

Public Interest Interpreting and Translation in Japan: Nagoya's Pioneering Training Program

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ABSTRACT

In April, 2015 Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (NUFS) in Japan launched a new graduate program: 'Master of Arts in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation' (修士公益通訳翻訳, *Shūshi Kōeki Tsūyaku Hon'yaku*). The program aims at fostering interpreters-translators, who would engage in work in the judiciary, public administration, healthcare, education, disaster management and other public interest-related settings. Even though this genre of interpreting and translation (especially in legal and healthcare settings) has gained much attention in recent years both in Japan and overseas, there are still many problems and challenges to tackle. As there are few educational courses that train interpreters-translators in non-conference and non-business fields, those working in the abovementioned settings often find themselves with no guidance or development opportunities, having to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills on the job. This paper gives an overview of the situation in public interest interpreting and translation in Japan and introduces the new program at NUFS with a discussion of the problems and challenges interpreters-translators, as well as those educating them, face.

KEYWORDS

Japan, community interpreting, legal interpreting, medical interpreting, public interest interpreting and translation.

Research has probably been one of the most neglected areas in Community Interpreting. The limited number of university courses has inevitably impacted on the amount of research in this discipline ... [T]here seems to be no consistent link between the results of the research, the little training available and the practice of interpreters ...
(Hale 2007: 197)

1. Master of Arts in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation: Raison D'être.

In April 2015, a new graduate program was launched at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (NUFS) in Japan, Master of Arts in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation (PIIT). The program aims at fostering interpreters-translators working in non-conference and non-business settings related to public interest, such as the judiciary, healthcare, local and central government administration, education, natural disaster management, and multicultural management.

In this paper we refer to “interpreters-translators” rather than “interpreters and translators”. The reason for this is that in this domain the acts of interpreting and translation are usually performed by the same person in the same setting. For instance in the judiciary, the interpreter is also the translator, as numerous documents are presented to defendants during criminal trials. These include opening

statements and closing arguments by the adversaries or judgment texts among other documents. They are usually translated first before being read out to the defendant during the trial.

Much of academic literature and many training programs in the domain of interpreting studies have focused on conference and business interpreting. However, it seems that the paradigm both in Japan and overseas is shifting away from this, or at least diversifying, and interpreting and translation in other domains are gaining more attention than ever before. This is of crucial importance, as this type of interpreting and translation services is becoming increasingly required not only in countries like Japan but also in the globalized world in general.

Graduate programs in interpreting and translation focusing on non-conference and non-business settings are implemented in different universities and offer various language pairs. Valero-Garcés (2014) gives examples of such programs in different countries and regions such as Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia and Spain among others. She points out that while Australia has been the pioneer in recognizing the need for high quality interpreting and translation services in the public interest sector, the situation is highly diversified in other countries and depends largely on the region and the language pair. For example, Mikkelsen points out that, with some exceptions, such programs in the United States usually offer courses in Spanish as the dominant foreign language in the country, thus neglecting other languages (2014: 12).

In the European context, the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) provided by London Metropolitan University offers two specializations—medical and legal—with the following open language pathways: Arabic, French, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish,

Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Spanish, as well as other languages to pair with English with at least four students for the concerned language enrolled in the program (London Metropolitan University 2015). The course is structured around practical skills such as consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, translation, and sight translation. For example, the legal specialization also provides courses that allow students to “learn about the professional legal settings applying to the DPSI English Law option (Immigration, Police, Courts)” (London Metropolitan University 2015).

Another example is the MA in Intercultural Communication, Public Service Interpreting and Translation, offered at the University of Alcalá in Madrid, Spain. Its objectives include:

[providing] students with the theoretical knowledge and the skills, abilities, and tools they need to act as linguistic and cultural liaisons between institutional, medical, judicial and educational staff and the users of these public services who do not speak the language of communication fluently (University of Alcalá 2015).

This program, too, offers a wide variety of languages to pair with Spanish, “the language of communication”: Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, English, French, German, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Russian (University of Alcalá 2015).

In contrast, such curricula at university level are still scarce in Japan. The first program of this kind was established at Osaka University of Foreign Studies in 2003 (Tsuda 2010). It was originally a set of courses in legal interpreting and translation, which focused on “the very specific area of the profession that includes both police investigation[s] and public prosecutors’ investigation[s]” (Nishimatsu 2003: 103) and was in 2004 expanded to a Master’s program (Okuno

2005, Tsuda 2010) with a total of 15 students who successfully finished the program. However, as the university merged with another state institution, Osaka University, in 2008, the MA program was discontinued. Currently, Osaka University offers interpreting and translation minors in two specializations: legal and medical, but their completion is not rewarded with an academic degree. Completion certificates are issued, though, and all MA and PhD students enrolled at Osaka University are eligible to enroll in the program.

