

The multiplicity and dynamics of the interpreter's roles in mediating cultural differences: a qualitative inquiry based on an international collaborative teacher professional development programme

Tianyi Wang & Colleen McLaughlin

To cite this article: Tianyi Wang & Colleen McLaughlin (2023) The multiplicity and dynamics of the interpreter's roles in mediating cultural differences: a qualitative inquiry based on an international collaborative teacher professional development programme, *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 23:4, 414-428, DOI: [10.1080/14708477.2022.2112208](https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2022.2112208)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2022.2112208>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 30 Aug 2022.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 1657



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)



Citing articles: 1 [View citing articles](#)

RESEARCH ARTICLE



The multiplicity and dynamics of the interpreter's roles in mediating cultural differences: a qualitative inquiry based on an international collaborative teacher professional development programme

Tianyi Wang and Colleen McLaughlin

Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the role of interpreters in addressing cultural differences in the context of a cross-cultural collaborative teacher professional development project. Based on positioning theory, this study employed interpreter-mediated interactions and interviews to reveal the complex roles that interpreters played when interpreting culture-related terms. Findings revealed that interpreters' roles were shifting between those of transmitters of information, cultural insiders and constructors of shared understandings between interlocutors. Notably, the lack of training in this specialised field obliged interpreters to rely mainly on their personal experiences to judge which role they should play in the face of cultural differences.



本文探讨了教师跨文化合作培训项目中口译员在翻译文化差异时的角色定位问题。基于定位理论，通过分析口译介导的对话及相关采访，本研究阐释了口译员在处理文化负载词中所扮角色的复杂性。研究结果显示口译员在信息传递者、文化局内者与对话双方共识建构者这三重角色之间的不断转换。值得注意的是，在这种特定场合里，由于相关培训的欠缺，口译员往往只能凭借自身的文化背景来酌情处置交流双方之间所出现的文化差异现象。

KEYWORDS

Interpreters' roles; interpreting cultural differences; positioning theory; interpreting in international collaboration; training for interpreters

Introduction

Interpreting culture has drawn increasing research attention amid the rapid growth of intercultural communication (e.g. Hale, 2014; Woodin et al., 2021). As revealed by current literature (e.g. Gu & Wang, 2021; Vargas-Urpi, 2014), how to address cultural differences is one of the most important yet challenging aspects of interpreting services for cross-cultural collaboration. However, although the importance of interpreters in mediating cultural differences has been recognised in previous studies (e.g. Angelelli, 2004), little research has probed into the complex roles that interpreters play in the face of cultural differences and the reasons behind the dynamics of these roles. Moreover, compared to research on medical or court interpreting (e.g. Angelelli, 2004; Baraldi, 2012; Cortabarría, 2015), much less attention has been paid to interpreting in international collaborative work. This is despite that interpreting has become an integral part of and significantly influences the quality of international collaboration (Woodin et al., 2021). Therefore, underpinned by positioning

CONTACT Tianyi Wang  tw403@cam.ac.uk  Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, CB2 8PQ, UK

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

theory, this study conducted a qualitative inquiry into the multiple roles that two interpreters played in handling cultural differences when they provided interpreting services for a teacher professional development (TPD) project which was developed by a leading UK university and delivered to schools in a region in northern China. Since this project focused on the localisation of learner-centred education in China through in-depth collaboration between Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educators, the development of shared understandings between the two sides became essential. This situation provided an opportunity to explore how interpreters addressed cultural heterogeneity with regard to the lived complexities of cross-cultural communication. Audio-taped interpreter-mediated interactions and interviews were collected to investigate the dynamics of the interpreters' positioning when coping with cultural differences and the reasons behind the formation of such positioning. Notably, as a small-scale qualitative inquiry, the study was exploratory in nature and aimed to draw research attention to the dynamic construction of interpreters' roles in the face of cultural differences.

Literature review

Culture difference and interpreting

There is renewed research interest in cultural difference in the field of translation and interpreting amid the increasing need to address cultural multiplicity in intercultural communication (e.g. Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2012; Zhu et al., 2020). Before reviewing the literature on interpreting cultural differences, it is first necessary to distinguish this concept from cultural diversity. While the latter underscores the multiculturalism of a globalised world and celebrates 'hybridity and in-between-ness', culture difference focuses on unfolding the tensions between different cultural standpoints and revealing the voices of minority cultures (Kramsch & Zhu, 2020, p. 4). It should also be mentioned that the notion of culture here is not defined in an essentialist approach in which individuals are labelled with unchanging cultural characteristics. Rather, culture is understood as a highly dynamic and hybrid construct which is constantly reproduced in social actions (e.g. Baraldi, 2012; Holliday, 2013). Therefore, an investigation into cultural difference does not advocate the strengthening of cultural stereotypes but draws attention to the underlying struggles and ambivalence in the course of intercultural communication.

How to address cultural differences is a heatedly discussed topic when researching interpreter-mediated interactions. According to Baraldi (2012), interpreting shoulders the responsibility of coordinating interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds and constructing shared understandings during cross-cultural interactions. From this perspective, interpreting needs to elucidate the implicit cultural perspectives embedded in the interlocutors' words. Hence, regarding cultural differences, the focus of interpreting should not merely be on the 'product' (i.e. the interpreted dialogue) but on the meaning-making 'process' during which distinct cultural standpoints are investigated and intercultural conflicts are mediated (Woodin et al., 2021). To achieve this aim, interpreting may entail the construction of an interactive environment and of a 'third culture' which hybridises the cultural presuppositions of both sides (Baraldi, 2009). In short, interpreting can play a much more complex role than that of a conduit of information, especially when it comes to addressing cultural heterogeneity.

Notably, since the manifestations of cultural differences are not fixed but vary across contexts (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008), it may not be easy for interpreters to identify the cues that indicate the presence of cultural differences. As suggested in Woodin et al.'s (2021) research on international development projects, the context-specific meanings embodied in local languages could be easily overlooked during translation and interpreting, resulting in local cultural perspectives being unheard. Given such complexity involved in handling cultural differences, it becomes important to look at the role of interpreters in intercultural communication.

