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Court Interpreting: Practical Experience and Implications for Training Interpreters

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Abstract

In the course of the 20th century, Switzerland became far more than quadrilingual due to migration. On account of this linguistic change, the need for interpreting rose considerably and has continued to rise. Most of the languages that need to be interpreted for Swiss authorities and institutions are languages for which no accredited interpreter training exists in Switzerland. Many interpreters thus lack professional skills in or even basic knowledge of interpreting and notation techniques and lack awareness of the interpreters' code of ethics and of their professional role. Moreover, many interpreters have insufficient competence in one of the languages of the interpreting pair and/or in the complex syntactic structures and specialized terminology required. Many also lack the special background knowledge assumed in various areas, be it medical, educational or legal. In these cases, the quality of interpreting is unlikely to be satisfactory and communication is hampered or even fails completely. These communication problems are shared by Switzerland and many other countries; it is precisely here that institutes of translation and interpreting can suggest new solutions. The paper outlines initial steps towards heightened expertise and professionalism in public interpreting services: since 2003 a basic educational program for court interpreters has been offered in the Canton of Zurich.¹

1 The Language Situation in Switzerland

Four official languages are a standard feature of Switzerland: for about two hundred years the four national languages - German, French, Italian and Romansh - have been spoken to varying degrees in various regions of the country. Every child grows up with food labels in two or three languages, and people are accustomed to interpreting services if they watch elections to the Federal Council or other parliamentary sessions on TV or listen to radio broadcasts of them.

¹ I would like to thank the Interpreting Group under the presidency of Peter Marti, followed by Anton Schärer, as well as Councillor Notter of the Canton of Zurich legislature and the Public Prosecution Office of the Canton of Zurich (*Oberstaatsanwaltschaft*) for their commitment to the professionalization of court interpreters. Without their support, educational programs could not have been offered to practicing court interpreters. I am confident that these professional development courses will contribute to better understanding of court interpreting as a field and to a significant improvement in the quality of court interpreting in Switzerland.

Since the middle of the 20th century, migration has expanded the spectrum of languages considerably, leading to a new multilingualism in Switzerland. As a consequence, the need for interpreters has grown considerably, especially for languages for which few or no educational programs are offered. A recent report by the Federal Office of Statistics (Lüdi & Werlen 2005) revealed some surprising results on native speaker use of languages in Switzerland in 2000. Although the three most frequently used languages were national languages of Switzerland (64% German, 20% French, and 6.5% Italian), the fourth most frequent language was Serbo-Croatian. A total of 9% percent of the population in Switzerland spoke non-national languages, representing a considerable change in the second half of the 20th century. In Fig. 1 these languages are plotted according to their frequency of use in the population. Of course these statistics vary from region to region, and the numbers are not even the same for major cities such as Zurich and Geneva. Nevertheless, they are especially interesting in the context of interpreting because they show that almost half of the 10 most frequent languages used in Switzerland are not regularly taught in Swiss schools and are not part of the usual interpreting versions at translation and interpreting schools.

