



RAHNAMA
P R E S S

@RAHNAMAPRESS
WWW.RAHNAMAPRESS.COM

Franz Pöchhacker

Introducing
**INTERPRETING
STUDIES**

Second edition

ROUTLEDGE

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>Publisher Acknowledgements</i>	x
Introducing <i>Introducing ...</i>	1
<i>Re-introducing ... 1</i>	
<i>Perspective 1</i>	
<i>Structure and Features 2</i>	
PART I	
Foundations	7
1 Concepts	9
<i>1.1 Conceptual Roots 9</i>	
<i>1.2 Interpreting Defined 10</i>	
<i>1.3 Settings and Constellations 13</i>	
<i>1.4 Typological Parameters 17</i>	
<i>1.5 Domains and Dimensions 24</i>	
2 Evolution	28
<i>2.1 Socio-professional Underpinnings 28</i>	
<i>2.2 Breaking Ground 33</i>	
<i>2.3 Laying Foundations 35</i>	
<i>2.4 Renewal and Internationalization 37</i>	
<i>2.5 Integration and Diversification 40</i>	
<i>2.6 Consolidation 45</i>	

vi *Contents*

3 Approaches	51
3.1 <i>Disciplinary Perspectives</i>	<i>51</i>
3.2 <i>Memes of Interpreting</i>	<i>56</i>
3.3 <i>Methodology</i>	<i>64</i>
3.4 <i>Paradigms</i>	<i>68</i>
4 Models	77
4.1 <i>On Modeling</i>	<i>77</i>
4.2 <i>Socio-professional and Institutional Models</i>	<i>79</i>
4.3 <i>Interaction Models</i>	<i>81</i>
4.4 <i>Processing Models</i>	<i>89</i>
4.5 <i>Models, Tests and Applications</i>	<i>98</i>
PART II	
Topics	103
5 Language and Memory	105
5.1 <i>Bilingualism</i>	<i>105</i>
5.2 <i>Memory</i>	<i>107</i>
6 Cognitive Processes	114
6.1 <i>Comprehension</i>	<i>114</i>
6.2 <i>Production</i>	<i>117</i>
6.3 <i>Simultaneity</i>	<i>119</i>
6.4 <i>Input Variables</i>	<i>122</i>
6.5 <i>Strategies</i>	<i>126</i>
7 Product and Effect	131
7.1 <i>Talk as Text</i>	<i>131</i>
7.2 <i>Source–Target Correspondence</i>	<i>135</i>
7.3 <i>Effect</i>	<i>139</i>
8 Discourse in Interaction	144
8.1 <i>Participation</i>	<i>144</i>
8.2 <i>Discourse Management</i>	<i>147</i>
9 History	152
9.1 <i>Historiography</i>	<i>152</i>
9.2 <i>From Ancient to Modern Times</i>	<i>154</i>
9.3 <i>Professionalization</i>	<i>157</i>

10 Profession	160
10.1 <i>Sociology</i>	160
10.2 <i>Competence</i>	164
10.3 <i>Ethics and Role</i>	167
10.4 <i>Quality</i>	173
10.5 <i>Occupational Issues</i>	178
11 Technology	182
11.1 <i>Equipment</i>	182
11.2 <i>Remote Interpreting</i>	184
11.3 <i>Automation</i>	188
12 Education	191
12.1 <i>Curriculum</i>	191
12.2 <i>Selection</i>	194
12.3 <i>Teaching</i>	197
12.4 <i>Assessment</i>	202
12.5 <i>Further Education</i>	204
PART III	
Directions	209
13 Directions	211
13.1 <i>Trends</i>	211
13.2 <i>Perspectives</i>	215
13.3 <i>Orientation</i>	221
<i>Bibliography</i>	225
<i>Author Index</i>	253
<i>Subject Index</i>	258

