State of the art in Community Interpreting research[i]

Mapping the main research topics

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Introduction

Even though Community Interpreting is a relatively 'young' field of study, it has already been object of a considerable number of contributions that have departed from a variety of disciplines such as Applied Linguistics, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology or Communication Sciences. This interdisciplinary approach is rather understandable if we take into account the wide range of topics that have been discussed in Community Interpreting research.

    This paper is based on a review of the literature on Community Interpreting research produced over the last fifteen years and aims at drawing a map of the main topics of research discussed up to date. It does not intend to be exhaustive but to point out those

issues that have attracted more attention over the past few years and provide an overview of the state of the art in research as a prospective study for future essays.

Thus, considering the features that separate Community Interpreting from Translation and Interpreting Studies, our paper suggests a classification inspired by Williams and Chesterman's (2002) map of research topics in Translation and Interpreting. Finally, it provides a conceptual map where the close relation among the different research topics is highlighted, aiming at serving as a point of departure for further work.

Drawing a map of research

Considering the wide range of topics discussed in this emerging field, our map of research inspired by Williams and Chesterman (2002) but specific for Community Interpreting would include the following topics: text analysis (of transcribed interactions), quality assessment, interpreting in different contexts, technology, history, ethics, terminology and glossaries, working conditions, competences, training and professionalization.

Some of the categories Williams and Chesterman (2002) mention when describing research in translation and interpreting are also discussed in Community Interpreting research. However, aware of the differences between Community Interpreting and Translation in general, new categories have been added in our map, such as 'professionalization', 'working conditions' and 'competences'. On the one hand, research concerning 'professionalization' includes all the contributions that place their emphasis on the development of the professional status of community interpreters. On the other, many articles and papers try to shed light onto community interpreters'

working conditions and competences, which are two tightly related categories with highly relevant contributions.

It is worth noting that some topics could be placed in more than one category; for instance, the interpreters' (in)visibility, which could be discussed through the analysis of their techniques (see Section 1), in order to establish the impact of this (in)visibility in the quality of the interpretation (see Section 2) or in accordance with the deontological codes (see Section 6). Therefore, the different topics of study should not be regarded as hermetic or isolated, but as complementary and even overlapping at certain points.

It is also worth mentioning that not all the topics reflect the same volume of research. For instance, community interpreters' training or ethics have been rather prolific areas, whereas some other topics, like history or terminology and glossaries have perhaps attracted less research interest. Nevertheless, it is not in the scope of this paper to review in detail all contributions in Community Interpreting, but to provide an overview of the main topics up to date.

1. Text analysis and interpretation

Through the analysis of transcribed dialogues as forms of oral text, many scholars have analysed real or simulated (role played) interpreted interactions, which have been the basis for different kinds of studies. Wadensjö (1998), for example, analyses a sample of interactions to describe interpreters' techniques, which becomes one of the most interesting contributions of her book, *Interpreting as interaction.* She proposes a classification for interpreters' renditions (close renditions, expanded renditions, reduced

renditions, summarized renditions) and, specifically for community interpreters': two-part or multi-part renditions, non-renditions and zero renditions.

In addition, Wadensjö (1998: 108-10) complements this taxonomy with her explanation of the interpreters' orientations: on the one hand, a 'textual orientation', which comprises interpreters' own interventions (non-renditions) used as strategies for their translation; on the other hand, an 'interactional orientation', which also covers non-renditions but when they are aimed at managing the flow of talk.

Bot (2005: 246) also develops a study through dialogue analysis, but her aim is to elucidate how the perspective of a rendition can affect its reception. Therefore, based on theories of perspective and mental space (Fauconnier 1985; Sanders 1994) Bot distinguishes four different kinds of interpretation according to the perspective and the reporting verb used by the interpreter: direct representation (using a reporting verb but maintaining the perspective), indirect representation (using a reporting verb and changing the perspective), direct translation (without reporting verb but maintaining the perspective) and indirect translation (without reporting verb and changing the perspective).

2. Quality assessment

Unlike written translation, which produces a material result relatively easy to evaluate, quality in interpreting is generally more difficult to assess, as its outcome is oral and evanescent. Even though this obstacle can be overcome by recording the interpretation if participants and interpreters agree on this, there is often the added obstacle of confidentiality, especially when the interpretation concerns conversations dealing with sensitive issues, which therefore might not be recorded. Nevertheless, the need to assess

and ensure quality in Community Interpreting has motivated the development of alternative assessment methods.

Thus, aware of the importance of this issue, Pöchhacker (2001) addresses the question of how quality in interpreting should be understood, as it may be perceived differently depending on whom we ask —the interpreter, the primary speaker, the receiver, the interpreting services agency or an interpreter colleague may have very different ideas of what a 'good' interpretation is. According to him, the interpreter has to give a dual service (towards the primary speaker and the receiver), therefore, the quality of the interpretation is also dual: towards the product —an accurate, adequate and equivalent translation of the original— and towards the service —a successful communicative interaction (Pöchhacker 2001: 413-4).

When reviewing quality assessment methods, Pöchhacker identifies four different groups: surveys, experimentation, corpus-based observation (very limited in Community Interpreting), and case studies, through the combination of various methods, e.g. Wadensjö's (1998), combining the analysis of a wide corpus of recorded interpreted interactions, her participation as an observer and her subsequent interviews to the interpreters and primary speakers; even though Wadensjö's purpose is not evaluative, but descriptive.

An example of experimentation as an assessment method may be found in the use of 'role plays' to analyse interpreters' performance, as in the research Townsley (2007) carried out in cooperation with the London Borough of Haringey's translation and interpreting service. Using this kind of methodology, interpreted acts could be examined more directly, as researchers did not need to ask users' opinions but they could shape their own; even though the interpreters who were evaluated were not in a real situation

and, therefore, some of them might have not behaved as they would have under habitual circumstances. Nevertheless, in the conclusions of their research, Townsley highlights the lack of consensus among institutions for the concept of 'quality in interpreting', which shows the need for more cooperation among interpreters, users and interpreting services agencies.

Tellechea (2005) also developed a study which sought to assess Spanish interpreters' quality at some health service settings in the United States. Basing on a qualitative methodology in order to describe the real situation and explore it in depth, she interviewed a sample of Hispanic families who had used interpreters when attending medical consultations. She was able to use this kind of methodology because, despite not being fluid enough to speak English, the Hispanic families she interviewed did understand spoken English and therefore could detect when their interpreters omitted or summarized information. Thus, it must be stated that this kind of methodology has a limited scope: it might also be applied to assess interpreting between close language pairs —e.g. between Latin languages such as Spanish, Portuguese or Italian—, but it would not be a feasible method to analyse interpreting between distant languages if users did not have any kind of competence in the other language.

Overall, in most contributions concerning the topic of quality, there is the general conclusion that it is difficult to objectively assess Community Interpreting through surveys and interviews, since answers are often biased by users' own subjectivity when thinking that a 'good' interpretation is one that has 'good' results for them (cf. Edwards et al. 2005).

3. Interpreting in different contexts

The different interpreting contexts do not only involve linguistic differences, but also differences concerning interpreters' ethically and socially expected role; therefore, considerable research has been developed for specific interpreting contexts, especially for legal settings and health service. As it is not our purpose to give an exhaustive report of the specificities of each context, in this section we will just briefly comment on the main research questions raised for each of them.

3.1. Court interpreting

Court interpreting has been the object of a considerable amount of studies and research. Trying to explain why, Hale (2007: 90) points out two reasons: first, empirical data is somehow more available than in other contexts (e.g. we can find trials that have been recorded but it is very difficult to get empirical data from medical interpreting); second, court's own idiosyncrasy, marked by protocol, ritual and historic procedures as well as clearly-defined participant roles, has raised researchers' interest in this interpreting context.

The need for professional court interpreters is widely claimed by researchers and, therefore, many studies have been carried in order to describe the interpreters' performance and explore how training should be arranged. Mikkelson (1998), for instance, has published some articles on court interpreters and translators training and has also participated in the production of specific material for court interpreting teaching.[ii]

Court interpreters' role and ethics also have a central position in research. Even though most deontological codes do not explicitly say that interpreters must provide a

literal or verbatim rendition of the original, it seems that many judges do require this kind of translations. Many researchers have focused on this controversy and through dialogue analysis have examined whether it is possible to provide a literal and 'faithful' rendition of the original while maintaining its pragmatic implicatures. Mason and Stewart (2001), for instance, take O.J. Simpson's trial as their object of study and demonstrate the loss of pragmatic meaning when pursuing a literal translation.

Other research works have focused on the study of specificities of language in courtrooms and how they can pose special challenges to the interpreters. For instance, Hale's (2001) analyses of how questions are translated, especially focusing on their pragmatic effect; and Miguélez (2001) concentrates on what she calls "expert witness testimonies", a very specific case of court interpreting. As Miguélez (2001: 5) explains, in the United States, a wide range of expert witnesses —e.g. forensic scientists— can be called to clarify a controversial point in a criminal or civil case. Even though they are often regarded as an added challenge for the interpreters, Miguélez's analysis reveals a relatively limited use of jargon and specific terminology. Instead, the author explains that what really challenged interpreters were grammatical and syntactical mistakes produced in the originals, which certainly pinpoints the need for more research that tries to establish to what extent quality of primary speakers interventions can affect interpreters' renditions.