The role of interpreters in addressing cultural differences

A review of current literature suggests that interpreters are more like active participants than merely transmitters of information in intercultural communication (e.g. Angelelli, 2004; Wadensjö, 2013). As Angelelli (2004) points out, interpreters exert agency and impact on the dynamics of conversation in the process of interpreting. For example, the way that interpreters deal with the forms of address (Schäffner, 2015), modality of the discourse (Gu & Wang, 2021), or even nonverbal behaviours (Mason, 2014) can significantly influence the communication between the interlocutors. Moreover, rather than mechanical language experts, interpreters always need to ensure that their interpreting aligns with their positioning and the context-specific requirements, which adds to the complexity of their roles in different contexts. For instance, when addressing political and diplomatic discourse, interpreters may contribute to facilitating global knowledge dissemination and reinforcing the positive images of the political parties that they belong to (Gu & Wang, 2021). When it comes to interpreting in schools, interpreters may help with the establishment of trust between schools and students (Rudvin & Tomassini, 2008). In religious settings, interpreters have been found to collaborate with preachers and co-construct the meaning of theological discourse (Hild, 2017; Hokkanen, 2017). Based on this evidence, it can be inferred that interpreters' roles differ significantly based on their understanding of their positions in situated contexts.

Amid the discussions on interpreters' roles, special attention has been paid to the multiplicity and complexity associated with their responsibilities for mediating cultural difference (e.g. Angelelli, 2004; Hsieh, 2008). Such complexity is first related to interpreters' need to strike a delicate balance between clarifying cultural differences and maintaining impartiality during interpreting (Dysart-Gale, 2005). On the one hand, interpreters are supposed to create an environment for implicit cultural beliefs to be understood by all the interlocutors and for cultural standpoints to be negotiated. Therefore they may act as 'diamond connoisseurs' and 'miners' who identify the issues that need further discussion and encourage interlocutors to share useful information (Angelelli, 2004). They also need to play the role of the clarifiers who interject 'specific information in cases when cultural differences create incommensurability in messages' (Dysart-Gale, 2007, p. 239) and ensure that interlocutors can comprehend the cultural framework that the other side is drawing on (Angelelli, 2012). For example, in Angelelli's (2012) study on medical interpreting, the interpreter was found to help the doctor and the patient understand how the rating scale of 'pain' worked in each other's culture. Lastly, interpreters may create new cultural forms which hybridise the characteristics of different cultures (Baraldi, 2012). Gu and Wang (2021), for instance, found that interpreters might recontextualise culture-related discourse and generate additional meaning potential when interpreting news. In short, when handling cultural differences, the roles played by interpreters can be multiple and dynamic. On the other hand, however, interpreters' interference in mediating cultural differences may run the risk of overgeneralising cultural presuppositions (e.g. Vargas-Urpi, 2014) or inserting personal cultural beliefs into the interpreted dialogue (e.g. Dysart-Gale, 2007). This situation raises the question regarding the extent to which interpreters should play the role of cultural mediators (Davies, 2012). Admittedly, total objectivity is nearly impossible in real-life interpreting, as interpreters are also individuals with distinct cultural preconceptions and interpreting is a meaning-making process based on the efforts of all the parties involved in intercultural communication (Davies, 2012). Yet interpreters are still expected to balance the need of transmitting information, without undermining its original meaning, and that of constructing shared understandings between interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds (Dysart-Gale, 2007).

Another factor that adds to the complexity of interpreters' roles in addressing cultural differences is the different and often ambiguous expectations imposed on them across contexts. For example, in Gibb and Good's (2014) study of the interpreting services for refugee determination procedures in the UK and France, it was found that different institutions had different preferences regarding the role of interpreters (e.g. whether they should offer a literal translation or explain underlying social and cultural presuppositions). Moreover, although in cases such as court (Gibb

& Good, 2014) or medical interpreting (Dysart-Gale, 2007), codes of conduct have been developed to guide interpreting services, these codes are often not flexible enough for interpreters to address real-life problems and may even give contradictory guidance. Therefore, in the process of interpreting, interpreters need not only to decide when to mediate the communication between interlocutors, but also to work out their expected roles in different tasks.

Although researchers have touched upon the multiple roles played by interpreters in the face of cultural differences, few studies have investigated the dynamics of, and especially the reasons behind the fluidity of, these roles across contexts. This situation makes further research necessary, particularly when we consider the complex or even conflicting duties which interpreters need to shoulder when handling cultural heterogeneity. Moreover, despite the growing interest in the roles of interpreters in intercultural communication, research in this area has been mainly related to specialised fields in which codes of conduct are established and professional training is available, such as medical (e.g. Angelelli, 2004; Baraldi, 2012) and court interpreting (Cortabarría, 2015). However, due to the growth of cross-cultural communication in most aspects of social and public life, interpreting services are employed in an increasingly wider range of settings, for example, field research (Sepielak et al., 2019) and international development projects (Woodin et al., 2021). Interpreters' duties in these activities are no less complex than those in health care or community services, but they normally receive much less guidance and training for their work (Sepielak et al., 2019). This situation makes it crucial to investigate a much broader range of contexts in which the complexity of interpreters' roles in addressing cultural differences can be further revealed. From this perspective, a study on the formation of interpreters' roles with regard to cultural differences in the context of a cross-cultural collaborative TPD project becomes important.

Theoretical framework: positioning theory

To investigate the dynamics and complexity involved in interpreters' roles when they addressed cultural differences, the study adopted positioning theory as the theoretical framework. This theory conceptualises how individuals position themselves and others during discursive practices and social interactions, on the basis of which the reasons behind individuals' implicit and explicit acts are examined (Davies & Harré, 1990). Position, specifically, is theorised as 'clusters of beliefs about how rights and duties are distributed in the course of an episode of personal interaction and the taken-for-granted practices in which most of these beliefs are concretely realized' (Harré et al., 2009, p. 9). In other words, positioning theory sheds light on the normative constraints and opportunities based on which individuals construct their thoughts and behaviours in the real world (Harré et al., 2009).

