The Role of Interlingual Mediation in Public Diplomacy: An Exploration of Research Methodologies

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The role of translation and interpreting in public diplomacy has received little attention in the Interpreting and Translation Studies communities. In a discussion of research methodologies in public diplomacy and Interpreting Studies (IS), this article explores the relationships between these two fields and generates starting points for inquiries into the use of interpreting and translation in real world public diplomacy settings. Methodological overlap is considered to gauge the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration, and IS research questions are developed to address strategies and the effectiveness of interlingual mediation practices in public diplomacy in the United States.

Keywords: interpreting, translation, interlingual mediation, research methodology, interdisciplinary research

1. Introduction

As a contribution to the growing literature on research design and methodology in Interpreting Studies (IS), this article aims to provide an example of the design of research and selection of methodologies in an area that has received little attention from the Interpreting (and Translation) Studies community to date: the role of interlingual mediation in public diplomacy. To achieve this aim, the author makes transparent the considerations undertaken

in proposing courses of action for research on this topic and thereby illustrates an approach to situating IS research in an interdisciplinary framework. In this context, the term 'interlingual mediation' is borrowed from Pöchhacker and Shlesinger's (2002: 2-3) definition of 'interpreting' and refers to spoken and written communication through interpreting, translation, or their hybrid forms across languages and cultures. In the relatively young field of IS, practitioners have repeatedly expressed the need for newcomers to develop a theoretical and methodological foundation that informs their research. More recently, attention in the IS community has also turned to discussions of the relevance and effectiveness of IS for society in general and the communities of practitioners, users, and educators in particular (Gile, Hansen and Pokorn 2010; Gile 2010; Pöchhacker 2010). The author hopes to show a course of action that can be taken up by other researchers and concurrently stimulate interest in an unexplored area. He hopes to provide an example of the social relevance of IS by developing research questions, designs and methodologies to inform the interlingual mediation strategies used in public diplomacy and to suggest starting points for conducting evaluations of their effectiveness. Although a broad view of public diplomacy will be taken, the discussion focuses primarily on the public diplomacy efforts of the United States government, which are often undertaken in partnership with non-profit organizations.

To this end, the author provides a discussion with a dual approach:

a. A brief overview of the field of public diplomacy, including its definitions, goals, research designs and methodologies, and an indication of the interest shown by its practitioners in interlingual mediation to date.

b. A brief overview of past IS research on interpreting in public diplomacy and of topics, research questions, designs, and methodologies that have been used or could potentially be used to explore this area.

Areas of methodological overlap between the two fields are considered to gauge the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration, and the juxtaposition of the two fields charts a course for the development of research questions pertaining to the strategies and effectiveness of interlingual mediation policies and practices in public diplomacy. A fundamental premise in these considerations is the aim of IS research to be socially useful and relevant for practitioners of both fields in operational settings.

2. An overview of public diplomacy

Although scholars do not agree on a single definition, 'public diplomacy' has been widely seen as the actions undertaken by governments to understand, inform and influence foreign publics with the aim of promoting national and strategic interests.[2] In the summary of the most recent report of the Congressional Research Service providing an overview of the public diplomacy activities of the United States government, public diplomacy is broadly defined as "a term used to describe a government's efforts to conduct foreign policy and promote national interests through direct outreach and communication with the population of a foreign country" (Nakamura and Weed 2009). The term 'public diplomacy' became widely known in the United States when the Edward R. Murrow Center for Public Diplomacy was established in 1965 under the leadership of Edmund Gullion at Tufts University.[3] Public diplomacy involves outreach through traditional activities including cultural, educational, and informational programs, citizen exchanges, and broadcasts.[4] More recently, with the addition of social media, public diplomacy has been regarded as three main groups of activities: (1) "providing information to foreign publics through broadcast and social media and at libraries and other outreach facilities in foreign countries"; (2) "conducting cultural diplomacy, such as art exhibits and music performances"; and (3) "administering international educational and professional exchange programs" (Nakamura and Weed 2009: 2). Public diplomacy has been closely associated with the work of the United States Information Agency (Dizard 2004), whose functions were transferred to the United States Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors in 1999. Currently, within the United States federal government, the main public diplomacy programs are run by the United States Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Broadcasting Board of Governors (Voice of America and similar broadcasting services), and the Department of Defense (See Nakamura and Weed 2009 for an overview).