3.2 Interpreting at asylum hearings

Pöllabauer (2004, 2006) has developed a pioneering work in this interpreting context with clear results in her doctoral thesis. Basing on an analysis of transcriptions of 20 asylum hearings in Graz, Austria, she denounces the scarce attention given to

interpreting in this context, reflected in a lack of specific training and also in a lack of minimum standard requirements towards the interpreters that work in asylum hearings. According to Pöllabauer, many of the interpreters in her study were bilingual but had not received specific training for interpreting. However, misunderstanding due to a bad translation can lead to asylum denial, which in extreme situations can be a synonym of a death sentence (Pöllabauer, 2004: 143-144). Therefore, Pöllabauer focuses on examining the interpreters' role and responsibilities in these interactions, as well as power issues (see Section 6).

3.3 Interpreting at police stations

Working conditions for the interpreters at police stations are similar to those for interpreters at asylum hearings, since both places present marked power asymmetry and, often, one of the participants of the interpreted act is not willing to cooperate. Therefore, some authors have considered police stations and asylum hearings as the same context, although we prefer to draw a distinction between them following a 'dialogue' criterion: conversation topics in an asylum hearing are normally rather specific and with a clear objective (granting or denying asylum), whereas, at police stations, there can be a wide range of topics and interpreters may have to work under very different circumstances.

When discussing interpreting at police stations, Hale (2007) points out the importance of questions in police interrogatories, as they are uttered with a very specific purpose and, consequently, their patterns are not random but calculated for that purpose. Not only is semantic meaning important, but also pragmatic content, which is, perhaps, even more challenging to transfer. Therefore, Hale denounces the general practice of working with non-professional interpreters, like bilinguals or even police officers with a

very limited competence in the foreign language they are translating. This clearly affects the suspects' rights and also police officers' interests, since one of the consequences of the loss of the question's pragmatic value may be the suspects' reticence to answer them.

Other challenges in this context are described in Navarro Montesdeoca's (2006) work, where he presents his own experience as an interpreter in an immigrant detention centre in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. All the interrogatories there are either in English or French, despite the fact that most immigrants in the Canary Islands come from Africa and have a very limited competence in these languages. Consequently, the possibility of misunderstanding is high, since both the interpreters and the immigrants are not speaking their mother tongues. In order to avoid misunderstandings and lies —e.g. about their countries of origin or about their health status— Navarro Montesdeoca suggests that questions should be adapted, either by softening the register or explaining them better. Finally, he denounces the fact that very often police officers are not willing to cooperate.

Concerning this last point, Pérez and Wilson (2004) claim that police officers should be trained to work with interpreters, since they often regard interpreters as immigrants' advocates and are thus reluctant to give them information prior to the interview. According to them, training courses for police officers would perhaps help mitigate the problem, but also more specialized training for interpreters working at police stations, more dialogue between police and interpreters and a better understanding of the interpreters' role in the process.

All in all, most studies developed in this context focus on the need for more and better cooperation between police and interpreters, in order to improve interpreter's working conditions but also to raise the quality of the interpretation.

3.4 Medical interpreting

There is a considerable number of contributions in the context of health service interpreting, as can be inferred from the books and journals devoted to it.[iii] Many aspects of medical interpreting have been explored, although it seems that most of them convey different approaches to the study of the interpreters' role in health service, which certainly becomes a key element, as we shall see in Sectoin 6. Hale (2007: 41), for instance, states that contrary to court interpreting, in health service, the interpreters' role seems to be more flexible and they are no longer seen as mere conduits or translation machines. Hale (2007: 41) refers to Bolden's (2000) differentiation between direct interpreting —using first person, accurately, not summarizing or adding information— and mediated interpreting —using third person, summarizing, omitting or adding information. Some interpreters, especially if they have not received specific training, seem to prefer this second method, since they think it is the best way to help both doctors and patients. However, empirical studies such as Cambridge's (1999) reveal that mediated interpreting has very often become a barrier for a correct diagnosis of a patient.

Therefore, in order to analyse interpreters' omissions, additions or changes in meaning, many studies have been developed from discourse analysis theoretical and methodological frameworks, including conversation analysis and critical discourse analysis. A considerable amount of contributions expose the risks of working with non-

professional interpreters, since their part in the interaction is crucial for a correct diagnosis and treatment of a patient.

3.5 Interpreting at social services offices

As far as we know, interpreting at social services offices, which include welfare, housing or occupation services, have not been the object of any specific research work, unlike other Community Interpreting contexts. However, some general studies do mention interpreting at social services offices, such as Townsley's (2007), who points out the vast range of situations that interpreters working for a local authority may encounter in a typical day, not being able to predict or to prepare for them.

3.6 Interpreting at schools

Again, research on interpreting at schools is comparatively scarcer than on other contexts, at least up to present date. This might be due to the fact that schools are often assisted by linguistic and cultural mediators, who interpret when necessary but also mediate in case of intercultural conflicts. For instance, in Catalonia, both figures (interpreters and mediators) coexist: whereas community interpreters intervene only in interviews between local teachers and allophone parents, mediators undertake a more active role in order to raise both parties' awareness of the other's culture and encourage mutual understanding. Apart from Vargas-Urpi's (2009) contribution, where linguistic and cultural mediation at Catalan schools is described, we have not found other specific studies for this context, although we can find certain references in generic dissertations.

4. Community Interpreting and technology

Following the advances in other areas of interpreting (business, conference), developments concerning the use of new technologies applied to Community Interpreting have enhanced interpreting via telephone or videoconference. Even though they are at a relatively early stage in Community Interpreting, remote telephone interpreting is being increasingly used in certain countries (e.g. the U.S.A.) or settings (e.g. health service) and even a European project (Avidicus) is being developed to explore the possibilities of videoconference interpreting in the Criminal Justice Service.

Connell (2006) provides a very critical article on this topic, as he covers almost all the advantages and disadvantages of this rather new practice. Focusing on telephone interpreting, he considers its practical and economical advantages: interpreters do not have to move, which speeds up procedures that depend on interpreting, and, in addition, thanks to companies that grant 24-hour service, interpreting becomes ubiquitous, closer and more available to users. However, as Connell also points out, there are many questions around telephone interpreting that should be further defined, such as quality granting or specific deontological codes for remote interpreters.

From the interpreter's point of view, remote interpreting poses new challenges that far from making interpreting easier, may instead make it more difficult: interpreters cannot rely on non-verbal language, they sometimes have to work at night due to time zones difference when giving service to other countries and they are under an extra pressure due to the fact that users pay per minute of service. Therefore, although it may be regarded as a high-potential service, interpreters will need to face these new challenges to adapt to it.

5. Community Interpreting history

Even though the interest for Community Interpreting is relatively recent, we cannot say the same for its practice, especially if we regard it as a modality of liaison interpreting, existing since the first migratory flows. Historical research has attempted to describe, for example, the interpreters' role in certain moments, like Giambruno's (2008) paper on *The role of the interpreter in the governance of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spanish colonies in the 'New World'.* Baigorri and Alonso-Araguás have also developed in-depth research in historical issues, like in the *Iconography of interpreters in the Conquest of the Americas* (2004) or *Indigenous languages and linguistic mediation in the Jesuit reductions in Paraguay 17th Century* (2007)[iv] amongst other. Even though their work may be seen as a contribution to Interpreting Studies as a whole, it is certainly fundamental to understand the evolution of the interpreting profession until present day community interpreters.

Concerning 'Community Interpreting' as we understand it nowadays, most scholars place the starting point of research at the beginning of the 1990s and more specifically at the first Critical Link conference, which was organized in 1995 by its homologous association.[v] Since then, this conference has been held triennially and has become an essential reference in Community Interpreting research.

6. Ethics

Most contributions to Community Interpreting research raise the question of ethics, be it their central topic or just a reflection at a certain point. Discussions concerning ethics include issues like the interpreters' role and their (in)visibility, deontological codes, the

influence of cultural or ideological factors and the controversy between personal and collective identity and ethics. In fact, all these questions are interconnected, since designing a deontological code, for example, requires determining the interpreters' role, which implies dealing with the clash between personal and collective identity and ethics. Furthermore, all these questions —but especially the deontological code— are key elements for the professionalization process of Community Interpreting (see section 11).

Hale (2007) devotes a whole chapter of her book *Community Interpreting* to deontological codes, focusing on the analysis of codes from 16 institutions of 9 different countries and comparing them with personal opinions of a sample of interpreters she surveyed. Through this analysis, she observes that accuracy is not related to literal or verbatim renditions and that, on the contrary, some codes explicitly admit that interpreters should adapt their messages in order to transmit both the meaning and the tone of the original. As for impartiality, all the codes Hale analyses are very clear and they all state that interpreters must be neutral, cannot give their opinion and cannot be influenced by their own ideology. However, in practice, as Hale points out (2007: 126), many interpreters go beyond this impartiality and other researchers like Kaufert and Putsch (quoted by Hale 2007) have even suggested the possibility of establishing new professional profiles that would not necessarily be limited to the impartiality of an interpreter —e.g. advocates, mediators, brokers, medical assistants or case coordinators, among other. Hale's conclusion is that more research is required in order to determine if it is feasible to accept different interpreters' roles depending on the context where they work.