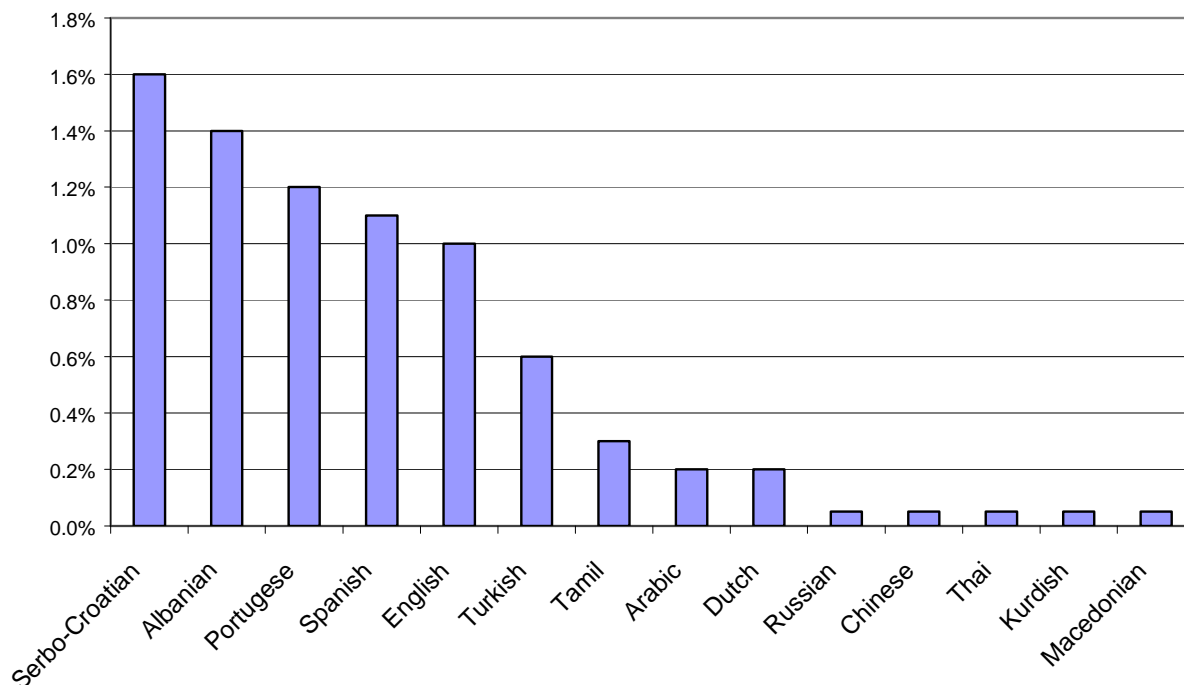


Fig. 1: Percentage of Swiss population by native language (taken from Lüdi & Werlen 2005).

The various language groups form communities with clear boundaries to their surroundings, yet individual members still have to communicate with their host country, sometimes in the form of “forced contacts” with refugee organizations, social institutions, medical doctors, psychiatrists, teachers, police, courts and so on. These contacts present different degrees of complexity for interpreting tasks in a variety of communication situations.

Multilingualism has an impact not only on communication itself but, of course, also on costs. One example is in the police offices and courts in the Canton of Zurich. There has been a considerable increase in the number of criminal proceedings and in the use of interpreters recently. Expenses for court interpreting in the Canton of Zurich alone amounted to CHF 5 million in 2003 and CHF 7 million in 2005 (personal communication). On the basis of these figures, it can be inferred that detention and penal authorities must be depending on

interpreters to a increasing degree although at present there are no data on the exact number of interpreted interrogations, legal examinations or trials.

2 Court Interpreting in Switzerland

Only very seldom do professional conference interpreters choose to work for federal or cantonal authorities or the criminal courts² because of the low salaries and the comparatively poor working conditions (e.g. lack of access to records). Although court interpreting has gained importance throughout Europe in the past few decades and courts and other public authorities have to rely on interpreting services for numerous languages, there have been few formal training programs up to now. The educational background of court interpreters varies from doctoral degrees to very limited education and correspondingly few can learn to interpret professionally on their own. Thus heterogeneity is one of the most difficult aspects for the authorities and the courts (and of course also for educational institutes).

Irrespective of the various levels of interpreting quality, there are regulations stipulating the involvement of court interpreters. The most important of these in Switzerland, established in the federal constitution (Art. 29), are binding for cantonal courts and judges and guarantee the right to a fair trial, meaning that no one should suffer discrimination because of language. Furthermore, every individual in Switzerland has the right to receive equal and fair treatment by legal and administrative authorities (Art. 1), and contesting parties have the right to a legal hearing (Art. 2). At the European level, the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Art. 5, para. 2 EMRK) establishes correspondingly strict rules: *Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a Language which he understands of the Reason for his Arrest and of any Charges against him.* Switzerland has consistently implement the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms since joining the Convention in the year 1974.