One distinguishing feature of positioning theory lies in its conceptualisation of individuals' positions as fluid, disrupted, multifaceted and contextually-based (Van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). This is because individuals' understanding of their rights and duties is constantly changing during their engagement in social activities, leading to different contextual conditions when they enact their positions (Harré et al., 2009). Put differently, positioning entails a process during which individuals interpret and negotiate their rights and duties based on their interactions with the situated contexts. From this perspective, positioning theory not only enables discussions on the changeable positions which individuals may take across time and space but also on the rationale behind such dynamics (Harré et al., 2009). The potential of this theory in illustrating the complexity of interpreting has also been recognised in the literature. Based on a discussion on interpreters' linguistic and paralinguistic behaviours, Mason (2014) has demonstrated the dynamic construction of interpreters' roles from the perspective of reflexive and interactive positioning. Specifically, reflexive positioning refers to how 'one positions oneself' and interactive positioning addresses how one 'positions another' (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 48). These theoretical constructs also provided a promising lens for the present study to investigate the changeable roles which interpreters may perform in the face of cultural differences and the reasons behind the construction of these roles.

In short, underpinned by positioning theory, this study discussed how and why interpreters adjusted their roles when addressing cultural differences in a cross-cultural TPD project. Two research questions were raised specifically:

- (1) What roles did interpreters play when interpreting cultural differences and how did these roles influence their interpreting practices?
- (2) Why did interpreters shift their roles in the course of interpreting?

Methodology

Research context

The present study employed qualitative methods to investigate the role played by interpreters when handling cultural differences in the context of cross-cultural collaboration. This research is part of a larger study which focused on the implementation of a cross-cultural collaborative TPD project. In this project, a leading UK university sent teacher educators to a newly-developed district in a provincial capital city in northern China and helped principals and teachers from local primary and secondary schools to launch pedagogical reforms. The project aimed to develop a localised version of learner-centred education in China and consisted of workshops and class observations. In the workshops, the UK teacher educators delivered lectures on the theories and practices relating to learner-centred approaches. The workshops were followed by classroom observations in which one of the UK teacher educators observed how Chinese teachers implemented learner-centred pedagogies in their classes. There were ten classroom observations in total and each of them was followed by an after-class discussion during which the UK teacher educator discussed with Chinese teachers regarding how learner-centred education could be localised with consideration given to contextual differences between China and other countries. In this process, how to address cultural differences and achieve shared understandings between the UK teacher educator and Chinese teachers became crucial and the role of interpreters should not be underestimated. This study therefore focused on the interpreting services provided in these follow-up discussions with the aim of unravelling interpreters' complex roles when they coped with cultural differences.

Participants

Two interpreters (pseudonym: Xiayi and Dongxue) were employed to provide consecutive interpreting services for the UK teacher educator and Chinese teachers in the after-class discussions and both of them agreed to participate in the research. The interpreters were English teachers from the participating schools in this project and both had accumulated interpreting experiences beforehand. Therefore neither interpreter was a professional interpreter at the time of the project but each was familiar with the basic requirements for interpreting. They spoke Chinese as their first language but could use English at the professional level. In addition to the two interpreters, seven out of the ten teachers who had their classes observed and later engaged in the after-class discussions were also invited to join this study, as what they meant originally in their usage of some culture-bound terms needed to be checked after the discussion. Every teacher was assigned a code (from A to G) during data analysis. Given the limited size of participants, it should be mentioned that this exploratory study did not aim for any generalisable conclusions.

Data collection and analysis

Audio-taped interpreter-mediated interactions were employed as the primary source of data in this study with a particular focus on how the interpreters handled the culture-bound terms used in the Chinese teachers' utterances. This is because the two interpreters regarded it as easier for them to

cope with the cultural implications embedded in Chinese terms due to their familiarity with Chinese culture and contexts. Specifically, seven out of the ten after-class discussion sessions (average length 45 min) were audio-recorded and used for analysis (the other three sessions were not selected because the teachers who taught them had not been interviewed). Chinese terms with culture- or context-specific meanings were selected and how they were interpreted were analysed as a way to understand interpreters' positioning in the interaction. The identification of these culture-bound terms was based on interpreters' reactions (i.e. whether they tried to reveal the implicit cultural beliefs embedded in some phrases) and the first author's judgement (Chinese is the first author's first language). To reduce the possibility that the selection of culture-bound terms might have been influenced by the researcher's personal bias, the terms that had not been addressed by the interpreters but were identified by the first author as containing cultural implications were either discussed with the interpreters or checked with the Chinese teachers in the follow-up interviews. During data analysis, the interpreter-mediated interactions were transcribed in a broad way (e.g. markers of intonation not being featured). This is first because the main focus of this study was how interpreters addressed specific culture-bound terms rather than how they interpreted the whole conversation. Moreover, as Mason (2006) has suggested, follow-up interviews could be more effective than narrow transcriptions of interpreter-mediated discourse when researchers want to explore interpreters' underlying intentions, so this study used interviews as a complement to the interpreter-mediated interaction data (as discussed later). Subsequent to transcribing, open coding was conducted. At this stage, how interpreters handled culture-specific terms was highlighted and the linguistic features relating to their positioning (e.g. orientation to others) were marked. Literature on interpreters' roles (Angelelli, 2004; Dysart-Gale, 2005; Hsieh, 2008; Showstack, 2021) was then visited to assist the categorisation of initial codes into analytical themes. Moreover, the positioning theory, especially from the perspective of reflexive and interactive positioning, was drawn on to analyse the formation of the interpreters' positioning when addressing cultural differences. Lastly, as the interactions between interpreters and other interlocutors were sometimes investigated for a deeper understanding of their positioning, Baraldi's (2012) study on interpreters' reflexive coordination during dialogic interaction was also referred to during data analysis.

In addition to audio-taped interactions, a short interview (average length 12 min) with the interpreter was conducted immediately after each of the seven discussion sessions. During the interview, their attitudes towards how to address cultural differences and the reasons behind their choices of how to interpret some culture-bound terms were broached. The aim of these interviews was to generate more in-depth data regarding interpreters' positioning when dealing with cultural differences. The interviews were later coded according to two research questions, namely, the role played by the interpreters in the face of culture-bound terms and the formation of such positioning. Positioning theory was also referred to at this stage to synthesise codes into analytical themes and deepen the analysis of why the interpreters constantly shifted their roles in intercultural communication. Lastly, the seven teachers who had their classes observed were briefly interviewed subsequent to each after-class discussion, during which what they meant originally in their usage of some culture-bound terms was checked. The aim was to enhance the accuracy of the identification of culture-bound terms and to investigate whether the interpreter-mediated discourse captured the cultural richness embedded in the original utterances.

