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## SPECIAL ISSUE

Practices in Intercultural Mediation:  
Public Service Interpreting in Perspective





## INTRODUCTION

In the wake of Foucault, academic papers generally no longer focus on defining the ontological statute of their objects of study; in other words, they do not proceed on the basis of a definition that predetermines what the specific field of knowledge *is*. On the contrary, researchers now tend to focus on the way in which their own *practices* take shape in a given spatial or temporal context. From this point of view, Public Service Interpreting can be viewed not as a normative discipline in which a particular way of acting is pre-established according to a defined set of *a priori* rules, but rather as an exercise in which a particular unit of knowledge is applied in relation to adjacent practices.

Hence the interest of framing translation practices within the cultural context. Having said that, however, we wish to make it clear from the outset that in proposing PSI as an intercultural mediation exercise, our objective in this monographic study is not to focus on the bridges that translation builds between cultures by endeavouring to make their respective points of view mutually understandable. Cultures are symbolic constructs, and their symbols are above all articulated through language. And although the interpreter often finds him or herself in the demanding situation of closing the gap between different cultural viewpoints by translating the words in which they are expressed, we do not wish here to use the term “intercultural” in a broad sense, since it would require us to pay particular attention to mediation practices designed to facilitate the processes of negotiation in community-based conflicts. We do not use the term “culture” in its ethnographic or ethnological sense, which deals with the comparative study of the identity patterns expressing differences between peoples, nor in its broader anthropological sense, focusing on the scientific observation of the human being as a whole. In almost “functionalist” terms, when discussing intercultural mediation, we shall refer to the deceptively simple fact that the public services interpreter is literally *in the middle* of different social groups who identify themselves by following patterns of behaviour which are often very firmly established or even conform to certain institutionally defined protocols. Consequently, interpreters find themselves in the position of having to adapt the way they work to a cultural “ecosystem” defined by reactions, values, ideological and behavioural models which, in relation to other groups, other members of their own group or themselves, bring into play the members of the social groups involved in the interpreting practices.

To return to the above-mentioned propositions, it is in those very practices arising from the exercise of public service interpreting that the cultural norms inherent to the behaviour of the groups and agents involved —be they interpreters or those who use their services— can become an object of study and field of



knowledge. Judges, doctors, police officers, lawyers, social workers... and victims, witnesses, declarants and agents in general, do not have a previously established set of rules to regulate their behaviour in the situations defined by the translation activities. Rather, those practices influence the “norms” of behaviour, which, far from being subjective or idiosyncratic, conform to observable patterns informed by the cultural characteristics of the groups involved. Our aim is to find out how translation practices take shape in the midst of professional cultures that are made explicit through being exercised.

Translation practices in the context of public service translating not only transfer equivalent contents from one language to another, but at the same time they mediate between institutions, collectives, corporate habits, regulations, administrative measures and utterances; between specific direct limitations which may have existed before the practices, on the one hand, and indirect pressures which dictate behaviours during the exercise of those practices. They also mediate in situations in which not only interests, but also values and beliefs, come into conflict in communicative situations that are far from horizontal. In this monographic work, therefore, we shall study interpreting by looking at different professionals working in different contexts and from different theoretical perspectives, considering their practices as the field in which the inertias and tensions determining their exercise are articulated.

This monograph contains various articles which, from a variety of theoretical perspectives and frameworks, show the importance of discursive practices in establishing the interpreter’s professional identity, his or her recognition, society’s expectations regarding the interpreter’s professional activity, and the public perception of the social need for the linguistic services provided and the priority given to them in public policies. This latter aspect is discussed by García-Beyaert, who emphasises and appeals to the responsibility of States and public authorities in providing interpreting services. Government intervention would ensure professional regulation, the development of the necessary infrastructures for interpreting services to be carried out, and the sustainability of the system. However, in order for such a commitment to come about, the author considers that it is essential for the so-called institutional “agenda setting” to be changed in such a way as to make the provision of language assistance services a priority. According to the author, this prioritisation requires a reformulation of the problem of language assistance to present it as a basic right of vulnerable sections of society, rather than an action in defence of linguistic diversity; in other words, the problem needs to be addressed more from the communication point of view than from the perspective of linguistic difference. By emphasising the value of shared human dignity as opposed to difference, such a focus stands to benefit all the interested parties, not just the users.

According to Martín Ruano, the present institutional subordination and scant recognition of the role and practice of PSI is a consequence, among other factors, of the internalisation on the part of interpreters of the normative discourse that defines their role. In her article, she uses Foucault’s concept of power to shed light on the reasons explaining the pragmatic construction of the interpreter’s role, the definition of his/her relationship to the other agents involved, and the creation of the latter’s expectations concerning the interpreter’s role. Within these parameters, the



author discusses the need to propose new and more assertive definitions regarding the professional profiles of the agents involved in translation practice, and the need to build and effectively negotiate new subjectivities.

In an attempt to redefine the landscape in which the roles of the respective agents in translation acts take shape, the research carried out by Jiqing Dong sets out to study the discursive practices which determine the weft and warp of professional practice in a new organisational context: a social interpreting services company directed and managed by interpreters themselves. The current neoliberal agenda of many governments has promoted the outsourcing of interpreting services (for example, in court interpreting in the United Kingdom), which, on a commercial level, has resulted in the deregulation of the market and, in labour terms, a change in the professional code, working conditions and autonomy of interpreters. In this context, the author examines and highlights the transformative potential of the discourse used by translation company executives—based on the discourse of the directors of the company she studied—in their conceptualization of the interpreter's professional identity, making a case for the interpreter's social role in the interests of the community, independently of a purely business or lucrative point of view.

The diverse factors that determine interpreters' professional development and the pragmatic definition of their function have also been studied by Baixauli-Olmos and Aguirre and Roca. Baixauli-Olmos offers a description of the professional role and identity of public service interpreters working in prisons and correctional institutions, an environment which shapes the institutional, ethical and cultural considerations determining their activity. Taking as his starting point a socio-ecological model developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), he identifies balancing and unbalancing factors and variables which affect the role of interpreters working in correctional institutions, their social and occupational profile, and the evolution of their role. By observing the complex and changing nature of interpreters' actions in interactions within a set of systems, the author describes their efforts to achieve a contextually and ecologically balanced equilibrium.

Roca and Aguirre's novel point of view challenges the traditional notion of the interpreter's role, advocating the need to introduce new perspectives into the debate. The authors examine the interrelationship between the interpreter's degree of mediation, his/her role and the pragmatic concept of social distance, both from a theoretical point of view and in its application to dialogue interpreting and its implications for the negotiation of his/her function. The authors observe the position of the interpreters relative to the interlocutors and the mediation strategies used, as well as their relation to the various degrees of familiarity and hierarchisation in the communicative situation.

In the specific case of telephone interpreting, the distance (in this case physical) between the participants in the communicative encounter makes it necessary to follow a series of protocols dictated by the use of the telephone as an instrumental channel which helps to compensate for the physical absence of the interpreter. This requirement also necessitates on the part of the interpreter a range of skills specific to this mode of translation. Fernández Pérez's article focuses on the skills required by the interpreter to fulfil his/her role as the coordinator of the participants' turn-



taking, according to Wadensjö (1998). The author discusses four skills which she considers to be the most influential when it comes to managing interaction in the telephone interpreting mode and which most clearly set it apart from on-site dialogue interpreting: managing the beginning of the encounter, managing turn-taking, non-renditions and the interpreter's own interventions, and managing the end of the encounter.

The articles by Tipton and Vargas-Urpí study and present practices of the agents involved in the translation acts and the ways in which they apply their protocols as determining factors when defining the role and practice of interpreters. Tipton's study analyzes interpreters' perceptions of police interviews involving victims of domestic abuse with limited language proficiency. From the point of view of risk assessment and management, key elements in this type of communicative situations highlight the lack of a regulatory framework for police interventions and the gaps in institutional knowledge regarding interpreter mediation. The author postulates the need for co-responsibility between agents and interpreters during the encounter, not with a view to changing the interpreter's role and position, but to co-manage risk in the interactions.

The hypothetical triangular communication, defined as an equilateral situation relying on the interpreter's impartiality and invisibility, is revealed as much more complex in the work of Vargas-Urpí, in which she analyses the interaction of judicial agents in criminal proceedings when interpreting is required for the defendant or the witness. Specifically, Vargas-Urpí shows how the style of judges and lawyers, as well as the management of the conversation beyond the existing recommendations on working with interpreters, influences the way the interpreters perform their duties and poses problems of both a textual and interactional nature.

Finally, the aim of the diachronic historical study carried out by Estévez Grossi is to reconstruct, on the basis of oral testimonies, the communicative situation of migrant workers from Galicia (Spain) in Hanover (Germany) in the 1960s and 1970s and their need for community interpreting. In her article, the author puts forward a methodological proposal for the study of oral history as a means of retrieving the voices of participants in mediated encounters and thereby gaining insight into the practices and norms which obtained in the provision of interpreters to emigrant communities during that episode of our past.

We hope that a close reading of the following articles will contribute to the awareness that a description of real cultural patterns (what actually happens) can only be defined in dialectic relation to ideal patterns (what could or should happen), and that the model of truth proposed by academic research will be determined by the practices that it observes, while at the same time it normalises the observance of the practices that it defines.



## ARTICLES



# PUBLIC CONCERN, PUBLIC POLICY AND PSI: THE PUBLIC DIMENSION OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETING\*

Sofía García-Beyaert  
Arcos Institute, Seattle WA, USA

## ABSTRACT

PSI is a unique form of interpreting because it addresses a matter of public concern. After exploring what constitutes a matter “of public concern” and looking at arguments for government intervention, this article draws on theoretical frameworks from the academic field of public policy analysis to consider how an issue enters the public policy cycle. As a result, agenda-setting is identified as the first point of intervention in institutionalizing professional PSI. Further, it is argued that de-emphasizing language difference and focusing on communication rights is an effective strategy for framing PSI as a matter of public concern.

**KEYWORDS:** Community Interpreting, Public Service Interpreting, Communication Rights, Institutionalization, Public Policy.