Another example is the program offered at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies 2015). It offers classes in medical interpreting but does not culminate in an academic degree as it is designed for people in the work force, rather than university students.

As the examples above demonstrate, the PIIT program at NUFS is currently the only such endeavor in Japan whose completion offers an MA degree. This makes it the crucial first step for the development of this academic field in the country.

In terms of immigration and foreign communities, the situation in Japan is much different from that in Australia or the United Kingdom, both of which have traditionally had large immigrant populations. It can, however, be compared to that of Spain. Valero-Garcés points out that

[f]rom a social standpoint, Spain, for example, is no longer a country of emigrants, but rather a country to which immigrants come. This immigration is occurring alongside the traditional tourism that has existed for some time. From a linguistic perspective, these foreign citizens bring with them diverse cultures and/or languages (Valero-Garcés 2014: 25).

Perhaps the scale of this process in Japan is still smaller than

that in Spain but despite Japan's image of a homogenous society, this is not necessarily the case anymore. There are over two million foreign nationals living in Japan either long-term or permanently (Japan in Figures 2015) and ten million overseas visitors to the country annually (Japan National Tourism Organization 2015). This situation is expected to advance even further, as Japan is preparing to host the G7 summit in 2016, as well as the summer Olympics in 2020.

Moreover, the aging society and declining birth rate are catalysts for debate on how Japan should welcome more immigrants, which seems inevitable if the current scale of the country's economy is to be maintained. In other words, tourism is still the greatest source of foreign nationals' presence in Japan, but not the only one. Large populations of Chinese, Koreans, Brazilians and Peruvians (mostly of Japanese origin), or Filipinos and other Southeast Asians have already settled in the country, and a further influx of immigrants is a probable scenario for the near future. All these present and future foreign visitors and residents may find themselves in various critical (as well as everyday) situations requiring the link to interpreting and translation services.

However, most interpreters-translators working in the public interest settings did not receive the necessary training designed for these settings, and instead have developed their skills on the job. Since there is no accreditation system for interpreters and translators (of any kind of setting) in Japan, officially provided (by the state or other authorities) opportunities for interpreters and translators to deepen their knowledge and continuously improve their skills are rather limited.

Even though implementation of such an accreditation system is a part of the discourse, especially on legal interpreting as proposed by the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (2013), the discussion

usually centers on examining and testing prospective interpreters in order to secure a fair legal process for, for instance, non-Japanese speaking defendants. In other words, such discourse often fails to address the importance of proper platforms for fostering and continuing education for interpreters-translators, without which the effectiveness of accreditation and examining seems rather insufficient. As a result, in some cases the interpreters-translators may find themselves lacking sufficient knowledge about the process they are a part of, for instance, regarding legal or healthcare procedures.

The PIIT program aims at bridging this gap, thus giving the prospective public interest interpreters-translators the opportunity to gain not only the required interpreting and translation skills, but also the necessary knowledge about the field they wish to work in, such as the law, healthcare or education, as well as on various aspects related to multilingual and multicultural society in general. One of the most important features of the program is the fact that in many of the program's courses, it is the professionals who work in the field in question (for example, lawyers of the Aichi Bar Association or police officers of Aichi Prefectural Police Headquarters, staff at Nagoya [City] International Center), who give lectures to and engage in discussions with the enrolled graduate students.

It is also noteworthy that it is not only students coming afresh from undergraduate programs who can enroll in the PIIT courses. In fact, the program aims at serving as an opportunity for continuous education for those who already work as interpreters or translators in other settings but who have decided to get involved in the public interest domain, or for those who have already worked in the PIIT field but who have never had the chance to gain the necessary theoretical background knowledge and who wish to deepen their understanding of terminology and the process, of which they are a part.

The subsequent parts of this paper will give a more specific overview of the PIIT program. First, however, we will discuss the reasons behind choosing the new term - *public interest interpreting and translation* or kōeki tsūyaku hon'yaku (公益通訳翻訳) in Japanese.

1.1. What is 'Public Interest Interpreting and Translation'?

Based on the setting in which it takes place, interpreting can be largely divided in two main genres: conference interpreting and liaison interpreting (Smirnov 1997). One of the main reasons behind this division is the interpreting mode used in each of the two types. Traditionally it has been assumed that while a conference interpreter's main mode is *simultaneous* interpreting, in liaison interpreting it is *consecutive* mode that is used most frequently (in this paper, we focus on interpreting between spoken languages; interpreting with the use of signed languages will not be addressed). However, this is not necessarily always the case. Mikkelsen (2014: 17) points out that liaison interpreters sometimes perform interpreting in the simultaneous mode, and conference interpreters may need to use consecutive interpreting as well.