Findings

The analysis of interpreter-mediated interactions and interviews suggested that the positioning of interpreters was dynamic across contexts. While they sometimes played the role of transmitters of information who did not probe into the cultural differences between the Chinese expressions and their English equivalents, they could also work as insiders of Chinese culture and illustrate the implicit meanings of cultural-bound terms in other cases. They might even help with the

establishment of mutual understanding by requesting more information from the Chinese teachers or pointing out the existence of conceptual differences between the interlocutors. However, without sufficient guidance and training for interpreters in this specialised field, the construction of their roles with respect to interpreting cultural differences seemed to be mainly related to their personal experiences and understanding of the project.

Positioning as transmitters of information

Data analysis revealed that the first role that the two interpreters played in addressing culture-bound terms was that of transmitters of information, which means that they focused mainly on looking for the English equivalents for the Chinese expressions. In this case, the culture- or context-specific implications embedded in the Chinese terms were generally not explored. One example from the interpreter, Xiayi, is presented below (words in *italics* is the culture-bound term):

- 01 Teacher E: 今天在课堂上很多发言的都是 *学困生* [Chinese pinyin: *xuekunsheng*], 我觉得这是一个成功。
 02 Xiayi: Today, many students who shared their opinions in class were *poor students* [how '*xuekunsheng*' was interpreted]. I regard it as a success in my class.

In this example, the Chinese phrase '*xuekunsheng*' was interpreted as 'poor students'. However, according to the Chinese teacher in the follow-up interview, the meaning of this phrase should be 'students who receive extra attention from teachers both in and after class due to their lack of self-discipline or poor academic performance.' Improving these students' performance constituted an important part of local teachers' work. Therefore, although 'poor students' seemed to be a similar expression to the Chinese phrase '*xuekunsheng*', the former did not fully capture the contextual background associated with the latter. From this perspective, the interpreter did not reveal the cultural implications behind this expression. Moreover, a closer look at the discourse shows that Xiayi referred to Teacher E in the first person ('I regard it ...'). This also indicated her reflexive positioning as a conduit of information, as she lowered her presence in the interaction and reflected in English nearly the exact words uttered by the Chinese teacher.

This situation was also identifiable in other interpreter-mediated interactions, which might have sometimes hindered the UK teacher educator from gaining an in-depth understanding of the Chinese context. The following excerpt demonstrates an example, which occurred when the Chinese teacher and the UK teacher educator were discussing how to promote collaborative learning in the local class:

- 01 Teacher D: 我觉得让孩子们学会合作很重要, 所以我这学期让他们去做 '*使命宣言*' [Chinese pinyin: *shiming xuanyan*], 包括让他们积极参与班级活动, 保持教室整洁等等。
 02 Dongxue: The teacher said that she has realised the importance for children to learn how to work together, eh, how to collaborate. So this term she asked her students to have *a statement, eh, a statement for their mission. Well, it is something like class rules* [how '*shiming xuanyan*' was interpreted]. Students are encouraged to participate in class activities, keep the classroom clean and so on.

In this excerpt, although Dongxue referred to Teacher D in the third person, she still tried to reflect in English the exact words used by the teacher. This can be inferred from her initial attempt to translate '*shiming xuanyan*' in a word-by-word manner ('a statement for their mission'). When this way of interpreting did not make full sense in English, Dongxue used the term 'class rules' to convey the meaning. Although this phrase was accessible to the UK teacher educator, it could not illustrate the contextual specificity implicated in the word '*shiming xuanyan*', as revealed by the follow-up interview with the Chinese teacher:

- The researcher: Could you explain more about '*shiming xuanyan*'?
 Teacher D: Our Chinese think highly of collective values. So to promote collaborative learning in my class, I think that the first thing is to cultivate students' identification with the class and

'shiming xuanyan' is a very important step. When students discussed about their missions, namely, the contributions they could make to and the responsibility they should shoulder for the class, I could see that they were more identified with the class culture and the importance of collaborating with their classmates. Such identification is the basis for collaborative learning.

It is evident from this excerpt that there is a significant cultural difference between 'class rules' and *'shiming xuanyan'*, as the Chinese phrase placed more emphasis on the cultivation of students' identification with the class, a vivid manifestation of collectivism in local context. However, rather than discussing the hidden meaning of this culture-bound term, the interpreter chose to interpret it in a rather decontextualised way, indicating her reflexive positioning as a transmitter of information.

Reasons behind the positioning as transmitters of information

The follow-up communication with the interpreters further substantiated that they were likely to position themselves only as transmitters of information when they regarded the explanation for the hidden meanings behind some culture-bound terms as unimportant for enhancing the communication between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator. According to Xiayi and Dongxue, the discussions on cultural differences were both time consuming and attention demanding, which made it nearly impossible for them to identify and clarify the difference between every culture-bound term and its English equivalent during interpreting. This situation drove them to be selective when handling culture-bound terms, as Xiayi reported:

It is impossible for me to address or even to identify all the cultural differences. My main duty is to transmit information and help the communication to flow in a smooth way, so I first need to make sure that the interpreted discourse is accurate and comprehensible. Therefore, I may not always probe into the differences between the Chinese expressions and their English counterparts, especially when they do not hinder the communication between the two sides.

As demonstrated in the excerpt, Xiayi prioritised her responsibility for transmitting information over mediating cultural differences if she did not regard the differences as barriers to mutual understanding. This may explain why she interpreted Chinese terms in a relatively decontextualised way in the aforementioned scenarios. This view was shared by Dongxue, as she would also neglect the differences between the interpreted discourse and the original expressions if such differences did not 'significantly influence the communication between the interlocutors'.

Interestingly, with respect to which kinds of cultural differences were 'unimportant', both interpreters admitted that the decision was made on a very subjective basis, as they had received no guidelines or training regarding when they should point out these differences. Dongxue suggested, for example:

My decision regarding when I should pay attention to the cultural differences during interpreting totally depends on my personal judgement. There are no guidance on when we should address these differences. I admit that I cannot always make the right decision.

As indicated in the excerpt, the interpreters were not sure about which types of cultural differences needed special attention during the interpreting process. This situation seemed to add to their difficulty in positioning themselves when coping with cultural differences.