## RESUMEN

La ISP es un tipo de interpretación singular porque responde a una cuestión de interés público. Después de explorar qué constituye una cuestión «de interés público» y de considerar argumentos que justifican una intervención gubernamental, el presente artículo recurre a contribuciones teóricas del ámbito académico del análisis de políticas públicas para entender bajo qué circunstancias una determinada cuestión desencadena un ciclo de política pública. Como resultado, el llamado *agenda-setting* queda identificado como primer punto de intervención hacia la institucionalización de la ISP profesional. Se aboga además por restarle énfasis a la diferencia lingüística y poner el acento en el derecho a la comunicación como estrategia más eficaz para fomentar una percepción generalizada de la ISP como cuestión de interés público.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** interpretación en el ámbito comunitario, interpretación en los servicios públicos, derecho a la comunicación, institucionalización, políticas públicas.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly interconnected world with increasingly multicultural societies, legislators and policy makers have yet to catch up with new needs arising from encounters that involve disparate languages. The need to communicate effectively is often poorly addressed in such encounters. Generally speaking, measures to ensure interpreting services that meet adequate quality standards are either insufficient or patently nonexistent.

In this article I address the public dimension of public service interpreting (PSI). I reflect on the role that public institutions play in the development of this sector of interpreting and the role that interpreters, interpreting scholars, and citizens at large can have in influencing public institutions and their agendas. My analysis is informed by direct observation in Spain and the United States and in-depth field study research in Ontario, Canada.

The exceptionality of PSI lies in the fact that it addresses a matter of public concern. After exploring what it means for PSI to be “of public concern” (Section 2), I review some theoretical frameworks to clarify what is required for an issue to be addressed by policy (Section 3). Agenda-setting, as the first stage for any public issue in its journey toward public policy, offers interesting insights for the development of PSI and the role that professionals and interpreting researchers can play in the (further) institutionalization of this maturing profession. In light of such insights, Section 4 concludes with a suggested framework within which to take initiatives for the development of PSI.

## 2. PSI AS A UNIQUE KIND OF INTERPRETING

Conference interpreting has reached a mature stage of professionalization through supply and demand market mechanisms (whether serving the needs of supranational institutions or those of local private markets). PSI, on the contrary, responds to social needs, which are not driven by market forces. Thus, quality service provision typically requires governments to intervene in the public interest. The next few paragraphs explain why the combination of these two characteristics (PSI as a social need and the absence of a market drive) qualifies PSI as a matter of public concern.

### 2.1. PSI IS A SOCIAL NEED

The term PSI reflects a specific approach to welfare in which government intervention has traditionally been central. “Public Service Interpreting” reflects an

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\* I would like to thank Barbara Taylor and two anonymous reviewers for their help during the editorial process.

assumption that basic services are, and should be, publicly managed. Under this model, the role of public administration is prominent: government-based organizations identify and provide welfare services. Sweden or France are typical examples of countries that employ this model. However, it is not universal; other countries rely heavily on a third sector of non-profit and non-governmental organizations for the provision of some or all social services. The United States and Canada are good examples. Not surprisingly, in these countries this sector of interpreting is referred to as “community interpreting”.

Roberts distinguishes between three sectors of interpreting: conference interpreting, court interpreting, and community-based interpreting. Under the rubric of PSI, court interpreting and interpreting in community-based settings (including healthcare, social services, and education settings) fall under one shared umbrella because interpreting is offered to assist with the provision of services that often fall in the public realm.

Welfare models and nomenclature considerations aside, the social value of interpreting services remains, regardless of whether the services support the first sector (private), second sector (government) or third sector (nonprofits and NGOs). Children’s education, for example, can be taken on by private initiatives, offered by the public sector, or through third sector organizations. For the provision of such a critical service to all children, effective communication with parents from diverse backgrounds is essential and interpreting fills this social need regardless of the sector. The same observation holds true in healthcare. Communication with patients is critical to effective service provision whether it is in the private, public, or third sector realm, and the lack of a system to ensure effective communication can result in a service breakdown.

In his article about the factors that determine the provision of public service interpreting, Ozolins remarks that, in many countries, interpreting for welfare services is often ensured through the intervention of third sector organizations.

Several countries deliver a good proportion of social services through NGOs, religious or voluntary associations—both Japan and a string of Mediterranean countries place heavy emphasis on NGOs supplying interpreters, usually from small organisations assisting refugees, migrants or foreigners, and there is often little government interest in regulating or supplementing these functioning bodies. Germany has largely considered interpreting needs outside of court interpreting to be adequately met by voluntary or NGO provision. (198)

Third sector organizations, the argument goes, are in the right position to identify social needs that neither the public nor the private sector have been able or willing to address. Language barriers between provider and client are a very real impediment to service provision and compromises the basic rights and freedoms of service users. Given the role of the third sector in society, it is not surprising that non-profit organizations often take on the responsibility of covering interpreting services. Because third-sector organizations are prohibited from distributing any surplus they generate to their investors, directors, or stakeholders, they are better positioned to serve the broader public interest (Lester and Sokolowski).



Looking at concrete real-life scenarios is often the best way to demonstrate the necessity for PSI and a system to support it. The situation below is shared online by the Washington State Coalition for Language Access (WASCLA). It is the story of a non-English speaker who is unable to engage available systemic help due to language barriers; the consequences are fatal to her and traumatic to her children.

A monolingual Spanish-speaking woman called 911 on a Friday morning. She was not able to speak to the operator because of the lack of language and eventually hung up. However, two non-Spanish-speaking officers did show up at the apartment where she and her husband were living with their two children and extended family. The family woke up a 17-year-old nephew sleeping on the couch to act as the interpreter. Officers did not arrest the husband. After they left, the woman went to the Mexican Consulate seeking help. The Consulate told her about getting an Order for Protection. The woman, accompanied by her relatives, went to the Courthouse where she filed a Petition for an Order for Protection with the assistance of the court facilitators. By the time she completed the paperwork, it was too late for the Commissioner to hear the case. The woman was told to return on Monday. The husband killed her on Sunday morning, at the family home, while the rest of the family was in the apartment, including the children. (New York, 2000)

This is a dramatic example of systemic failure at multiple levels. The cross-linguistic communication disconnect is only one level, but it failed repeatedly: with the 911 service, when resorting to a minor to communicate with police officers in the home, and at the Courthouse. Sadly this case is not unique and the experiences of non-dominant language speakers who are victims of gender-based violence are symptomatic of a general systemic deficiency in the provision of adequate interpreting services.

There are at least two ways in which language barriers in institutional responses to gender-based violence are indicative of larger problems. The first pertains to the encompassing nature of programs that address domestic violence issues. The variety of services that are involved in helping a victim out of the abusive situation—emergency services, security, housing, healthcare, public benefits, law enforcement, etc.—necessitate a holistic and coordinated approach to service provision. Failure to consistently and adequately address language barriers across the range of services is a striking symptom of institutional short-sightedness. Disregard for cross-linguistic communication negates appropriate access to many critical services for significant segments of the population, and reflects the failure of stakeholders in multiple sectors to exert sufficient influence to advocate for appropriate cross-linguistic assistance.

Since abusers typically isolate their victims, access to cross-linguistic communication support can literally mean the difference between life and death. Readily available interpreting services, at all points of the holistic institutional response, preserve the victim's autonomy and ability to communicate despite language barriers. Given that the wellbeing, and even life, of victims, some of whom are children, are at risk in gender-based violence situations, it is difficult to imagine a more urgent and compelling reason to develop and implement effective policies to ensure consistent access to interpreting services. Yet, as the story above illustrates, these policies are



not in place —with a few notable exceptions— in most countries. Thus the second reason the story above highlights larger problems is that if, even under the most dire circumstances of gender-based violence, interventions that are in place to assist victims fail due to language barriers, it is likely that non-dominant language speakers seeking assistance for other reasons also experience deficits in adequate interpreting services.

One notable exception is in Ontario in the context of programs that assist women affected by gender-based violence. Ontario, in the 1980s, adopted innovative initiatives which have shaped the current state of professional interpreting in that province. The Ontario Women's Directorate of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration led the development of interpreter training and service provision by identifying the need to ensure quality cross-linguistic communication assistance in the field of gender-based violence (García-Beyaert, *Cross-Linguistic Communication and Public Policy: The Institutionalization of Community Interpreting*).

The Women's Directorate initiative ensures service provision to thousands of survivors to this day. Most significantly, its ripple effects have gone beyond the field of gender-based violence, spearheading the professionalization of community interpreting at large. Had interpreting services relied on market drives or third sector initiatives only, the profession in Ontario would not have reached its current level of maturity.

## 2.2. ABSENT MARKET DRIVE

The need for interpreters is an increasing social need. Logically, the demand for effective cross-linguistic communication assistance should bring about an increase in the supply of reliable professional interpreters ready to respond to the need. Yet, Mikkelson's observation highlights the disparity between actual need and the short supply of *qualified* interpreters:

As I've traveled around the world meeting interpreters of myriad languages working in a vast array of settings, I've been struck with another irony: Interpreting is becoming an increasingly common activity that is now an essential part of human interaction at all levels; more and more people are employed as interpreters in government and public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private industry —yet the interpreters I talk to are almost unanimous in complaining that they are underpaid, undertrained, and underappreciated. In a situation that would appear to defy the law of supply and demand, the demand for interpreters far exceeds the supply (of qualified interpreters, that is —or in some cases, even unqualified ones), while the pay and working conditions deteriorate. Although the number of interpreters in the world is not keeping pace with the need for their services, it is growing in absolute terms. (Mikkelson)

In the context of supranational organizations (such as the EU and the UN), multinational business partnerships, or international gatherings, conference interpreting was developed and is sustained through market mechanisms of supply



and demand and the corporate organization of professionals. Individuals in the business sector and in high levels of government enjoy the availability of high quality interpreting services thanks to the functioning of market rules (García-Beyaert, *Key External Players in the Development of the Interpreting Profession*). Demand and supply meet through the exchange of existing economic resources. However, in sectors where economic resources of end users are limited and different actors have opposing interests, market logic cannot work its magic. In such circumstances, service provision is tenuous and professional development for interpreters is often limited and precarious.

Markets work to satisfy societal needs under certain premises. One premise is that all actors participate in the market under equal conditions, thus, they all need to have equal access to relevant information and an equal ability to act on their own behalf. Without such conditions, the market cannot find an efficient equilibrium between supply and demand that can simultaneously satisfy both the needs of consumers and suppliers through exchange, and therefore cannot effectively respond to societal needs.

