

A Guide for Journalists

CROSS-CULTURAL JOURNALISM 101

 DayInterpreting



*Journalism is what maintains
democracy; it's the force for
progressive social change.*

THE NEW IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-CULTURAL JOURNALISM

In this globalized world, with economic, political and cultural issues and narratives transcending borders, **international and cross-cultural journalism is more relevant and powerful than ever before.**

Since language assistance, and, especially, interpreting is often key to producing quality international reporting, we've decided to release this guide to help journalists from all walks of life to efficiently collaborate with media interpreters.

Whether you're a freelancer or a member of an international news agency, covering armed conflicts or theater, this document has easy to understand, straightforward and actionable advice to make mediated cross-cultural communication as smooth as possible.



WHAT WE'LL COVER

The Interpreter as a Cultural Assistant
Communicating with an Interpreter in Journalism
Finding the Best Interpreter for Your Case

THE INTERPRETER AS A CULTURAL ASSISTANT



Journalists and linguists aren't strangers. Global news bureaus often pass news through their international agencies, to be translated and localized. Foreign tips, testimonies, and the work of reporters from different cultures can be at the center of a journalist's work.

Reporters working internationally or for international organizations **constantly benefit from cross-cultural material, and require profound cross-cultural understanding and awareness.**

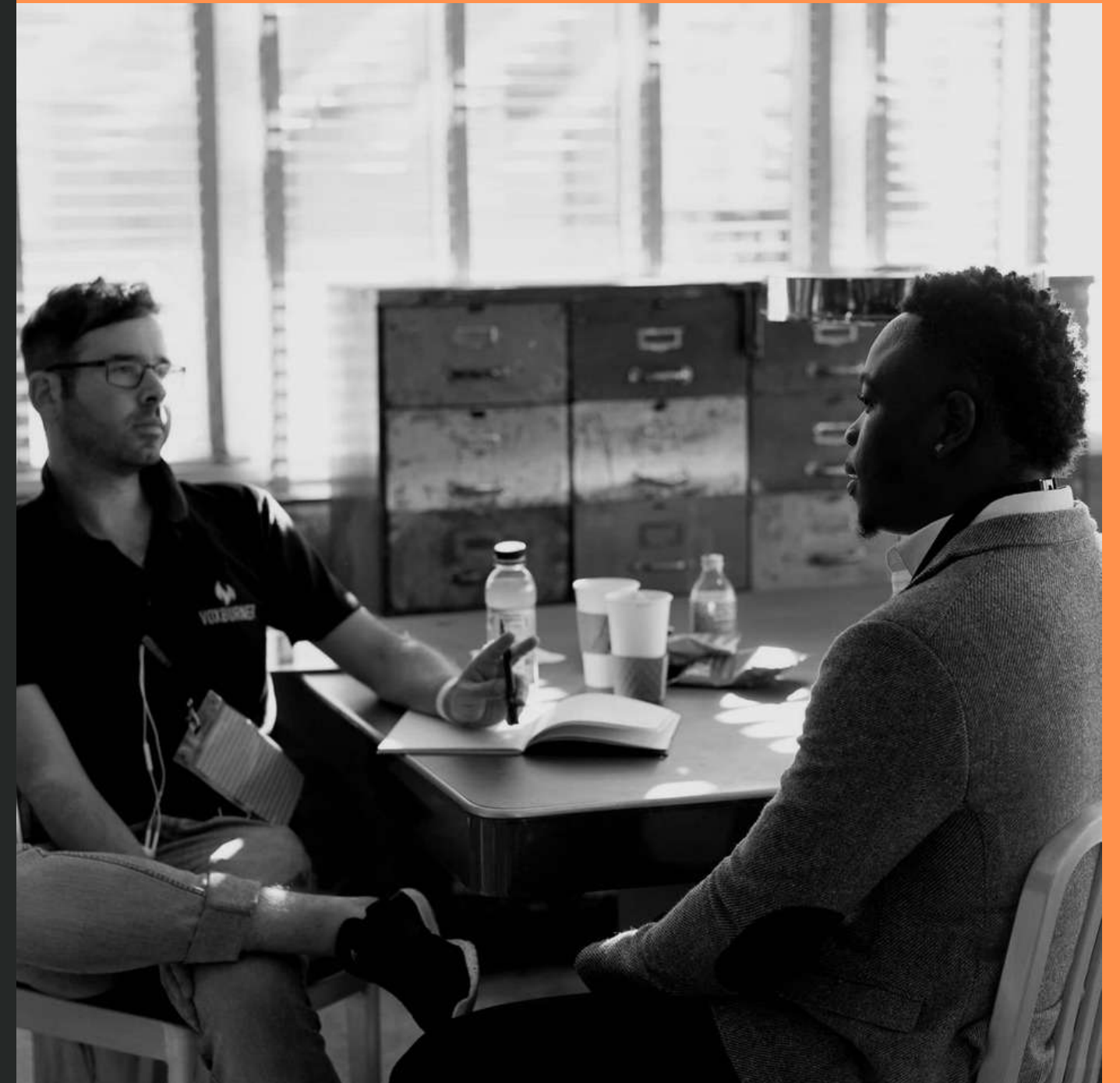
In some countries, an interpreter will be **key to establishing a connection with a local source, making them feel more comfortable and motivated to share more.**