Cambridge's (1999, 2002, 2004) contributions, on the other hand, reinforce the importance of the 'impartial model' of interpreting. According to her, interpreters work under a great pressure, which may be caused by different factors —e.g. power asymmetry between participants, tendency to identify with one of the parties or the need to intervene in dramatic situations— and therefore need to rely on an impartial model to bear all this pressure. In her own words:

> Interpreters using the impartial model relay messages accurately, completely and in as closely as possible the same style as the original. They do not give personal advice or opinions; do not add or omit parts of the message; do make every effort to foster the full, accurate transfer of information; do maintain strict confidentiality. They will intervene only when they need clarification of part of a message; they cannot hear what is being said; they believe a cultural inference has been missed; they believe there is a misunderstanding. (Cambridge 2002: 123)

Cambridge (2004: 4) also highlights the importance of the impartial model when interpreting in a situation where participants' faces may be threatened. Court and health service interpreting, for example, require an accurate, faithful and complete rendition of the original messages, even if this sometimes implies transmitting emotional content such as insults or swearwords. In such cases, softening the original register may be against users' interests, which is why interpreters need to learn how to transmit both emotional content and pragmatic intention of the original messages, even when they may feel their face is being threatened because of this.

Rudvin's (2006, 2007) contributions also raise the question of the interpreters' role, although she analyses it from an ethnographic approach. Rudvin objects to a universal

deontological code and, instead, she suggests empowering interpreters so that they could have more competences to better adapt to each institution's needs and even negotiate their role with public services providers and users. Through this kind of negotiation, all the participants in the interaction would be aware of its *skopos* and therefore it would be easier to reach. In fact, according to Rudvin (2007), professionalism should not be assimilated to the adoption of a deontological code that does not foresee the great variety of interpretative situations caused by cultural and ideological factors.

Pöllabauer (2004, 2006) developed a thorough analysis of interpreted asylum hearings, especially focusing on the interpreters' role, and she found out that interpreters did take part in the interaction in certain situations. The interpreters in her study also assumed 'extra' functions such as coordinating and controlling talk, solidarity, omission of 'irrelevant' information, 'internal' rounds of talk and meta-comments, face-saving strategies, 'us' vs. 'them' discourse and miscommunication due to lack of shared background and linguistic resources. Most of the times, interpreters appeared as officers' assistants, even undertaking some of their tasks. Therefore, Pöllabauer (2004: 175) states that "traditional codes of ethics may only be valid on paper" and claims for better training of interpreters so that they can cooperate as professionals and not impinge on participants' interests.

Valero-Garcés (2007), Angelelli (2004) and Martin & Abril-Martí (2002), among other scholars, also revise and discuss issues around ethics, codes and the interpreters' role; which may be referred to for a wider overview of this question.

7. Terminology and glossaries

Despite not being one of the main topics of Community Interpreting research, there are some significant contributions on the potential of terminological tools and glossaries in Community Interpreting practice and training. Both Niska (2002) and Straker (2004) propose the introduction of terminology in Community Interpreting courses, especially considering that many of the interpreters-to-be may have to deal with very specific language if they are to work at health service settings or courts.

Valero-Garcés (2005a) discusses the problems that may arise due to a lack of terminology and explores how professional and *ad hoc* interpreters may face them. Among the usual strategies she identifies omission, literal translation, direct loan (the original term is only phonologically and/or morphologically adapted), explanation of concepts, use of non-existing words, deictics and non-verbal language. These strategies may sometimes lead to misunderstanding and, therefore, Valero-Garcés emphasizes on the importance of Community Interpreting training and on the need to include terminology in it.

8. Community interpreters' specific competences

8.1 Translation modalities in Community Interpreting

Community interpreters' competences also include the command of the different translation modalities they may have to perform; therefore we will first briefly describe these modalities.

As reported by Hurtado-Albir (2001: 639), translation modalities are "different kinds of translation which vary according to the translator mode*"*, while the translator mode is "a variation in language use depending on material means".[vi] Community Interpreting includes the following modalities: sight translation, simultaneous

interpreting, liaison interpreting and *chuchotage*. Liaison interpreting, also known as

dialogue interpreting, bilateral interpreting or dialogic interpreting, is the most frequent

modality in Community Interpreting, consequently being the focus of most research.

Sight translation is also rather habitual, especially to translate forms or behaviour

codes. Simultaneous interpreting often occurs with sign language but also in some cases

of court interpreting. *Chuchotage* is perhaps the least common modality, although it has

sometimes been used in court interpreting.

Besides these 'traditional' modalities, videoconference and remote interpreting

should also be included in the list (see Section 4), since the 'material means' are

different and, consequently, may also involve a variation in language use.

'Relay interpreting' could also be considered a specific modality which takes place

when there are four participants and three languages in a conversation, thus implying

that a message that has already been interpreted must be interpreted again. It is a

relatively unexplored modality that could be taken into account in future research,

especially from the perspective of Wadensjö's dialogic discourse and interaction

paradigm, which considers interpreters as participants of the interaction and, therefore,

responsible of meaning construction.