In the case of PSI, consumers —defined as both service providers and speakers of non-societal languages— are usually either ill-informed or lacking in agency, or both. Let's consider service providers first. They are typically not in a position to accurately assess the need for interpreting services or to judge how well the need is being met. Generally speaking, (public) service providers have low levels of intercultural competence, and ad-hoc solutions to cross-linguistic communication are the default approach (the nephew woken up to interpret is an example). In the case of organizations that have recognized the need to address language barriers in a systematic and professionalized way, evaluation of the quality of the interpreting service is difficult since the consumer is competent in only one of the languages involved.

As for speakers of non-societal languages who use PSI, they often have limited agency. Agency is the ability of an individual to independently and freely take action for their own benefit. Yet, any individual's agency is constrained by cultural norms and societal structures. Differences in economic and social standing mean that some people face fewer constraints on their agency, or latitude for action, while others face more. Among the consumers who would benefit most from high-quality PSI are immigrants, refugees, and occasional visitors. Constructed as outsiders, in the eyes of society and in their own eyes, members of these groups are not well positioned to exercise their agency in obtaining the high-quality interpreting services they need for their wellbeing. Their typically limited economic power and their silenced political voice means that there is a power imbalance in PSI that renders speakers of non-societal languages effectively, if not in fact, agency-less.

Thus, consumers of public interpreting services either are (or perceive themselves as) powerless to obtain appropriate services (typically the case of speakers of non-societal languages), or, despite enjoying factual agency, are not in a position to judge low quality service provision (typically the case of speakers of the societal language who are providing services).

If consumers cannot appreciate the difference between high-quality services and low-quality services, they have no incentive to opt for the more expensive op-



tions. On the other end of the exchange, qualified interpreters who provide quality services —individuals who are trained, who engage in professional development and who prepare for their assignments— should be able to expect a compensation that is up to their level of professionalism. In the absence of compensation, they will either provide services in other sectors of the profession that pay appropriately (namely conference interpreting) or they will abandon the profession. Thus, under these circumstances, PSI attracts mainly unqualified interpreters that can only do the job in between other commitments (Dubslaff and Martinsen, cited in Ozolins).

Without a broader infrastructure that can guarantee adequate training, fair remuneration of professionals, and the monitoring of quality, among other things, it is unlikely that the societal need for effective cross-linguistic communication can be adequately met.

### 2.3. PUBLIC CONCERN

When a matter is understood as being of public concern, public resources can be allocated to guarantee public welfare. In the absence of market drive, governments play a crucial role in ensuring social needs are met. A combination of coercive power (authority) and managerial capacity (administration) explain why governments are in a unique position to help advance PSI as a matter of public concern. In the case of PSI, there are at least three ways in which government intervention to reallocate public resources is justified: professional regulation, developing infrastructure and ensuring sustainability.

The first way in which government intervention can help is through professional regulation. Different countries operate under different models of regulation for professions and occupations. In some countries the government's role is limited to legislating the requirement for professional regulation. The actual execution and implementation is relegated to professional boards, which are responsible for screening professionals and issuing licenses. In other countries, government bodies at different levels assume all functions of professional regulation, from legislation to execution through government agencies. Despite structural differences, the ultimate goal in all cases is to protect the public. Governments intervene whenever the public's health, safety, and/or welfare may be harmed if services are provided by unqualified professionals. When the public is not in a position to judge the quality of professional service and the consequences could be serious, it is legitimate for the government to arbitrate and eliminate competition from those who might provide cheaper yet sub-standard service. The government's singular and irreplaceable role is to exert its coercive power to protect the public. Just as medical professions are regulated by the government, it is appropriate for interpreting services to be regulated in the interest of the general public.

Second, government intervention is also desirable in PSI to support the development of an underlying infrastructure. An overarching approach is necessary to set up mechanisms for quality monitoring once the profession is regulated. Quality assurance relates both to the performance of each individual interpreter,



and to the performance of the administrative infrastructure that delivers interpreters when and where they are needed. If, for example, it is difficult for service providers to know how to obtain interpreter services when they need them, the system as a whole is not offering optimal quality. The following are some of the aspects that are desirable in a well-functioning system: cross-sectorial service assignment systems (a centralized pool of interpreters with a centralized assigning system that both accounts for sector-specific needs and allows for consistency and cohesion across sectors); data-collection mechanisms to evaluate service delivery programs; awareness-raising campaigns to reach ill-informed (public) service providers, etc. These are all essential components of a quality PSI program that require the intervention of an overarching entity—that is, the government. Through their coercive power and managerial capabilities, governments are in a unique position to cater to these needs for PSI advancement. A helpful analogy in this case is the role of governments in ensuring the development of roads and highway networks. They constitute the underlying infrastructure that allows for the movement of goods and travellers, ensuring benefits for the public at large, which no individual actor could achieve in isolation.

The third way in which PSI can effectively be supported by government as a matter of public concern involves system sustainability and comprehensive service provision. Collaboration between regions allows for coordination of problem solving, such as problems related to less common languages. An overarching approach that pursues general sustainability (rather than maximizing profits) can support services in languages of lesser diffusion through two possible mechanisms: (1) when it is difficult to maintain qualified interpreters for languages of lesser diffusion, the geographic service area can be expanded; and (2) income generated from services in languages that are more prevalent can subsidize services in languages of lesser diffusion. The most rural post office in the U.S. illustrates this point: mules deliver mail daily to the bottom of the Grand Canyon in Arizona to service the Havasupai Indian Reservation. The U.S. post office was created as a system to enable communication across the nation serving all people (Gallagher). This post office, taken individually, might not be cost-effective from a business point of view, however, the public interest is served when the system ensures access to communication to everyone.

The need for cross-linguistic communication increases with growing migrations. Since in multicultural social fabrics cultural differences are most often accompanied by language differences, failure to properly address PSI risks compromising both wellbeing and basic rights. Underlying infrastructures and basic standards are necessary to guarantee the availability of professional assistance in the face of language barriers. Public regulations and allocation of public resources are needed to support effective intercultural communication and safeguard social welfare.



### 3. FROM PUBLIC CONCERN TO PUBLIC POLICY

Many in the field of interpreting studies lament the lack of intervention from public institutions. For instance, Franz Pöchhacker pointed out that the search for joint solutions between public institutions and educational institutions is an interdisciplinary effort, and noted that there is a gap between data-based knowledge (research) and legal, institutional, or political action. In spite of the existence of useful research, legislators and policy makers have yet to effectively respond to new cross-cultural communication needs. What does it take for institutions to find the political will and organizational focus to address matters of public concern?

#### 3.1. PUBLIC POLICY

Asking whether an issue is of public concern or not, often equates to asking whether such an issue requires intervention from public institutions. That is clearly Parsons' take in his definition of "public":

The idea of public policy presupposes that there is a sphere or domain of life which is not private or purely individual, but held in common. The public comprises that dimension of human activity which is regarded as requiring governmental or social regulation or intervention or at least common action (3)

In practice, however, public concern does not necessarily mean that actual public policy will follow. In fact, far from being automatic, for an issue of public concern to be publicly regulated, a complex multi-stage process needs to be set off. From a theoretical perspective, the development of policy measures is thought to follow a cycle. Commonly, a differentiation is made between (1) agenda-setting, (2) policy formulation, (3) decision making, (4) implementation, and (5) evaluation. These stages were crystalized toward the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, mainly through the versions of the model proposed by Brewer and deLeon, Jenkins, and Anderson.

Public policy is such an encompassing concept that pinning down a definition can be elusive. Nevertheless, Klein and Marmour take a pragmatic and simple approach: public policy is "what governments do and neglect to do" (892). Since governments generally neglect developing and implementing measures to support cross-linguistic communication, it is apparent that policy around PSI is generally in its infancy. Efforts need to focus on entering the agenda (the first step of the policy cycle). In the next section I explore the concept of agenda-setting as a way to position cross linguistic communication as a public issue.





### 3.2. COMPETING FOR THE AGENDA

The concise definition that we adopted for public policy above glosses over considerable complexity. Which governments should do what for whom and in which ways? This question encapsulates complex considerations deeply intertwined in policy actions of any sort. Within the ubiquitous constraints of limited resources—time, money, attention, etc.—divergent interests compete for attention in the public realm. In this context of fierce competition, developing effective reference frameworks is critical to the effective formulation of policy issues as matters of public concern and for the latter to become part of the agenda.

Cohen first introduced the use of “agenda” as a metaphor in describing institutional action, though the actual term “agenda-setting” was coined by McCombs and Shaw in 1972. Birkland offers this definition of the concept of agenda in public policy:

An agenda is a collection of problems, understanding of causes, symbols, solutions, and other elements of public problems that come to the attention of members of the public and their government officials. An agenda may be as concrete as a list of bills that are before a legislature, but also includes a series of beliefs about the existence and magnitude of problems and how they should be addressed by government, the private sector, nonprofit organizations, or through joint action by some or all of these institutions. (63)

In short, an agenda consists of problems facing the public that have been identified and attended to by the public and/or the government and judged appropriate for institutional intervention. Some elements are inevitably prioritized over others because finite time and institutional resources limit the number of issues that can be addressed (Birkland; Majone). Agenda-setting therefore consists of influencing the selection of social problems for which official collective action will be taken. In developing their definition of an agenda, Vazquez and Delaplace reflect on the difference between an issue as a public concern and an issue as a public problem that requires institutional action:

There may be issues that belong to the public sphere that are not necessarily part of the public agenda. The public sphere is one of social dialogue with multiple discursive nodes: the media, public plazas, collective interest, etc. However, there may be issues discussed in the public sphere that are not necessarily part of the government agenda. For an issue to become a public problem, it must be put on the public agenda and taken up by government offices so that it can motivate the analysis of public policy and jumpstart the public policy cycle. (35)

Public policy scholars recognize that problem definition is a key factor in successfully putting an issue on the public agenda. How a problem is defined and marked as deserving attention affects its journey throughout the agenda-setting process.



### 3.3. PROBLEM DEFINITION AS A CONSTRUCT

Problems are constructs rather than givens. Problems are not objective entities, they are conceptual tools (Dery 40). As such, whether an issue is considered a public problem or not depends on shared understandings of the world around us. Social consensus may be elusive as different groups, considering the same issue from varying perspectives, construct different definitions of the problem. Some important implications follow from an understanding of problems as constructs rather than objective givens and can be summarized as follows:

- (1) The feasibility of solutions is a determinant of problem definition (Dery). In fact, policy analysis is defined as “creating and crafting problems *worth solving*” (Wildavsky, 389, cited by Dery, emphasis mine).
- (2) Divergent interests can generate divergent definitions of problems and solutions (Cobb and Elder 177). Thus, it is not uncommon for individuals and organizations with divergent interests or perspectives to have conflicting definitions of a particular problem and, consequently, advocate for different, or even conflicting, solutions.
- (3) Different depictions of an issue are possible even after the issue has reached the agenda. “Even when an issue gains attention, groups must fight to ensure that their depiction of the issue remains in the forefront and that their preferred approaches to the problem are those that are most actively considered” (Birkland 63).

Ultimately, how an issue is defined has consequences for agenda-setting and policy outcomes, including: which groups align around a given issue; how the issue is perceived by outsiders; which solutions are adopted, etc. According to Vazquez and Delaplace:

The set of solutions will depend on how the problem is framed: there is no single solution to a given problem. The framing of the problem and the design of multiple solutions, together with the decision-making phase, are the most “political” parts of the public policy cycle. (35)

What is the best way to frame the issues of cross-linguistic communication in public service provision? What construction of the problem is the most likely not only to help the issue enter the public policy cycle but also to generate the best outcomes? These questions are of the utmost relevance to PSI as a matter of public concern.

### 3.4. AN EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCT FOR PSI

Contextual circumstances have an undeniable impact on the strategic construction of policy issues. For example, the existence of Title VI of the Civil Rights



Act and its implementing regulations providing that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin under any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance is the backdrop against which most initiatives in the US have arisen. Anti-discrimination legislation does not exist in countries with a less multicultural recent history, and their strategic approach to problem definition will therefore be different. The general conceptualization of the problem can also vary from sector to sector: from protection of vulnerable populations in the case of gender-based violence, to risk management and social wellbeing in healthcare, to due process and equal access to justice in the courts, to disability rights in the case of sign language interpreting, etc. General circumstances such as a country's welfare system, cultural beliefs around language and identity, or the financial health of its government coffers, also bear on strategic approaches to problem definition.

However, it is possible to make some general observations on the effective construction of problems related to PSI. One general consideration holds true internationally and can help inform the construction of effective frames for the advancement of PSI everywhere. Since language is almost universally understood as a symbol of national unity and identity, those who do not speak the dominant societal language are constructed as outsiders and, effectively, positioned as undeserving of public resources. Additionally, those deemed to be outsiders, who are most in need of high-quality communication assistance, typically have the least political voice and social agency.

I propose that legitimizing the claim and the claimants by framing recipients as deserving is critical to effective problem definition and effectively advancing PSI. Based on my research in Ontario, I have argued for a framework that highlights the elements of this public problem that are shared by all, defying the outsider/insider dichotomy. I propose defining the issue with an augmented focus on communication, leaving language difference in the background (García-Beyaert, *Cross-Linguistic Communication and Public Policy: The Institutionalization of Community Interpreting*). By focusing on communication we highlight the common ground that makes us human. It is easier to build empathy and connection, and tap into the general moral conscience, when evoking commonly held social and political values and needs rather than cultural and linguistic differences that set us apart. Therefore, the most effective argument for PSI is not so much that language diversity as such requires public support as it is that communication is critically important for preserving the shared values of public safety, respect for individual dignity, and civil rights. This is, or should be, the cornerstone of the argument for directing public attention and resources to support cross-linguistic communication.

The benefit of a framework that focuses on communication rather than language difference is twofold. First, because communication intrinsically involves at least two parties, the beneficiaries of institutional support for PSI are clearly understood to be not only members of the so-called outsider group, but also those who need to communicate with them (service providers) and society at large. Second, a focus on communication de-emphasizes difference and emphasizes human dignity—a shared value. Language is not the end-goal, communication is. And



communication is a defining characteristic of the human species. Whereas language identity divides us (insiders vs. outsiders), communication brings us together. Hence, I propose that communication rights, rather than language rights, should be the umbrella framework under which sector-specific and country-specific problem definitions are constructed.

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article I have shown how PSI is a matter of public concern. I have explained that matters of public concern require governmental action through public policy, and since public policy involves the use of (limited) resources, different social issues compete for institutional attention. Therefore gaining access to the institutional agenda becomes critical and requires strategic framing of the problem at hand.

Highlighting the aspects of a problem that are shared by all—and therefore align with everyone's interests—is an effective strategy within the reach of interpreter professionals and researchers. A framework that focuses on communication as the issue, rather than focusing on language difference, emphasizes commonly held values.

For this reason, I suggest that stakeholders in different sectors (academic, professional, civic, etc.) frame their efforts in terms of successes and failures in communication, communication rights, or the direct connection between autonomous communication and human dignity (García-Beyaert, *Communicative Autonomy and the Role of the Community Interpreter*), to give but a few examples. Whether they focus on awareness-raising strategies, solution quests, or problem definition efforts, stakeholders' interests will be best served through the lens of effective communication. The right to effective communication is, in my analysis, the essence of what professional PSI offers and the reason why it is a matter of public concern.

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# DEVELOPING NEW MODELS FOR PS(T)I: FROM HETERONOMY TO AUTONOMY\*

M. Rosario Martín Ruano  
Universidad de Salamanca

## ABSTRACT

There are still many signs indicating that translation and interpreting in the public services are low-status activities regulated to a large extent by external authorities and social agents. In this article, I will explore Foucault's theories on power in order to contribute to a better understanding of the factors and dynamics which might exacerbate the low status of the profession, including regulatory professional discourses or the practitioner's self-identity. A productive, and not merely repressive, vision of power as exercised throughout the social body helps us to realize that translators and interpreters might uncritically perpetuate the power regime within which they performatively construct their identity. Additionally, it ultimately serves as the basis for the development of alternative professional practices.

**KEYWORDS:** Public Service Translation and Interpreting, Identity, Discourse, Power, Foucault, Agency.

## RESUMEN

Son numerosos los signos que parecen indicar que la traducción y la interpretación en los servicios públicos siguen siendo actividades con escaso reconocimiento, en buena medida reguladas por autoridades y agentes sociales externos. En este artículo se exploran las teorías de Foucault sobre el poder para profundizar en la comprensión de los factores y dinámicas que pueden agravar el escaso reconocimiento de la profesión, entre ellos los discursos profesionales de carácter normativo o la identidad asumida por los propios profesionales. Una visión productiva y no meramente represiva del poder en la que este atraviesa todo el cuerpo social ayuda a discernir que los traductores e intérpretes pueden perpetuar acríticamente el régimen de poder en el que performativamente construyen sus identidades; asimismo, permite plantear modelos alternativos de praxis profesional.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** traducción e interpretación en los servicios públicos, identidad, discurso, poder, Foucault, agencia.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding the progress achieved to date, much still remains to be done for Public Service (Translation and) Interpreting in order to obtain the social and institutional recognition which this “young occupation [...] still undergoing professionalisation” (Gentile 63) deserves and requires. There is still much room for improvement in order to consistently guarantee levels of quality in interpreting and translation provision which may be attuned both to professional standards and to the complex needs for cross-cultural mediation in our linguistically and culturally diverse societies. There is no doubt that the efforts made in the last three decades, both in the professional field of community translation and interpreting, as well as in training and research institutions, has enabled the establishment of PS(T)I as a distinctive area of interest, a subdomain of the discipline in its own right (Toledano; Taibi & Ozolins 1.1). In this regard, despite the diversity of situations and approaches perceived at a local level, and especially in relation to the somewhat better regulated sector of official and/or court translation and interpreting, some authors distinguish positive indications of an “emerging community of practice” in PS(T)I (Corsellis 103) within which common perceptions in relation to existing needs, desirable standards, and future challenges can be clearly identified.

However, even though the development in PS(T)I from a theoretical point of view is undeniable, reality continues to confront us with multiple examples which demonstrate that, far from being an established profession, PS(T)I is still, in many cases, a fragmented, unregulated and low-profile activity. A 2012 study by the European Commission on the status of the translation profession identified a number of worrying signs of market disorder which inevitably calls into question the real degree of professionalisation achieved in translation in general and in PS(T)I in particular. These signs include persistent paraprofessionalism, especially in relation to languages of limited diffusion, where the shortage of trained professionals is more noticeable; lack of sufficient levels of training among practitioners; lack of uniformity in relation to qualification and certification procedures; difficulties in the cross-border recognition of accreditation mechanisms, for instance those existing for official or sworn translation; low professional recognition, and low fees, recently affected by a further decline partly attributable to the prevalent outsourcing trend in increasingly privatised “public” translation and interpreting services (European Commission 2012: 4). From 2012 to date, the overall picture has not much improved. On the contrary, some recent trends leave few grounds for optimism. It would seem that the fruitful development of academic research has not

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been matched by an increased social and institutional recognition of the importance and complexity of the role played by PS(T)I practitioners. In their introduction to a recent volume entitled *Ideology, Ethics, and Policy Development in Public Service Interpreting and Translation*, Valero and Tipton regret the “limited impact to date that profession- and disciplinary-led discourses on professionalisation have had on policymakers” (xv). In their opinion, this makes it necessary for the profession to “seek new ways to engage with relevant stakeholders” (xvi).

The need to negotiate with policy makers is of high importance and should by no means be diminished. In any event, in order to make the most of any potential efforts undertaken in this direction, any negotiation must depart from a clear picture of the broader context. With an emphasis on the current reality in Britain, Tipton (38) observes a growing dependence on “the non-profit, voluntary and charities sector (commonly described as the third sector)” for interpreting and translation provision. This fact leads Tipton to argue that, although increased levels of professionalisation are noticeable in the services offered by these non-professional agents, the blurring of the boundaries between paid and informal service providers raises new questions about legitimisation and accountability. In a similar vein, Gentile observes that the recent economic depression has brought about adjustment policies inspired by austerity, as well as negative perceptions about non-native, displaced communities, in turn resulting in a severe and generalised backlash against measures guaranteeing language rights in multicultural and multilingual contexts. Indeed, Gentile perceives regression signs in PS translation and interpreting provision, both in countries which at the beginning of the recession were still struggling towards the professionalisation of PS(T)I services —such as those in Southern Europe including Spain—, as well as in countries where significant milestones such as the creation of professional registers had already been achieved —for instance in the Netherlands and the UK, where, in her opinion, outsourcing policies and reduced fees are currently resulting in a devastating process of de-professionalisation.