Utmost diligence, correctness and completeness are indispensable in legal proceedings when acquittal or sentencing is at stake. Unprofessional interpreting or translating can therefore have serious consequences for the language mediator involved. The Swiss Criminal Code (Art. 307, para. 1) stipulates that translators and interpreters can be charged and sentenced to up to five years for misrepresentation or mistranslation.

According to information from the Supreme Court of the Canton of Zurich, an interpreter has to be present in approximately 50% of all criminal justice cases and the number is on the increase (personal communication). The languages concerned have changed with subsequent waves of migration: in the 1960s Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese became increasingly common in Switzerland whereas in the 1970s Arabic and Turkish were the new languages. In the 1980s the use of Lebanese, Latin American Spanish, and African languages increased, and since the 1990s the languages from Eastern Europe have become more frequent (as shown in Figure 1). Not surprisingly, the courts in the Canton of Zurich have experienced an increase in the number of interpreters and languages covered: as of 2005, 130 different languages are listed, covered by over 962 interpreters (Table 1). In 2003, there had only been 560 interpreters.

² In civil proceedings, the contesting parties often do engage professional conference interpreters.

Language	Number of Interpreters		Language	Number of Interpreters	
	2005	2004		2005	2004
English	164	125	Italian	80	66
Serbian	161	139	Turkish	69	57
Croatian	155	137	Arabic	69	55
French	140	90	Albanian	67	59
Spanish	128	97	Portuguese	50	36
Russian	112	75	Chinese	26	22
Bosnian	100	75	Total: 130 (120)*	962	818

Tab. 1: Number of court interpreters registered for various languages in the Canton of Zurich.

* The number in brackets refers to the total number of languages in 2004. The total number of interpreters does not correspond exactly to the actual number of court interpreters, because some of them are registered for several languages and are therefore counted more than once (for example, many interpreters of African languages also interpret to and from English).

The changes in distribution of language groups in Switzerland are comparable to those in neighboring countries such as Germany (Kalina 2001) and Austria (Kadric 2001). As a consequence of them, new training programs have been developed in several parts of Europe since the end of the 20th century. The demand on the part of interpreters for professional development programs is rising, and court interpreting as a field of study has gained importance. Researchers from areas like translation studies and sociology have been pursuing the topic over the past few years (cf. Driesen 1998, 2002; Kadric 2001; Pöchhacker 2001; Pöllabauer 2002) and have demonstrated that the situation in court interpreting in Germany and Austria presents similar problems to those in Switzerland.

3 The Court Interpreting Project in the Canton of Zurich

3.1 Background

As mentioned above, courts, police, and immigration officers in the Canton of Zurich have a register of interpreters from which judges and police officers appoint an interpreter in a specific case. Prior to 1999, the professional status of interpreters at police stations and in courtrooms was only loosely regulated: persons registered were not tested as to their interpreting skills or competence in their respective languages, and there were no training programs. The quality of interpreting was quite often low, as was the appreciation of the court authorities for interpreters.

In 1999, political intervention in the Canton of Zurich prompted a closer examination into court interpreting. The reason for this intervention was not concern about quality but high costs. One of the interpreters had charged more than a quarter of a million Swiss francs to the

District Court of Zurich for interpreting services in 1998. However, when the parliament of the Canton of Zurich scrutinized the level of salaries for court interpreters, they discovered that the legal status of interpreters as well as their level of qualifications had to be discussed rather than the costs, which turned out to be justified.³ Contrary to other areas, such as educational settings, costs for interpreters in courts cannot be reduced since laws stipulate their presence.

