

2020 Seoul International Forum on Translation and Interpreting

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Ewha Research Institute of Translation Studies and
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Moonsun Choi

Ewha Womans University, South Korea

Moonsun Choi is an Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Republic of Korea, where she teaches Korean-English interpreting and conducts research on interpreter education and technology in interpreting. (choimoonsun@ewha.ac.kr)

The Ewha Research Institute of Translation Studies (ERITS, erits.ewha.ac.kr) and Korea Legislation Research Institute (KLRI, klri.re.kr) co-hosted the 2020 Seoul International Forum on Translation and Interpreting (Seoul IFTI). Initially planned to be held at the Ewha Womans University campus in November 2020, the forum was conducted as a webinar due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic with the streaming of pre-recorded presentations on 3-4 December 2020. The Korea Legal Research Institute (KLRI) is the only government-funded research institute specialized in legislation in the Republic of Korea, and ERITS is the translation studies research institute of the Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation (gsti.ewha.ac.kr), Ewha Womans University, Korea. The forum had received over 800 pre-registrations for the webinar, including many from overseas in different time zones. Simultaneous interpretation in Korean, English, French, Chinese and Japanese was provided for the international viewers by the Ewha GSTI.

The 2020 forum, which as the first installment of the Seoul IFTI series to follow in the years ahead, was organized under the theme of legal translation and interpreting as an interface between law and language. Various issues relating to law and language, and legal translation and interpreting were explored from research, professional practice and training perspectives. The forum, though it was held online, enabled the participants from home and abroad to engage in active, in-depth discussions on the role of translation and interpreting in legal settings by exchanging their views in writing via the electronic bulletin boards set up on the webinar webpage.

The two-day program consisted of three plenary talks and four sessions on legal interpreting, law and language, and legal translation. The plenary speakers included Prof. Sandra Hale, University of New South Wales, Australia, Prof. Łucja Biel, University of Warsaw, Poland, and Prof. Jan Engberg, University of Aarhus, Denmark. A total of 16 scholars from Korea, Australia, UK, Mexico, Austria, and Japan participated as presenters. Notably, there were two “special conversations” arranged as an intermittent session for each day, in which Jeesoo Jung, an Ewha GSTI alumni and conference interpreter specializing in legal field, and Sharon Choi, who interpreted for Bong Joon-ho, director of the internationally acclaimed Korean film “Parasite” were invited for one-on-one interviews to talk about their experience in the field.

Day 1 kicked off with the opening remarks by Prof. Mikyung Choi, Dean of Ewha GSTI. President Kye-Hong Kim of KLRI welcomed the audience to the forum, followed by Minister Kang-Seop Lee of the Ministry of Government Legislation, Korea, and Director Klaus Meyer-Koeken from the European Commission Directorate-General for Translation sending congratulatory messages to the international audience.

The first plenary talk was given by Prof. Sandra Hale (University of New South Wales, Australia) on legal interpreting in Australia. Under the title of “Fighting for justice: Battles won for legal interpreting in Australia”, Prof. Hale summarized her own trajectory as practitioner, educator, researcher, advisor and advocate for improvements to legal interpreting and outlined the battles won along the way. Her presentation provided a summary of the main results of her research over the years on the social status of legal interpreters. She closed her presentation by showing how dissemination and outreach have led to social impact and significant milestones.

In Session 1 on legal interpreting, Prof. Jieun Lee (Ewha Womans University, Korea) and Dr. Seoyeon Hong (Dankook University, Korea) co-presented a paper entitled “Repair as a coping strategy in legal interpreting: A case study of untrained interpreter-mediated investigative interviews”. They explored the phenomenon of repair in legal interpreting and its critical role in communication, drawing on the discourse of interpreter-mediated Korean prosecutor interviews with a suspect. Prof. Miranda Lai (RMIT University, Australia) and Prof. Erika Gonzalez (RMIT University, Australia), in their presentation titled “When interpreting training is not available – A pilot court interpreter mentoring program for minority languages”, talked about a pilot program for interpreter training adopted in Australia to implement the Recommended National Standards for Working with Interpreters in Courts and Tribunals released in 2017. Prof. Eloísa Monteoliva (Heriot-Watt University, UK) delivered her presentation under the title of “It is ‘The’ way, but it can turn into a bit of a palaver - Police

officers' views of interpreting and other means to communication in multilingual interaction", drawing on six focus group interviews with community and response officers from Police Scotland. She discussed interpreting as a socially-situated practice in policing scenarios and different forms to enable communication in multilingual encounters used by officers in daily policing operations.