As sub-categories for liaison interpreting Smirnov (1997: 213) indicates business interpreting and community interpreting. He points out that

[c]ommunity interpreting, which is distinctly inferior to business interpreting in status and remuneration, but superior in "humanitarian" (social) significance, demands that its practitioners possess the same specialised terminology and bicultural competence as business interpreters (Smirnov 1997: 213).

While business liaison interpreters find themselves working in

various business or industrial settings such as negotiations and meetings or at manufacturing plants, community interpreting “takes place in settings where the most intimate and significant issues of everyday individuals are discussed: a doctor’s surgery, a social worker’s or a lawyer’s office, a gaol, a police station or courtroom” (Hale 2007: 26).

Not all scholars agree on the scope of community interpreting. Therefore, depending on the author, various settings may either be included in or excluded from this umbrella-term. In her book, *Community Interpreting*, Hale (2007) focuses on legal and medical settings as the two main genres for this type of interpreting practice. Mizuno and Naito (2014), discussing community interpreting in Japan, add one more genre to the two above - interpreting in public administration settings. Whether the legal setting should be included in community interpreting and translation is a debated issue (see Mikkelsen 2014).

The term itself is also a subject of debate. Some authors prefer to use other terms referring to non-business liaison interpreting such as “public service interpreting and translation” (Valero-Garcés 2014) or “community-based interpreting” (Pöchhacker 2004). The former term is rarely used in the Japanese context. It sometimes appears in Japanese descriptions of interpreting and translation research or practice carried out overseas (usually in Europe). When the term is used, “public service” usually takes the Japanized form of the English original (パブリックサービス, paburikku sābisu), while Japanese words are used for interpreting and translation (通訳, tsūyaku for interpreting and 翻訳, hon’yaku for translation). To the authors’ knowledge, the latter term - “community-based interpreting” - does not appear in the Japanese literature on the subject. “Community interpreting” (コミュニテイ通訳, komyūniti tsūyaku in Japanese), on

the other hand, is quite frequently used for these settings in Japan and overseas.

However, on the occasion of designing and establishing the PIIT program, it was decided that it was necessary to emphasize that interpreting and translation in these settings not only serve non-Japanese speakers in need of these services, but contribute to Japanese society in general. Given the differences in scope of the other terms discussed above and the fact that the PIIT program was to include various types of non-business liaison settings, a new Japanese term - kōeki tsūyaku hon'yaku (公益通訳翻訳) - was coined. Kōeki (公益) could be translated into English as *public good* or *public benefit*. In this sense, then, it is similar to the other terms discussed above and, indeed, it can be used synonymously with them. As the official name in Japanese of the program, though, is Kōeki Tsūyaku Hon'yaku (and not, for example, コミュニティ通訳翻訳, Komyūniti Tsūyaku Hon'yaku or パブリックサービス通訳翻訳, Paburikku Sābisu Tsūyaku Hon'yaku), throughout this paper we will use *public interest interpreting and translation* (and its abbreviated form - PIIT), as the English translation of this newly coined Japanese term.

As we mentioned above, PIIT deals with various types of non-business liaison situations, whereby interpreting and translation services may be required in a variety of settings such as legal settings (including not only the courtroom but also interviews at the police and Public Prosecutors offices, lawyer-client conferences, refugee recognition hearings, as well as other law-related situations), healthcare settings (visits to hospitals, pharmacies, welfare facilities), educational settings (e.g. children from linguistic backgrounds other than Japanese requiring assistance in school), and disaster management situations (providing information to non-Japanese speakers on the occasion of earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons or other

natural disasters). The term ‘public interest interpreting and translation’ would also include interpreting and translation performed as a part of various multicultural or multilingual policies implemented by the state or local authorities, as well as projects and endeavors carried out by nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations, often within community-based settings.

On the other hand, interpreting and translation in other administration-related areas such as diplomacy or international relations are beyond the scope of public interest interpreting and translation as understood in the context of the PIIT program.

1.2. Public Interest Interpreting and Translation in Japan

The situation as regards public interest interpreting and translation depends largely on the language concerned. For example, there is no publicly available data on the number of legal interpreters-translators based on their working language. Therefore, assumptions presented here are based on the authors’ observations of interpreter-mediated criminal trials and various symposia and conferences related to PIIT. Taking Chinese, for example, it seems that a large number of interpreters working in the field in Japan originally come from a Chinese-speaking background (e.g. from mainland China or Taiwan). As some of them may have been naturalized, they are considered Japanese nationals of Chinese-speaking origin. Something similar could probably be said for speakers of other East or Southeast Asian languages such as Korean or Filipino (Tagalog), for which there are relatively large populations of migrants who use these languages as native speakers.

