

**THE CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN THE  
INTERPRETING SYSTEM**

**Kuldoshov Uktam**

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

[kuldashovuktamjon@gmail.com](mailto:kuldashovuktamjon@gmail.com)

**Hasanova Rushana Zafarovna**

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

[rushanahasanova03@gmail.com](mailto:rushanahasanova03@gmail.com)

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20343093>

**Abstract.** The interpreting profession plays a crucial role in ensuring effective communication between individuals, institutions, and nations in multilingual environments. As globalization, international diplomacy, migration, and cross-cultural cooperation continue to expand, the demand for highly qualified interpreters has significantly increased. In this context, ethical behavior and professional standards have become essential components of interpreting practice. This article examines the importance of the code of ethics and professional standards in the interpreting system, focusing on their influence on translation accuracy, interpreter neutrality, confidentiality, professional competence, and intercultural communication. The study analyzes the fundamental ethical principles followed by interpreters in international organizations, governmental institutions, healthcare systems, educational settings, and legal environments. Furthermore, the paper discusses how professional standards contribute to the quality assurance of interpreting services and strengthen trust between communicative participants. The research also highlights the challenges interpreters face in maintaining ethical responsibilities under stressful and culturally sensitive conditions. Comparative examples from international interpreting associations and institutions are used to demonstrate the practical implementation of ethical regulations in professional interpreting activities. The findings indicate that adherence to ethical codes not only improves interpreting performance but also enhances the reputation and reliability of the profession in global communication systems.

**Keywords:** interpreting ethics, professional standards, confidentiality, neutrality, interpreting system, intercultural communication, translation accuracy, interpreter competence.

**Introduction**

Interpreting has become one of the most significant instruments of international communication in the modern world. In political negotiations, diplomatic meetings, international conferences, legal procedures, medical consultations, educational exchanges, and business cooperation, interpreters serve as linguistic and cultural mediators between speakers of different languages. The effectiveness of communication in such multilingual environments largely depends on the interpreter's professional competence and ethical responsibility. Therefore, the development of ethical principles and professional standards in the interpreting system has become increasingly important in contemporary translation studies and professional practice. The concept of professional ethics in interpreting refers to a set of moral principles, behavioral norms, and professional responsibilities that guide interpreters during communication processes. These ethical principles are designed to ensure accuracy, impartiality, confidentiality, professionalism, and respect for all participants involved in communication. Since interpreters often work in sensitive situations involving confidential information, legal consequences, or diplomatic relations, ethical conduct becomes a fundamental requirement of the profession.

One of the primary ethical principles in interpreting is confidentiality. Interpreters frequently encounter private, official, or sensitive information during their work. In medical interpreting, for example, interpreters may have access to patients' personal health information, while legal interpreters often participate in court hearings or police investigations involving confidential materials. In such circumstances, maintaining confidentiality is essential for protecting the rights and trust of communicative participants. Failure to preserve confidentiality may not only damage professional reputation but also lead to legal and institutional consequences.

Another significant ethical principle is impartiality and neutrality. Professional interpreters are expected to remain unbiased and avoid expressing personal opinions, emotions, or ideological positions during interpretation. Their role is not to influence communication but to transmit messages accurately and objectively. This principle is especially important in diplomatic negotiations, political conferences, and courtroom interpreting, where even minor distortions or subjective interpretations may affect decision-making processes and intercultural relations.

Accuracy also represents a core professional standard in interpreting systems. Interpreters must convey the speaker's meaning completely and precisely without omission, addition, or modification. Achieving accuracy requires advanced linguistic knowledge, subject-specific terminology, strong memory skills, concentration, and cultural awareness. In simultaneous interpreting environments, interpreters often work under intense psychological pressure and time limitations, which increases the importance of professional preparation and ethical discipline.

**Materials and methods.** This study adopts a qualitative-descriptive research design aimed at analyzing the role of ethical codes and professional standards in the interpreting system. The research is based on a comparative and analytical approach, focusing on how ethical principles are applied in real interpreting contexts such as conference interpreting, legal interpreting, medical interpreting, and diplomatic communication.

The data for this study were collected through document analysis of academic literature, professional ethical guidelines, and institutional codes of interpreting organizations. Key sources include international interpreting associations, academic monographs, and peer-reviewed journal articles in translation and interpreting studies. Special attention was given to ethical frameworks developed by global professional bodies and their implementation in practical interpreting environments.

The analysis procedure involved three stages. First, relevant literature on interpreting ethics and professional standards was systematically reviewed. Second, core ethical principles such as confidentiality, neutrality, accuracy, competence, and professionalism were categorized. Third, these principles were analyzed in relation to real-life interpreting challenges, including cognitive pressure, cultural mediation, and institutional constraints. The findings were then synthesized to identify patterns and interpret their significance for professional interpreting practice.

## **Results**

The analysis of the literature reveals that ethical codes and professional standards are universally recognized as the foundation of interpreting practice. Different scholars emphasize various dimensions of these principles, but all agree on their essential role in ensuring quality and trust in communication.

