UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Interpretation Techniques

2627-1-E2007P007

Learning area

II. Area of learning: Acquisition of practical and theoretical knowledge and techniques useful for the profession of interpreter and translator between spoken languages and sign languages, including in an international context.

Learning objectives

The main objective of the course is to provide a solid theoretical and practical foundation for intermodal interpreting (LIS ? Italian), specializing in Team Interpreting and the Feeding technique.

Knowledge and Understanding
• Thoroughly understand the main theoretical models (e.g., Theory of Sense, Effort Model) and cognitive strategies that govern interpreting.
• Identify the role, training, and specific competencies of the Deaf Interpreter (DI) and the necessity of their intervention.
• Know the ethical and deontological principles guiding the profession, and the structural differences between LIS and Italian that impact translation.

Application of Knowledge and Understanding
• Execute simultaneous and consecutive LIS ? Italian interpreting sessions on topics of medium to high complexity.
• Effectively apply collaborative strategies (Team Interpreting) and, specifically, the Feeding technique (in the role of the hearing interpreter who "feeds" the Deaf Interpreter).
• Manage cognitive load and stress in the interpreting booth (or in platform interpreting contexts).

Autonomy of Judgement
• Critically evaluate one's own performance and that of co-interpreters, providing constructive feedback.
• Independently decide the most appropriate interpretive, ethical, and logistical strategy based on the context, users, and message requirements (e.g., when to propose a DI's involvement).

• Resolve ethical dilemmas in complex situations by referencing the code of ethics.

Communication Skills
• Ensure a faithful and culturally appropriate rendition of the message, maintaining the register and tone of the original speaker.
• Communicate clearly and concisely with the interpreting partner (both hearing and deaf) to coordinate the session and optimize Team Interpreting.
• Interact professionally with users and stakeholders to define work parameters (briefing and debriefing).

Learning Ability
• Develop self-reflection techniques (self-monitoring and self-assessment) to identify personal strengths and weaknesses.
• Maintain constant professional development through research and participation in specific training.
• Independently acquire terminology and cultural background on new specialization fields.

Contents

• Theoretical and Cognitive Foundations: Interpreting models, discourse analysis, and memory management.
• Interpreting Techniques: Consecutive, simultaneous, and sight translation.
• Collaborative Interpreting: Principles of Team Interpreting and Relay Interpreting.
• Feeding: Role, competencies, and practice of the Deaf Interpreter (DI) and collaborative strategies.
• Ethics and Contexts: Codes of ethics, dilemma management, and specialization in specific domains (legal, medical, conference).

Detailed program

Module 1: Theoretical and Cognitive Analysis
• Theory of Sense (Séleskovitch and Lederer) and Effort Model (Gile).
• Decoding processes (active listening and analysis) and recoding processes (production in LIS/Italian).
• Strategies for managing decalage (time lag) in simultaneous interpreting.

Module 2: Practice of Core Techniques
• Consecutive interpreting exercises: notetaking and rendition of complex speeches.
• Simultaneous interpreting exercises: shadowing, dual tasking, and terminology management.
• Sight translation (written text ? LIS).

Module 3: Team Interpreting and Feeding
• Definition and advantages of Team Interpreting.
• Introduction to the Deaf Interpreter (DI): when they are necessary and what their responsibilities are.
• The Feeding Technique (Inter-modal Relay):
? Strategies for the hearing interpreter (feeder) to produce a simplified or signed LIS that is optimal for reception and re-elaboration by the DI.
? Practical team collaboration exercises, including simulation of the DI role.
? Logistics and debriefing in Feeding contexts.

Module 4: Ethical and Professional Aspects
• In-depth analysis of the Code of Ethics.
• Discussion of case studies related to impartiality, confidentiality, and advocacy.
• Preparation and documentation for high-specialization contexts (e.g., UN meetings, legal interpreting).

