

Media and Moving Image presents

The Diplomacy of Diplomatic Interpreting

a public lecture by
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Honors Commons
2nd floor of M. D. Anderson
Library

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Diplomatic interpreting is a specialized form of media interpreting and requires interpreters to navigate complex political and cultural dynamics that are inherent in international relations. This paper discusses the challenges and dilemmas facing diplomatic interpreters in the course of facilitating communication and cooperation between nations. It illustrates, with examples drawn from actual diplomatic scenarios, that diplomatic interpreters do not always adhere to the principle of accuracy or impartiality; rather, they intervene from time to time, for example, by softening or changing face-threatening remarks in order to avoid potential conflicts or confrontation. In so doing, they assume the speaker role as a principal, rather than an animator of the speaker's words (Goffman1981) and take on the role of a mediator.