This is not the case for a language such as English. Even though there is a limited number of English native speakers working as

interpreters-translators, or Japanese who were either brought up or spent a significant amount of time in English-speaking countries, the authors estimate that most public interest interpreters-translators working with English use it as their second (or third) language. Some of them have also taken courses at interpreting schools, while others have not. Either way, most of them gain their knowledge in the setting they work in, while performing the job.

Regardless of the language they work with, public interest interpreters-translators are expected to have a deep knowledge and understanding of their field. The PIIT program aims at providing such background, thus giving the interpreters-translators (or those aspiring to become such) an opportunity to not only work on their practical interpreting and translation skills, but also to encourage them to engage in academic research on the setting they are interested in, and thus provide input into and enrich both the profession and academia. By doing so, the PIIT program aims at the development of highly skilled and highly educated interpreters-translators, as well as those who might not necessarily engage in PIIT practice themselves but wish to contribute to and participate in the increasingly multilingual and multicultural Japan.

The fact that the program was launched at NUFS is also of crucial importance. Located in Central Japan, Aichi Prefecture with its capital city of Nagoya, boasts the third largest population of foreign residents in Japan, after Tokyo and Osaka (Ministry of Justice 2014). As of December 2014, there were over two hundred thousand (200,673) foreign citizens living in the prefecture (cf. Tokyo: 430,658; Osaka: 204,347). In other words, while the non-Japanese in the nation's capital account for approximately 20% of the entire foreign population in Japan (over two million), the second and the third largest metropolitan areas in the country (Osaka and Aichi respectively) are

each home to roughly 10% of all foreign nationals.

This is not only because Nagoya is one of the largest metropolises in Japan. The region of Central Japan, which is composed of Aichi and the surrounding prefectures of Gifu, Mie, and Shizuoka, is a major industrial area with numerous manufacturing plants, among which the most prominent are those in the automotive industry. Many of these manufacturers and their subcontractors employ foreign nationals as well, thus leading to the establishment of non-Japanese speaking communities.

It is also worth mentioning that Central Japan International Airport located in Aichi is one of the four major international airports in the country (the other three being Tokyo's Narita and Haneda, and Kansai in Osaka). This makes Nagoya and Aichi, and the region of Central Japan in general, not only a tourist destination but a convenient transportation hub as well.

It is then natural that public interest interpreting and translation services in such a multicultural and multilingual environment are indispensable, and so, this new endeavor at NUFS is of crucial importance for the region.

2. PIIT Program Overview

The PIIT program was designed as a part of a broader NUFS endeavor - 'Multilingual and Multicultural Studies in the Global Era' (グローバル共生研究, Gurōbaru Kyōsei Kenkyū) - that offers a Master of Arts in Multilingual and Multicultural Management (MMM, 多言語多文化マネジメント, Shūshi Tagengo Tabunka Manejimento in Japanese) as well. Therefore, students have the opportunity to partake in classes forming the curricula of both programs, as well as

other courses provided by the NUFS Graduate School of International Studies.

There is no limit on the number of students who can enroll in any specific MA program. The Graduate School of International Studies accepts up to twenty new students in total annually, and the number of students in each particular program depends on the year. As of 2015 (the year that the PIIT and MMM programs were launched) there are four newly enrolled graduate students (two in each program).

Students enrolled in the PIIT program can also take courses offered by other graduate programs that will complement their education. Some of these courses focus on developing the students' general interpreting and translation skills such as consecutive and simultaneous interpreting or note-taking (from a broader perspective, without focusing on the public interest domain alone) in particular language pairs (e.g. Japanese and English), while others aim at equipping them with broader knowledge about multilingual and multicultural matters, as well as globalization issues in general.

The courses that the enrolled students are eligible to take, can be divided into three main categories: 1) theory-oriented, 2) practical aspect-oriented, and 3) skill-oriented. The difference between the skill-oriented and the practical aspect-oriented courses is that the former aim at enhancing the students' interpreting and translation skills, whereas the latter focus on the field of public interest interpreting and translation (as well as multilingual and multicultural management) from the perspective of those already working in it. This refers to practicing interpreters-translators, as well as the *users* or *service-providers* (e.g. legal and medical professionals, public servants), working with them. In other words, this category of courses gives the students an opportunity to learn from practicing attorneys, prosecutors, law enforcement officers for the legal sphere, healthcare

professionals for the medical as well as public health fields, or local government or NPOs' and NGOs' staff whose work is concerned with multilingual and multicultural policies or projects.

