This handbook is the first that aims to present a comprehensive overview of the main themes and concerns surrounding the evolving domain of conference interpreting to researchers, practitioners, trainers, and students. These range from the history and basics of conference interpreting to the settings and regions where conference interpreting occurs, from training and professionalisation-related issues to trends in research, to recent developments. The handbook is divided into seven parts, with 40 contributions from 75 authors around the globe.

Chapters under Part I focus on the fundamentals of conference interpreting. Although the issues addressed are not new, their comprehensive coverage makes this section a valuable resource to both students and lecturers, as well as early researchers. The areas covered are the historical developments of conference interpreting and its professionalisation under the impact of ICT and Nuremberg Trials (Baigorri-Jalón, Fernández-Sánchez and Payás, Chapter 1); the main modes of conference interpreting, and issues of cognitive processing, constraints, and problem triggers (Bartłomiejczyk and Stachowiak-Szymczak, Chapter 2); and the under-researched skill of note-taking in professional consecutive interpreting and as related to cognition, technology-assisted note-taking, and notes as a source of feedback and self-reflection in training within the learner-centred paradigm (Ahrens and Orlando, Chapter 3). Tiselius (Chapter 4) contributes to the ongoing debate over whether conference interpreting and community interpreting should be treated as distinct or similar professions. She concludes that the two are similar in terms of required skills, competences, and knowhow, despite differences existing between them, for example, in terms of interpreter profiles and level of professionalisation. Tiselius emphasises that conference interpreting and community interpreting researchers have pursued different research topics, but fails to point out that training paradigms also
differ. While the AIIC training paradigm dominates conference interpreter training (Boéri, 2015), community interpreting has started to align itself with emerging training paradigms (Šveda, 2021) oriented towards particular settings.

Part II is dedicated to five evolving settings of the broader domain of conference interpreting. Slaughter Olsen, Liu, and Viaggio (Chapter 5) give an anecdotal account of diplomatic conference interpreting in sovereign governments and intergovernmental organisations, and highlight issues of modes, directionality, and role perceptions, as well as the impact of developments in RSI and AI on this interpreting setting. Sandrelli (Chapter 6) focuses on the defining features of conference interpreting at press conferences and highlights relevant challenges, the dialogical nature in particular, of this interpreting setting in need of further empirical research. Falbo (Chapter 7) overviews media conference interpreting history, features, and challenges; and Graves, Pascual Olaguíbel, and Pearson (Chapter 8) offer an account of distinct features of conference interpreting in the EU institutions against the backdrop of multilingualism. Chapter 9 by Ruiz Rosendo and Diur concludes Part II by discussing distinct features and challenges of conference interpreting at the United Nations (UN). Readers in some countries, where conference interpreting has been slow to evolve, might struggle to relate to the diversity of Part II, but what scores the highest about this part is that the chapters are both informative and practical, and it is interesting to see how conference interpreting events occur in a dynamic interplay between various factors and professional requirements such as working conditions in special communicative settings with blurred boundaries and specific features and challenges.

Part III focuses on nine geographical regions, where conference interpreting exists, from the United States to China, from India to Brazil. However, it does not cover transcontinental countries such as Turkey (Diriker, 2015), where conference interpreting is an established profession, or Middle Eastern ones, including Iran, where at least for more than four decades, the main requirements have been for conference interpreting and diplomatic interpreting (Dastyar, 2019). Despite this shortcoming, this section contributes to the field by presenting the first global overview of conference interpreting. Major recurring themes throughout part III are English as a lingua franca, which is strongly felt in the United States (Chapter 10 by Jourdenais); impacts of conference interpreting in South Korea (Chapter 13 by Lee), which is still marginal in Japan (Chapter 12 by Takeda and Matsushita); the COVID-19 pandemic (Chapter 18 by Pagura and Costa Pinto); and the growing demand and challenges of distance interpreting in view of the pandemic, on one hand, and advances in the technological paradigm, on the other (Chapter 16 by Harshvardhan and Malhotra).

Part IV documents the professionalisation of conference interpreting. Again, the chapters cover established topics in conference interpreting rather than offer new information. However, they are clear evidence that conference interpreting is the most professionalised type of interpreting. Pradas Macías and Zwischenberger (Chapter 19) discuss quality as related to norms in conference interpreting. Dawrant and Han (Chapter 20) discuss professional qualification testing in conference interpreting and advocate the wider use of a criterion-referenced testing (CRT) method. However, major challenges to CRT, for example, scoring and score interpretation, allowing for variability of scores, defining and measuring quality constructs, and so on, need to be overcome for
improved assessment-related outcomes. In line with the brief historical account of the professionalisation of conference interpreting in Chapter 1 of the handbook, Dam and Gentile (Chapter 21) address in detail issues of status and (de-)professionalisation in this field. Horváth and Tryuk (Chapter 22) focus on ethics in conference interpreting and interpreting in conflict zones, ethical issues related to ICT in interpreting and interpreter training, as well as ethical dilemmas interpreters face. In view of its thematic relevance, it would have been more appropriate to include Chapter 39 (Conference interpreting and English as a lingua franca) by Albl-Mikasa in this section.