Gentile et al. (1996) consider liaison interpreting as a variation of consecutive

interpreting and while comparing it to conference consecutive interpreting, they

enumerate the following features which are specific for liaison interpreting: the

physical environment, which is closer and more intimate; the immediacy of

interpreting; the difficulties due to interruptions while interpreting a message; the non-

fixed length of the messages to be interpreted; a smaller audience; and the basic rules,

which should specify how to interpret when there is more than one speaker of one of

the languages. Gentile *et al.* also discuss the role of note-taking in liaison interpreting and they state that even though it may be useful in certain situations, in other situations (e.g. in a psychotherapy session) it may not be advisable, as it can make participants feel uncomfortable. Therefore, they suggest that interpreters should not rely on note-taking, but focus on face to face communication.

8.2. Community interpreters' model of competences

Pöchhacker (2000) and Martin & Abril-Martí (2008), among other researchers, have developed empirical research based on surveys to community interpreters (either professional or *ad hoc*), in order to determine how interpreters perceive themselves and what qualities they think their job requires, a kind of research that may have direct influence in the design of Community Interpreting courses curricula.

Pöchhacker's (2000) survey to interpreters and service providers revealed that interpreters undertake other tasks apart from interpreting, such as filling in forms, explaining terminology, simplifying language or summarizing. This is one aspect that should be further explored, in order to determine the specific functions an interpreter should and could assume.

Martín & Abril-Martí (2008) conducted a similar study, although focusing only on community interpreters' own perception. They discovered that a considerable number of interpreters admitted taking part in an interaction without much constraint, adapting messages and adding cultural explanations or information concerning public services, although they all tried not to summarize or omit information.

This kind of studies attempts to provide a general overview of what qualities and functions are expected in an interpreter, either from the interpreters' or the users' point

of view. However, they tend to provide a biased view, since users respond rather intuitively, due to their lack of information on the nature of the profession, and interpreters seem to value those qualities that correspond to their working attitude, but may not especially consider other qualities such as impartiality. Thus, Abril-Martí & Martín (2008) propose a model of competences for community interpreters based on a revision of professional standards and training courses from different countries (cf. Abril-Martín & Martín 2008). Through this bibliographic research, Abril-Martí & Martín identify which competences appear in most sources and, based on these coincidences, they suggest an adaptation of Kelly's (2005) competences model for translation (cf. Abril-Martí & Martín 2008). Their approach to community interpreters' competences is rather innovative and it would be very interesting if further research could be conducted in order to establish the adequacy of their suggested model.

9. Community interpreters' working conditions

This area of research may include those contributions that refer to the ecology and sociology of Community Interpreting —i.e. contributions that describe the contextual factors of an interpreted interaction.

   Cambridge (1999, 2002, 2004) has devoted several of her contributions to describe the importance of interpreters' impartiality, especially considering the roles participants assume during an interaction (see Section 6) as well as the different situations interpreters may have to face. Concerning these situations, Cambridge (1999: 208-9) highlights the difficulties that interpreting at public services may involve: background noise, surrounding conversations, time constraints (e.g. in medical consultations), power asymmetry between service providers and service applicants and cultural

differences. To these difficulties, which are rather specific of Community Interpreting, we should add usual difficulties inherent in any kind of interpreting activity, such as primary speakers' accent and speech speed, jargon and specific terminology, or the impossibility to consult reference works.

In another paper, Cambridge (2002: 124) refers to other two obstacles interpreters may have to overcome: first, the fact that they are considered neither as part of the multidisciplinary team where they are working, nor as people who may also need help or assistance; second, the fact that they tend to think that it is not professional to admit that they have been overwhelmed by emotions, which nonetheless are a natural reaction if we take into account the kind of situations interpreters have to deal with. For all these reasons, Cambridge claims for a closer cooperation between public services and community interpreters.

Corsellis (2002) also believes in the importance of this cooperation and adds that not only would this help public service providers better understand the interpreters' role and functions, but also interpreters, who would be able to reach a deeper knowledge of the public services structure and system. However, this cooperation would only be possible if economic and practical barriers were overcome: economic due to limited subsidies and practical because of public services providers' reluctance to cooperate with interpreters.

In fact, many authors have agreed on the need for more cooperation and have provided different examples to prove it. Moreover, Rudvin (2006: 39) and Corsellis (2006) also claim that advances in Community Interpreting research should be disseminated not only among interpreters, but also among public service providers that usually need to work with them. Thus, as Corsellis points out, users would also be

aware of the different solutions available (for example, 'face to face' vs. remote

interpreting) and they would be able to choose those that better satisfied their needs.

