



PIVOT INTERPRETATION IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: A HYBRID REGIME

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Some would maintain that conference interpretation is most successful when exercised from several passive languages into a mother tongue. That approach is not always possible: certain UN official languages must be serviced by bi-directional interpreters offering relay to all other members of the team. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages, but can the two systems co-exist effectively within the same teams of interpreters?

Ian Newton was formerly Chief Interpreter of the International Labour Office, Geneva, and manager of the ILO's Interpretation Service. He was originally trained in conference interpretation as a stagiaire at the European Commission; he subsequently free-lanced in Geneva, mainly within the UN system and the then CSCE, before pursuing his interpretation career with the ILO. He lectured in interpretation (consecutive and simultaneous) for three decades at the University of Geneva. He is now Professor of Interpretation Studies at Shanghai International Studies University; he also lectures on a programme sponsored by the University of Nairobi and the African Union to train interpreters in African languages. Accordingly, he is well acquainted with issues surrounding bi-directional interpretation régimes and relay.