Positioning as insiders of Chinese culture

While the interpreters tended to position themselves as transmitters of information if they did not consider it necessary to explain the context-specific implications behind some terms, they were likely to play a much more active role in other cases. For example, both interpreters were found to position themselves as insiders of Chinese culture when the teachers' utterances contained typical Chinese cultural elements, such as Confucianism and the College Entrance Examination.

Specifically, they would add additional explanations for these terms in order to help the UK teacher educator understand the underlying cultural meanings. One example from Xiayi is cited below:

- 01 Teacher A: 我们的传统里很讲究师道尊严 [Chinese pinyin: *shidao zunyan*], 但我觉得现在是时候要更关注学生了。
- 02 Xiayi: In our tradition, we emphasise on teachers', eh, teachers' dignity. Well, it means that teachers are held in a higher position than students and teachers should be highly, highly respected and their instructions should be followed [how '*shidao zunyan*' was interpreted]. But the teacher thinks that it is the time for us to pay more attention to students.
- 03 Xiayi: (To Teacher A): 我刚才解释了一下“师道尊严”的文化内涵, 因为这个在咱们文化里很重要嘛。 [I was giving extra explanation for the cultural implications behind '*shidao zunyan*', because it is very important in our culture.].
- 04 Teacher A: (to Xiayi) 对对, 这个很重要, 你看着需要的地方就帮忙解释解释。 [Yes, this is very important. Please add extra explanation when needed.]
- 05 Xiayi: 好的。 [OK.]

As revealed in this example, Xiayi first tried to translate the Chinese term '*shidao zunyan*' in a literal way ('teachers' dignity') but then decided to expand and reformulate the Chinese teacher's original utterances. Such renditional reformation helped to reveal the cultural richness behind the term. Her follow-up interaction with Teacher A (Turn 03) clearly demonstrated her reflexive positioning as a cultural insider who helped the UK teacher educator understand Chinese educational tradition. Her usage of 'our culture' (Turn 03) when discussing why she provided extra explanations for '*shidao zunyan*' also substantiated her solidarity with Chinese culture in this case. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Teacher A engaged in interactive positioning by giving positive feedback to Xiayi's choice (Turn 04), which further strengthened the interpreter's determination to play the role of a cultural insider (Turn 05).

Reasons behind the positioning as cultural insiders

The follow-up interviews with the interpreters suggested that their tendency to position themselves as cultural insiders was closely related to their sense of duty with respect to helping the UK teacher educator understand the local context, especially when it came to 'the essential parts' of Chinese culture. Specifically, being the interpreters and native Chinese speakers at the same time, both interpreters regarded it as their responsibility to reveal the complexity embedded in some culture-bound terms to the UK teacher educator. For example, Xiayi explained the reason for her choice of adding explanations for the term '*shidao zunyan*' as follows:

It is evident that '*shidao zunyan*' is very important in our culture. So I think that I should explain this tradition in more detail to ensure that the UK teacher educator could understand why teachers are held in such a high position in China. Anyway, as the interpreter and the person who understands Chinese culture, I should help to bridge the cultural gap.

Therefore Xiayi had the awareness of clarifying the implicit meanings behind some culture-bound terms when she considered these terms important for developing mutual understanding between the interlocutors. This view was shared by Dongxue who also agreed that she would provide further explanations if the Chinese expressions 'touched upon essential Chinese values'.

It is nevertheless notable that the interpreters' judgement regarding which culture-bound terms represented 'essential Chinese values' was solely based on their personal understanding. Dongxue and Xiayi even held slightly different opinions in this respect. Xiayi, for example, suggested that she would provide additional explanations for the terms relating to Chinese educational traditions, such as the beliefs of Confucius or other ancient Chinese educators. Dongxue, however, paid more attention to the expressions pertaining to current educational system in China, for instance, the college admission mechanism or national education reforms. This situation implied that the interpreters' decisions on when they should play the role of cultural insiders were mainly related to their personal understanding of Chinese culture.

Positioning as constructors of shared understandings between the interlocutors

In addition to culture insiders, the interpreters might also position themselves as constructors of shared understandings between the interlocutors during interpreting. First, both interpreters were found to facilitate intercultural communication by requesting more context-specific information from the Chinese teachers. This situation was most likely to happen when the conversation was related to the implementation of learner-centred education in local schools, such as the construction of learner-centred classes or the role of teachers in collaborative learning. The following example is cited from a dialogue when the Chinese teacher and the UK teacher educator were discussing how to cultivate a culture of collaborative learning in the school:

- 01 Teacher F: 小组合作意识需要时间。现在他们是三年级，到了高年级可能会更好。[It needs time to cultivate students' awareness of collaborative learning. They are Grade 3 students now and they can be better when they become more senior.]
- 02 Xiayi: (to Teacher F) 三年级才开始合作学习，是吗？为什么不是一、二年级？[So collaborative learning starts from Grade 3, right? Why not Grade 1 or 2?]
- 03 Teacher F: 是，三年级才开始这样的学习。一、二年级也会鼓励合作，但是不会完全放给他们，是老师带领的。这个你也可以和专家提一下。[Yes, we start to promote collaborative learning from Grade 3. Collaborations are also encouraged among Grade 1 and 2 students. But those are teacher-led and we do not give students full autonomy. You can pass this information to the UK teacher educator.]
- 04 Xiayi: (To the UK teacher translator): The teacher said that it takes time to cultivate students' awareness of group learning. The students we just observed are at Grade 3. The teacher thinks that older students can be better at this kind of learning. I was asking whether it is from Grade 3 that students begin to learn collaborative learning. Why not younger students? The teacher said 'Yes'. She also said that younger students are encouraged to work together but their collaborations are led and controlled by teachers.

As revealed in this example, Xiayi raised a question to Teacher F (Turn 02) and requested more information regarding when the teacher began to encourage collaborative learning. This enabled her to introduce a new perspective into the conversation, namely, the conditions that Teacher F regarded as necessary for launching learner-centred approaches. This act of raising new questions and digging out more contextual information suggested Xiayi's reflexive positioning as a constructor of mutual understandings between the interlocutors. Notably, Xiayi's effort was also recognised by Teacher F, as she asked Xiayi to pass this new information to the UK teacher educator (Turn 03). In other words, Xiayi's positioning as a co-constructor of shared understandings was interactively supported.