In this bleak context —characterised not only by financial cuts, but also by widespread, renewed scepticism about the purported obligations of public authorities towards the specificities of diverse populations, as well as by narratives in which translation and interpreting are not portrayed as promoting social integration as argued for in recent research by Pena, but rather as measures eliminating the need for migrants to learn the local language and thus, paradoxically, as measures presenting an obstacle to integration—, the support which can be found from other stakeholders to achieve recognition for the profession is likely to be negatively impacted upon. The working basis of this article is that these circumstances make it all the more necessary to promote the reinforcement and enhancement of the profession from within. In this regard, it is important to bear in mind that the recognition and/or misrecognition of the profession operate on two interrelated levels —internal and external— on which transformations can be effected and sought after. In relation to the external level, and as I have argued in another contribution which departs from the concept of ‘recognition’ as articulated by authors including Charles Taylor, Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth (Martín Ruano 2017), PS(T)I can certainly be considered to be affected by institutionalised patterns of misrecognition which



result in an undervaluing of the role, capabilities and potentialities of PS translators and interpreters by other stakeholders. The dominant view and expectation of PS translators and interpreters as occupying a marginal position in intercultural encounters can be understood as a revealing example of existing forms of structural underestimation. PS translators and interpreters are seen as unobtrusively serving other professionals and actors who are portrayed as the meaningful participants in such encounters —i.e., as subordinate figures performing seemingly subsidiary and instrumental tasks for relevant agents and not as central agents themselves playing a determinant role in the co-construction of these encounters. This institutionalised subordination curtails the possibilities for these professionals to act (and to be recognised) as players capable of participating on a par with other co-agents in relations of “participatory parity” (Fraser 24, 29), as fully-fledged agents in their professional contexts. However, for the purposes of this article, it is very relevant to highlight that misrecognition may also be, or may become, deeply ingrained in the group’s self-identity. As Michel Foucault reminds us, subordination can be internalised and uncritically replicated by the misrecognised groups. In our case, it can be perpetuated by translators and interpreters themselves through practice.

In this article, I will argue that understanding the dynamics of social and professional subordination affecting PS translators and interpreters is vital in order to actively intervene in the transformation of the power regimes regulating PS(T)I. The Foucauldian vision of power not merely as a repressive force coercively exerted by those in positions of authority, but rather as a decentralised system of relations manifested, enacted and transmitted at the micro level of society in a whole myriad of social practices is, in my opinion, certainly very enlightening in order to identify the reasons behind professional misrecognition affecting PS(T)I practitioners. Through understanding the system of relationships whereby both hegemonic and subordinate groups may productively assume and reify forms of domination, we are better equipped to combat the causes for these disempowering practices and, ultimately, to advance towards transformed, more empowered and empowering visions and models of professional identity.

## 2. THE MICRO-PHYSICS OF POWER AND PS(T)I

Michel Foucault’s work has been highly influential in promoting new, cross-disciplinary understandings of the workings of power in relation to various social practices. Research inspired by Foucault’s vision goes beyond the traditional, centralised view of power as exerted in vertical, hierarchical relations, and highlights the pervasive nature of power, conceived as a network of relations and regimes of truth shaped by discourses and social practices. In the field of Translation Studies, authors including André Lefevere, Rosemary Arrojo, Theo Hermans, África Vidal Claramonte, Amalia Rodríguez Monroy, Gillian Lane-Mercier, Maria Tymoczko and Edwin Gentzler have drawn on Foucault in order to improve our understanding of translation as an activity which is subject to prevailing power structures and power relations, but which is also capable of modifying them and of bringing about



change in the *status quo*. In the specific field of PS(T)I, authors including Robert F. Barsky, Sandra Hale, Ian Mason, Carmen Toledano, Ian Mason and Wen Ren have also been inspired by Foucault in their analysis of PS interpreting as a norm-governed activity, and of interpreted encounters both as situations shaped by power differentials and as instances where power relations have the potential to be (re) negotiated. For the purposes of this article, the Foucauldian view of power seems an appropriate point of departure in order to contribute to a better understanding of the reasons behind the prevalent construction and dominant expectation of PS translators and interpreters as (relatively) powerless social agents. His concept of power as dispersed throughout the social body, legitimated through authoritative discourses invested as “knowledge”, embodied and enacted in a multiplicity of social settings, and thus transmitted and reinforced performatively by individuals and groups in discursive and social practices helps us not only to explain the aforementioned dominant expectations for PS(T)I agents but ultimately to imagine alternative discourses defining more empowered professional identities and more proactive models of professional praxis.

Foucault’s vision has the potential to be awareness-raising not only for practising professionals but, more importantly, for trainee translators and interpreters. The latter tend to be very wary of the penalties which may be imposed on them in cases of non-compliance with both spoken and unspoken rules governing the profession as well as in cases of overstepping expected limits of professional behaviour. However, as a result, they may be less inclined to question the rationale behind those rules and limits. By linking “power” and “knowledge”, Foucault highlights the importance of discursive practices in the definition of roles and identities, in the hierarchisation of social players, as well as in the shaping and maintenance of power differentials among different groups interacting in any given social, institutional or professional setting. In his view, dominant discourses, despite their contradictions and discontinuities, embody and reinforce the power relations among the groups which are defined, constructed and regulated through these discourses. In this sense, discourses (including not only social, theoretical and academic discourses, but also professional discourses) cannot be understood as objective and neutral knowledge which fulfils a merely informative or explanatory role, but instead need to be seen as causes and effects of a given power regime, and as extensions of a certain “political economy of truth” which creates particular positions for objects and subjects of discourse and which imposes a particular social and symbolic order. From a Foucauldian perspective, translation and interpreting can be thus considered to be social (and professional) activities constituted by certain discourses which regulate its limits and possibilities, the scope of action of its practitioners, and the hierarchical position they occupy in relation to those with whom they interact. What is most enlightening about this vision is that it offers an inevitably *politicised* view both of authoritative discourses and of the system of relations supported and reinforced by it.

In the specific case of PS(T)I, this vision invites us to discover the point of view from which the dominant discourses about PS(T)I are constructed, whose voices are represented in these discourses and whose voices are excluded. This reflection is eye-opening: the dominant construction of PS(T)I as mere “conduits” or



“ghosts” (Rycoft; Koskinen 1), as invisible “non-presences” who do not demand a space of their own (Niska 305; Diriker 27; Angelelli), as professionals “remaining a non-participant in the encounter” (Clifford 91) and who unobtrusively perform “an activity perceived as a form of mechanical code-switching” (Koskinen 67) can only be projected as an ideal if the subjectivity enunciating the norm is different from the subjectivity expected to obey it. Such an ideal can only emerge from a perceived position of authority and from a desire to control a group of practitioners moulded as objects of discourse, and not as real subjects. In addition to being eye-opening, this reflection becomes essential if the goal is the ultimate strengthening of the profession. It makes it possible to argue that dominant discourses regulating translation and interpreting, which are themselves particular discursive practices, may still be emanating not from the professional group for which they are supposed to be speaking, but instead from positions outside the group. As a result, these discourses could be envisioning translation and interpreting as they are expected to behave from the points of view of other players —players who could be fearful or uninformed of the needs and potential of translation and interpreting for effective intercultural communication—, and not from the point of view of their practitioners and in light of their experience.

In this regard, at a time in which the importance of regulatory discourses for the profession (including codes of ethics and conduct, theoretical production, research, etc.) is being emphasised as a key element in the process towards professionalisation, it seems crucial that the PS(T)I community does not simply and uncritically adopt and propagate heteronomous discourses —i.e., discourses regulating the profession from outside— which may in fact collide and compete with in-group perceptions and interests. The undisputed acceptance of taken-for-granted but deeply problematical ideas about translation in these regulatory discourses could foster suspicion and lack of trust towards the professionals abiding by such rules in the future. By way of illustration, the following paragraph in relation to *accuracy* from a recent Code of Professional Ethics for legal translators and interpreters can be analysed in this light:

The source-language message shall be faithfully rendered in the target language by conserving all elements of the original message while accommodating the syntactic and semantic patterns of the target language. The register, style and tone of the source language shall be conserved.

Errors, hesitations and repetitions should be conveyed. (EULITA 2)

The wording selected unambiguously reveals the decisive influence of widespread but restrictive ideas about translation in these codes, to the detriment of more nuanced discourses attuned to the views and needs of this particular community of practice. Indeed, the paragraph puts a visible emphasis on concepts such as faithfulness —which, due to its vagueness from a theoretical point of view and its uneasiness from a methodological point of view, has been long problematised in Translation Studies, where it has also been replaced by more elaborate and practice-oriented notions— and reinforces a vision of translation as exact reproduction and



preservation —which dismisses ample corpus-based evidence that translation and interpreting often entail and require the standardisation of original messages but also, in the specific case of PS(T)I, the need to redress asymmetries between the agents involved in the mediated encounter (Taibi and Ozolins 1.2.1), and which remains oblivious to recurrent situations in which, as research has demonstrated, the adoption of powerless style by translators and interpreters could seriously damage their professional credibility (Rycroft 219; Berk-Seligson 131). A question posed by Angelelli (20) seems to be relevant at this point: “Why are interpreters so infrequently asked their views on their role? And when they are asked, why don’t their views count? Why do professional associations ignore the reality of the practitioners and the empirical research on interpreting and set idealized standards of practice?” Foucault’s explanation of exclusionary procedures operating at the service of “the order of discourse” (Foucault 1970) offers a potential answer: in the regulation of the *will to truth* in the field of translation and interpreting, examples such as this could be considered to be indicative of a prevalence of *commentary* about translation (recurrent narratives operating at the foundation of our cultural system) over *doctrinal discourses* about PS(T)I emerging from a distinct *society of discourse* constituted by a pool of experts establishing their own views and standards as regulatory principles. Toledano’s remark (19) that “[i]mporting expectations, desires and evaluative criteria from other areas only serves to highlight the hierarchy of one of the parties, precisely the one that is in a privileged position of power” is also significant in this context.

In addition to revealing existing hierarchies, the above example very tellingly illustrates another key feature of power as understood and explained by Michel Foucault: that power is not only coercive, but extremely productive. It is often accepted and promoted by all groups interacting in power relations, both by those invested with authority and by those in subordinate positions; both by those inspiring the norms and by those complying with them. As Foucault once argued in an oft-quoted statement: “[w]hat makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression” (Foucault in Colin 11). Far from being merely limiting and restrictive, power generates respect and fascination. The compensations and rewards obtained by those meeting existing expectations (be it financial retributions, or influence, credibility, authority, recognition or status) are perhaps more effective than any foreseen form of punishment. Rather than being servient vassals of discourse, by internalising dominant discourses and adopting a behaviour and demeanour in line with such discourses, individuals can thus become accomplices of power, active partners collaborating in its endurance and reinforcement. As Foucault underlined in another lecture also included in the book edited by Colin, power is not that “which makes the difference between those who exclusively possess and retain it, and those who do not have it and submit to it”. Rather than being “localised here or there”, power is “employed and exercised through a net-like organisation”. Individuals in this net “are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power.