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[2] Center on Public Diplomacy; Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy; *Charter of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy*; Public Diplomacy Alumni Association; Epstein and Mages: *Public Diplomacy: A Review of Past Recommendations* 2005: 1.
[3] Public Diplomacy Alumni Association. See Cull (2009) for a history of the term 'public diplomacy'.
[4] http://www.state.gov/r/; Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy 2002.

Many governments and non-state entities around the world also have strong public diplomacy programs. Snow and Taylor (2009) provide an overview of global approaches to public diplomacy with contributions on public diplomacy programs in the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, China, Central and Eastern Europe, and Australia. In a discussion of the soft power of the United States and other countries around the world, Nye (2004: 124) provides a comparative overview of expenditure on public diplomacy programs in the United States, France, Great Britain, Germany, and Japan. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintains information on public diplomacy programs at its website.[5] Recently, the term public diplomacy has been broadened to include activities by non-state entities such as supranational organizations, sub-national actors, non-governmental organizations and private companies.[6] The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, for example, maintains a Public Diplomacy Division in its civilian structure.[7]

In the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001, interest in the state of public diplomacy increased dramatically in the United States. Since 2002, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has issued nine reports with the term 'public diplomacy' in the title (see references), and additional reports have addressed the topic in the context of the Middle East and strategic communication, among others. The Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, originally established under the United States Information and Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1469), continues to issue annual reports,[8] and the Congressional Research Service (CRS) has produced two comprehensive reports (Epstein and Mages 2005; Nakamura and Weed 2009) in recent years. Since the influential "Djerejian Report" of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, much of the discussion in the United States government community has centered on the need for clear strategic direction and vigorous measurement (2003: 14). Despite this heightened interest in public diplomacy, it is still described by some as a fragmented effort (Armitage and Nye 2008: 4).

Additional challenges have arisen through the widespread use of social media; public diplomacy is increasingly seen as a function of strategic communication in an increasingly complex, accessible, and democratized global communications environment (Nakamura and Weed 2009: 2). The effort make use of the full communication potential of the Internet began under the Bush Administration with a drive for 'Public Diplomacy 2.0', also referred to as 'e-Diplomacy', among other terms, and has been expanded under the Obama Administration through the inclusion of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter in communication, outreach, and dialogue with foreign publics (GAO-09-679SP 2009: 2, 31-34).

3. The role of interlingual mediation in public diplomacy

Given the overarching objective of understanding, informing, and influencing foreign audiences, public diplomacy is by definition a field requiring interlingual and intercultural mediation in order for its efforts to be successful. It is impossible to communicate effectively with broad foreign publics by utilizing only one language. Translation and interpretation have thus had a pervasive role in public diplomacy since its inception, although that role may not have been acknowledged or addressed explicitly. In terms of influencing and persuading, the localization industry has shown that products, services, and advertising should be adapted to local markets to be most appealing and effective. In the United States, there has been considerable discussion of the foreign language competence required of public diplomacy practitioners, particularly in the call for training of government personnel (recently in GAO-09-1046T 2009). A survey of studies and reports generated since the attacks of September 11, 2001, reveals, however, that there are relatively few mentions of translation and interpretation. *Explicit* references to translation and interpretation in public diplomacy reports and documents include, among others, the following:

a. In its 2003 report, the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World suggests the launching of an American Knowledge Library Initiative, consisting of "a massive translation program of thousands of the best books in numerous fields into Arabic and other languages of the region," which would then be distributed to libraries and other centers of learning (ibid: 39-40). The Advisory Group also recommends that resources be set aside for the "translation of Internet-

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[5] http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/index.html, accessed on February 11, 2010.
[6] Center on Public Diplomacy.
[7] http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/structure.htm, accessed on February 11, 2010.
[8] http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/adcompd/rls/index.htm, accessed on February 11, 2010.

