The growing role of the Interpreter as a Mediator in Negotiation

Die verstärkte Rolle des Dolmetschers als Mediator bei Verhandlungen

Mag. Dott. Anna Maria Valle
Conference & Legal Interpreter, Court Translator
Graz - Austria
SKILLS required for a ...(?)

Oral/written comprehension - Listen/Read AND understand information /ideas

Oral/written expression - Ability to transmit information /ideas

Speech clarity - so that other can understand you

Inductive reasoning - Ability to combine information /find relationship among them

Active Listening - Giving full attention to what others say

Active learning - Understand implications of new information

Information ordering - ability to arrange things/information in pattern

Memorisation - ability to remember

Social perceptiveness - being aware of others’ reactions and understanding why

Negotiation skill - bringing others together
Mediation vs. Interpreting

**Mediation** = kooperative Verhandlung zwischen versch. Beteiligteninteressen
the cooperative negotiation between different interests of the parties
mehrstufiges, streng strukturiertes Konfliktregelungsverfahren /
rigorously, in several segment structured process to conflict solution
http://www.oebm.at/cms/index.php?id=62
is a form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediation

Officially since the 1970ies, bursted out in the 1990ies

**Interpreting** / =
the facilitating of communication
to enable people (with different languages) to communicate with each other by conveying the ideas which they express
http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_5012/
„Dolmetschen“< "dilmaç" = mediator between 2 parties

Officially ever since people (different cultures) communicate
The Harvard Concept

Create a relationship: create the stress-less atmosphere, give comfy, comfortable, secure feeling.

Be aware what’s going on: Get the point and be able to transmit gathered information /ideas

Ruling the play: clear rules > fair play; administrator, not player

Summarise results: Ability to combine information, find relationship among them, forward them without prejudice/comments (objectively)

Neutral = do not take part

Be “beyond the things”: practitioner has no advisory role, has to be impartial (all-partial), dispassionated
Who does it best?

Building bridges - being connecting link
Managing the process - by giving communication rhythm, note down partial results,
Leading to consent - not compromising, but win-win result
Command of language - appropriate use of terminology, idiomatic, registers
Neutralise killer phrases - distension strategy

The Interpreter’s PLUS

Concentration skills drilled in multitasking
Non monocultural knowledge i.e. awareness of traditions, social practice and structure…
Professional command of languages
- on various levels/registers
- in different cultural fields
- ability of rapid paraphrasing
Mediation vs. Interpreting

**Legal definition / protection?**

**Mediation:**
- Directive 2008/52/EC

**Interpreting**
- (gener. Language mediation):
  - NO legislation /directives (EU)
  - Only „indirectly“ mentioned / required in other context (i.e. criminal law, asylum, etc.)
  - NO registered profession (except for some field, like Court)
  - NO unified curricula for training / teaching

http://www.mediatorenliste.justiz.gv.at
Summarising….

**INTERPRETER** vs. **MEDIATOR**

**Required Skills**
- communication
- listening/summarising
- connecting people
- memorisation...

**Profession exists** ever since
- no univoque definition

**Operational fields**
- several
- always multicultural

---

**Conflict /Dispute**

**Operational fields**
- usually monocultural
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training / Curriculum</th>
<th>INTERPRETER</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>MEDIATOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ca. 180/240 ECTS</td>
<td>200 /220 h. (=80/90 ECTS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>basically consistent (Harvard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(different approaches monitored by law due to different training theories)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Recognition</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profess. Recognition/</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES (A, since 2004)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remuneration</td>
<td>ca. € 600,-/day</td>
<td>1.200,-/day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= unjustified discrimination
Next steps to professional advancement

BE AWARE about your role, tasks and abilities, and RESPONSIBILITY as an interpreter.

Spread information about the required abilities, skills, and essential role of interpreters.

Awake awareness about the differences between “professional” (trained and qualified) and “other” (forget false shyness and humility).

Integrate/perfect curricula with some special courses / training units on Mediation (Harvard Concept) > emphasize professional qualities.
Erfolg besteht darin, dass man genau die Fähigkeiten hat, die im Moment gefragt sind.

*Success is to have the skills and abilities just in time, when they are required.*

Henry Ford

... and endorse and point them out clearly!

Anna Maria Valle

GRAZIE - THANK YOU - OBRIGADA for your attention