They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are also always the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (Foucault in Colin 98).

The lesson to be drawn from this view is that subordination is a complex machinery of subtle devices, the effects of which traverse the whole fabric of society, reverberating in a myriad of social practices in which power is not only imposed but also assimilated, embraced, absorbed, learnt, and enacted. In what Foucault called the “disciplinary society”, power and its differentials are upheld by imitation and replication. Individuals internalise the workings of the social order, even when it is to their exclusion or undervaluing, and automate their behaviour accordingly: by observation and repetition, women learn what it means to be “feminine”, migrants discover what it means to behave in an “exemplary” way, translators understand what it means to be “faithful”. Foucault coined the term “governmentality” to refer to the trend by which the logics and norms of power become established in the collective mentality as logical and normal, by which both privileged and disadvantaged groups endorse, acquiesce and collaborate in furthering the dynamics of subordination. Inasmuch as the structures of domination tend to become invisible, and inasmuch as the results of training and socialisation processes instilling asymmetrical roles for different groups often come to be perceived to be normal or instinctive responses, so marginalisation may be more difficult to fight.

For the particular purposes of PS(T)I, understanding this capacity of power to inspire conformity even from among oppressed and undervalued groups is certainly an enlightening point of departure from which to initiate a relativisation of norms and behaviours that have come to be seen as natural. Foucault’s vision certainly contributes to a critical reading: under the lens of power, prevailing expectations about the ordinary positions and roles to be adopted by translators and interpreters in social practices turn out to be extraordinarily ideologised. In turn, this awareness may serve as a springboard for transformation, for building alternative perceptions of the self beyond inherited beliefs and for exploring new models of professional behaviour attuned to the specificities and needs of ever-changing social contexts. For PS(T)I, the lesson that power tends to be perceived as neutral is as enlightening as the lesson that power relations can, and perhaps need to, be brought into question and ultimately subverted.

### 3. RESISTANCE, EMPOWERMENT AND PS(T)I

Foucault’s work has been an inspiration across a variety of disciplines, not only in encouraging the unveiling of the dynamics of inequality, but also in the promotion of critical and transformative approaches aimed at bringing about greater levels of emancipation and empowerment for marginalised groups. Indeed, another major idea in Foucault’s work is summarised in a quote included in *The History of Sexuality*: “Where there is power, there is resistance” (95). Certainly, in Foucault’s theories, which depart from a view of (social) reality as a construction inevitably mediated by discourse(s), in a way similar to that of power, resistance is considered



to be inextricably linked with discursive practices, which he considered to be “not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behaviour, in forms for transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them” (200). If, for Foucault, discourse defines the limits of what can be said and done at any given historical moment and constitutes subjectivities within those limits, discourse also emerges as the site *par excellence* where limits can be transgressed and where subjectivities can explore new self-representations and identities: “Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (100-101).

Many scholars, and, most prominently, Judith Butler in her approaches to gender in various works, have drawn on Foucault to argue that identities are not only subjugated to power and discourse, but are also re-enacted, performed and re-signified through discourse and discursive practices which can also be associated with power —i.e., with power understood as *agency*. Butler’s theory of performativity has in turn opened up new perspectives for the understanding of identities and social practices in different disciplines, including Translation Studies. In *Translation in Systems*, Theo Hermans draws on Butler to stress the sociocultural and historical contingency of translation, which “takes place within an existing practice, reiterating and extending it. Whether we call this the social system of translation, or a translation tradition, or the sociocultural embedding of translation, we can only make provisional, time-bound statements about it” (Hermans 158). If the meaning of translation as a social practice has changed through history, and more precisely through the practice of translators and through discourses about translation which have performatively transformed the significance of this category over time, the identity of these professionals also needs to be understood accordingly: as contingent and changing; as malleable; as subject to modification through discourse and discursive practices, including actual translations.

These considerations are, in my opinion, very relevant for PS(T)I. First of all, they underline the uniqueness of every translation and interpreting situation, which thus emerges as a similarly unique opportunity for professionals not merely to adhere to existing expectations, but also to critically address them, and therefore to allow the profession to adapt to ever-changing contexts and unprecedented challenges. Foucault’s views are helpful in raising awareness among practitioners and among trainee PS translators and interpreters not only in regards to the restraints they might be faced with, derived from existing power relations or exerted upon them by other players occupying positions of authority, but also in regards to their possibilities to actively make use of their own power within the power relations governing the interaction, both for the benefit of effective cross-cultural communication and for the benefit of a profession which needs to look ahead. In this regard, to the extent that, according to Foucauldian perspectives, the professional identities of transla-





tors and interpreters are, like all identities, flexible and contingent, constructed and negotiated performatively, they can be either perpetuated or transformed, rebranded and updated through interaction. Certainly, this requires an openness on the part of PS(T)I to experience professionalism not merely as following its prescribed rules, but also as contributing to the (re)making of those rules.

In more concrete terms, it may require a willingness to redefine and enact one's professional identity beyond the inherited model of the neutral mouthpiece or the non-obtrusive language converter criticised, for instance, by Rycroft. Recent research on PS(T)I —itself a potentially empowering discursive practice— has contributed to the discovery of more diversified vocabularies articulating more assertive and more positive self-definitions for these professionals. In this regard, Angelelli perceives a shift in the perception of PS interpreters moving away from the idealistic (but simultaneously restrictive) discourse of non-intervention and emphasising their active and “powerful role” as “participatory agents between languages and cultures” (98). Indeed, it would be more appropriate to talk of “powerful roles” in the plural, to the extent that, as recent studies on PS(T)I have also demonstrated, PS practitioners adopt different professional behaviours located in a continuum of (non)intervention (as conduits, clarifiers, cultural brokers, advocates, etc.) depending not only on the specific features of the interpreted encounter and on the power relations in which it is embedded, but also on its actual development. Indeed, in relation to the first aspect, Clifford notes that the scope of action allowed for and taken by healthcare interpreters becomes greater in situations when prior collaboration with health professionals has resulted in the development of a trusting relationship; in other words, Clifford suggests that power, far from being unilaterally imposed, may be peacefully acquired and voluntarily transferred in relations deconstructing pre-existing hierarchies and opting for collaboration. In regards to the second point, Mason suggests that, within particular situations, professionals do not stick to a specific professional identity, but continuously revise their position vis-à-vis other co-participants along the triadic exchange. By this strategic and tactical positioning, they continuously renegotiate their identity and, ultimately, their share of power in the encounter. Indeed, for Mason (48), “the playing out of power relations *within* the exchange seems to be closely involved with the negotiation of identity”. These evidence-based perspectives allow for the viewing of power, not as a static force exerted upon PS translators and interpreters, but instead as a potentiality: as a capacity with which to influence the construction of meanings and of reality, which are constantly in flux and which are negotiated through dialectical processes.

#### 4. CONCLUSION: EMPOWERING PS(T)I

Foucault's theories facilitate a critical reading of the authoritative discourses currently regulating translation and interpreting activities for the public services. Seen through the lens of power, dominant expectations and normative behaviour appear to a large extent to still be *heteronomous*, i.e., ultimately subject to the rule of other authorities and agents, and established according to points of view external to



the profession. The challenge ahead is to transform the discourses which define the limits and potentialities for translation and interpreting in the public services sector in order to incorporate the insights of practising professionals and their perceptions regarding the increasingly demanding requirements of cross-cultural communication in our multicultural societies. As has been explained in this article, for Foucault, the transformation of discourse is enacted performatively through discursive practices, which in this case include actual translation and interpreting-mediated encounters in public services. Translators and interpreters willing to take up a proactive behaviour favouring cross-cultural intelligibility can actively contribute to challenge and resist the subservient and marginal role which they are expected to play according both to widespread ideas in society and to normative texts such as codes of ethics.

Precisely in relation to codes of ethics, a number of recent studies worthy of mention have adopted a critical stance in order to highlight their limitations and shortcomings (Ko; McDonough; Martín Ruano), in some cases in parallel to their merits (Baixauli-Olmos). These studies echo the opinion that, although the notions they frequently invoke —faithfulness, accuracy, neutrality— seem at first glance to be indisputable, they offer unsatisfying guidance for translators and interpreters dealing with ethical dilemmas in conflict-ridden situations. Furthermore, these studies highlight that the decontextualised maxims often appearing in these codes seem to be at odds with the specificities of certain translation and interpreting situations featuring particular power relations and dynamics. Foucault's theories help to relativise the maxims in these regulatory instruments; furthermore, they may also contribute to inspiring alternative, more explanatory discourses. In this regard, it is important to highlight that embracing Foucault's views does not imply renouncing the regulation of professional behaviour and validating a dangerous "anything goes" attitude in PS(T)I. It does, in my opinion, entail recognising that "professional behaviour" is a contingent, ever-changing construct that is defined and constantly redefined in every situation, and thus that the regulation of professionalism, if it is intended to be realistic and useful to professionals, should necessarily involve recognising the complexity and multiplicity of the situations in which PS translators and interpreters take part and, in turn, the complexity and multiplicity of the strategies which could be adopted by those professionals in different contexts. Certainly, in the current scenario, given the ubiquitous underprofessionalisation of PS(T)I, the adoption of behaviour associated with professionalism may significantly contribute both to the enhancement of the individual credibility of the practitioner and to the overall improvement of the perceived status of translation and interpreting as a profession. However, if the contingency of normative expectations is admitted, the same logic advises against sticking to "professional" behaviour as currently understood as a panacea for all situations. Tipton provides a pertinent example when noting that the "hyperformal" approach of professional interpreters with high qualifications may not be well received in organisations pertaining to the third sector, which place greater importance on rapport-building attitudes. Inasmuch as the definition of translation and interpreting is socio-historically and contextually defined, understanding professional standards in an over-restrictive way could foster the fossilisation of the profession. In the long term, emphasis on short-sighted concepts of "professionalism"



could sabotage the ability of translation and interpreting to respond to new needs arising in our present, and perhaps even to the challenges of the future.