linked information and news on U.S. Government websites in Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Bahasa Indonesia, and other strategically important languages (42). The idea of such an initiative is taken up again by Mar and Singer, who describe the United States Department of State's Arabic book translation programs run by the Embassies in Cairo[9] and Amman[10] as successful small-scale projects insufficient in scope (2007: 10-11). In a report to members of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, these book translation programs are described in greater detail and recommended for strong support (Kerry 2009: 30-32).

b. *The United States National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication* states under the heading "initial communication activities" that agency-specific plans should be developed to implement public diplomacy and strategic communication objectives and that the agency plans should identify, among other things, "workers who speak foreign languages and could translate/participate [sic] in interviews" (Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Coordinating Committee 2007: 9).

c. In a 2007 review report, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the United States Department of State reiterates the desire expressed at embassies and consulates to have State's Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) provide additional language materials, including translations, and describes a best practice of sharing with other Posts documents translated at Post (OIG 2007: 16-17.) OIG reports that IIP has developed a plan to coordinate translation of major foreign policy addresses and key documents into world languages (ibid: 17). OIG identifies a continued need for Arabic-language materials in African countries, particularly materials focusing on African and U.S. relations with the continent. (ibid: 18)

d. In a 2009 report of the Congressional Research Services entitled *U.S.*

Public Diplomacy: Background and Current Issues, Nakamura and Weed provide an overview of public diplomacy activities involving languages other than English. Although they do not discuss the role of interpretation explicitly, they mention in particular the International Visitor Leadership Program run by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), which is described at the Department of State's website as "a professional exchange program that seeks to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other nations through carefully designed short-term visits to the U.S. for current and emerging foreign leaders. These visits reflect the International Visitors' professional interests and support the foreign policy goals of the United States".[11] Regarding the role of language mediation, information at the website indicates that the

> *International Visitor Leadership Program uses the services of the Office of Language Services also within the Department of State to provide English Language Officers and Interpreters to accompany International Visitor participants. The Office of Language Services maintains a contract roster of some 1,000 freelance English Language Officers and Interpreters, covering almost every major language. These Interpreters are hired to take short-term travel assignments (usually 2 to 25 days at a time) for projects under the International Visitor Leadership Program and other users as the need arises.*[12]

Additional information on interpreting for the International Visitor Leadership Program is provided by the Office of Language Services at its website *http://languageservices.state.gov*.

According to Nakamura and Weed (2009: 21), the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) conducts outreach activities requiring some form of interlingual mediation in three main areas at least:

a. Translations of publications, including fiction and non-fiction works by American authors: IIP produces

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[9] http://cairo.usembassy.gov/pa/rbo_.htm, accessed on February 11, 2009
[10] http://jordan.usembassy.gov/educational_exchange/arabic-book-program.html, accessed on February 11, 2009.

[11] http://cairo.usembassy.gov/pa/rbo_.htm, accessed on February 11, 2009
[12] http://jordan.usembassy.gov/educational_exchange/arabic-book-program.html, accessed on February 11, 2009.

forty to fifty publications annually in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Persian, Russian, Spanish, and other languages, when appropriate, on topics that explore U.S. policy, society, and culture··· IIP also translates literary and non-fiction titles by American authors into several languages and, working through the embassies, establishes joint publishing agreements with local publishers. The translations can be full-length books, condensed editions, anthologies, and special adaptations in book form. (Nakamura and Weed 2009: 21)

b. IIP provides translated versions of the website *http://www.america.gov* in Arabic, French, Spanish, Mandarin, Persian, and Russian, and includes podcasts (spoken-language material) in languages other than English, some of which are excerpts from speeches of the President and Secretary of State, among others, and video material with subtitling in these target languages. Nakamura and Weed summarize that "IIP has also increased its information presence on the Internet in recent years. America.gov provides videos, blogs, timelines, web chats, articles and news stories on world events, American society, and U.S. policies, in several major languages" (ibid: 21).

c. Finally, IIP provides multilingual outreach through an online presence in a variety of Internet fora:

IIP also has a 10-person Digital Outreach team that communicates on popular Arabic, Persian, and Urdu blogs, news sites, and discussion groups to explain U.S. foreign policy and counter misinformation. The Digital Outreach team members identify themselves as employees of the Department of State as they interact on 25 to 30 Internet sites per week. The team posts short comments as well as longer op-ed pieces and translated videos previously produced by IIP. (ibid: 21)