Part V should have read training, education, and assessment, not training and education, to give adequate visibility to assessment issues in conference interpreting. Russo (Chapter 23) discusses aptitude testing and overviews empirical research into aptitude and aptitude tests for conference interpreting, but she leaves out the under-researched issue of developing models of aptitude for interpreting, with one exception being Catherine Chabasse’s (2009) aptitude model for simultaneous interpreting. Another important theme missing in Russo’s chapter is the critical issue of material selection in interpreting entrance examinations as related to aptitude testing. Kalina and Barranco-Droege (Chapter 24) discuss evolving learning and teaching practices for competence and expertise development in the main modes of conference interpreting. The authors, however, do not address the question “How can teacher training be improved?” (p. 321). They should have covered training of trainer (ToT) initiatives as related to this important question. Gile and Barranco-Droege (Chapter 25) give a brief overview of some predominant training paradigms and theories in interpreting studies, and present the results of a small-scale study based on questionnaires on the current position of theory in interpreter training programmes. One major drawback to Part V is that very little attention is paid to assessment issues regarding conference interpreting. That this part only has a few contributions also indicates that more attention needs to be paid to pedagogy. It is hoped that the articles inspire educators for fuller accounts of the themes covered.

Part VI presents an insightful overview of empirical and theoretical research into conference interpreting, focusing on cognitive processing and prediction in SI (Hodzik and Williams, Chapter 26), interpreting strategies (Riccardi, Chapter 27), research within the expertise paradigm (Moser-Mercer, Chapter 28), and stressful and emotional dimensions of interpreting (Korpal, Chapter 29). Defrancq, Collard, Magnifico, and Iglesias Fernández (Chapter 30) raise questions about gender-related issues in conference interpreting, but leave most of them unanswered. Bendazzoli (Chapter 32) discusses contributions of corpora as research and pedagogical tools to conference interpreting. He highlights target language enhancement, communication, linguistics, and terminology among the benefits of corpora for conference interpreter education, but this view is one-sided as corpora can play an important role in curriculum design, especially in terms of enhancing learner autonomy and empowerment and facilitating deliberate practice. Chmiel’s (Chapter 33) overview of eye-tracking research into conference interpreting is a major contribution as there is a dearth of research into cognitive aspects and efforts of interpreting. One gap in this section is the lack of a chapter on ethnographic research into conference interpreting, which is a new way of exploring the field as a professional community of practice (Duflou, 2016). Notwithstanding, the many contributions (nine chapters) in Part IV showcases the rich diversity of research strands and topics in
conference interpreting, which certainly hold strong appeal for both emerging and established researchers.

Part VII offers newer perspectives in conference interpreting. Seeber and Fox (Chapter 35) delve into the past and present of distance conference interpreting, cognitive challenges, and training issues, and Fantinuoli’s contribution (Chapter 36) overviews the use of technology with respect to interpreter training, levelling up interpreting processes, the reality of distance interpreting, and the emergence of machine interpreting. What is surprisingly missing in Fantinuoli’s chapter is emerging web-based assessment of interpreting skills thanks to advances in ICTs. Hickey, Downie, Gansmeier, and Drechsel (Chapter 37) advocate, as practitioners, close cooperation between research and practice in interpreting via social media platforms, and Turner, Grbić, Stone, Tester, and de Wit (Chapter 28) discuss sign language conference interpreting as an underresearched practice. Albl-Mikasa (Chapter 39) focuses on English as lingua franca as a growing trend that has the potential to threaten the future of conference interpreting, and Johnson’s chapter concludes the handbook by focusing on theoretical aspects and empirical evidence of benefits of mindfulness practice for attention, and stress and emotion management in conference interpreting. Although a separate part should have been dedicated in this handbook to technologies and different aspects of conference interpreting instead of a single chapter, part VII offers the reader new perspectives on how the field has evolved and promotes the scholarly debate about its future directions.

Overall, this handbook effectively fulfils its aim of attempting a comprehensive coverage of the ever-increasing body of knowledge in conference interpreting, covering both established themes as well as novel approaches in the field with scholarly accuracy and expertise. I highly recommend this indispensable handbook to researchers, practitioners, postgraduate students, and trainers in the field of conference interpreting, and to all those who are passionate about this fascinating field of study.

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Biography

Vorya Dastyar is an independent scholar, practicing conference interpreter and certified legal translator, and published author in interpreting and translation studies. He has been training interpreters and translators for over a decade. He is the author of *Dictionary of education and assessment in translation and interpreting studies* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019).