls for the professionalisation and institutionalisation of the mediator role through 'a mediation-centred training model/program' to be implemented through a postgraduate degree in cultural mediation, the curriculum of which should be based on the theory and practice of cultural mediation itself.

However, Bochner's proposal of a degree course for cultural mediation is aimed at professionalising and institutionalising the cultural-mediator role in any profession at the interface between any two cultures. Since the present argument concerns intercultural mediation in the field of (consecutive conference) interpreting, it can be suggested that professionalising and institutionalising the intercultural-mediator role in conference interpreting be implemented through a module of intercultural mediation to be integrated in the existing interpreter training programmes rather than a separate course. The module can be tailored to cater for conference interpreters' needs, that is, a module of intercultural mediation specifically designed to meet the needs of the conference-interpreting profession and not any other profession. Such a unique module can be oriented towards acquainting students with the problems of cross-cultural communication by creating in them the type of 'bicultural competence' (Witte 1994: 71) required to stand to the challenges of intercultural communication in a more professional approach, which will in the end benefit the profession of conference interpreting, interpreters themselves as well as clients and users of the profession of conference interpreting. This has implications for further research (see the third recommendation in the following section).

Indeed, the present study has shown that the professionalisation and institutionalisation of the intercultural-mediator role in CCI is easy to achieve from the academic and professional points of view if the will is present. As argued in the introduction to the thesis, the majority of academic researchers in the field of IS in general and conference interpreting in particular believe that culture plays a significant role in and has an undeniable effect on the

communication process and that the interpreter's ideal position is that of an intercultural mediator (Kurz 1988: 425; Kondo et al. 1997: 150; Katan 1999: 1/11-15).

Moreover, the analysis of the survey of conference interpreters has revealed that the majority of respondents describe their role in the communication process as intercultural mediators and thus believe that there is a case for intercultural mediation in CISs.

However, the question is whether the intercultural-mediator role would be preferred by people located on the other side of the equation, that is, users of the profession of conference interpreting (conference delegates) whose opinion on this important issue could be vital in motivating efforts towards the implementation of the intercultural mediation module. This statement also has implications for further research (see the fourth recommendation in the following section).

There is also a need for introducing the models of the CPA (theory of sense and RT) to the theoretical components in training programmes (**2.2.2.5.2.2 Theoretical components in interpreter training programmes**) because the two models can provide would-be conference interpreters with an indispensable insight into the interpreting process and the interpreter's position and role in the communication process since, as mentioned in **8.2 Conclusions**, the CPA has been found to be a reflection of the real interpreting (translational) process and one that puts the CCIr in his/her usual position as an agent facilitating understanding and communication between speakers and audiences of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (see also Viaggio 1992a; 2002).

### **8.3.2 Further research**

It is hoped that the results and conclusions arrived at in this thesis can motivate further research in this area to seek answers to some of the questions that could not be addressed in the present study and/or test the validity of the results and conclusions of the present study until generalisations can be made. The researcher therefore suggests the following recommendations for future research in this area. First, the interpreting examples discussed as illustrations for the use of the cultural mediation procedures are only a few examples and in one language combination (Arabic-English). Thus, further research is needed to conduct

analyses on as many examples of culture-specific references and cultural elements as possible and in various language combinations, which would make it possible to determine, *inter alia*, whether the results and conclusions of this study can be corroborated or not. If conducted, such an effort would pave the way for achieving more definitive conclusions and generalised rules that can benefit the theory and practice of conference interpreting.

Second, Gile (2000: 315) calls for further developing and replicating empirical studies reported in the literature on IS in general and conference interpreting in particular to achieve more reliable findings, and Altman (1989: 82) calls for studying the interpreter's role by making a greater use of the distinction between the interpreter's role in CCI and SI. Thus, further research is needed to administer similar surveys on the interpreter's role and the topic of intercultural mediation in different settings and/or modes. The present study has discussed the issue from the point view of CCI. Further investigations could be conducted to replicate this study in the context of CCI and also SI. Indeed, nine respondents to the present survey have mentioned in their comments that they make no distinction between CCI and SI or would give the same answers in the context of SI, which, even though is the opinion of only nine respondents, can still be considered as yet another indication of the worthiness of pursuing such an endeavour in the hope of achieving comparable results to the present study. Such (an) effort(s), if conducted and if it/they produced comparable results to the results of this study especially concerning the interpreter's loyalty, could for example motivate AIIC, being the only international association of conference interpreters, to reconsider its stance on primary loyalty to the speaker, particularly bearing in mind the fact that 87% of the respondents to this survey are AIIC members.