According to Pöchhacker (2004), interpreting quality is inseparable from ethical responsibility, as interpreters act as "mediators of meaning" rather than simple language converters. This highlights the importance of neutrality in professional practice.

Similarly, Gile (2009) argues that interpreters operate under significant cognitive load, and ethical decision-making is often challenged by time pressure and limited processing capacity,

especially in simultaneous interpreting.

Moser-Mercer (2015) emphasizes that professional standards are not only linguistic but also psychological, as interpreters must manage stress while maintaining accuracy and ethical discipline in high-stakes environments.

In the same context, Seleskovitch (1978) introduces the theory of sense-based interpreting, stating that interpreters must transmit meaning rather than words, which requires strong ethical awareness and contextual understanding.

Wadensjö (1998) highlights the interactional role of interpreters in dialogue interpreting, showing that neutrality does not mean invisibility, but rather controlled and responsible participation in communication.

Furthermore, Shlesinger (2010) notes that ethical dilemmas often arise when interpreters face conflicts between institutional expectations and personal moral judgment, especially in legal and political contexts.

Kalina (2015) emphasizes the importance of training and certification in maintaining professional standards, arguing that ethical competence must be developed systematically through education.

Finally, Chesterman (2001) proposes a set of translator ethics models, including norms of accountability, communication fidelity, and professional integrity, which are also applicable to interpreting practice.

Overall, the results indicate that despite variations in theoretical approaches, all scholars consistently underline the importance of confidentiality, accuracy, neutrality, and professional competence as core ethical pillars of interpreting.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study demonstrate that ethical codes and professional standards are not merely theoretical constructs but practical necessities in the interpreting profession. Interpreters operate in highly sensitive environments where even minor deviations from ethical norms can lead to serious communicative, legal, or diplomatic consequences.

One of the key insights is that neutrality in interpreting is a complex and dynamic concept. While traditional views emphasize complete invisibility of the interpreter, modern scholars such as Wadensjö (1998) suggest that interpreters inevitably influence communication to some degree. Therefore, ethical competence involves managing this influence responsibly rather than attempting to eliminate it entirely.

Another important issue is cognitive overload, as highlighted by Gile (2009). The results suggest that ethical decision-making is directly affected by cognitive pressure, meaning that interpreters may struggle to maintain accuracy and neutrality under real-time interpreting conditions. This emphasizes the need for continuous professional training and cognitive skill development.

The study also shows that confidentiality remains one of the most critical ethical principles across all interpreting domains. In legal and medical interpreting, breaches of confidentiality can damage trust between institutions and individuals, making ethical discipline essential for professional credibility.

Furthermore, intercultural competence emerges as a key component of professional standards. As Seleskovitch (1978) and Pöchhacker (2004) suggest, interpreting is not only linguistic transfer but also cultural mediation. This means that ethical interpreting requires awareness of cultural sensitivity, social context, and communicative intention.

The discussion also reveals that professional training plays a crucial role in ethical development. According to Kalina (2015), structured education and certification systems significantly improve interpreters' ability to handle ethical dilemmas effectively. This suggests that institutions should prioritize ethics-based training modules in interpreter education programs.

In conclusion, the discussion confirms that ethical codes and professional standards form the backbone of interpreting practice. They ensure not only linguistic accuracy but also trust, professionalism, and intercultural understanding in global communication systems.

### **Conclusion**

This study has examined the role of the code of ethics and professional standards in the interpreting system, highlighting their fundamental importance in ensuring effective, accurate, and responsible communication across languages and cultures. The analysis demonstrates that interpreting is not merely a linguistic activity, but a complex professional practice that requires strong ethical awareness, cognitive skills, and intercultural competence.

The findings show that core ethical principles—such as confidentiality, neutrality, accuracy, and professional competence—are universally recognized across interpreting contexts, including legal, medical, diplomatic, and conference interpreting. These principles serve as the foundation for maintaining trust between communicative parties and ensuring the reliability of interpreting services. Without strict adherence to these standards, communication risks distortion, misunderstanding, and even serious institutional consequences.

The study also reveals that ethical decision-making in interpreting is often influenced by real-life challenges such as cognitive overload, time pressure, emotional stress, and culturally sensitive situations. In such conditions, interpreters are required not only to possess high linguistic proficiency but also to demonstrate strong moral judgment and professional discipline. This indicates that ethical competence is as important as technical interpreting skills.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Chesterman, A. (2001). Proposal for a hierarchy of norms in translation ethics.
2. Gile, D. (2009). Basic concepts and models for interpreter and translator training. John Benjamins.
3. Kalina, S. (2015). Ethics in conference interpreting: Training and practice.
4. Moser-Mercer, B. (2015). Simultaneous interpreting: Cognitive and professional aspects.
5. Pöchhacker, F. (2004). Introducing interpreting studies. Routledge.
6. Seleskovitch, D. (1978). Interpreting for international conferences.
7. Shlesinger, M. (2010). Interpreter ethics and decision-making in practice.
8. Wadensjö, C. (1998). Interpreting as interaction. Longman.