After the parliamentary intervention in the Canton of Zurich in 1999, awareness of the need for better qualified court interpreters increased and efforts to professionalize court interpreting intensified. The cantonal parliament therefore ordered the institutionalization of an “Interpreting Group”, an adjunct to the Supreme Court of the Canton of Zurich, to be responsible for the introduction and development of educational programs, for the administration of the register of interpreters as well as for the selection, suspension, or expulsion of interpreters from the register. In January 2004, an ordinance on interpreting came into effect.⁴

3.2 New Regulations

The aim of the interpreting ordinance is to unify formalities for interpreters (e.g. tariffs and contracts), clarify their legal status, and professionalize their work. In an initial step, the competencies of interpreters had to be defined. As the Interpreting Group was responsible for the quality of interpreting and translation services for the courts and authorities in the Canton of Zurich, the members of the Group worked out a set of guidelines and decided which qualifications were indispensable for interpreters. In the ordinance on interpreting the Interpreting Group focused on three criteria for the registration of interpreters: personal requirements, ethical and legal principles, and professional qualifications.

- **Personal requirements** specify that interpreters must have a work permit, Swiss citizenship, or a residence permit and have no criminal record. They also include reliability, punctuality, stress resistance, and availability. These criteria are necessary but are not sufficient to guarantee professional, competent interpreting.
- **Ethical and legal principles** cover neutrality, responsibility, confidentiality, and loyalty to the employer. Neutrality must be understood and ensured: untrained interpreters might mistakenly understand their role as advocates for compatriots and misrepresent content. Interpreters must also be bound by confidentiality: they are forbidden from transmitting information to uninvolved parties (cf. Criminal Law Art. 320).
- **Professional requirements** cover an understanding of legal procedures in courts and of corresponding terminology. Court interpreters must also have mastery of two languages and extensive knowledge of the relevant cultural background. In addition, their work demands knowledge of interpreting and notation techniques as well as of the code of ethics.

The professionalism strived for in the guidelines was to be reached by “selection, training, and control”, and the Interpreting Group had to suggest the appropriate measures to be taken.

³ The charge was high because of telephone checks that were extremely time-consuming and not because the interpreter was paid so well.

⁴ *Dolmetscherverordnung* November 2003 (see www.obergericht-zh.ch), only available in German.

3.3 Involvement of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting

Since the members of the Interpreting Group were judges, public prosecutors, police, and immigration officers, but not interpreters or linguists, they turned to the Institute of Translation and Interpreting of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences Winterthur (ZHW) for help in defining the language and professional requirements for court interpreters.⁵ The results of the collaboration were incorporated into the Interpreting Group's guidelines, which took effect in January 2004,⁶ and the two institutions laid the groundwork for an educational program for court interpreters.

Discussions with representatives of immigration courts and police officers as well as participation in interpreting services at trials, interrogations, and legal examinations served as further preparation for the development of educational measures. The following deficits were identified as the most frequent:

- limited knowledge of the legal system and terminology
- insufficient knowledge of interpreting techniques and of the role of interpreters
- lack of language competence (particularly in German)

In accordance with the guidelines, court interpreters already working for the authorities and courts were offered a two-day course for which each institution designed one training day (see section 3.4).⁷ The first pilot course started in November 2003 and was followed by two more in January and February 2004. All three courses were subsidized by the Interpreting Group.

3.4 Basic course for court interpreters

After the three pilot courses with 52 court interpreters in the winter of 2003/04, a basic course was institutionalized for all court interpreters listed in the Interpreting Group register. The concept for the two-day course is based on the need for specialized knowledge, interpreting and notation techniques, awareness of the code of professional ethics, development of speech training, and interpreting practice.

Aims of the course

The Interpreting Group's aims for the two-day courses are to professionalize court interpreters and to revise the list of registered interpreters in order to ensure high quality. Court interpreters must be able to interpret complex issues completely and correctly and must have a professional attitude towards interpreting. The course also pursues the goal of improving the reputation of court interpreters.

⁵ Since its inception in 1999 the Institute's Center for Continuing Education has focused on the interface between languages and professional areas. Language and the law is an area it has specialized in from the very beginning.

⁶ *Merkblatt*, January 2004 (see www.obergericht-zh.ch), only available in German.