Not all students who complete the program will choose the profession of public interest interpreter-translator as a career. Some of them may prefer to work as interpreting and translation users (i.e., public officials and other professionals working with interpreters-translators). As mentioned above, the PIIT program also aims at serving as a platform for continuous education for those who already work as interpreters and translators. They may have been working in other interpreting or translation domains (such as conferences or business) and developed a curiosity for public interest-related settings.

Therefore, it is important for the program to equip its students with broad perspectives, which they can later refer to in real life situations in their professional work. Out of the four newly enrolled students in the PIIT and MMM courses, two already have some experience in working in interpreting and translation, and wish to continue this line of career by engaging in the PIIT settings. The other two students have been involved in volunteer work providing various forms of support to non-Japanese speakers living in the country and expect to gain more knowledge in order to enhance their continued involvement in such volunteer work.

Those already working as public interest interpreters-translators have a lot to gain from what the program offers as well. It provides an opportunity to deepen their knowledge about the field they work in, as well as to exchange opinions and engage in discussions with other professionals, either fellow interpreters-translators or service-providers who require interpreting and translation services.

Finally, satisfactory completion of the program is rewarded with a

Master of Arts degree. This means that in order to graduate, the students also need to engage in academic research and therefore acquire the necessary scholarly knowledge and skills related to methodology. This can be achieved by submitting and defending a Master's thesis, or by engaging in "task-oriented research" (課題研究, kadai kenkyū in Japanese), whereby students are expected to present practical applications of their research. In other words, the PIIT program is expected to foster the development of highly skilled interpreters-translators on the one hand, but also researchers and experts, who in the future, might themselves engage in training and educating interpreters-translators, on the other.

The PIIT program has one more benefit. The courses that form its curriculum are also open to applicants who do not necessarily wish to enroll in the Master of Arts track. They can take the classes as non-degree students, and if later they decide to enroll in any of the MA programs offered at NUFS, up to ten credits (or five courses) they have gained as non-degree students, will be counted into their transcript of records.

In the next subsections, we will take a closer look at the courses offered by the Multilingual and Multicultural Studies in the Global Era program. We will present examples for the three categories of courses mentioned above (Section 2.1). Then, we will look more closely at two of the courses that form a part of the PIIT program curriculum, 'The World of the Japanese Ministry of Justice and Public Prosecutors Office' (Section 2.2) and 'The World of Lawyers and Bar Associations in Japan' (section 2.3). The reason for choosing them as representative courses is that they both focus on legal interpreting and translation, which is the setting with which both authors are most familiar, as they are also practicing legal interpreters-translators.

2.1. Courses Offered as a Part of the Multilingual and Multicultural Studies in the Global Era program

The following list presents courses available to students enrolled in the PIIT and the MMM programs based on the categories mentioned in the previous section:

(1) Theory-oriented courses

- Introduction to Public Interest Interpreting and Translation (公益通訳翻訳論, Kōeki Tsūyaku Hon'yaku-Ron).
- Introduction to Multilingual and Multicultural Management (多言語多文化マネジメント論, Tagengo Tabunka Manejimento-Ron);
- Migration Policies and Human Rights of Foreign Residents (移民政策及び外国人の人権, Imin-seisaku oyobi Gaikokujin no Jinken);
- Studies in Multilingual and Multicultural Management in Civil Society (市民社会における多言語多文化マネジメント論, Shimin-shakai ni okeru Tagengo Tabunka Manejimento-Ron);
- Studies on Multilingual and Multicultural Society from Global/Local Perspectives (グローバル視点からの多言語多文化社会論, Gurōbaru Shiten kara no Tagengo Tabunka Shakai-ron);
- Studies on Japanese Language Education in Local Communities (地域日本語教育論, Chiiki Nihongo Kyōiku-Ron);

(2) Practical aspect-oriented courses

- Japanese Public Administration Policies and Measures on Multilingualism and Multiculturalism (行政の多言語多文化政策と実策, Gyōsei no Tagengo Tabunka Seisaku to Jissaku);
- The World of Japanese Police (警察の世界, Keisatsu no Sekai);
- The World of the Japanese Ministry of Justice/ Public Prosecutors Office (法務省・検察庁の世界, Hōmushō/Kensatsuchō)

no Sekai);

- The World of Lawyers and Bar Associations in Japan (弁護の世界, Bengo no Sekai);
- The World of Japanese Public Health, Medicine and Welfare (保健医療福祉の世界, Hoken, Iryō, Fukushi no Sekai).