In addition to requesting more information from the Chinese teachers, Dongxue was also found to initiate discussions between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator by pointing out potential conceptual differences between the Chinese expressions and their equivalents in English. The following example is cited from a discussion about the implementation of 'research' in local schools, a concept seemed to be understood differently in the Chinese and the UK contexts:

- 01 Teacher G: 我们现在在深入地开展一些研究 [Chinese pinyin: *yanjiu*], 就是怎么去设定更合理的学习目标。[We are conducting some in-depth research on how to set up more reasonable learning objectives.]
- 02 Dongxue: (to Teacher G) 您是指像我们学校常弄的那种，就是网上搜搜资料那种方式的研究还是指像课上讲的那样？我感觉他们这个方面的理解似乎跟咱们不大一样。[The 'research' you are referring to is something like what our school normally do, such as searching for information online, right? Or do you mean that you are doing 'research' in a way similar to what the UK teacher educators taught in the workshop? It seems to me that their understanding in this respect is different from ours.]
- 03 Teacher G: 是的是的，就是网上查查资料，看看示范课，再结合我们对自己课堂的反思，一起讨论讨论怎么改变。[Yes, just searching information online and observing model classes. We will then reflect on our own teaching and discuss how to make changes.]

- 04 Dongxue: (to the UK teacher educator) I was checking whether the teacher's understanding of research is similar to yours. The teacher was saying that they are now doing some research on how to set up suitable learning objectives. It means that they are searching for information online, observing some, eh, how more successful teachers teach and then reflecting on their own teaching. So this is different from what you mean by 'research', right? You seem to do some surveys or interviews when you are doing research?

As shown in this example, Dongxue was aware that the conceptualisation of the Chinese expression '*yanjiu*' and its counterpart in English (i.e. research) might differ slightly. While 'research' always involved collecting empirical evidence, '*yanjiu*', at least in her school context, could refer to reviewing online information relating to the topics under investigation. To deepen mutual understanding in this aspect, Dongxue first raised a question to Teacher G regarding the exact meaning of '*yanjiu*' by reflecting on her personal experience ('something like what *our* school normally do, such as searching for information online') and expressed her concerns over a potential misunderstanding between the two sides ('It seems to *me* that their understanding in this respect is different from ours'). This clearly showed that Dongxue's reflexive positioning here was more than a transmitter of information but an intermediary who wanted to initiate a deeper discussion on this topic. This act received positive reaction from Teacher G, as she added to Dongxue's understanding of '*yanjiu*' by pointing out that they not only reviewed information online but also observed model lessons and do reflections (Turn 03). With these extra explanations from Teacher G, Dongxue went on to check the meaning of 'research' with the UK teacher educator (Turn 04). From this perspective, Dongxue seemed to be both reflexively and interactively positioned as an intermediary who worked for constructing a shared understanding of the conceptualisation of 'research'.

Reasons behind the positioning as constructors of shared understandings

Interview data showed that the interpreters' willingness to create shared understandings between the interlocutors was related to their desire to help with the implementation of the project by promoting in-depth communication between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator. According to both interpreters, they wanted to 'help the UK teacher educator to know more about how local teachers understand learner-centred education' (Xiayi) and 'deepen the discussion on how to implement pedagogical changes' (Dongxue). A more detailed example could be found in the interview with Xiayi when she was asked why she decided to request more information from Teacher F regarding the proper time for introducing collaborative learning, as shown in the example above. According to her, she viewed the question of when students could be taught to learn collaboratively as 'crucial for the pedagogical reform'. This is because in the workshops teachers had mentioned that students' attitudes towards collaboration varied significantly across age. Therefore, based on her familiarity with the content of the workshops, Xiayi examined Teacher F's words in more depth to facilitate the launch of pedagogical changes.

In the case of '*yanjiu*', Dongxue also suggested that she considered more discussions on this topic important for a better implementation of the project. Specifically, as a local teacher herself, she was familiar with how '*yanjiu*' was conceptualised in her context. When she reviewed the workshop sessions on action research, she gradually realised that '*yanjiu*', though normally translated as 'research', seemed to be used in a broader sense, including reviewing online information, reflecting on personal practices and conducting empirical studies. As action research was an important part of the workshops, she considered it necessary to elucidate these differences. Therefore both interpreters seemed to regard it as their responsibility to facilitate thorough communication on the implementation of learner-centred education, which led to their contributions to establishing shared space for understanding between the interlocutors when the conversation was related to the progress of the project.

Notably, both interpreters again admitted that they received no guidelines or training regarding when it was necessary for them to promote shared understandings between the interlocutors. Dongxue particularly pointed out that it was only after she had deepened her understanding of

the project that she ‘became capable of clarifying the misunderstandings between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator’. This situation again suggested that the interpreters’ judgement over when they should intervene in the communication between the interlocutors was mainly based on their personal experiences and understanding of the project.

In short, the two interpreters in this study constantly changed their roles when addressing cultural differences. They would play a much more active role in bridging cultural gaps between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator if they believed that the cultural differences would hinder the development of mutual understanding between the two sides. However, without sufficient guidance and training, the decision regarding when and how they should position themselves as cultural intermediators seemed to be mainly related to the interpreters’ personal cultural experiences and understanding of the project.

Discussion

From the perspective of positioning theory, the findings suggested that the roles played by interpreters could be complex and dynamic when it came to addressing cultural differences. Such dynamics seemed to be related to interpreters’ changeable interpretations of their duties across contexts and the constraints emerged during interpreting. On the one hand, it is evident that these interpreters treated it as their responsibility to promote in-depth communication between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator. Therefore, when they regarded the cultural differences between the Chinese phrases and their English equivalents as barriers to the development of mutual understanding, they were likely to explicate the implicit cultural beliefs embedded in the Chinese terms, similar to Pöllabauer’s findings (2017). Such mediation can be important, as interlocutors’ utterances might entail contextual interferences which could not be fully revealed by literal translation (Mason, 2006). In other words, interpreters’ additional explanations about cultural and contextual specificity could enhance mutual accessibility of contextual assumptions between the interlocutors. Moreover, interpreters in this study also had the awareness of constructing shared understandings between the interlocutors. For example, they sometimes helped to dig out the context-specific information hidden in the Chinese teachers’ words and pointed out the conceptual differences between the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator. This finding echoes Wadensjö’s (2013) argument that interpreters always play the role of a bridge who work for constructing joint understandings between parties involved in the communication. It is also interesting to note that such positioning were often supported by other interlocutors (i.e. the Chinese teachers), which further strengthened the interpreters’ determination to mediate cultural differences.