Illustrations

Figures

1.1	Interpreting in different spheres of social interaction	16
1.2	Conceptual spectrum of interpreting	17
1.3	Continuum of consecutive interpreting	19
1.4	Forms of simultaneous interpreting	20
1.5	Domains and dimensions of interpreting theory	25
2.1	Decades of development in interpreting studies	48
3.1	The process(ing) supermeme	57
3.2	Map of memes in interpreting studies	64
3.3	Cluster of paradigms in interpreting studies	72
4.1	Levels of modeling	79
4.2	Tseng's model of the professionalization process	80
4.3	Anderson's 'type-case' model of three-party interaction	81
4.4	Gile's interaction model of conference interpreting	82
4.5	Pöhhacker's interactant model of the interpreting situation	83
4.6	Ingram's semiotic communication model of interpreting	85
4.7	Kirchhoff's three-party bilingual communication system model	85
4.8	Stenzl's communicative information flow model	87
4.9	Kalina's model of comprehension and production in interpreting	88
4.10	Seleskovitch's triangular model (two versions)	89
4.11	Cokely's sociolinguistically sensitive process model	95
4.12	Paradis's flow-chart model of simultaneous interpreting	97
4.13	Setton's processing model for simultaneous interpreting	98
13.1	Critical issues for progress in interpreting studies	214

Table

3.1	Summary table of paradigms in interpreting studies	73
-----	--	----

Introducing *Introducing* ...

Re-introducing ...

A dozen years after the first edition of this book, an update was clearly overdue, given the steady growth and diversification of research on interpreting. Those familiar with the 2004 version will find the book considerably changed, with many parts extensively revised and restructured, and several new chapters. And yet the basic design of the book, and certainly its aim and vision, have remained exactly the same – that is, to provide students, research-minded teachers and practitioners of interpreting as well as scholars in related fields with a broad and balanced overview of interpreting studies as an academic field of study. Therefore, the way this book is introduced here differs little from the introduction written twelve years ago. The one major difference is reference to the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (Pöchhacker 2015), a comprehensive presentation of the state of the art that serves as an ideal complement to this textbook.

Perspective

The view of interpreting studies offered in this book is inevitably shaped by my individual perspective and some related constraints. My approach to interpreting is from the vantage point of ‘Translation Studies,’ the field of my **academic socialization**. On the other hand, my **professional background** and experience (as an interpreter in international conference and media settings) is rather narrow compared to the breadth of the field to be covered. Indeed, it was only in the course of my work as a researcher that I came to be involved in the field of community-based interpreting and developed an appreciation for interpreting in signed languages. Though I have done my best to expand my horizons and interact with interpreting researchers in different domains of our emerging community, it would be presumptuous to claim shared ground with all of them. What I hope we do share, though, is the aspiration toward ‘unity in diversity’ for our field of study.

Another constraint relating to the perspective of this book is **language**. Being limited to a small number of working languages, I have been unable to

2 Introduction

consider publications in languages like Russian, Japanese and Chinese. This has become less of a problem with the increasing use of English as a *lingua franca*, which has helped us achieve a considerable degree of ‘linguistic unity in diversity’ for our field. But that does not resolve the complex issue of terminological diversity and conceptual relativity, so acute in a discipline with an object as multifaceted as interpreting, which has been described from many different perspectives. Since the space available in this textbook permits only a limited degree of definitional rigor, my use of basic concepts and terms – such as ‘message,’ ‘text,’ ‘language,’ ‘context’ and ‘culture,’ to name but a few – is often unspecified and aims at a broad ‘common denominator’ so as to provide a starting point for further differentiation. With or without a definition, though, there should be no doubt in the reader’s mind that conceptual choices of the kind underlying this book are invariably colored by a given analytical perspective. Hence the need to caution the would-be interpreting scholar right from the beginning against the temptation to accept ‘reality’ at face value, be it a definition or a concept – or a textbook for a discipline.

Much like the maker of a documentary, the writer of a textbook strives to give a meaningful account but cannot claim to know and represent what the state of affairs, or the state of the art, is ‘really’ like. The film-maker and the textbook author have to decide what to bring into view, what to foreground, in which light and from what angle. As much as the goal is to do justice to all the protagonists, the resulting picture is based on a great number of **choices**. Some of these may be painful (as in deciding what to leave out) and others creative (as in establishing links and relations); all of them, however, are governed by the fundamental need to impose on the subject one’s own sense of **coherence** and structure.

