Translation for Dialogue amongst cultures. The case of Community and Public Service Interpreting

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Keynote address: Community Interpreting research and how it can influence change

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Abstract: Community Interpreting (aka Public Service Interpreting), has been neglected as an academic discipline and as a subject of research, until relatively recently. Discourse analytical and ethnographic studies (e.g. Wadensjo, 1998; Berk-Seligson, 1990; Hale, 1999; Angelelli, 2004) have described the practices of different practitioners in different settings and countries. The impact of the interpreter's performance has been studied in some experimental research studies (Berk-Seligson, 1990; Hale, 2004). Survey based studies have explored role, working conditions, and user perceptions (e.g. Ozolins, 2004; Lee, 2009; Hale, 2011). The cited studies, conducted by interpreting scholars, have been instrumental in developing the theories of community interpreting and the curriculum for the education and training of practitioners. However, the impact on the service users, on policy and on interpreter working conditions has not been immediately evident. This paper will present an overview of the different multidisciplinary research projects the author is involved in. It will highlight the importance of collaboration with other experts and give concrete examples of how such research is leading to positive changes.

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