On the other hand, however, the interpreters’ willingness to investigate the cultural differences was constrained by the difficulty of identifying all the cultural differences and the need to maintain a smooth flow of communication. Hence, there were also cases where the interpreters did not look into the nuances between the Chinese expressions and their English counterparts, especially when they regarded the differences as unimportant for the enhancement of communication. In this process, however, the interpreters were likely to neglect some cultural differences that could have been significant for the Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educators to investigate the contextualisation of learner-centred education in China.

Notably, in this study, the interpreters’ decision regarding when they should mediate cultural differences seemed to mainly depend on their personal judgement and was therefore closely related to their cultural and life experiences. For example, Xiayi’s and Dongxue’s personal knowledge of Chinese tradition and social realities helped them recognise the necessity of providing further explanations for some culture-bound terms. Similarly, their familiarity with local contexts and understanding of the project made them sensitive to the conceptual differences between some Chinese expressions and their English equivalents, such as ‘research’. Therefore, the two interpreters’ identities as Chinese and local teachers seemingly contributed to enacting their positioning as cultural insiders and constructors of shared understandings between the interlocutors. This suggests

that interpreters' multiple identities, personal experiences and cultural standpoints may need special attention, as they are already 'co-participants' rather than 'invisible language facilitators' (Angelelli, 2004) in the communication and their personal trajectories can significantly influence their choices during interpreting.

Despite the interpreters' willingness to mediate cultural differences, however, it is important to note that the lack of sufficient guidance and training seemed to undermine this possibility to some extent. Unlike the interpreting in the context of medical treatment (Dysart-Gale, 2007) or public service (Gibb & Good, 2014) in which training for interpreters is often available, the interpreters in this study received little training regarding the extent to which they should intervene in the communication and support the discussion between the two sides. This situation added to the interpreters' difficulty of positioning themselves in the communication and might have prevented them from investigating some important cultural differences. Admittedly, since cross-cultural collaborations may have significantly different objectives and cultural complexities (Woodin et al., 2021), what is expected of interpreters can be highly context-specific. This circumstance, however, makes it even more important for the different parties engaging in the collaboration to elucidate their specific intentions in the communication and for relevant training organised to support the interpreters.

Lastly, although discussions on cultural difference can easily lead to an essentialist view of culture, interpreters' stance in this study should not be presumptuously judged. While they sometimes brought in their existing knowledge of Chinese culture when playing the role of cultural insiders, they had the awareness of checking this practice with other interlocutors, as shown in the interpreter's interaction with the Chinese teacher when she interpreted '*shidao zunyan*'. Moreover, when working for joint understandings of some culture-bound terms, the interpreters, instead of directly assuming the existence of differences, always sought opinions from both Chinese teachers and the UK teacher educator and encouraged thorough discussions over controversies, as exemplified in the case of how to understand '*yanjiu*' and 'research'. This indicated their efforts to avoid forming cultural stereotypes during interpreting.

Conclusion

Underpinned by positioning theory, this study conducted a qualitative inquiry into the complex roles that interpreters displayed when interpreting culture-bound terms in the context of cross-cultural collaboration. It is revealed that interpreters' positioning changed throughout the interpreting process. In some cases, the interpreters focused only on transmitting information, especially when they regarded the cultural differences as unimportant for the deepening of communication. In other cases, however, they played the role of cultural insiders or constructors of shared understandings by providing additional explanations or creating space for interaction and negotiation. Their personal cultural and life experiences, along with their understanding of the project, were found to significantly influence their judgement regarding which kinds of cultural difference needed special attention. It is also notable that the lack of consensus and training relating to how interpreters should address cultural differences could have caused them difficulties in making proper decisions in this aspect. This situation underscores the importance of participants involved in cross-cultural collaborations recognising the essential role played by interpreters in intercultural communication and discussing beforehand the objectives of the conversation and how interpreters could help to enhance the communication. Some training sessions should also be organised to help interpreters recognise the importance of paying attention to cultural differences and addressing them in a non-essentialist way. In particular, analysis of real-life interpreter-mediated interactions, underpinned by relevant theoretical approaches, may enhance interpreters' capacity of playing proper roles in the face of culture-bound terms. Moreover, given the impact of interpreters' personal experiences on their decisions on how to address cultural differences, it could also be helpful for training sessions to encourage more critical reflections on interpreters' personal trajectories and cultural standpoints.

Admittedly, as a small-scale qualitative research, the conclusion generated here is context-specific. Future research may find it useful to investigate interpreters' roles in handling cultural differences in other scenarios. Particularly, this study focused on interpreters' reactions to the culture that they were familiar with. It can be interesting to explore how interpreters address the culture-specific elements associated with their second language during interpreting. It will also be worthwhile to examine how other participants in the cross-cultural interactions can collaborate with interpreters to ensure that cultural differences are interpreted in a way that maximises the effect of the communication and facilitates the development of mutual understanding.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by Jinan Innovation Zone Social Affairs Bureau, China.

Notes on contributors

Tianyi Wang is a research associate at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. She has completed her PhD in Education at University of Cambridge. Her current research interests include language learning motivation, multilingualism, teacher agency and intercultural communication.

Colleen McLaughlin is Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Cambridge. Her last roles in the University were as a senior advisor to the VC and Director of Education Innovation at the Faculty of Education where she led the Education Reform and Innovation team, who specialised in systemic research-informed reform working with Governments, NGOs and others. Recent projects included the transformation of the entire school education system in Kazakhstan working with the Minister, the establishment of NIS Schools of Innovation and the Graduate School of Education at Nazarbayev University, as well as working with the Aga Khan Foundation and the province of Jinan in China. She has undertaken major research and published on the topics of educational reform and the implementation of policy; school university partnerships for educational research; teacher development and mental health in schools. She has been a Head of Department at the University of Sussex and Deputy Head of Faculty at Cambridge. Her most recent book is with Alan Ruby and is entitled *Implementing Educational Reform: Cases and Challenges*, (2021) Cambridge University Press.