Structure and Features

Turning to another metaphor which seems particularly appropriate here, this book is intended to be a ‘map’ of interpreting studies as a field of research. What is more, its individual parts and subdivisions can be viewed as mapping efforts in their own right, ultimately adding up to a multi-layered representation of the field. This section briefly describes the structure of the book, which consists of 13 chapters organized into three parts. Each chapter begins with a short lead-in and is divided into ‘sections,’ with numbered first-level subheadings (e.g. 3.1). Most of these sections are in turn composed of several ‘subsections,’ with numbered second-level subheadings (e.g. 3.1.1) following a lead-in paragraph for the section.

Part I: Foundations

Part I comprises four chapters which make up the ‘synthetic’ representation of the discipline. Chapter 1 reviews major **conceptual** distinctions to illustrate the breadth and complexity of the object of study and map out its theoretical

terrain. The emphasis is on the construction of a coherent typological framework rather than on encyclopedic information about various forms of interpreting, as would be found in a ‘handbook.’ A basic level of familiarity with interpreting is thus presupposed. Where needed, such knowledge is readily available from the “Sources and Further Reading” listed at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 2 chronicles the **historical** “Evolution” of interpreting studies as a discipline. Responding to questions such as ‘who?’ ‘when?’ and ‘where?’, the chapter could be said to map the sociology and geography of the field and its institutional infrastructure. Chapter 3 reviews the major **disciplinary, theoretical** and **methodological** “Approaches” to interpreting, responding mainly to the questions ‘what?’ and ‘how?’ and culminating in a map of the discipline in terms of “paradigms,” or **research traditions**. Chapter 4 elaborates on the theoretical foundations by presenting “Models” of interpreting, at various levels of **modeling**.

Each of the four chapters in Part I begins with a list of the **main points** covered and concludes with a “Summary,” as well as a list of “Sources and Further Reading.” In addition, some “Suggestions for Further Study” are provided as a prompt for reflecting on the chapter content with regard to geographical and linguistic contexts not covered in the book.

In order to minimize redundancy and provide cross-references among major points covered in the various mapping dimensions, **text links** are used throughout the book. These forward and backward links, mostly to information in particular subsections (e.g. » 3.2.1, « 1.2.3), create interrelations within as well as between the different parts and chapters.

Part II: Topics

Building on the foundations laid in Part I by the ‘synthetic’ overview in terms of concepts, developments, approaches, paradigms and models, the second part of the book is devoted to a more ‘analytical’ presentation of the **state of the art**. In a total of eight chapters of uneven length (repackaged from the original four in the first edition), some of the prominent topics of research are introduced with reference to the relevant literature. Chapter 5, on “Language and Memory” (expanding parts of the chapter on ‘Process’ in the first edition), provides the foundation for Chapter 6, which focuses on “Cognitive Processes.” The next two chapters deal with text and discourse, with Chapter 7 putting the emphasis on “Product and Effect” and Chapter 8 on “Discourse in Interaction.” Chapter 10, on “Profession,” is flanked by “History” (Chapter 9) and “Technology” (Chapter 11), both of which have been expanded from sections in the first-edition chapter on ‘Practice and Profession.’ Part II concludes with Chapter 12, on “Education.”

All of these chapters feature landmark examples of empirical research on the topics at hand. Insofar as readability would permit, these studies are presented in the style of mini-abstracts, with special emphasis on aspects of research

4 *Introduction*

design such as the subjects, sample, techniques of data collection and analysis, and overall methodological strategy. Nevertheless, given the extensive nature of the territory to be covered, the review of selected research in Part II is even more reductionist than the mapping efforts in Part I, serving only as a ‘roadmap,’ as it were, with hardly any room for a description of the scenery. The difficult choice of what to mention, and what not, leaves these thematic reviews open to criticism from authors who may, rightly, feel that their work has been given short shrift. I hope they will understand that such lack of coverage results not from a lack of appreciation, but from the mandate to keep the book’s bibliography to a manageable size. After all, the thematic presentations are essentially designed to help locate various avenues and crossroads in the overall landscape of **research topics**; getting there is only possible via engagement with the **literature**, as indicated by references in the text and also found in relevant articles in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* that are listed, in SMALL CAPITALS, as “Further Reading” at the end of each chapter.

Part III: Directions

As a conclusion to the overview of interpreting studies provided in the two main parts of the book, Chapter 13 reviews some major trends and future perspectives of interpreting studies as a field of research. In addition to these “Directions” for the discipline, the final section of the book offers some basic orientation for those undertaking research of their own.

Sources, Authors, Subjects

Given the need to keep the **bibliography** of this book reasonably concise, the list of references reflects a priority for widely cited ‘classics,’ for particularly innovative and illustrative examples of recent work, and, overall, for publications which may be more readily available (and written in a language which is more easily accessible) to the readers of this book. As pointed out above, this textbook, and in particular the overview of selected topics and research, find an ideal complement in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (Pöchhacker 2015), whose more than 2,100 bibliography entries constitute an extraordinarily comprehensive and up-to-date list of references to the literature on interpreting. The two-part **index**, finally, permits a focus on individual members of the interpreting studies community and their work (“Author Index”), and serves as an effective tool to access key concepts and topics (“Subject Index”) across the structural subdivisions of the book.

Function

The fact that this book is organized thematically, rather than by interpreting types and professional domains, reflects the underlying vision of the discipline. While recognizing that interpreting studies is characterized by an

overwhelming degree of diversity and difference, this textbook reaffirms linkages, relations, and common ground in various dimensions. Though this may be of little worth to researchers and teachers who specialize in one domain or another, the added value of this **integrated approach** for the discipline as a whole would seem to justify the focus on ‘unity in diversity.’

Aside from the function of this book as an introductory reference work for the interpreting studies community at large, its design and thematic scope should make obvious how it can be used as a textbook. While it can certainly stand on its own, it is most profitably used in conjunction with *The Interpreting Studies Reader* (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002), all chapters of which are cited in the text, and best complemented by the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies*. Ideally, teachers of introductory courses or modules on interpreting theory would consider this book essential reading for their students. If this is the case irrespective of professional domain, this second edition will continue to promote an integrated view of interpreting studies and serve its continued development as a highly differentiated – and thus all the more fascinating – field of study.

1 Concepts

This initial chapter introduces some basic concepts and distinctions relating to interpreting as the object of interpreting studies. The set of types and terms presented here will serve as a broad foundation for what will be discussed in the course of this book.

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- the conceptual roots of ‘interpreting’
- the definition of interpreting
- the relationship between interpreting and translation
- the social settings and interaction constellations in which interpreting takes place
- the major parameters underlying typological distinctions
- the complex interrelationships among various ‘types’ of interpreting
- the mapping of theoretical dimensions and domains of interpreting practice and research

1.1 Conceptual Roots

Interpreting is regarded here as **translational activity**, as a special form of ‘Translation.’ (The capital initial is used to indicate that the word appears in its generic, hypernymic sense.) Interpreting is an ancient human practice which clearly predates the invention of writing – and (written) translation. Many Indo-European languages have words for interpreting, and interpreters, whose etymology is largely autonomous from words for (written) translation. Expressions in Germanic, Scandinavian and Slavic languages denoting a person performing the activity of interpreting can be traced back to Akkadian, the ancient Semitic language of Assyria and Babylonia, around 1900 BCE (see Vermeer 1992: 59). The Akkadian root *targumânu*/*turgumânu*, via an

10 Foundations

etymological sideline from Arabic, also gave rise to the ‘autonomous’ English term for interpreter, **dragoman**.

The English word ‘interpreter,’ in contrast, is derived from Latin *interpres* (in the sense of ‘expounder,’ ‘person explaining what is obscure’), the semantic roots of which are not clear. While some scholars take the second part of the word to be derived from *partes* or *pretium* (‘price’), thus fitting the meaning of a ‘middleman,’ ‘intermediary’ or ‘commercial go-between’ (see Hermann 1956/2002), others have suggested a Sanskrit root. Be that as it may, the Latin term *interpres*, denoting someone ‘explaining the meaning,’ ‘making sense of’ what others have difficulty understanding, is a highly appropriate semantic foundation for ‘interpreter’ and ‘interpreting’ in our current understanding.

These etymological roots of the verb ‘**to interpret**’ make for a semantically tense relationship with the terms ‘translation’ and ‘translate’: While one can capitalize on the polysemy of ‘interpret’ to argue for a meaning-based, rather than word-based, conception of Translation (» 3.2.4), it has also been common to stress the distinction between the more general hermeneutic sense and a narrowly construed translational sense of the word. This is particularly striking in the legal sphere, where lawyers view it as their prerogative to ‘interpret’ (the law) and expect court interpreters to ‘translate’ (the language) (» 10.3.2). Rather than semantic quibbling, this constitutes a fundamental challenge to our understanding of what it means to translate and/or interpret, and many parts of this book, beginning with the following section, will be devoted to attempts at finding an appropriate response.

1.2 Interpreting Defined

Within the conceptual structure of Translation, interpreting can be distinguished from other types of translational activity most succinctly by its **immediacy**: in principle, interpreting is performed ‘here and now’ for the benefit of people who want to engage in communication across barriers of language and culture.

1.2.1 Kade’s Criteria

In contrast to common usage as reflected in most dictionaries, ‘interpreting’ need not necessarily be equated with ‘oral translation’ or, more precisely, with the ‘oral rendering of spoken messages.’ Doing so would exclude interpreting in signed (rather than spoken) languages (» 1.4.1) from our purview, and would make it difficult to account for the less typical manifestations of interpreting mentioned further down. Instead, by elaborating on the feature of immediacy, one can distinguish interpreting from other forms of Translation without resorting to the dichotomy of oral vs written. This is what Otto **Kade**, a self-taught interpreter and translation scholar at the University of Leipzig (» 2.3.1), did as early as the 1960s. Kade (1968) defined interpreting as a form of Translation in which

- the source-language text is presented only once and thus cannot be reviewed or replayed, and
- the target-language text is produced under time pressure, with little chance for correction and revision.

Kade chose to label the semiotic entities involved in Translation as ‘texts’ (» 7.1), for which one could substitute expressions like ‘utterances’ (in the broad sense), ‘acts of discourse,’ or ‘messages,’ subject to an appropriate definition. Whatever the terms, his definition elegantly accommodates interpreting from, into or between signed languages and also accounts for such variants of interpreting as ‘sight translation’ (» 1.4.2), ‘live subtitling’ or even the on-line (written) translation of Internet chats. This vindicates the general characterization of interpreting as an **immediate** type of translational activity, performed ‘in real time’ for immediate use. A definition relying on Kade’s criteria, foregrounding the immediacy of the interpreter’s text processing rather than real-time communicative use, could thus be formulated as follows:

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.

The criteria of ephemeral presentation and immediate production go some way toward covering our need for conceptual specification. Making our concept of interpreting hinge on the generic notion of Translation, however, leaves us exposed to the more general uncertainty of how to define that term. While the study of interpreting does not presuppose an account of Translation in all its variants and ramifications, our choice to define interpreting as a form of Translation implies that no interpreting scholar can remain aloof from the underlying conceptual issues. As George Steiner (1975: 252) put it, with reference to the German word for ‘interpreter’: “Strictly viewed, the most banal act of interlingual conveyance by a *Dolmetscher* involves the entire nature and theory of translation.”

1.2.2 *Interpreting as Translation*

Given the expansive and varied theoretical territory of Translation, as covered in reference works like the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker and Saldanha 2009) and the *Handbook of Translation Studies* (Gambier and van Doorslaer 2014), there is a plethora of approaches on which we might draw to enrich our account of interpreting as a form of Translation. Since different scholars will define and characterize their object of study in accordance with their particular aims, experiences and interests, the basic question regarding the nature of Translation has drawn widely discrepant answers. To illustrate the spectrum of choice, let us take a look at four answers to the question ‘What is Translation?’ and consider their theoretical implications.