(3) Skill-oriented courses

- Fieldwork in Multilingualism and Multiculturalism (多言語多文化共生の現場実習, Tagengo Tabunka Kyōsei no Gemba Jisshū);
- Theories and Practice in Legal Interpreting and Translation (司法通訳翻訳実務論, Shihō Tsūyaku Hon'yaku Jitsumu-Ron) (available language pairs: Japanese/English, Japanese/Chinese, and Japanese/Brazilian-Portuguese);
- Practice in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation (司法通訳翻訳実習, Shihō Tsūyaku Hon'yaku Jisshū) (available language pairs: Japanese/English, Japanese/Chinese, and Japanese/Brazilian-Portuguese);
- Special Seminar in Multilingual and Multicultural Management 1 (多言語多文化マネジメント特別実習1, Tagengo Tabunka Manejimento Tokubetsu Jisshū 1);
- Special Seminar in Multilingual and Multicultural Management 2 (多言語多文化マネジメント特別実習2, Tagengo Tabunka Manejimento Tokubetsu Jisshū 2);
- Special Seminar in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation 1 (公益通訳翻訳特別実習1, Kōeki Tsūyaku Hon'yaku Tokubetsu Jisshū 1);
- Special Seminar in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation 2 (公益通訳翻訳特別実習2, Kōeki Tsūyaku Hon'yaku Tokubetsu Jisshū 2).

Let us now take a closer look at the following three courses as selected examples for each category: 1) 'Introduction to Multilingual and Multicultural Management' (theory-oriented), 2) 'The World of Japanese Public Health, Medicine, and Welfare' (practical aspect-oriented), and 3) 'Practice in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation' (skill-oriented).

The first category—theory-oriented courses—is the most research-centered. It includes 'Introduction to Multilingual and Multicultural Management'. This course takes a look at various multilingual and multicultural endeavors, in which central and local governments engage. One of the main foci of the course is implementing such endeavors in the educational setting taking into consideration similar efforts carried out in other countries such as Canada or the United States.

'The World of Japanese Public Health, Medicine and Welfare' focuses on the issue of access by non-Japanese speakers to healthcare services. It takes on topics such as medical terminology, communication between healthcare professionals and non-Japanese speaking patients, and medical interpreting practices overseas. The course also discusses healthcare, medicine and welfare institutions and practices in Japan, thus providing to the prospective medical interpreters indispensable background knowledge about the field of their interest. The last two classes of this course are composed of practical exercises such as role-plays set in healthcare situations.

In the 'Practice in Public Interest Interpreting and Translation' course, students will acquire interpreting skills through consecutive interpreting exercises focusing on the public interest setting. After introducing students to basic skills such as sight-translation or note-taking in the first two classes, the course moves on to practicing interpreting mainly in the legal and medical settings. Twelve out of

fourteen classes are purely practical: students engage in scenario-based role-plays, in which they practice interpreting skills in situations such as an interview at a physician's office or a criminal trial. Since translation is an important part of interpreting in the two settings mentioned above, students are also expected to produce translated versions of documents such as indictment acts, which will then be analyzed and discussed by the students and the instructor.

The brief overview given above aimed at presenting examples of the three categories of courses available to the PIIT program students. In the next two sections, we will introduce two particular courses in detail, namely 'The World of the Japanese Ministry of Justice and Public Prosecutors Office' and 'The World of Lawyers and Bar Associations in Japan'. These courses belong to the second category - courses focusing on practical aspects of public interest interpreting and translation. As can be seen from the descriptions given below, they provide background knowledge that interpreters-translators require when working with defense attorneys and other legal professionals. Through discussions with these professionals, the courses give the students an opportunity to deepen their knowledge about practical aspects of the interpreters' and translators' work, as well as the roles they undertake in the legal context.

2.2. The World of the Japanese Ministry of Justice and Public Prosecutors Office

This course forms a part of the second (Fall) semester curriculum. Like most other courses in the PIIT program, 'The World of Japanese Ministry of Justice and Public Prosecutors Office' is composed of fourteen weekly classes, each worth two credits. Every class is conducted by a different official or staff working either at institutions

under the Ministry of Justice or the Public Prosecutors Office, and coordinated by Mamoru Tsuda, professor at NUFSS.

The following legal institutions are associated with the course by either providing their officials and staff to serve as lecturers, or by organizing field tours to their facilities, where interpreting and translation actually takes place: Nagoya Legal Affairs Bureau - Human Rights Promotion Division, Nagoya District Public Prosecutors Office, Nagoya Regional Correction Headquarters, Osaka Prison - Office for International Strategy, Nagoya Prison, Nagoya Probation Office, and Nagoya Immigration Bureau.

The classes are divided into five main thematic blocks: 1) protection of human rights, 2) the work and roles of public prosecutors (investigative stage, and criminal trials including the newly implemented 裁判員制度, saiban'in seido or lay judge system), 3) correctional and penitentiary procedures and facilities, 4) the work of probation offices and officers, and 5) immigration and refugee recognition. The rationale for selecting these topics is that the situations they represent all have the potential for including non-Japanese speakers, and as a consequence, may require interpreting and translation services.