References

- Angelelli, C. V. (2004). *Medical interpreting and cross-cultural communication*. Cambridge University Press.
- Angelelli, C. V. (2012). Challenges in interpreters' coordination of the construction of pain. In C. Baraldi & L. Gavioli (Eds.), *Coordinating participation in dialogue interpreting* (pp. 250–268). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Baraldi, C. (2009). Forms of mediation: The case of interpreter-mediated interactions in medical systems. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 9(2), 120–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708470802588393>
- Baraldi, C. (2012). Interpreting as dialogic mediation. In C. Baraldi & L. Gavioli (Eds.), *Coordinating participation in dialogue interpreting* (pp. 297–326). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cortabarría, B. (2015). The role of translators and interpreters in hybrid English–Spanish contexts in the USA. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 15(3), 407–423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2015.1015345>
- Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1), 43–63. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.1990.tb00174.x>
- Davies, E. E. (2012). Translation and intercultural communication: Bridges and barriers. In C. B. Paulston, S. F. Kiesling, & E. S. Rangel (Eds.), *The handbook of intercultural discourse and communication* (pp. 367–388). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Dysart-Gale, D. (2005). Communication models, professionalization, and the work of medical interpreters. *Health Communication*, 17(1), 91–103. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327027hc1701_6
- Dysart-Gale, D. (2007). Clinicians and medical interpreters: Negotiating culturally appropriate care for patients with limited English ability. *Family & Community Health*, 30(3), 237–246. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.FCH.0000277766.62408.96>

- Gibb, R., & Good, A. (2014). Interpretation, translation and intercultural communication in refugee status determination procedures in the UK and France. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 14(3), 385–399. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2014.918314>
- Gu, C., & Wang, B. (2021). Interpreter-mediated discourse as a vital source of meaning potential in intercultural communication: The case of the interpreted premier-meets-the-press conferences in China. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 21(3), 379–394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2021.1879107>
- Gumperz, J. J., & Cook-Gumperz, J. (2008). Discourse, cultural diversity and communication: A linguistic anthropological perspective. In H. Kotthoff & H. Spencer-Oatey (Eds.), *Handbook of intercultural communication* (pp. 13–30). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Gumperz, J. J., & Cook-Gumperz, J. (2012). Interactional sociolinguistics: Perspectives on intercultural communication. In C. B. Paulston, S. F. Kiesling, & E. S. Rangel (Eds.), *The handbook of intercultural discourse and communication* (pp. 63–76). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Hale, S. (2014). Interpreting culture: Dealing with cross-cultural issues in court interpreting. *Perspectives*, 22(3), 321–331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2013.827226>
- Harré, R., Moghaddam, F. M., Cairnie, T. P., Rothbart, D., & Sabat, S. R. (2009). Recent advances in positioning theory. *Theory & Psychology*, 19(5), 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354308101417>
- Hild, A. (2017). The role and self-regulation of non-professional interpreters in religious settings. In R. Antonini, L. Cirillo, L. Rossato, & I. Torresi (Eds.), *Non-professional interpreting and translation: State of the art and future of an emerging field of research* (pp. 177–194). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Hokkanen, S. (2017). Simultaneous interpreting and religious experience. In R. Antonini, L. Cirillo, L. Rossato, & I. Torresi (Eds.), *Non-professional interpreting and translation: State of the art and future of an emerging field of research* (pp. 195–212). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Holliday, A. R. (2013). *Understanding intercultural communication: Negotiating a grammar of culture*. Routledge.
- Hsieh, E. (2008). “I am not a robot!” Interpreters’ views of their roles in health care settings. *Qualitative Health Research*, 18(10), 1367–1383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732308323840>
- Kramsch, C., & Zhu, H. (2020). Translating culture in global times: An introduction. *Applied Linguistics*, 41(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amz020>
- Mason, I. (2006). On mutual accessibility of contextual assumptions in dialogue interpreting. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(3), 359–373. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2005.06.022>
- Mason, I. (2014). Role, positioning and discourse in face-to-face interpreting. In R. de Pedro Ricoy, I. Perez, & C. Wilson (Eds.), *Interpreting and translating in public service settings* (pp. 52–73). Routledge.
- Pöllabauer, S. (2017). Issues of terminology in public service interpreting: From affordability through psychotherapy to waiting lists. In R. Antonini, L. Cirillo, L. Rossato, & I. Torresi (Eds.), *Non-professional interpreting and translation: State of the art and future of an emerging field of research* (pp. 131–155). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Rudvin, M., & Tomassini, E. (2008). Migration, ideology and the interpreter-mediator. In C. V. Garcés & A. Martin (Eds.), *Crossing borders in community interpreting* (pp. 245–266). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Schäffner, C. (2015). Speaker positioning in interpreter-mediated press conferences. *Target*, 27(3), 422–439. <https://doi.org/10.1075/target.27.3.06sch>
- Sepielak, K., Wladyka, D., & Yaworsky, W. (2019). Unsung interpreters: The jumbled practice of language translation in contemporary field research—a study of anthropological field sites in the Arab League countries. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 19(5), 421–437. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2019.1585443>
- Showstack, R. E. (2021). Making sense of the interpreter role in a healthcare service-learning program. *Applied Linguistics*, 42(1), 93–112. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amz058>
- Van Langenhove, L., & Harré, R. (1999). Introducing positioning theory. In R. T. Harré & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory: Moral contexts of intentional action* (pp. 14–31). Blackwell.
- Vargas-Urpi, M. (2014). Public service interpreting for Chinese immigrants in Catalonia: A study based on interpreters’, coordinators’ and users’ views. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 14(4), 475–499. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2014.934691>
- Wadensjö, C. (2013). *Interpreting as interaction*. Routledge.
- Woodin, J., Hamaidia, L., & Methven, S. (2021). Cultures in translation, complexity and development inequalities: Cultivating spaces for shared understanding. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 21(1), 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2020.1833902>
- Zhu, H., Kramsch, C., Gramling, W. D., House, J., Johnson, J., Li, W., & Park, J. (2020). Translating culture in global times: Dialogues. *Applied Linguistics*, 41(1), 148–160. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amz021>