Nakamura and Weed (2009: 22-24) also outline the structure of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), an entity separate from the Department of State that pursues public diplomacy activities in the area of radio and television broadcasting in sixty languages in total.[13] As in other journalistic settings, these activities require the (sight) translation of news items for broadcasting and website posting as well as simultaneous interpretation

during some television programs. According to information posted at the websites of the various broadcast entities of the BBG, the Voice of America (VOA) transmits approximately 1,500 hours of programs each week in forty-five languages, twenty-five of which are used in television programming. Program content includes news, features, education, and culture, in documentary, discussion, and call-in formats, both live and pre-recorded.[14] Cuba Broadcasting operates Radio and TV Marti, which is in Spanish. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcasts via radio, web, and streaming audio in twenty-eight languages and also operates Radio Farda, which broadcasts in Persian/Farsi to Iran. Programming totals approximately 1,000 hours per week and reaches an audience of 17.6 million people in twenty-one countries.[15] According to its website, Radio Free Asia broadcasts in nine languages native to East Asia and publishes a Web-only English page to meet international demand.[16] Last but not least, the Middle East Broadcasting Network operates Radio Sawa and Alhurra television in Arabic.

In summary, although translation and interpreting are tasks required for the effective practice of public diplomacy in the new global communications environment, there are relatively few explicit mentions of the role of interlingual mediation, i.e., translation and interpreting specifically, in documents and reports produced for the United States government. Interlingual mediation initiatives are not mentioned in Epstein and Mages' summary list of key recommendations from twenty-nine documents issued between 1999 and 2005; only language training (for diplomats) is mentioned under the heading of public diplomacy training (2005: 2-3; 9). The key recommendation to "improve communication" (ibid: 2-3; 10-11) through 'two-way' dialogue that involves in particular listening, dialogue, and debate necessitates a clear role of interlingual mediation. In view of the lack of attention interlingual mediation issues seem to have received in the public diplomacy literature to date, one could conclude that the role of interpretation and translation is implicit, underdeveloped, or not seen as strategically important in the planning and execution of public diplomacy. The reasons for the lack of attention are worthy of exploration by IS researchers. They are also worthy of consideration

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[13] http://www.bbg.gov/about/faq.html#languages, accessed on February 11, 2010.
[14] http://author.voanews.com/english/about/FastFacts.cfm, accessed on February 11, 2010.
[15] http://www.rferl.org/section/FAQ/777.html, accessed on February 11, 2010.
[16] http://www.rfa.org/english/news, accessed on February 11, 2010.

by researchers in public diplomacy, if dialogue, outreach, and integration (Mar and Singer 2007: 5) are to be pursued with non-English speaking audiences. Similarly, a communication strategy to support public diplomacy events and policy developments, which includes consideration of the "best way to deliver it [the message] to the target audience",[17] must delineate the role of translation and interpretation.

4. Research design and methodology in public diplomacy

In academia, public diplomacy is seen as a multidisciplinary field with ties to communication, history, international relations, media studies, public relations and regional studies, among others, with which it has theoretical, conceptual and methodological ties.[18] Research centers focusing on public diplomacy generally have links with schools of policy studies, communication, humanities and the arts. Public diplomacy methodologies are therefore grounded in the social sciences in general and political science in particular. Although a paradigm of public diplomacy has yet to take shape, Gilboa identifies the case studies and comparative analysis methodologies commonly used in the social sciences as fruitful avenues that have been pursued in the study of public diplomacy (2008: 68–71). He notes that despite

> the growing significance of public diplomacy in contemporary international relations, scholars have not yet pursued or even sufficiently promoted systematic theoretical research in this field. They have developed models and tools for analysis in several relevant disciplines but have not proposed a comprehensive and integrated framework. (ibid: 73)