12 Foundations

Translation is:

- a a process by which a spoken or written utterance takes place in one language which is intended or presumed to convey the same meaning as a previously existing utterance in another language (Rabin 1958)
- b the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form ... or whether one or both languages are based on signs (Brislin 1976a)
- c a situation-related and function-oriented complex series of acts for the production of a target text, intended for addressees in another culture/ language, on the basis of a given source text (Salevsky 1993)
- d any utterance which is presented or regarded as a 'translation' within a culture, on no matter what grounds (Toury 1995)

Definition (a) foregrounds the defining relationship between the source and target utterances and stipulates 'sameness of meaning' as an essential ingredient. It also introduces, albeit implicitly, human agents and attitudes in terms of 'intentions' and 'expectations.' Definition (b) describes Translation as a process of 'transfer' acting on 'ideas' in the medium of 'language.' Definition (c) introduces a number of descriptive features, such as 'situation,' 'function,' 'text' and 'culture,' and stresses the target orientation of the translational product. The target orientation is carried to the extreme in definition (d), in which the theorist relinquishes any prescriptive authority and accepts as Translation whatever is treated as such in a given community.

All four definitions accommodate interpreting, but each foregrounds different conceptual dimensions. And whatever is stipulated as an essential feature of Translation (i.e. notions like transfer, ideas, sameness, intention or culture) will carry over to our definition of interpreting and will have to be accounted for in subsequent efforts at description and explanation. We are free, of course, to formulate an altogether different definition of our own, but it would seem foolish to reinvent the wheel of Translation in order to move on with the study of interpreting. We could certainly mine the various definitions of Translation for basic conceptual ingredients, such as

- an **activity** consisting (mainly) in
- the **production of utterances (texts)** which are
- presumed to have a **similar meaning and/or effect**
- as **previously existing** utterances
- in **another language and culture.**

These terms can be adapted and refined in different ways. The notion of 'activity,' for instance, could be specified as a 'service,' possibly qualified as 'professional,' for the purpose of 'enabling communication' and for the benefit of 'clients' or 'users.' Similarly, we could specify 'production' (and 'communication') as taking place in a given 'situation' and 'culture,' and we could

elaborate and differentiate such key concepts as ‘culture,’ ‘language,’ ‘utterance’ and ‘meaning.’ No less significant than terminological refinements, however, are the ways in which our conceptual framework reflects some key areas of theoretical controversy. These include:

- the scope of the interpreter’s task (‘mainly’ production);
- the perspective on the translational process (target-oriented ‘production’ rather than source-dependent ‘transfer’); and
- the normative specification of the translational product (the assumption of ‘similarity’ in ‘meaning’ or ‘effect’).

Whichever of these options one might wish to pursue, the definitional scaffolding set up in these terms should provide sufficient support to interpreting scholars seeking to conceptualize their object of study as a form of Translation. It should be clear, though, even – or especially – in a textbook, that any definition of one’s object of study is necessarily relative to a set of underlying theoretical assumptions. In the words of Gideon Toury (1995: 23):

Far from being a neutral procedure, establishing an object of study is necessarily a function of the *theory* in whose terms it is constituted, which is always geared to cater for certain needs. Its establishment and justification are therefore intimately connected with the *questions* one wishes to pose, the possible *methods* of dealing with the objects of study with an eye to those questions – and, indeed, the kind of *answers* which would count as admissible.

In this relativistic perspective, there can be no such thing as an objective definition fixing, once and for all, the ‘true meaning’ or ‘essence’ of what we perceive or believe something to be like. This ‘non-essentialist,’ postmodern approach to meaning has been reaffirmed by leading scholars as part of the “shared ground” in Translation studies (Chesterman and Arrojo 2000). Its theoretical and methodological consequences will become clear in subsequent sections of this book (» 3.3.1). In the present, foundational chapter, we now return to the concept of interpreting to review ways in which it can be further distinguished with regard to various criteria.

1.3 Settings and Constellations

If we approach the phenomenon of interpreting from a historical perspective, the most obvious criterion for categorization and labeling is the **social context of interaction**, or **setting**, in which the activity is carried out. In its distant origins, interpreting took place when (members of) different linguistic and cultural communities entered into contact for some particular purpose. Apart from such contacts *between* social entities in various **inter-social settings**,



RAHNAMA
P R E S S

@RAHNAMAPRESS
WWW.RAHNAMAPRESS.COM