Undoubtedly, and to conclude, this contingent understanding of PS(T)I inspired by Foucault ultimately poses a challenge to educational institutions, which are perhaps one of the most important apparatuses moulding the professional conduct of translators and interpreters. Adopting critical approaches to translator and interpreter training, many scholars, including Baker and Maier (2), have stressed the need to go beyond codes of conduct or codes of ethics in order to properly embrace ethics —i.e., in order to engage in debate and critical reflection on moral dilemmas. Authors like Toledano emphasise that “[t]eaching, including in this phase of community interpreting consolidation, must not and cannot only teach norms but also develop and train the critical skills of students and practising professionals regarding current ‘normal’ practice. [...] Universities [...] relate as much to reflective practice and self-criticism as to raising the profile of trained professionals” (20). In a similar vein, D’Hayer argues for a shift from PSI training to PSI education, i.e., for pedagogical models which might overcome the prevailing skill-based approach in order to engage in the education of critical thinkers and of conscious practitioners who will work as social agents. These conclusions seem particularly important at a time when regular, long-term translator training programmes at BA and MA level are being complemented with intensive training formats for *ad hoc* or non-professional interpreters. Although it seems unquestionable that translator and interpreter training institutions need to familiarise future members of the profession with prevailing professional norms, Foucault’s theories also make it advisable to go beyond a procedural approach in order to teach trainees the relativity of those norms, their socio-historical contingency, and their dependency both on certain discourses and points of view and on the specific conditions of possibility where those norms emerged and where they might have been perpetuated. Foucault invites us to see the shaping of norms as effects of particular power relations which can, and perhaps should, be transformed. In this regard, the professional identities inherited from the past, inasmuch as they reflect prevailing expectations, are necessary starting points in educational contexts, but translator and interpreter training may also contribute to their transformation and to the rejection of taken-for-granted ideas about established rules of behaviour seen as natural. With Alonso and Baigorri (8-9), it may be argued that the only universal solution or possible dogma to be taught is flexibility. These authors stress the need to instil students with the idea that they will bear the responsibility for decision-making. In this regard, they will need clear referents, but also a considerable deal of autonomy. These reflections confirm that, together with actual professional practice, translator and interpreter education can contribute to resisting and challenging negative, restrictive or disempowered images of PS translators and interpreters and, thus, to developing more positive, proactive models of professional identity.

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# INTERPRETERS' PROFESSIONALISM AND IDENTITY WORK IN AGENCIES: A DISCURSIVE PERSPECTIVE

Dong Jiqing  
University of Leicester

## ABSTRACT

The present article explores how professionalism is redefined by agency managers through a set of corporate rules and protocols, which ultimately affect interpreters' understanding of their professional identity. It draws upon the body of literature on identity work and the concept of professionalism in sociological studies. Findings based on ethnographic fieldwork show that while management can have an influence on work practices, it does not necessarily undermine the discretion of interpreters or conflict with their professional activities. The majority of the managerial procedures are formulated in order to clarify role boundaries and increase inter-professional recognition, thus having the potential to enhance the professional status of public service interpreting (PSI) by building the very institutional infrastructure that this profession genuinely needs.

**KEYWORDS:** Professionalism, public service interpreting, interpreting agencies, identity work.

## RESUMEN\*

Este artículo estudia cómo los gerentes de las agencias de interpretación redefinen la profesionalidad a través de un conjunto de normas y protocolos corporativos, que afectan a la visión que tienen los intérpretes de su identidad profesional. Recurre a la literatura sobre el concepto de la identidad y la profesionalidad en estudios sociológicos. Los resultados derivados de investigaciones etnográficas demuestran que, aunque la gerencia puede influenciar la práctica profesional de los intérpretes, no socava necesariamente la discreción de los mismos, ni está reñida con su actividad profesional. La mayoría de los procedimientos gerenciales está formulada para aclarar los límites del papel del intérprete y aumentar el reconocimiento inter-profesional, de ahí que estos procedimientos tengan el potencial para realzar el estatus profesional de la ISP, construyendo la misma infraestructura institucional que esta profesión verdaderamente requiere.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** profesionalidad; interpretación en los servicios públicos (ISP); agencias de interpretación; trabajo de identidad.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recent professionalization of public service interpreting (PSI) in the UK has suffered tremendous setbacks due to the austerity-led privatisation of interpreting work and subsequently contractors' failure to deliver quality services. Particularly in the legal interpreting field, the major supplier CAPITA contracted by Ministry of Justice (MoJ) was criticised of replacing professional workforce with lay persons and cutting interpreters' pay (PI4J). Over the past six years, professional interpreters have enacted various forms of resistance against contractualism, including forming unions, launching campaigns, increasing press exposure and formally engaging with state institutions (NAO; PAC). Despite the on-going boycott by practitioners and the painstaking negotiations with policy makers, MoJ continues to partner with private agency and the quality of interpreting has not been substantially improved. According to an independent market review report (MoJ) on the quality arrangements under the Framework Agreement, 70% (N= 570) of standard language interpreters felt dissatisfied with "the current procedures in terms of the evaluation of skills and experience required for face-to-face interpreters". The report also points out that there are no training programmes offered by this agency, and over half of the interpreters working for this agency do not possess acceptable qualifications.

In the academic literature, although in-depth empirical research on everyday realities of interpreting work and provision remains largely lacking, the heightened tension between interpreters and language services has long since been recorded (e.g. Harrington; Ozolins). A Swedish case study (Norström, Fioretos and Gustafsson) on the working conditions of community interpreters shows that professionalism was undermined by worsening salary structures, low social status and poor employment support. In particular, the deregulation of the market leads to competition between many agencies, forcing down prices and compromising quality. Tipton considers the rise of agencies represents the accelerating pace of corporatisation. The adoption of 'tiered system' in agency-led framework disrupts the then institutional order and prevents professional associations from functioning properly. In general, it seems that prior studies tend to emphasise more on the unstoppable dominance of managerialism and less on the instances of resistance by interpreters. Managers seem to be cast as the 'opponents' of interpreters, who are by and large portrayed as passive recipients of the hegemonic changes *done* to their profession. Moreover, the foregrounded antagonistic relationship between the two seems to suggest that there is a clear-cut, irreparable divide between the ideal of professionalism and managerial practice. With scarce evidence authenticating the local reactions to the neo-liberal agenda, it is difficult to achieve a profound and comprehensive understanding of the change in professional work and its impact on the status and autonomy of interpreters.

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\* The abstract was kindly translated by Dr. Marc Ripley ([mri125@le.ac.uk](mailto:mri125@le.ac.uk)) at Modern Languages, University of Leicester.



One way to address this gap is to consider how sociological professionalism intersects with the present-day professionalism in ambiguous public domains (Noordegraaf). Prevailing sociological models of professionalisation (such as Babbage *et al.*) tends to neglect the role of organisations as characteristic vectors in such professionalisation processes. There is a strong call in organisation and management studies to look beyond ‘pure’ professionalism characterised by a “peculiar type of occupational control” (Johnson 45), and to “revisit theories of professionalism, which did not fully anticipate the shift of professional work to the context of large organizations” (Suddaby, Copper and Greenwood 357). It is therefore important to recognise the rise of organisation, in our case language services, as a potential locus for staging professional projects and redefining occupational boundaries (Muzio and Kirkpatrick). Moreover, professionals are generally able to cope well with the challenges arising from being employed by large corporations (Ackroyd) despite certain degree of their discretion is subjected to budgetary, behavioural and ideological controls. In contrast with the alleged colonising power of business logic, legal practitioners (Ackroyd and Muzio), medical doctors (Dent *et al.*) and university academics (Anderson) all strategically adopted different approaches to management schemes. All these debates provide valuable references for mapping out the current changes in the organising of interpreting work.

Drawing from the ethnographic case study of a language service start-up established by interpreter-turned-managers, this study explores the changing status of professional interpreters in the UK against a backdrop of public sector outsourcing of interpreting service to for-profit providers. The aim is to identify the discursive reconstruction of professionalism and autonomy, as practiced by participants in their space ‘*Insight*’, and document their day-to-day work processes in which discursive resources are mobilised to reconcile the conflicting logic. Built on the notion of ‘identity work’ —the forming, maintaining, repairing and revising of individual and group conceptions (Sveningsson and Alvesson 1165), this study aims to identify how these ‘hybrid’ managers draw on the discursive reconstruction of professionalism to make sense of their collective identities and achieve a particular social order. Taking a discursive perspective of organising process, professionalism is viewed as discursive resources that aim to “manage and motivate individuals in a broad set of occupational contexts beyond the traditional professions” (Muzio *et al.* 703). Subsequently, by revealing the evolving meaning of professionalism and its all the more ‘hybrid’ nature, this paper wishes to bring to life the impact of structural change upon service provision in a manner that perhaps better captures the reality of interpreters’ work practices.

## 2. THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF PROFESSIONALISM

The notion of ‘professionalism’ is becoming increasingly versatile and controversial as the status of traditional professions are being challenged by various forces of institutional, economic and organisational change (e.g. Reed; Muzio *et al.*). Perceiving it from ‘Trait approach’, professionalism is the symbol of technical





rationality (Schön) —an essential feature of few occupational groups characterised by their mastery of esoteric knowledge (Abbott; Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy and Policy.*), such as doctors and lawyers. In this approach, a critical element inherent to professionalization is the control of a codified body of knowledge. Without a delineable ownership of knowledge and systematised training of practitioners in its application, the occupational jurisdiction and status are unlikely to be recognised by the lay public (Abbott). Therefore, the inaccessibility of professional knowledge to the uninitiated is recognised as a defining feature of such an ideal-typical professionalism (Freidson, *Professionalism: The Third Logic.*). Known as experts with moral authorities, they subsequently enjoy a higher social standing as a result of extensive education and licensing.

Functionalist approach (Parson *The Social System*; Goode), on the other hand, is epitomised in the form of social trustee professionalism (Brint) that underlines the importance of social responsibilities shared by professionals. In the words of Parson (53): “a full-fledged profession must have some institutional means of making sure that such competence will be put to socially responsible uses.” These include, among others, the service provision by trained practitioners, affective neutrality, institutional altruism and unwavering integrity. The apparent flaws in trait models and functional orthodoxy invite criticism in the 1970s and gives rise to the “power approach” (Hughes; Johnson; Larson; Macdonald). It centres on the power dynamics in the journey of professionalisation, including changes in the relationship between producers and consumers (Johnson), organised autonomy against external forces and interference (Freidson *Professionalism: The Third Logic.*), strategic actions of claiming knowledge monopoly and social closure (Larson; Witz). Professionalism in this context is seen as “government of autonomous conduct” (Fournier) in that professionals are entitled to control standards and self-regulate practices through professional associations.