In operational settings, recommendations since the Djerejian Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World (2003) to improve the measuring of impact and outcomes of public diplomacy efforts have resulted in a focus on performance measurement. In 2004, the Department of State established an Office of Policy, Planning and Resources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, reporting directly to the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, and within it an Evaluation and Measurement Unit that has developed four program evaluation tools.[19] Two initiatives focus on impact assessment: (1) a Public Diplomacy Impact project "uses surveys and focus groups to gain quantified performance measurement data, and (2) Program Evaluations "conduct formative evaluations as well as retrospective assessments" to improve program management and strategic planning. The other initiatives focus on enhancing performance: (3) a Mission Activity Tracker is a "reporting tool that documents the scope, frequency and achievements of U.S. mission public diplomacy activities" through the collection of qualitative and quantitative performance measurement data. (4) Finally, a Performance Based Budgeting Pilot "evaluates whether U.S. missions are achieving key performance measurement objectives with the current allocation of program funding" and whether changes are needed to reach stated objectives. These performance measurement initiatives use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data in their methodologies. Similarly, the General Accounting Office (GAO) advocates the development of research products requiring the use of social science methodologies and explicitly mentions broad public opinion polling data and root cause polling data (GAO-06-535 2006: 25). GAO also recommends program evaluations of exchanges and key public diplomacy programs and initiatives (26). The Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs also maintains an Office of Policy and Evaluation[20] and within it an Evaluation Division that conducts this task for programs requiring language support such as the International Visitor Leadership Program.

Regarding the role of interlingual mediation in conceptual models of public diplomacy activities and processes, an access point is the review of communication models cited in public diplomacy reports as promising areas of application and further development. Examples of models cited in reports include a *'campaign‑style' communications model* (GAO-07-904 2007), a general *public relations strategy flow chart* (GAO-07-795T 2007:11; GAO-06-535 2006: 19, 55), and a *logic model*, also in the form of a flow chart (GAO-06-

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[17] Called for under the "general communications guidelines" of the *United States National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication* (2007: 26).
[18] Center on Public Diplomacy; Gilboa 2008; Gregory 2008.

[19] http://www.state.gov/r/ppr/emu/index.htm, accessed on February 11, 2010.
[20] http://exchanges.state.gov/programevaluations/program-evaluations.html, accessed on February 27, 2010.

535 2006: 29). None of the communications models include an explicit role for translation and interpretation. They provide a framework, however, for the consideration of interlingual mediation activities and tasks in the planning, implementation and monitoring of public diplomacy efforts. Pertinent examples in the public relations strategy include defining target audiences and developing strategies and tactics to reach the target audience and the consideration of translation and interpretation requirements in these contexts. Such conceptual models could be broadened to include a needs assessment for interlingual mediation requirements in any initial research phase and inclusion of interlingual mediation in the performance measurement activities as well.

5. Interpreting studies research on public diplomacy

In the IS literature, relatively little attention has been paid to the role of interlingual mediation in public diplomacy. Although there has been exploration of the history of interpreting, in particular the role of interpreters in state and religion, discovery and conquest, military and diplomacy (Pöchhacker 2000; Bowen 1994), public diplomacy is seen by its practitioners as a more recently developing field, separate from traditional diplomacy given the audience and forms of interaction, which now include social media. Given the field's youth, there is little direct, immediate precedent in the form of IS research models for the design of research and selection of methodologies that could be used to inform research questions developed from a basic interest in the role of interlingual mediation in public diplomacy. Points of access therefore need to be identified, so that avenues for IS research become apparent.

An approach to situating public diplomacy as an area of research activity in the disciplinary framework of Interpreting Studies is to discuss public diplomacy as an object of inquiry within the basic conceptual dimensions of IS. Pöchhacker (2004: 60) defines these dimensions as the four axes, or coordinates, of *language, cognition, interaction*, and *culture*. Borrowing the concept of memes from Chesterman (1997), Pöchhacker situates along these axes fundamental theories, perspectives and ideas pursued in the field of IS, which can also be related to the basic constructs, goals, and themes of the field of public diplomacy. This contextual information derived from situating the fields in relationship to one another can then serve as a starting point for the development of research questions. In turn, it is hoped, the research questions will inform the design of research studies and the selection of methodologies leading to the gathering of data to address the questions. In this particular approach, an overriding concern is the development of questions considered to be relevant not only to IS researchers but also to public diplomacy theorists and practitioners, and by doing so serve as an example of how Interpreting Studies can be socially useful and give back to a neighboring discipline. It would then remain to be seen where the research questions, design, and methodologies fall in terms of the main IS paradigms, or disciplinary matrices (Pöchhacker 2008: 34-41; 2004: 83), that have emerged as the field of IS has grown and developed.