⁷ Switzerland is by no means the first country in which measures for better qualifications of interpreters have been taken. In Europe, various educational programs have been developed in the past decades, with Germany and Austria serving as models for the Swiss program. The educational program in Magdeburg-Stendal preceded the Swiss program and was designed for a similar public with a comparable spectrum of languages, and there is also an educational program for these languages in Vienna. Representatives from both Magdeburg-Stendal and Vienna inspired and contributed to the conception of the court interpreting program in the Canton of Zurich.

Admission

Participants are selected by an admission procedure that guarantees the level of the course corresponds to its aims:

- Education: at least 9 years of schooling, completed compulsory education, or professional experience. These criteria are difficult to check from an administrative point of view.
- German test for non-native speakers: the German competence of non-native speakers certainly cannot be trained in two days, so candidates should be tested if they do not have a diploma certifying a level in German corresponding to C2 of the European portfolio.⁸ High competence in German is essential for court interpreters to be able to interpret correctly and precisely even under pressure and without the help of dictionaries.

Content

The following subjects are covered in the two-day basic course:

- legal and political specialized knowledge
- professional ethics and the role of an interpreter
- theory of interpreting techniques (consecutive interpreting, whisper interpreting, sight translation)
- interpreting practice (with language-independent exercises because of the impossibility of covering all conceivable language combinations, such as Arabian, Igbo, Urdu, etc.)
- speech and breathing techniques

Exam

About a month after the basic course there is an exam comprising a written (specialized knowledge) and an oral section (professional ethics, interpreting techniques as well as German/German language-independent interpreting). The court interpreters are tested by faculty from the Institute for Translation and Interpreting. In order to ensure that the standard of the exam corresponds to the requirements of authorities and courts, the Examining Board includes representatives of the Interpreting Group commissioners. Upon successful completion of the exam, candidates are officially registered as court interpreters in the Canton of Zurich. The courts and penal authorities are then assured of at least a basic level of knowledge and skill.

Feedback by course participants

Feedback is requested of all course participants with a view to continually optimizing course content and presentation. An example of the average evaluation of a recent course can be seen in Fig. 2. The 18 participants of this particular basic course evaluated the competence of the instructors most highly but were less satisfied with the volume of the course material and practicability.

⁸ C2 is the highest level in the European Portfolio. Non-native speakers can understand everything they hear and read and can summarize information from various written and oral sources and can render explanations and justifications very accurately. They can express themselves precisely and distinctly and can describe complex relations and nuances.