SOMETIMES, AN INTERPRETER WON'T HELP

Talking to the International Journalists' Network, freelance correspondent Didem Tali explained:

“The most pressing issue I’ve had with interpreters is that the overwhelming majority of translators in the ‘global south’ tend to be males. When you’re covering sexual violence, child marriage and issues for Syrian women, it makes [sources] a bit uncomfortable to have the presence of a male translator.”



Keys to Effectively Collaborate with an Interpreter



Experience

Is your interpreter experienced at this sort of work? This is especially important if you're going to be working at a highly-stressful setting where audition can be impaired by loud or consistent noises.



Simultaneous or consecutive:

Will your interpreter be expected to translate as the speaker is talking, or after? Simultaneous interpretation keeps the interaction from being radically slowed down, but consecutive interpretation allows you to pay attention to gestures and non-verbal cues, while being able to capture the meaning of the speaker's words separately.

Keys to Effectively Collaborate with an Interpreter



Quotes

If you're going to quote the interviewee, make sure the interpreter knows it and opts for translating precisely, even including slang and obscenities, instead of paraphrasing.



The Story

Make sure the interpreter knows the situation they'll be working in. Provide them with relevant information, and guarantee their full understanding of the sources' place within this story.



IT'S GOING TO BE HARDER THAN USUAL

Prepare for a harder interview process.

Even when working with an excellent media interpreter, it's not gonna be the same as interviewing someone who speaks the same language as you. A cultural barrier might also make understanding harder.

But, don't worry: *Prepare yourself.* Extensive knowledge of the culture and the situation at hand will make you less likely to be unknowingly rude than a regular tourist. Be empathetic, patient and take specific measures to bond with your source, such as small talk or inviting them a coffee.



HIRING A MEDIA INTERPRETER

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Depending on whether you're a freelance journalist or part of an international organization, your first steps towards working with an interpreter will differ.

If you're a freelancer, you could rely on recommendations of colleagues doing work similar to yours. This is one of the instances in which networking proves itself to be key.

If you work for an organization, ask if there's a list of trusted agencies and professionals they tend to work with.

Basically, there are two roads you could take: You could look for **in person** or **over the phone** interpreting services.

PHONE INTERPRETING

- ✓ *Lower costs than its counterpart.*
- ✓ *Professional can be based anywhere.*
- ✗ *The interpreter is decontextualized.*
- ✗ *Relies on good telecommunications infrastructure.*

IN PERSON INTERPRETING

- ✗ *More expensive, you'll have to cover the interpreters expenses.*
- ✗ *Limited by local offer.*
- ✓ *Full understanding of the context, ability to translate non-verbal cues.*
- ✓ *Doesn't rely on good connectivity.*



Mother-tongue interpreters



Supporting all languages



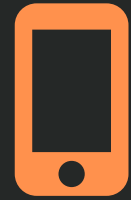
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