In Session 2 on law and language, Prof. Andrii Ryzhkov (National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico) presented a paper titled "Sworn Korean-Spanish-Korean translation: Repercussions of migratory processes between Mexico and South Korea". Based on professional interaction between the author as an official translator and interpreter with citizens from Mexico and the Republic of Korea, Prof. Ryzhkov analyzed sworn translations for individuals coming from the two countries and discussed the realities that migrants face in everyday life upon arrival in the two countries. Dr. Iana Kazeeva (University of Vienna, Austria) presented a paper titled "Drafting errors and interpretations of legal provisions", in which she delved into punctuation errors and suggested some possible solutions. Prof. Hyun-soo Kim (Pusan National University, Korea) delivered a presentation titled "Problems and solutions in the translation of civil law provisions". Prof. Kim highlighted the obstacles that impede the translation of the civil code and suggested the necessity of drawing up a translation guideline. Prof. Sara Oh (Gachon University, Korea), in her presentation entitled "Ethics for AI court translation and interpretation", examined the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) in courtrooms and judicial institutions around the world and discussed the issue of translator ethics with the focus on the need for a specialized code of ethics for the AI translators.

Day 2 opened with two plenary talks. In the first talk entitled "What's trending in legal translation studies?: Sketching a landscape of research trends in the last decade (the 2010s) through a bibliometric analysis", Prof. Łucja Biel (University of Warsaw, Poland) surveyed and categorized publications on legal translation in the 2010s to identify key research trends and publication patterns as well as niches and gaps through a bibliometric and bibliographic analysis of key journals and translation-studies bibliographical databases. The second talk entitled "Generating multidimensional knowledge for legal translation: How comparative law and translation theory interact in translation as knowledge communication" was given by Prof. Jan Engberg (University of Aarhus, Denmark). Noting that legal translators must have strategies and techniques to generate relevant knowledge for the specific translational purposes from legal sources of different kinds in a systematic and efficient manner, Prof. Engberg presented ways of generating and representing the necessary multidimensional knowledge in the form of conceptual frames, mirroring the structure of the human long-term memory.

Following the plenary talks, Session 3 on legal translation featured three Korean papers. Prof. Jina Kim (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea) discussed “Points to note when translating Korean-Chinese laws”. Prof. Kim examined the difficulties involved in the translation of Korean laws into Chinese and suggested some solutions. Prof. Jieun Lee (Ewha Womans University, Korea), Ms. Hyejin Park (Attorney at Law and Lecturer, Ewha Womans University, Korea) and Prof. Hyo-eun Choi (Ewha Womans University, Korea) co-presented a paper titled “Developing a guideline for the Korean-English Translation of Korea Laws” with a focus on the project for the development of an English translation guideline for the government-funded Korea Law Translation Center (KLTC) of the Korean Legal Research Institute (KLRI). And Ms. Hyejin Chong (Senior Researcher, KLRI, Korea) shared her experience as a practitioner in the field of legal translation in her presentation titled “Legal translation from the perspective of translation practitioners: The case of the Korea Legislation Research Institute”.

Session 4 was another session dedicated to legal interpreting along with session 1 on Day 1. Prof. Jakub Marszalenko (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Japan), in his presentation entitled “Court interpreting prescribed vs court interpreting described: Differences between Japanese and English and their implications on interpreter-mediated criminal proceedings in Japan”, discussed discretionary choices made by court interpreters in Japan working with English. Last but not least, two Ph.D candidates from Australia presented papers based on their doctoral dissertation work. Ms. Shuyu Zhang (Ph.D Candidate, Australian National University, Australia) focused on sight translation in legal interpreting in her presentation titled “From theory to practice: Interpreter protocols revisited with special attention to sight translation in legal interpreting”; Ms. Xiaoyu Zhao (Ph.D Candidate, University of New South Wales, Australia), in her presentation titled “Linking the process and product of simultaneous interpreting in courts: An experimental approach”, discussed an experiment that links the process and product of SI in courts with the adoption of eye-tracking equipment.

Now that Seoul IFTI 2020 is over with a great success, the vision of the Seoul IFTI series is to make the forum an annual event to serve as an international platform for legal experts and T&I researchers and practitioners from around the world to discuss theory and practice on legal issues involving T&I and to share their diverse experiences and perspectives. The second forum, Seoul IFTI 2021, is scheduled to be aired on 15 July 2021. Papers on the topics related to ethics and professionalism in Translation & Interpreting are welcomed.