10. Community interpreters' training

The emergent need for community interpreters has raised the issue of training and,

therefore, research on this issue has been widely discussed. Many proposals have been

made concerning training courses curricula, which for reasons of space and scope will

not be described here in detail, but just through a very brief overview. For a detailed

approach to training courses curricula and proposals, Abril-Martí's (2006) doctoral

thesis (in Spanish) is an excellent reference work, providing in-depth analysis of

proposals from other countries as well as her own proposal for courses in Spain.

Besides curricula, research has also attempted to shed light onto questions concerning

admission criteria, trainers' profiles, learning path, assessment, interpreters' register

and quality supervision.

Hale (2007) comments on the great variety of training courses available: from

masters and university degrees to 20-hour courses. She points out that finding trainers

for such courses is one of the major difficulties when planning them, since it is still not

clear whether such trainers should be community interpreters (i.e. practitioners) or

Community Interpreting researchers. In this respect, Hale suggests that trainers that are

both practitioners and researchers can complement their examples with theoretical

reflections, which may help them promote self-evaluation among students.

Sandrelli (2001) exposes her own experience as community interpreters' trainer in a

course that combines both traditional methodologies —e.g. memory training activities

and note-taking techniques practice— with teaching innovation through a virtual

program which lets students practice on their own while complementing lectures or seminars. Practising through a virtual program, students generally feel more relaxed, since they do not have the pressure of being directly assessed by their teacher; moreover, they can repeat the exercises they do not understand, they can record and listen to themselves and, therefore, they can practice at their own pace. As Community Interpreting courses length is usually limited, Sandrelli regards virtual practices as a good solution to complement classroom sessions.

Community interpreters' training sometimes also includes short internships in public services, as in the case of the Official Master in Intercultural Communication, Public Service Interpreting and Translation held at the University of Alcalá (Spain). Valero-Garcés (2008: 182-4), as its director, highlights the difficulties that some of her students had to face when they started their internship: from feeling uncomfortable when having to introduce themselves and explain their role to ethical dilemmas while trying to abide the impartial model. Therefore, Valero-Garcés points out that more psychological training should be included in courses' curricula, which would help interpreters overcome this kind of situations.

11. Community Interpreting professionalization

Contributions in Community Interpreting research try to shed light onto those still unclear questions concerning the practice of this rather young activity and therefore support its professionalization process, regarded as the path towards its social recognition.

As Rudvin (2007) points out in relation to 'professionalization':

Professional qualification is related to the professional's differentiation from the layman in that s/he is paid for his/her services, that s/he is trained to perform in this specific field, and that s/he therefore possesses certain skills and a 'superior' competence. Thus, s/he acquires credibility in the eyes of the public (and of potential clients). (Rudvin, 2007: 51)

One of the most paradigmatic contributions concerning Community Interpreting professionalization is Ozolins' (2000) classification of the different stages countries generally undergo as part of this process:

- Non-comprehensiveness: a first stage where the need for linguistic resources is even denied.

- *Ad hoc* services: provisional solutions to linguistic barriers often looked for by institutions (not by government), especially hospitals and police offices.

- Generic language: governments, NGOs or private providers try to respond to the increasing demand for interpreting through generic language services (not specifically trained for Community Interpreting).

- Comprehensiveness: this last stage is characterized by a global solution based on the organization of specific Community Interpreting services as well as training and accreditation for interpreters. It also involves specialization of interpreters to work just in one context (e.g. health service or courts), training for users of interpretation services, political planning supervising the interpreters' accreditation system or inclusion of all languages which are spoken in a country in the provided services.

Ozolins' classification has become a referent for many researchers (e.g. Abri-Martí 2008), who have used it to describe the situation of Community Interpreting in specific countries.

Discussion

In our overview of the state of the art in Community Interpreting research, we have tried to summarize the most discussed questions; however, it is worth noting that all these questions do not exist isolated from each other, but are tightly connected. The following map (Figure 1) exposes the connections between the different topics of
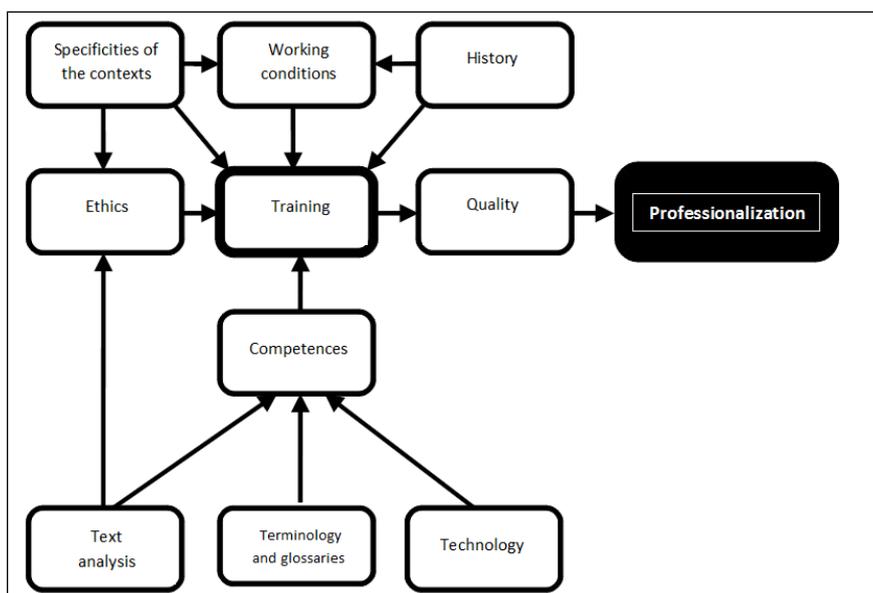
research in Community Interpreting, explicitly highlighting the position of 'professionalization' as the goal of research as a whole.