In each class, the lecturer dispatched from one of the institutions mentioned above presents a topic that focuses on non-Japanese subjects (e.g. suspects or defendants, asylum seekers) of the process in question, and the related interpreting and translation issues. As these lecturers and the institutions they represent are those who require interpreting and translation services, it gives the students an opportunity to see PIIT from the users' perspective. Thus, prospective interpreters-translators can learn what is expected of them, contributing to more effective cooperation between the two groups of professionals.

The course is language-neutral, so depending on the students' working languages practical activities such as role-plays are carried out. For example, should there be at least two students skilled in, say, Mandarin Chinese, one would play the role of the non-Japanese speaking suspect, defendant or person seeking counsel on human rights, while the other would interpret for them and the official of the said institution. In these practical activities, students learn not only how to interpret for the concerned institutions and non-Japanese speakers involved in their procedures, but also about such ethical aspects of the interpreter's work as impartiality, confidentiality, or the importance of accurate interpreting in the legal process.

One of the most appealing features of this course are field tours to some of the collaborating institutions. They account for four out of fourteen classes in the semester. The facilities and institutions visited during such tours are the Public Prosecutors Office, Nagoya Prison, the Probation Office, and the Immigration Bureau located at Central Japan International Airport. These field tours give the students a unique opportunity to see how some of the legal institutions are involved in the course work.

Out of these four tours, the one to Nagoya Prison provides an exceptional opportunity to students by showing them a dimension of the legal process that otherwise would be completely inaccessible to them. During this tour the students are shown the living conditions of inmates: the canteen where they have their meals, their cells and the bathhouse, or manufacturing plants where they work. All this is preceded by detailed explanations on life in prison as well as a lecture that includes issues such as special measures taking into consideration non-Japanese speaking inmates (such as, for example, interpreting and translation services, providing halal meals for Muslim inmates, or the inmates' rights and obligations).

With its wide range of subjects, this course gives students opportunities to learn about the legal process in Japan in a way that goes beyond regular textbook and lecture knowledge. By enabling participants to engage in discussions with officials working at these institutions, the course allows them to develop insights that can later prove useful in their work as interpreters-translators. It also gives them a chance by offering their side of the story, which can contribute to better cooperation and mutual understanding between those institutions that require interpreting and translation services and those who provide them.

2.3. The World of Lawyers and Bar Associations in Japan

This course is offered in the first (Spring) semester of the academic year. It is similar to other courses that focus on interpreting and translation in the legal setting in that it also includes lectures by legal professionals and that it is language-neutral. The difference between this course and the one described above, though, is that it allows for the development of insights into the legal process from the perspective of defense attorneys, instead of legal institutions run by local authorities or the central government.

Lectures in this course are divided into thematic blocks focusing on the following aspects of the legal process: immigration and refugee recognition, labor law, traffic law, legal matters related to daily life, family law, civil law, and criminal law.

The greatest focus—four out of fourteen classes—is given to the section on criminal law, as this is the genre in which interpreters-translators engage most frequently. The course covers the following two stages: the pre-indictment phase (when the non-Japanese speaker apprehended and arrested by the police is still

referred to as *the suspect*) and the trial (with the subject being now *the defendant*).

As in other similarly oriented courses, in 'The World of Lawyers and Bar Associations in Japan' lecturers and students engage in discussions on interpreting and translation-related issues. For example, the attorney-lecturers may share their experience of work with interpreters-translators thus giving the students insights on *dos and don'ts* in interpreting in lawyer-client conferences. This is of crucial importance, as mutual understanding and trust between attorneys and interpreters-translators are a foundation for effective cooperation, and, as a consequence, for smooth communication between the defense attorney and their non-Japanese speaking client, the reason why interpreting and translation services are provided in the first place.

3. Old Problems and New Challenges

This recent endeavor at NUFS is an ambitious project that aims at responding to the growing need for highly educated and skilled professionals. Embarking on such a wide-scaled endeavor naturally leads to difficulties and challenges that might not be easily overcome. This section will give an overview of such issues that the PIIT program will need to deal with in order to further develop and respond to the needs of Japan in the global era.

One of the greatest challenges that the PIIT program will have to face is providing training and education oriented more towards specific language pairs. At the moment, the languages of public interest interpreting and translation to pair with Japanese for which practical courses are offered are English, Mandarin Chinese and

Brazilian-Portuguese. The rationale for choosing those languages includes the community needs for interpreting and translation services and availability of instructors, the students' interests, or a combination of both. Compared with similar graduate programs at London Metropolitan University in the United Kingdom and the University of Alcalá in Spain, which were introduced in the preceding sections of this paper, the number of language pairs offered in the program at NUFS is still rather modest. Therefore, in the future it will be necessary to provide similar courses in other languages to pair with Japanese, for which there are significant needs both in the region of Central Japan and nationwide. Such languages would most likely need to include Filipino (Tagalog), Korean, Spanish, Indonesian and Vietnamese among others.