Third, in the preceding section (**8.3.1 Implications for training**), a suggestion has been made for institutionalising and professionalising the intercultural-mediator role in conference interpreting through the introduction of a module of intercultural mediation to interpreting training programmes to acquaint trainees with the problems of cross-cultural communication and equip them with 'bicultural competence' (Witte 1994: 71). If the implementation of such a module is to succeed and the module to serve its purposes, a theoretical and research base on intercultural mediation from a conference interpreting perspective should be available for schools offering interpreter training programmes to rely on for developing such a module in the first place and maintaining its continuity and



productivity. Therefore, further research is needed to try and find suitable cultural material for the design of the module and decide on the most effective methods for instilling cultural knowledge in students. Such future research efforts could be of an interdisciplinary nature benefiting from the knowledge available from the field of intercultural mediation and adapting findings in this field to the needs of the profession of conference interpreting. As a starting point, the contributions in Bochner (1981a) and many others could give an important insight into the topic of intercultural mediation in general. Witte (1996), Katan (1999) and Levine (2002) contain specific proposals for acquisition of cultural knowledge and course material and design. Research efforts could be oriented towards assessing these proposals, improving on them, or simply rejecting them and developing new ones, etc.

Fourth, it has also been argued in the preceding section that the professionalisation and institutionalisation of the conference interpreter's role as intercultural mediator is supported from the academic and professional perspectives. However, McLeod (1981:41-46) argues that the mediator's characteristics, background, training, skills, motivation, etc. are not enough alone for the mediator to succeed in his/her mission because probably the most pivotal factor that determines the mediator's success is *acceptance* or otherwise *rejection* of his/her role as intercultural mediator by both cultures. By the same token, it can be argued that the success of the professionalisation and institutionalisation of the intercultural-mediator role in the field of conference interpreting depends also on acceptance and support for the intercultural-mediator role by the people located on the other side of the communication equation, that is, users of the profession of conference interpreting (conference delegates). The results obtained from a user-oriented survey conducted by Kopczyński (1994; **5.1.3 Ghost of the speaker versus intruder**) have shown that the majority of conference delegates in Kopczyński's survey would prefer the interpreter to add his/her own explanations, but these results cannot be used on their own to prove that the intercultural-mediator role in conference interpreting is supported from the user-oriented perspective because Kopczyński's survey, which is a single study with a limited number of respondents, has not been specifically concerned with the issue of intercultural mediation and the interpreter's role as intercultural mediator. Therefore, further research is needed to address a detailed survey on the specific issue of intercultural mediation and the interpreter's role to users of the profession of conference interpreting whose opinion

concerning this particular issue, as Altman (1989: 82) also argues, is ‘worth canvassing’ for the reasons cited above.

Fifth, the discussion of the interpreting examples has shown that all the procedures that have been selected from contributions on Translation Studies have been found to be used by CCIrs in practice, which has prompted the present researcher to argue in the discussion of the results of the analysis of the interpreting examples (**6.10 Results**) that it is justifiable to talk about *interpreting* cultural mediation procedures as opposed to translation procedures, a subject in its own right that deserves further investigation from an IS point of view. The analysis of conference interpreters’ responses to questions 13-15 of the survey of professional conference interpreters has shown that CCIrs actually use such procedures in practice, thus confirming the above conclusion. Therefore, further research is needed in this area in search for more interpreting procedures, making use of examples of cultural references in a variety of language (and cultural) combinations.

Finally, the point raised by one of the respondents to the present survey concerning speakers delivering speeches through a foreign language is an interesting point of particular relevance to the subject of intercultural mediation in conference interpreting due to the repercussions this use of the foreign language by speakers could have on the interpreter’s ability to render such material effectively. Therefore, further research is needed to try and find if this situation could affect the interpreter’s performance in the first place, and if yes, to seek solutions to the problems encountered or ways to avoid the occurrence of such problems, though one has to emphasise the difficulty of conducting such a research endeavour due to the following requirements which are not easily met. The first is that investigating this problem requires finding and analysing a representative sample or corpus of speeches delivered by delegates in a foreign language and their interpretations.

The second requirement is that for such an investigation to be carried out, the researcher(s) who conduct(s) the research project need(s) to be familiar with the delegate’s mother tongue and the foreign language the delegate uses to be able to detect any cultural transpositions the speaker makes from his/her mother tongue to his/her speech or ideas in the foreign-language speech or text.

The third requirement is that the researcher(s) also need(s) to be familiar with the TL the original text is interpreted into (which could be a third language, that is, a language different from the speaker's mother tongue and foreign language which the speaker uses to deliver the speech). This will enable the researcher(s) to detect how the interpreter deals with the cultural transpositions the speaker makes from his/her mother tongue to the foreign-language speech, if any, whether these cultural transpositions cause any (comprehension) problems for the interpreter, and how these problems could be avoided.

Such efforts would certainly benefit both the theory and the practice of (conference) interpreting if they were to be carried out.

## Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Sample of the worldwide survey of conference interpreters**

Some minor changes to the layout of the original electronic version of the survey which has been distributed to conference interpreters via email have had to be made when reproducing the survey here. The changes reflect the difference between an electronic version, which makes use of drop-down menus and other form field format features, and a printable paper version with a basic type of presentation to allow the already provided answers to appear when printing the thesis since they can not appear when an electronic version is printed because answers in the electronic version are embedded within the drop-down menus.