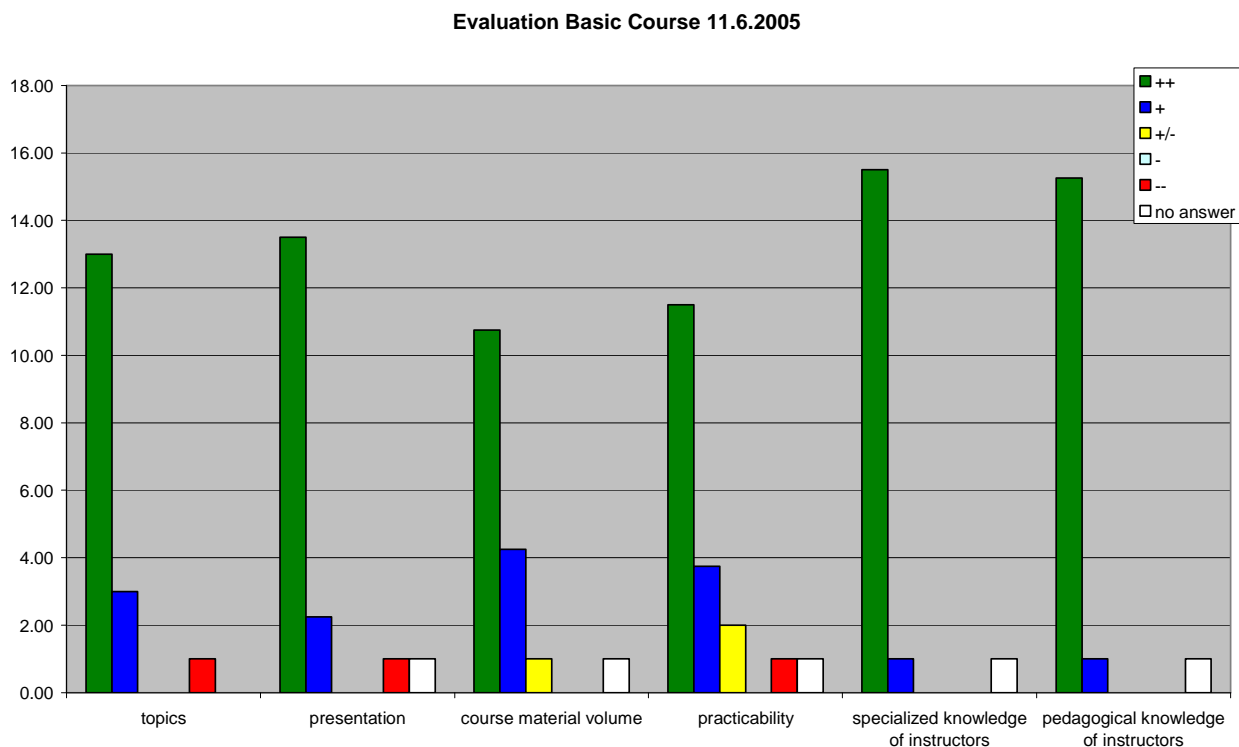


Fig. 2: Feedback by 18 participants of a Basic Course for court interpreters.

Strengths and weaknesses of the basic course

The number of proceedings with cantonal and federal authorities as well as in the courts mean that a sufficient number of interpreters must be available but the Interpreting Group demands increased professionalization, a review of the register, and improvement in the standard of court interpreting. Designed to achieve this balance, the strengths of the basic course are:

- fostering professionalization by bottom-up model
- meeting education requirement for court interpreters
- teaching by experienced interpreters
- including course content based on close cooperation of the Center of Continuing Education (ZHW) with clients (Interpreting Group representing the courts of the Canton of Zurich, immigration office, cantonal police, and penal authorities)

Inherent in this quality management process is the risk of losing a disproportionate number of interpreters because of higher standards and the difficulties in certifying enough court interpreters within a reasonable period of time. Some weaknesses of the Basic Course at present are:

- exclusion of rare minority languages
- heterogeneity of groups in the course (with respect to language competence and specialized knowledge)
- lack of testing of native languages other than German

During the transition period at the moment, both less qualified interpreters and better qualified interpreters are working in the courts because basic courses and qualifying exams are still in

progress or planned. Far more court interpreters would like to attend these courses than have had the opportunity to do so. Within the next two years, all court interpreters in the Canton of Zurich should have had the chance to attend a basic course.

3.5 Outcome of the basic course

When the three pilot courses were first advertised there was an enormous response. Most of the court interpreters not only needed (further) professional training, they also wanted to learn more about interpreting. About 300 applicants responded immediately, yet for pedagogical reasons we started with only 52 participants.

In addition to the aims of the course outlined in 3.4, we found it necessary to react to several misconceptions about interpreting mentioned by the pilot course participants such as:

- being allowed to ask questions at court or in police offices if they do not understand
- being in the position to offer legal explanations or even advice
- judging their own capabilities.

Because of the great interest in the pilot courses the Interpreting Group decided to offer the educational program on a regular basis and continue to subsidize it. The basic course has been compulsory for new applicants since April 2004 and will become so for all court interpreters by the end of 2006. The courses and exams are thus being used as a selection instrument for court interpreters in the Canton of Zurich. Although the basic course is not yet compulsory, almost one-third of all court interpreters had already enrolled in the program by July 2005. The huge increase in applications surprised both institutions (the Interpreting Group and ZHW Center for Continuing Education): obviously the training program meets a deficit experienced by a majority of court interpreters. By July 2005, eleven courses had been offered, with a total of 198 participants.

Of the 171 candidates who have taken the exams to date, 125 (73%) passed. Although the basic course is only two days long and the evaluation of the exams still has a preliminary character, they make it apparent whether candidates have acquired the specialized knowledge, whether their competence in German actually corresponds to C2 when interpreting, and whether they have analytical competence and a gift for interpreting.

Interpreters who successfully pass the exams receive more commissions from authorities and courts after their qualification, and those who fail the exams are suspended or excluded from the register. Some others decide to remove their names from the register even before they attempt the exam. The heterogeneity among course participants, a well-known problem of most courses offered by centers of continuing education, has the advantage here that interpreters can compare their competence and performance with other members in the course; in the process some realize that they had underestimated the interpreting profession and that interpreting is more than just speaking two languages.

Somewhat to our surprise, the tightening of requirements does not necessarily lead to fewer court interpreters on the register but, because of the steadily rising number of applications, to better trained, more efficient ones. The training programs in the Canton of Zurich also benefit court interpreters from other cantons as well as interpreters active in other fields, above all in medicine and education. Interest from interpreters in other parts of Switzerland and other fields may be a possible explanation for the increase in applications.

3.6 Reactions from the Supreme Court of the Canton of Zurich

After the pilot courses, the Interpreting Group evaluated the results of the courses and exams. The primary reasons for unsatisfactory performance in the exams were a lack of specialized knowledge and a limited ability to interpret.

What the Interpreting Group experienced in the exams:

- a word-for-word translation is not the basis for good interpreting
- language competence in two languages has to be high
- interpreting demands analytical skills
- preparation is a necessity
- access to information (which may include records) is essential

Measures

In addition to the two evaluation measures described in 3.4 for the basic course exam, the Interpreting Group implemented a third criterion for inclusion in the register, so there are three possibilities for selection, before and after the basic course as well as parallel to it:

- passing a high-level German exam (for which about 850 – 1300 teaching units are a prerequisite for non-native speakers of German)
- passing the exam after the basic course
- passing an interpreting test at the Center of Continuing Education (This additional criterion was introduced to test individual interpreters on demand if a judge complains about their performance.)

The decision about inclusion or expulsion from the register is always with the Interpreting Group. One of the difficulties with expulsion concerns critical languages such as Urdu or Igbo; these have to be covered even if the respective interpreters are not successful in the exams.

Initial consequences: Seminar for the commissioners

Over the last two years interpreting has become an important issue on the political agenda in the Canton of Zurich.⁹ Proof of the broader commitment by the Supreme Court of the Canton of Zurich is the institution of a so-called lunch and learn seminar on the topic for commissioners. In discussions with the members of the Interpreting Group, it became obvious that commissioners have diverse opinions about the strategies, tasks, and competence of interpreters. Yet the commissioners can contribute considerably to good performance on the part of court interpreters. The commissioners have to become aware that a successful strategy is not based on literal translation or interpreting: interpreters render meaning, not just words. The commissioners should also understand the various interpreting techniques and their appropriate application in trials, interrogations, or examinations. The demanding task of court interpreters can be eased if they are given time for preparation and access to records. Court interpreting (in all settings) can only succeed if interpreters truly understand what is said. Of course, prerequisite to this is sufficient competence with respect to special knowledge, language, and terminology, as discussed above. This competence is not static, however; interpreters must adapt continually to new situations in courts and offices and acquire new

⁹ The President of the Supreme Court of the Canton of Zurich, Dr. R. Klopfer, confirmed the importance of court interpreting in an interview in the leading Swiss daily newspaper (NZZ 2005).

legal knowledge, vocabulary, and deeper understanding of words, concepts, and terms.¹⁰ The lunch and learn seminar should serve to put the knowledge of interpreting techniques and principles on a par for all parties concerned.