On the other hand, the goal of some of the students enrolling in the PIIT program might be to improve their skills in the second language. It is not difficult to imagine that different students will possess different proficiency levels in the language concerned, as well as a wide variety of skills in interpreting techniques. It will, then, be necessary to provide opportunities for students to enhance their skills in the language concerned, so that they can reach a level required for interpreting and translation in the PIIT settings.

The PIIT program aims also to foster the development of educators who would in the future take on the challenge of training and educating interpreters-translators themselves. This means that such professionals will first need to gain the necessary knowledge and skills related to interpreting and translation and then pass them on to the next generation of interpreters-translators, researchers, and other professionals working in the public interest domain dealing with multilingual and multicultural matters.

In the preceding sections of this paper, we mentioned that the PIIT

program hopes to attract practicing interpreters-translators in order to engage them in academic research on public interest settings, as well as to deepen their theoretical or background knowledge about the concerned field. This means that the program might need to be flexible in order to transform itself and explore ways of catering to the needs of those who already work in the field. The PIIT program will also need to make itself attractive to professional interpreters and translators who work in settings other than public interest, such as conferences or business. The aim of this is to have them involved in public interest settings so that they make a positive contribution to the multilingual and multicultural society of Japan not only by providing their services in the field but also through engaging in exchanges with interpreters and translators from other settings, researchers and scholars, users of interpreting and translation services (e.g., legal and healthcare professionals, national and local authorities, NPO and NGO activists, as well as others engaged in various endeavors carried out as a part of civil society).

In order to improve the curriculum of the PIIT program in the future, it will be necessary to consider how to incorporate theoretical frameworks and outcomes of research conducted in other countries. Even though, as mentioned above, the situation of immigrant and foreign communities in Japan and Western countries differs significantly, Japan is indeed becoming an increasingly multilingual and multicultural society. Therefore, there are many lessons to be learned from experiences of training interpreters and translators in countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom or Spain, both in terms of research into and practice of public interest interpreting and translation. We do not mean to imply that Japan should uncritically follow these examples. Rather, it should give them serious consideration, learn from their successes and failures, and consider

what applications and solutions would work best in the Japanese context.

Finally, a large-scale collaboration with other educational institutions would have a significantly positive impact on the PIIT program in the future. Therefore, it is desirable to establish partnership agreements not only with other universities in Japan that want to contribute to the public interest interpreting and translation practice and research, but also with educational facilities overseas. Such nationwide or international exchange opportunities would have an undoubtedly positive effect on both parties: the PIIT program at NUFS, and on the partner institution. This is so especially for the academic research aspect of the program.

Engaging in research from an overseas perspective would lead to broadening horizons, and as a consequence, to producing better founded and more valuable scholarly work, which is crucial to contributing to the improvement of the overall situation in the public interest interpreting and translation domain. This process has already begun. In June 2015, NUFS concluded a general agreement on student exchange with Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. The focus of this exchange program is PIIT-related research as well as the basic skill training. It is desirable that this agreement be followed by other similar collaboration projects in the future.

4. Concluding Remarks

The aim of this paper was to give a brief overview of the contents and goals of the PIIT program launched as a new and ambitious endeavor at NUFS in Japan. The program has only started and it is still difficult to predict how it will evolve in the future. One of the

most important steps for the program's evolution will be to increase the number of languages to pair with Japanese and give more attention to fostering practical interpreting and translation skills discussed in the previous section.

As discussed throughout this paper, there are very few opportunities in Japan for fostering the development of public interest interpreters-translators at university graduate level. This makes the PIIT program an important and unique attempt to address the challenges that Japan faces as a multilingual and multicultural society, into which it has already started to transform.

The PIIT program aims at contributing to Japan by providing new generations of interpreters-translators that are not only equipped with professional skills but that also have a vast knowledge about their field of expertise and competence in academic research. This is not an easy task, but in order for the country to face this new global reality and become a respected member of the international community in the true sense of the word, this process is indispensable.

There is a long way ahead of the PIIT program. The challenges and problems discussed throughout this paper will need to be tackled in order for it to reach its goal – providing highly qualified and educated specialists in the public interest interpreting and translation domain. The first steps towards achieving this, however, have been made and through launching the PIIT program, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies is attempting to address the absence of links between research, training and practice related to public interest interpreting and translation, of which Hale (2007: 197) refers to in the excerpt quoted in the beginning of this paper.

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