This means that in the sample below it looks as if respondents could select more than one answer for the majority of questions whereas in fact for questions 1 to 12, interpreters could only choose one option from the other answers available to them in the electronic version because a drop-down menu will only allow for one option to be chosen for each question.

Moreover, instead of reproducing a long list of years of experience ( '1 year' to '24 years or more') as in the electronic version of the survey, the sample below contains only two categories of years of experience (less than five years and more than five years). These two categories are used when dealing with the role of professional experience in the survey.

Furthermore, it has been possible in the electronic version to reserve for the last (open-ended) question only a small empty field for respondents to write their answers to the last question or any comments they want to add on any of the questions or their answers to the previous questions. That small field is a very small one, but it is expandable and can expand to contain pages and pages. However, this field is represented below as a blank space with lines as if it was prepared for handwriting.

## **Intercultural Mediation in Consecutive Conference Interpreting: Conference Interpreters' Perception of their Role in Consecutive Interpreting**

Dear Colleagues

I would be grateful if you could possibly complete this questionnaire and return it to one of the following email addresses within three months:

[transatlantic12@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:transatlantic12@yahoo.co.uk)  
[a.al-zahran@pgt.salford.ac.uk](mailto:a.al-zahran@pgt.salford.ac.uk)

The questionnaire and its results will be used as part of my PhD on Intercultural Mediation in Consecutive Conference Interpreting. Your help in this respect is highly appreciated because it will be vital for the completion of my PhD thesis. I can guarantee that any personal information (e.g. names, affiliation, etc.) will be kept confidential and that no direct reference to any person will be made in the discussion of the survey.

Research into Interpreting Studies shows clearly that interpreters deal not only with source and target languages, but also with their corresponding cultures due to the fact that culture and language are so inextricably interwoven that they cannot be separated from each other. This will result in inevitable effects of cultural differences on the communication process. It is therefore assumed that the role of the CCIr is seen as one of an intercultural mediator rather than only a linguistic mediator. Intercultural mediation, the subject of the questionnaire, is used here to refer to the interpreter's knowledge of both the source and target cultures which he/she uses where necessary to establish understanding between speaker and audience while at the same time remaining faithful to the meaning of the original.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Aladdin al-Zahran

## The Questionnaire

Please base your answers on **CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING**:

1. Are you:  
 Freelance interpreter  
 In-house (permanent) interpreter
2. Are you a member of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC)?  
 Yes  No
3. How long have you worked as a professional conference interpreter?  
 Less than five years  More than five years
4. Do you think that cultural differences, cultural gaps, or culture-specific references can constitute obstacles, difficulties or breakdowns to successful communication?  
 Yes  Yes, sometimes  No
5. If your answer to the above question is 'Yes', do you think that this difficulty becomes greater when the source and target cultures are perceived to be too distant?  
 Yes  No
6. How do you define your role as a consecutive interpreter?  
 Linguistic mediator  Intercultural mediator
7. Consecutive interpreters play the role of intercultural mediators because they deal not only with languages, but also with cultures  
 Completely true  Partly true  Completely false
8. Do you think that the consecutive interpreter can perform intercultural mediation while still remaining faithful<sup>1</sup> to the meaning of the original?  
 Yes  Yes, to a certain extent  No
9. Do you think that the consecutive interpreter as intercultural mediator should *faithfully* interpret information even when he/she does not agree with what the speaker is saying?  
 Yes  Yes, certainly  Yes, sometimes but not always  
 No
10. Do you think that intercultural mediation means going beyond establishing understanding between speaker and audience?  
 No  Absolutely not  Yes

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<sup>1</sup> The word 'faithful' is used here to mean faithful or faithfulness to the *meaning or sense* of the original as it is frequently used in the literature.

11. Do you think that the interpreter as intercultural mediator should identify with either of his/her clients?

- Yes       Yes, occasionally       No, not at all

12. Do you think that the language direction has an effect on whether or not cultural mediation can be performed or, in other words, do you think the consecutive interpreter can better assume the role of intercultural mediator when interpreting into

- The mother tongue (A Language)       The foreign (B Language)  
 The mother tongue or foreign language

13. What cultural mediation procedures do you most commonly apply when interpreting consecutively into *the A language*?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Borrowing/Importation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calque/Loan translation               | <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Equivalent/Substitution      | <input type="checkbox"/> Description/Definition                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Functional Equivalent/Deculturalising | <input type="checkbox"/> Gloss/Explanation                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literal translation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Omission                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrase                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognised/Generally accepted translation |

14. What cultural mediation procedures do you most commonly apply when interpreting consecutively into *the foreign language*?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Borrowing/Importation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calque/Loan translation               | <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Equivalent/Substitution      | <input type="checkbox"/> Description/Definition                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Functional Equivalent/Deculturalising | <input type="checkbox"/> Gloss/Explanation                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literal translation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Omission                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrase                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognised/Generally accepted translation |

15. Do you use any other procedures not mentioned in the above list or combinations of procedures mentioned in the above list? Please give as much detail as possible in the space provided.

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Once again, thank you very much indeed for your time.

If you have any further comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the email addresses provided above.

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