On the grid formed by the four basic poles of language, cognition, interaction and culture, identified by Pöchhacker (2004: 60), the axis along the poles of culture and interaction is where the memes are situated that can serve as an apt starting point for the exploration of interlingual mediation in public diplomacy. Given the importance of *understanding, informing*, and *influencing* in definitions of public diplomacy (see above), the meme of **mediation**, with concentrations on the role of the interpreter as cultural mediator and cultural interface (59) is one possible avenue. Another would be to move toward the language and cognition poles and the memes of **text/discourse** and **making sense** (60), the latter of particular relevance given the desire in public diplomacy to determine effectiveness and impact through performance measurement. The research themes of *communicative context* (settings), *socio-cultural background, function,* and *communicative effect*—all within the meme of **making sense**—can serve as reference points to attempt to inform the public diplomacy concern of ensuring successful communication and outreach.

6. Interpreting studies methodology – access points for public diplomacy?

The question of the compatibility of IS methodologies with those of public diplomacy can be addressed by relating one field to another. Of the three main methodological approaches utilized since the inception of IS-fieldwork, survey, and experiment (Pöchhacker 2004: 64)-survey methodology, as a standard tool in the social sciences, has been advocated most actively through above-mentioned calls in public diplomacy studies for survey and focus group research as part of performance measurement. Survey and focus group research

on the role of interlingual mediation can either be folded into broader program evaluation efforts on audience impact within the field of public diplomacy or conducted as a standalone enterprise solely within the domain of IS (**mediation, making sense**). Such inquiries into the effectiveness of public diplomacy efforts could be supported by evaluations of interlingual products using quality assessment criteria developed in IS and text analysis (**text/discourse**).

The second methodological approach of the social sciences, fieldwork, is conceivable as having applications within the field of public diplomacy. Exploration of the roles of those engaging in public diplomacy requiring translation and interpretation tasks–diplomat, broadcast journalist, interpreter?–and the settings in which interlingual mediation occurs–meeting, broadcast studio, online, etc.–are two areas that lend themselves particularly well to fieldwork. Analysis of the interlingual tasks themselves–interpretation of spoken and written texts, translation of spoken and written texts, producing target language spoken and written summaries of source language material–is a potential third area of fieldwork inquiry.

Moving away from the social sciences, the calls for consideration of communication models as part of a public relations strategy in public diplomacy point to a similar kind of theory and construct building undertaken by IS researchers identified by Moser-Mercer (1994: 20) and Gile (2005) as belonging to a liberal arts paradigm in IS. In the case of the little-explored role of interlingual mediation in public diplomacy, an initial phase of theory building would seem particularly useful in establishing a framework or foundation for conducting research.

In achieving the goal of providing a return to the adjacent field of public diplomacy, combined methods triangulating quantitative and qualitative data hold the promise of providing a comprehensive view of public diplomacy efforts and their overall effectiveness, while single-method studies could provide valuable enlightenment regarding a more narrowly defined aspect of a program.

Finally, the question arises to what extent research solely within the domain of Interpreting Studies does justice to the exploration of interlingual phenomena in public diplomacy. The fact that hybrid forms of interlingual mediation are widespread–the use of translated materials in podcasts, subtitling in videos, sight translation and summary translation in the preparation of newscasts–draws attention to the importance of considering Translation Studies paradigms. Geller, Vinokurov, and Martin's paper on "Cross-Cultural Issues in Survey Translation: Translation of Meaning and Meaning of Translation" as part

of the 2005 conference of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology of the Office of Management and Budget is a prime example of a cross-cultural communications approach to a translation-related area of inquiry in public diplomacy program evaluation. Similarly, a discussion of the socio-cultural research on the role of interlingual mediation in national images, perceptions and stereotypes of the 'other' goes beyond the scope of this paper.