Prerequisites

• LIS Language Proficiency: Certification or demonstration of fluent mastery of the Italian Sign Language (LIS) and Deaf Culture, equivalent to at least B2/C1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
• Italian Language Proficiency: Excellent command of the Italian language, both written and oral.
• Prior Skills: Having completed a basic introductory course in LIS-Italian interpreting or linguistic mediation.

For the academic year 2026/2027 it will not be possible to select this course as a single-course entry.
Exam not selectable from the study plan by students not enrolled in Interpretariato e Traduzione in Lingua dei Segni Italiana (LIS) e Lingua dei Segni Italiana Tattile (LIST) *(Italian Sign Language (LIS) and Tactile Italian Sign Language (LIST) Interpretation)*.

Teaching methods

Delivered didactics: 12 hours (face-to-face lectures)
Interactive teaching: 30 hours (much of the teaching will take place through brainstorming activities for solving interpretation problems and practical interpretation exercises. Activities will also be assigned to be carried out outside lecture hours and for which a return will be given in the classroom.)
• Theoretical Lectures: Presentation of models and theories with critical discussion.
• Intensive Practical Lab Work: Real-life interpreting simulations in pairs and teams in booths and face-to-face settings.
• Feeding Role-playing: Specific exercises where students alternate between the feeder and re-interpreter (simulated DI) roles.
• Analysis of Video Recordings: Viewing and critical evaluation of professional interpreting performances, with a specific focus on Relay and DI cases.
• Thematic Workshops: Meetings with professionals (Deaf Interpreters and specialized hearing interpreters).

Assessment methods

• Continuous Assessment (30%): Active participation, quality of weekly notetaking, shadowing, and debriefing exercises.
• Mid-term Practical Exam (30%): Simulation of consecutive interpreting of a technical speech.
• Final Practical Exam (40%):

Execution of a high-level simultaneous interpreting test (LIS ? Italian).
Simulation of a Feeding exercise in a team, evaluating the effectiveness of collaboration and the clarity of the feeder's production for the DI.
• The exam is successfully completed upon achieving a level of professional adequacy and fluency in fundamental and collaborative techniques.

Assessment Criteria and Grading Scale (Grades on a 30-point scale)
30 cum Laude (Excellent with Honors): Outstanding performance. Demonstrates superior mastery of theoretical concepts and interpreting techniques. Flawless management of latency time (décalage), fluent, highly accurate, and natural delivery in the target language. Impeccable team-interpreting skills and seamless management of feeding dynamics (both giving and receiving feed).

30 - 29 (Excellent): Excellent performance. Solid theoretical and practical skills in interpreting. Accurate comprehension of the source message and excellent target language rendering with minimal flaws. Effective management of décalage and optimal collaboration with the co-interpreter.

28 - 26 (Good): Good performance. Comprehensive knowledge of theoretical principles and solid practical skills. Good output fluency and adequate handling of décalage. Fully satisfactory ability to collaborate and process feeding inputs, with only minor errors.

25 - 23 (Satisfactory): Satisfactory performance. Sound understanding of concepts, though with minor uncertainties in practical execution. Fluctuations in output fluency or message accuracy. Acceptable management of décalage and basic team collaboration.

22 - 20 (Pass): Barely adequate performance. Basic and sometimes superficial application of interpreting techniques. Noticeable delays, loss of information from the source text, or difficulty managing décalage. Minimal integration with the co-interpreter.

19 - 18 (Marginal Pass): Borderline performance. Limited theoretical and practical proficiency. Evident difficulties in decoding and target rendering, unmanaged latency time, and minimal ability to give or receive feeding in team interpreting.

Below 18 (Fail): Unsatisfactory performance. Severe gaps or complete lack of required knowledge and interpreting skills. Critical omissions/distortions, inability to sustain the interpreting process, and lack of team-interpreting capacity.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

• Specific to Deaf Interpreting and Team Interpreting:
? Swabey, L., & Tipton, V. (2020). The Practice of Interpreting. Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Press. (Consultation of specific chapters on Team and Relay interpreting).

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS