

# Editorial

Issue 29 of *The Interpreters' Newsletter* is a generic issue which brings together authors from different backgrounds and regions with diverse interests in the field of interpreting and Interpreting Studies. Six papers compose this issue and explore various areas of interpreting practice, training and research. Two contributions look at training and learning opportunities in conference interpreting; one describes the outcomes of a project aiming at setting up a simultaneous interpreting service in an academic setting; one focuses on a survey relating to interpreting strategies in the field of Church interpreting; and finally, two papers provide reports on specific perspectives relating to interpreting in healthcare settings and to communication difficulties during medical interactions.

**Beatrice Costabile's** paper investigates the role played by the observation of expert simultaneous interpreters and the impact of such example-based learning in simultaneous interpreting training. Following a comprehensive inventory and discussion of theories on and applications of example-based learning, the author categorises and describes different types of practical activities to be implemented by teachers and students of conference interpreting: teacher demonstrations, guided conference observation, and drills based on online resources and interpreting corpora. Many trainers will certainly be interested in exploring some of the recommendations provided here and add them to their training toolkit.

In **Michela Bertozzi's** article, the focus is on the pilot testing phase of an innovative e-learning platform designed to enhance interpreter training, particularly within the Spanish-Italian language cohort. Through a combination of quantitative and quali-

tative analyses, the study provides evidence of the platform's effectiveness in meeting students' didactic needs and fostering significant pre- and post-training improvement. The research identifies key areas of pedagogical relevance, such as self-assessment, collaborative learning, and structured progress tracking, which were highlighted by the pilot testers. Furthermore, Bertozzi's findings reveal both language-specific and language-independent requirements for effective interpreter training. For instance, while the Spanish-Italian cohort demonstrated unique needs in collaborative training and cross-functional skill development, the broader applicability of the platform's methodologies across other language pairs also emerged. This insight sets the stage for its integration into advanced curricula, such as the "Interpreting and Technologies for Communication" program at the University of Bologna, and for the completion of additional units dedicated to continuous self-learning and collaborative practice.

**Francesco Cecchi's** study expands the discussion by delving into the evolution of spoken-language educational interpreting services at the University of Bologna. Drawing on models established in South African tertiary education, these services adapted with remarkable flexibility to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, transitioning from in-class to remote and hybrid modalities. The paper details how initial scepticism among students and lecturers was replaced by a widespread appreciation of the educational interpreter's role as an active participant in the classroom. The inclusion of interpreters in both academic discussions and logistical planning demonstrated the value of their contributions. Cecchi's analysis also highlights the high rate of service renewal requests, affirming its acceptance and effectiveness. Looking ahead, the paper outlines plans to expand the service across more courses and departments, train additional educational interpreters, and conduct further research into this unique interpreting modality. Moreover, the recorded sessions provide a resource for quality assessment, training material for interpreting students, and the construction of a corpus for studying spoken-language academic interpreting, underscoring the broader academic and professional implications of this initiative.

**Jonathan Downie's** article explores language provision in multiethnic churches and its relationship to church language provision. Through an international, multi-denominational survey, the study investigates how churches align their interpreting services with their identity and priorities, the characteristics of churches offering interpreting, and the impact of these services on satisfaction and future planning. Despite being constrained by the sample size, the study uncovers meaningful trends. Larger, more diverse congregations are more likely to provide interpreting and other language services, reflecting their commitment to multilingual inclusion. Interestingly, a significant number of these churches employ professional interpreters, challenging assumptions in the existing literature. Churches with interpreting services also report higher satisfaction levels and a desire to continue or expand their offerings, linking interpreting provision to both community engagement and institutional aspirations. Downie's findings open important avenues for further research, particularly on the interplay between church identity and language services, and their broader implications for interpreting in community and social settings.

In the fifth contribution, the reader's attention is drawn to the field of healthcare interpreting. In this contribution, **Ineke Crezee, Shirley Jülich and Emiliano Zucchi** focus on the findings from a study about patient and family behaviour affecting the role of professional healthcare interpreters working in Australian settings. The authors

review several codes of ethics where discrepancies about the role of the healthcare interpreter have been noted. The survey findings reveal that patients and their families do not have a correct/realistic view of the role of professional healthcare interpreters, which can lead to rejecting the participation of an interpreter, to questioning the concepts of confidentiality or impartiality, or even to the inability of the interpreter to perform adequately in situations where emotions run high. The authors recommend that more be done by the various T&I stakeholders (researchers, clinicians, professional associations, governments, language service providers, etc.) to raise awareness of this role among patients and families.

The second paper dealing with medical interpreting, and the last of this issue, is co-authored by an interdisciplinary team from KU Leuven, **Mohamed Irfan, Antoon Cox, Marc Sabbe, Heidi Salaets and Birgitte Schoenmakers**. The authors focus on communication difficulties during medical interactions due to language discordance and on subsequent risks affecting patients' care. They present a pilot study aiming at raising awareness (via a simulation) among future clinicians on potential strategies to implement when patients are from a different linguistic and cultural background and interpreters are not available or not requested, with a specific focus on the use of non-verbal communication and English as *lingua franca*. The post-intervention findings suggest a better understanding by trainees of the need and ways to establish common ground, mutual understanding and trust during such medical interactions. Though not primarily about interpreting per se, their study presents some potential interesting relevance for interprofessional education involving interpreting and medicine students and underlines the importance of interdisciplinarity for interpreter education and Interpreting Studies.

We would like to thank the authors of these papers for their submissions and their work during the editing process. Special thanks too to all the reviewers and the proof-reader involved for finding the time to assist us all along.

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