Figure 1. Map of research in Community Interpreting

Starting from the left top, studies which attempt to explore the specificities of the different contexts in Community Interpreting nourish research on community interpreters' working conditions, provide different approaches for the ethical discussions and help better development of training curricula specializing on the interpretation in different contexts. Research on working conditions is also complemented by historical studies and both topics provide materials for training

courses. Training has a central position in our map, as we believe it is a key element in research and in the path towards professionalization. Training tries to prepare interpreters-to-be for real life work and, thus, is dependent on research that reflects this real life —ethics, contexts, working conditions, history— but also on prospective studies which describe the competences interpreters should command once trained. Interpreters' competences can be described through text analysis and can be completed by research on terminology and glossaries applied to Community Interpreting and on technological uses being developed in this field. Text analysis through dialogues has also been used to describe the roles interpreters assume, which is a central issue in ethical discussions. The core line in our map shows the important relationship between ethics, training, quality and professionalization. Ethics is undoubtedly a central issue in Community Interpreting research and, therefore, most training courses try to emphasize it. On the other hand, the aim of training is quality, which is a *sine qua non* when considering the professional status of Community Interpreting, the final goal of research as a whole.

Although research is sometimes very specific, the most interesting contributions are those that show the tight interconnection between the object of study and all the other topics of research. In this sense, Connell's (2006) contribution is a good example: the object of his study is remote interpreting by telephone (i.e. technology), but he also refers to quality issues, competences, working conditions, ethics and training, giving a very interesting global view of his specific topic.

Conclusions

Community Interpreting research is relatively recent, but as we have seen, it is a flourishing field and there is already a solid ground of contributions exploring a vast range of topics. This paper has attempted to provide an overview of the most relevant contributions on the different topics as a prospective study for future research, while also pointing out those areas that could be further researched. It is worth noting that some contexts are still relatively unexplored, such as social services or education, and that some fields such as technology or terminology and glossaries may be given more importance as they are becoming more common in the practice of Community Interpreting.

We have finally suggested a map of Community Interpreting research which, on the one hand, shows the close relationship among research topics and, on the other hand, emphasizes the core position of ethics and training as two key elements in the path towards quality and professionalization. We claim that future contributions should try to bear in mind research topics as a whole and, even when focusing on a very specific issue, show how it is related to other topics of research.

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Notes

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[ii] A number of Mikkelson's articles as well as information about teaching material can be found at her web page: http://www.acebo.com [Last view: 22nd December 2009].

[iii] For instance, Interpreting (2005) vol. 7 (2) is entirely devoted to health service interpreting. This issue was afterwards published as a book, edited by Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2007).

[iv] Original title in Spanish: *Lenguas indígenas y mediación lingüística, en las reducciones jesuítas del Paraguay - s.XVII* (Translation by the author of this paper).

[v] For further information, see http://www.criticallink.org (last access: January 4th , 2010).

[vi] Translation by the author of this paper.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Over the past ten years Community Interpreting research has become a flourishing field of study with a great number of contributions being published every year. Books, articles, papers and presentations may vary in their topics —some of them being very general and some of them much more specific— and this diversity has been the source of our motivation to draw what could be regarded as a map of the main research topics in Community Interpreting. Thus, based on a literature review and inspired by Williams & Chesterman's (2002) map for Translation Studies, this paper proposes a specific map for Community Interpreting research, while also attempting to summarize the main contributions. It does not intend to provide an exhaustive revision, but an overview that reflects the state of the art in Community Interpreting as a basis for future research. It finally states that research topics are not isolated, but tightly interconnected as different steps in the path towards professionalization, as can be seen in the conceptual map suggested at the end of this paper.

Keywords: Community Interpreting, Public Services Interpreting, professionalization, Public Services interpreters' training

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