4 The Future Development of Court Interpreting

4.1 Open questions

There are two pressing questions that must be considered in the context of court interpreting:

- Unknown language level

When migrant waves bring different languages into Switzerland, the courts and various authorities initially have difficulty finding interpreters. Obviously only few people are able to interpret at this stage, and sometimes court interpreters even come from neighboring countries with related languages. Just as the courts start finding interpreters more easily for a certain language, new languages arrive in Switzerland. In connection with recruiting court interpreters, there is also the issue of changing language competence and language attrition. Once immigrants become integrated in their host country, their language patterns can change and the local language (e.g. German in central and northern Switzerland) can become dominant. The children of such immigrants are even more integrated, since they are socialized and educated in German. The latter is usually their dominant language, with the other language potentially quite limited with a less elaborated code, used for household affairs and little else.

- Testing and developing competence in rare minority languages

How educational institutes can determine the language level of prospective interpreters is one of the most challenging issues when dealing with minority languages. In the educational program outlined in 3.4, the Center of Continuing Education is of course able to test whether court interpreters' German is at C2 level but finding instructors to test rare minority languages is more difficult. Even if it were possible to test court interpreters in all their languages, what measures should be taken if the languages are not elaborated enough, and how should we provide a program to improve the competence in these languages?

4.2 Further education

A two-day course is not long enough to attain interpreting expertise but is an instrument to establish the basis for professional development. Because in two days some topics can only be touched upon (as reflected in the participants' feedback), more educational programs are being planned.

- Intermediate course: 8 days long (60 lessons), with the focus on interpreting, ethics of interpreters, various interpreting techniques, internet research techniques, and interpreting exercises. The exam includes sight translation (German-German) and consecutive interpreting (L1-L2).

¹⁰ Jan Engberg (2005) discussed the evolution of concepts with the example of "murder".

- Certificate course:¹¹ divided into two parts (specialized knowledge and interpreting), there are also teaching units on specialized translation of legal texts (judgments, divorce, contracts, etc.). The exam includes consecutive interpreting (L1-L2 and vice versa).
- Coaching for interpreters with rare languages who fail the exam.

5 Final Remarks

Court interpreting is one of the most difficult yet fascinating topics in translation and interpreting studies in the 21st century and will probably remain a common activity despite or even because of increasing globalization. As outlined above, court interpreters in the Canton of Zurich are being trained along the principles of conference interpreters, with interpreting skills taught by instructors in the ZHW degree program and instructors from outside Switzerland who teach court interpreters in their own countries. (The input about special areas is provided by various experts from the courts, penal authorities, migration offices, etc.).

The court interpreters' situation is generally quite special: they usually have little or no theoretical background in translation studies, because for many of them court interpreting is not actually their profession, but rather something they feel qualified for by virtue of having lived in a host country for a certain length of time or having been brought up with another language, such as Portuguese, Tamil, or Urdu. By contrast, prospective conference interpreters usually have high competence in German, English, French, Italian and/or Spanish and can participate in regular interpreting programs with training in three languages.

Court interpreters require a theoretical basis in interpreting and notation techniques, ethics, and so on but must also know about various legal topics and legal systems and be competent in the terminology of at least two languages. Court interpreters themselves are often unaware of these requirements, which are uncontested in interpreting literature. Quite often they also seem to lack the practical side of handling terminology, databases, and search techniques. Yet terminology is essential: it is the link between specialized knowledge and language competence (Budin 2002).

The newly developed basic training courses in Zurich are an opportunity for court interpreters to become more professional. It remains to be seen whether solid programs on various levels (basic, intermediate, certificate) can be established throughout Switzerland and elsewhere for court interpreters to achieve true professionalism. Training courses are primarily a chance for court interpreters to produce better performance, but they are also a chance to improve the reputation of the profession as a whole. Finally, it is to be hoped that international cooperation and standardization for court interpreting intensifies.¹²

¹¹ These two additional programs are not part of the Interpreting Group's compulsory program as the basic course is, but the Supreme Court and the Public Prosecution Office of the Canton of Zurich (*Oberstaatsanwaltschaft*) under the leadership of Commissioner Notter are subsidizing the two programs substantially.

¹² I especially hope that European cooperation intensifies and would very much like to thank the organizers of the Euroconference 2005 in Saarbrücken for fostering cooperation.

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