7. Research questions for public diplomacy and interlingual mediation

This paper has outlined public diplomacy definitions, goals, research designs and methodologies, and explored instances in which interpretation and translation have been a subject of discussion in public diplomacy publications. A discussion of interpreting studies research on public diplomacy has shown that, although the field of public diplomacy has not been a focus of research in IS, well-established approaches and paradigms in IS can serve as access points. This conclusion is supported by the methodological overlap between the two fields, in particular in approaches based in the social sciences. The juxtaposition of key constructs–the definitions and goals of public diplomacy and interlingual mediation activities documented in public diplomacy literature–now serve as a starting point for the generation of general research questions which in turn would be operationalized and drive the design of the research and final selection of methodologies. They represent broad areas of potential research activity. A researcher's final selection of a question or narrow set of questions would be motivated by many sociological factors, including personal interest, institutional support, project feasibility, and perceived value.

Research questions related to the interlingual mediation **strategies** used in public diplomacy can be derived from the goals of *informing, influencing,* and *persuading* foreign publics. Questions may be related to issues of outreach to and communication with foreign audiences, including the following examples regarding *settings, roles,* and *tasks*:

a. How are interlingual mediation requirements incorporated into the public diplomacy *strategic planning process*?
b. Are different interlingual mediation *strategies* required to inform, influence, and persuade broad audiences vs. decision makers in positions

of power and authority?

c. What are the characteristics of the *settings* requiring interlingual mediation in the three main domains of public diplomacy: information programs, cultural diplomacy, and exchanges?

d. What *roles*, attitudes and expectations are associated with interpreters working in public diplomacy programs?

e. What are the characteristics of the interlingual mediation *tasks* performed in these settings?

The discussion in this article also points the way towards the generation of research questions related to the **effectiveness** of interlingual mediation strategies, for example in terms of the *audience impact* of public diplomacy programs. Such research questions could lead to studies contributing to program evaluation and performance measurement. Examples include the following:

a. When is language mediation essential for public diplomacy efforts to be *effective*? What percentage of a foreign audience in a given country can be reached through English as opposed to a language other than English?

b. What are the most *effective* language mediation strategies, or modes, e.g. interpretation, translation, dubbing, subtitling, etc., in various public diplomacy settings?

c. What *impact* does the use of languages other than English have on the perceptions of individuals who are fluent in English but are native speakers of the other language?

d. What is the interpreter's *impact* on the views and perceptions of exchange program participants on the host country? If the interpreter has multiple roles, what are the differences in impact of the various roles on the views and perceptions of participants?

e. What *impact* does the quality of interlingual mediation have on the views and perceptions of foreign audiences?

8. Conclusion

When considering possible relationships between the fields of IS and public diplomacy, IS researchers find themselves in the unusual but refreshing situation of being members of the field that is perhaps further along in its theoretical and academic journey. In charting a course for the development of public diplomacy research, Gilboa describes parameters that IS has in large part already fulfilled when stating that a "scholarly field is established when several minimal requirements are met. It must be clearly distinguished from other fields; it should define several subfields sharing theories, models, and methodologies; and it must win both internal and external recognition" (2008: 75). The "sunrise of an academic field" (Gregory 2008) with close links to and methodological overlap with Interpreting (and Translation) Studies could indeed lead to mutually beneficial forms of collaboration and exchange. With the considerable government support behind public diplomacy efforts around the world and progress "highly needed because of the central place it is now occupying in foreign policy and diplomacy" (Gilboa 2008: 75), collaboration with IS could help facilitate the breakthrough desired in the discipline. Although this potential undoubtedly exists, it is also questionable whether optimism is warranted. Along with the usual challenges of interdisciplinary collaboration,[21] it should be noted that the two disciplines are on an unequal footing given the institutional relegation of interpretation and translation tasks, as essential as they may be, to a non-substantive support function, if not, in some instances, an after-thought. In this regard, through the exploration of these and other research questions relating to the role of translation and interpretation in public diplomacy, researchers may one day be in a position to turn to another fundamental issue as an over-arching objective of their efforts: Does the field of public diplomacy require an interlingual mediation policy and how useful would such a policy be in promoting best practices? Given the pervasive role and essential nature of interlingual mediation in successful public diplomacy efforts, this question should be worthy of consideration.

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[21] See for example Gile and Shlesinger's contributions to the European Society of Translation Studies colloquium on research skills in Ljubljana in September 2006.

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