

PREFACE

This book is a collection of speeches meant to be used as a basis for practical activities during the applied sessions of conference interpretation, both in consecutive (with and without notes) and simultaneous modes which the undergraduate students of the B.A. Programme for Translation and Interpretation (STI) study and practice during their fourth to sixth semesters, and which the graduate students of the Master's Programme for Specialised Translation and Interpretation (MATIS) at the Faculty of Engineering in Foreign Languages (FILS) of the Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest (UTCB) study and practice during all four semesters, according to the curriculum.

There are thirty-six chapters in the book, which have the same structure: the text for each speech is preceded by a detailed introduction which gives information about the provenance of the text, its domain and topic, it describes its style, suggests appropriate types of activities suitable for it, and provides directions to sources of (often extensive) further reading at the end of the book.

The inclusion of references to supportive and additional material is of utmost importance for the aim of the book and it is the explicit wish of the authors that they be taken seriously by all users, both trainees and trainers.

Their objective is twofold: specifically, they are meant to provide background information for the topics of the texts, which vary greatly, and thus help the users better understand the message, and consequently better interpret it. More broadly, they are meant to create a work ethic, a work style which stresses the preparation of the topic, domain, vocabulary, terminology, trains the pronunciation of unfamiliar or difficult names and concepts, all in the name of

professional, fluent, flawless behaviour, rendition, and overall performance in class.

Such general education is not to be neglected and this approach to the topic of the day is to be incorporated into the work routine of the trainee interpreters from the early stages. It is meant to educate the right attitude towards the profession, a sense of respect and self-respect, as well as the discipline and responsibility which come with being a good professional. Also, it is an indispensable meta-skill in the set required of an interpreter.

Each text has been timed and an approximate duration is included, so that the users may take it into consideration when deciding the kind of activity they use it for – both when trainees use it for individual activities, and when the trainers choose the material for the working sessions in class, to be given as homework, or as supplementary tasks such as additional training, mock-conferences, catch-up activities, and exam topics.

Perhaps the most important role of the introductions to each chapter is to give suggestions of activities the texts can be used for, based on their style, topic, vocabulary, and length. We recommend reading these introductions, whether the activities are part of self-study or work at class.

Depending on all the aspects mentioned above and included in the introductions, the texts can be used as a basis for a variety of activities.

These range from preliminary ones, which are typically used during the early stages of acquiring interpretation skills, such as sight translation, memory exercises and consecutive without notes, include consecutive interpretation with notes, when the trainees learn the note-taking technique, and extend into the practice of simultaneous skills.

These, in turn, range from beginner-level ones, such as narrative speeches with easy sentence structure, accessible vocabulary, familiar topics and relatively short duration, to increasingly longer ones, with sophisticated discourse, more mature topics (such as politics, as in

Chapter XXV), more complex syntax and, indeed, even humour(!) (such as the last Chapter XXXVI), which is the bane of any interpreter's existence, as the trainees will no doubt find out.

Regarding the topics included in the book, the authors have chosen a wide variety of ideas from various fields, both historical and contemporary (you find the register of topics at the end of the book or peruse through the Table of Contents to get an idea): architecture, arts, craft, cuisine, history, Middle Ages, photography, language, music, fashion, literature, politics, religion, traditions. Remarkable men and women who left their mark on European or international history, culture, and civilisation from the Middle Ages to the present day are featured in areas of interest to the authors and will hopefully inspire the young trainees with their lives, works and stories. The extensive material provided is once again meant to whet the appetite for further reading and self-education.

The texts included are of three types: predominantly blog posts, three interviews (Chapters XVI, XXII and XXVII) and two exhibitions (Chapters VIII and XXIX), which include several subchapters on aspects belonging to the same overarching topic: urbanism in Napoleon's time and the universal style of Art Nouveau respectively. The material cluster grouped within the chapters on exhibitions can be used as a basis for organising a mock conference in class if the trainer considers it appropriate. The additional material provided includes photographs, sound, and videos, among other things, which can be used in PowerPoint presentations to support the mock conference, and practice interpretation with media support. Of course, this applies to additional material across the book, provided for the interviews and the blog posts as well.

The interviews are the most oral in style, obviously, but the rest of the material, the exhibitions and the blog posts will need to be processed into speeches, previously to being delivered as such in class, either by the trainees or by the trainer. They need to be "oralised", i.e. sound more like spoken language, the density of information per sentence loosened up, complex sentences broken

down into shorter, simpler ones, and whenever possible, follow the rule of one idea per sentence, especially in the early stages of training interpretation skills.

As such, the texts are starting points for further work and why not, even personal input, if the speaker resonates with the topic to bring their own contribution to it, like personal experience or personal interest. The users may take whatever freedoms they wish with the material provided, if they offer the necessary guidance to the other colleagues such as concept explaining, for example, as well as other freedoms which the authors of this book could not afford, for copyright reasons.

The matter of copyright was of paramount importance to the authors, one which dictated the source of the material as well as the selection and inclusion of the material. It was preserved 99.99% in its original, initial form, with only the odd intervention (a maximum of 10 throughout the whole book) on the text, where the wording was unclear or needed to be adapted after relinquishing the reference to an image, e.g., which had been discarded.

The source of the material is the Europeana website, available at <https://www.europeana.eu/en>, which is an initiative of the European Union, and it is operated by a consortium led by the Europeana Foundation. They make part of their material available free of charge, for educational and for commercial reasons, as long as they are properly mentioned and promoted, which the authors of the book are more than happy to do, as a matter of course.

The specific source of the material is the Stories section on the website, available at <https://www.europeana.eu/en/stories>, which comprises an enormous wealth of material, from which the blog posts, exhibitions and interviews were selected. According to the provisions of the Terms of Use on the website, available here <https://www.europeana.eu/en/rights/terms-of-use>: “All texts in our blogs and exhibitions are licensed as CC BY-SA, unless stated otherwise, with images and media being marked individually.” Where CC BY-SA means “You are free to share – copy and redistribute the

material in any medium or format [and] Adapt – remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially” <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> (05.01.2023).

The authors hope trainees (the students for which this book was put together) and trainers (fellow members of the teaching staff) will find a good support in this material for their individual and joint work, or at the very least ‘a friend in need’ for inspiration and practice of interpretation skills. We wish all good luck and, why not, have fun!