Influenced by the rapid development of technology and expansion of global information, the past decades have witnessed dramatic changes in employment arrangements and the organisation of work. New contractual relations characterised by fixed-term, flexible, contingent and mobile jobs are incrementally offered in service-centred industries (Schoemaker). Organisations have promptly responded to this trend and adapted themselves into network organisations (Castells) or virtual work environments (Fiol and O’Connor). Meanwhile, newer professions emerging from large companies do not always require the knowledge predetermined by the professional bodies. Instead, ‘modern’ professionals are more valued by their ability to respond to market demands and business priorities. As a result, the coexistence and hybridization of different logics tend to generate a mixture of managerial, organisational, and commercialised forms of professionalism beyond the traditional collegial professionalism (Muzio *et al.*)

This is especially the case in the public sector that combines bureaucratic and professional control (Clarke and Newman). In this context, the nature of professionalism is invariably contested. Built on their observations of globalizing law firms in the legal practice field, Faulconbridge and Muzio (20) argue that ‘organizational professionalism’ is formed through the professional project mobilised



and secured by the “support of appropriate organizational systems, structures and procedures” and ultimately in the interests of professionals. Evetts further distinguishes ‘organisational professionalism’ from ‘occupational professionalism’ based on the source of control. The former relies on *externalised* forms of regulation and is characterised by the standardisation of work procedures to achieve a managerial outcome. In contrast, the latter prioritises *internal* control deriving from professional peers and incorporates collegial authority. Expert professionalism (Brint) perhaps better captures the dynamism in emerging, yet less-regulated, occupational groups. In this context, actors depend more upon on the “relatively less restrained consumer markets and corporate power” (ibid. 124) to flourish. One case in point is management consultants as “marketized experts” (Furusten 265). This group digresses from the traditional pathway of professionalization to the building of ‘commercialised professionalism’. This implies that being accepted by the consumers is a key form of authorisation for prospective professionals, thereby highlighting the interdependence of business practice and professional service.

Noordegraaf (771) uses the term ‘situated professionalism’ to embody his understanding of similar contexts. He elucidates the inevitable intersection of occupational control and organisational logics in the knowledge society. Whilst it is challenging to retain strict professional autonomy, organisational considerations of costs, budgets and clients do not necessarily restrict professional development. The role of managers and professionals are no longer clear-cut but rather overlapping. In public sector, professionals’ frequent attempts at resisting commercialism have even led to the emergence of ‘hybrid managers’, a role aimed at combining managerial and professional logics and fostering one’s commitment to managerialism (Currie and Croft). Studies in health care domain suggest that while some prefer to adopt managerial, marketized discourse to govern professional work (Doolin), others remain ambivalent or strategically blend or navigate around the competing conventions. This seems to indicate that the two logics are not always confrontational and the organisational identities can provide the basis for meaning negotiation.

### 3. ORGANISATIONAL IDENTITY, IDENTITY WORK AND DISCOURSE

Although organisational identity was initially defined in terms of its key characteristics of distinctiveness, endurance and centrality (Albert and Whetten), ensuing studies have yet to agree on whether such an identity claim is guided by a singular “social actor” (Whetten and Mackey) or shared by members’ collective interpretations of their “organisational selves”. In the former case, an organisation’s prescriptive role in guiding individual’s behaviour and coordinating inter-organisational relationship is emphasised (Corley *et al.*). It also attaches great importance to an organisation’s legitimacy, status and reputation in relation to other entities in a social sphere. As such, the identity of an organisation features a sense-giving process: “a set of institutional claims that explicitly articulates who the organization is and what it represents” (Gioia *et al.* 5). The social constructionist perspective (Dutton *et al.*),



on the other hand, foregrounds a sense-making process as members actively seek meanings for the proposed organisations (Weick). When challenges emerge, they can constantly revise and negotiate these constructions in order to secure support of constituents or distance themselves from other institutional players in the field. In either view, identity is perceived as an evolving product subject to ongoing formation and revision rather than something static or ahistorical.

One of the key concepts that addresses the identity shaping process is 'identity work' (Sveningsson and Alvesson), similar to other terms such as 'identity construction' or 'identity project'. It refers to the ways in which individuals continuously engage in maintaining or repairing the 'constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness' (1165). From a management point of view, 'identity work' represents a less obtrusive and increasingly intentional medium of organisational control, or "identity regulation" defined by Alvesson and Willmott (622). The authors pointed out that it is by nature a discursive framework fleshed out by socially established norms and practices, with the aim to influence organisational members' self-definition and commitment. Particularly in knowledge-intensive firms, managers generally adopt four mechanisms to achieve regulation (Alvesson), namely, 'constructing an appealing organisational identity' through rhetorically boosting members' pride and image management; 'cultural control' that promotes ideology and ethos; 'normalisation' focusing on setting performance and behavioural criteria, and 'subjectification' that enables individuals to shape themselves around a specific self-defined standard.

If identity work can be essentially viewed as a discursive activity, then actors' ability to leverage the available discursive resources can arguably determine the success of such an undertaking (Coupland and Brown). Statements, expressions, norms and models as resources are not only able to "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 49), but also provide practice-derived, cultural-cognitive references for actors to decide future actions (Fairclough) and make sense of their institutional environment (Phillips *et al.*). In light with this thought, a number of discourse-based studies have suggested that professionalism can function as a sample of resources employed by managers within occupational discourse (Doolin). In contrast with the sociological model of professionalism reviewed earlier (i.e. trait approach and power approach), managers and professionals are not so much enemies as partners (Reay and Hinings), and their discourses are simultaneously articulated as one would appropriate the other's discourse into their work practice (Thomas and Hewitt).

To sum up, the proposed conceptual framework helps to place this study within the socio-organisational debate on the evolving discourse of professionalism and its role in reshaping professional identities and accountabilities in the context of neoliberalist reforms and new logics of organising work. In interpreting studies, while some efforts have been made to assess the negative impact of privatisation, there is a lack of research on how interpreters specifically *receive* the change and cope with difficult situations. The conflicting institutional logics requires a more critical and sophisticated understanding of professionalization, thus a direction towards the actual discursive practices of 'hybrid managers' in the workplaces might



be a useful way to address the gap. On the contrary, a neglect of local oppositions in varied forms, in particular with the help of discursive strategies might further weaken interpreters' professional autonomy and lead to a misrepresentation of their everyday realities of work processes.

#### 4. METHODS AND MATERIALS

To study the discursive practices of professionalism in an organisational context, this paper analyses an empirical case where interpreting service is organised by a local social enterprise *Insight*<sup>1</sup>. *Insight* was founded in 2009 in UK. Small as it appears to be, this organisation has around 200 interpreters on its books. The current management team involves four senior advisors who all have prior (managing) interpreting experience. The Executive Director (known as "Director") is the top decision maker who oversees the daily operations of the business. Actors who have certain management roles also include the Head of External Relations, the Administrator and the Training Officer. For analytical purposes, they are consistently grouped into the "managers" cohort, to be differentiated from the other several interpreters (known as "members") who are only offered limited hours to work in the office when they are available.

In 2013 when the study began, this group of 'interpreter managers' were already known in the region for their quality assurance measures as "it is the only one checking qualifications and arranging interviews when recruiting interpreters" [cited from one interpreter's comment]. However, they are far from being the major players in the market. In early 2009, a new contract came into effect which allows for one private agency *SG* to provide the overwhelming majority of work to the regional court service and public prosecution authorities. This aroused huge dissatisfaction from local interpreters who condemned *SG* for using unqualified interpreters and only pay 36 pounds for a day's work inclusive of travel expenses. In this sense, the founding of *Insight* in only after a few months' time can be seen as a vehement response to *SG*'s irresponsible decisions.

The fieldwork lasts approximately a year, including 4-month regular observation within the business site and following engagement with the participants in various ways. The initial contact with *Insight* began with my query stating my background, affiliated institution and concerns about the industrial practice of PSI, whilst explicitly asking the possibility of sharing organisational resources for research purpose. A positive reply was not long after obtained from the Director, who was found to be the gatekeeper and able to grant such access into the business venue where day-to-day interpreting work is organised. In response to the Director's request, I agreed to reciprocally assist *Insight* in developing a training programme for

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<sup>1</sup> *G* and *Insight* are pseudonyms used to replace the real names of the agencies involved. Same rules apply to all the names of the local companies, associations, areas and streets and documents.



interpreters at a later stage. At the prospect of conducting participant observation, I further reassured the Director of complete confidentiality of their in-house data and explained the ethical clearance procedure that I went through with the university. The consent forms specifying research purposes and anonymity considerations were signed by relevant parties before fieldwork started.

The rare opportunity of being a real insider allows me to observe the nuts and bolts of the actual organising processes of interpreting work in a ‘naturally-occurring’ setting. Following the principle of ‘thick description’ (Geertz), a series of ethnographic fieldwork methods including participant observation, informal talk, archival materials and vignettes (Brewer, Hammersley and Atkinson) and semi-structured interviews were adopted. Field notes were taken manually to record informal interaction, incidents, and the observation of work procedures, ranging from lunch breaks and in-car conversations to chance encounters on the stairs. Further descriptive accounts were noted down after the event, so that what was left out due to the strain of keeping pace with the ongoing communication could be filled in in a timely manner. On occasions formal events such as board meetings, job interviews and training sessions were audio-recorded with complementary notes. Additionally, a research journal was written to record my own reflections. The documentation analysis is also possible owing to the regular access to email conversations between managers and interpreters and to the corporate archives.

This paper focuses on the discursive identity work of these interpreter-turned-managers in their internal discussion on different dimension of professionalism as well as their external engagement with the public sector clients. In analysing the data I used a process of categorisation based on concepts drawn from the proposed framework. Within the identity work I analysed the examples that revealed the contested nature of professionalism and explored how it is framed in the managerialist discourse. The following sections will present the thematic findings and discussion.

## 5. CRAFTING A UNIQUE ORGANISATIONAL TEMPLATE

The invasion of agencies into freelance interpreters’ work life was started a few years before *Insight* was born. Founding members reflected that the available options to change the situation remained rather limited, as “multiple attempts were made to stop the outsourcing scheme but failed”. A number of veteran interpreters “ditched their job” [Mng]<sup>2</sup> and changed career ever since the Service Agreement came into effect in early 2000s. Reflecting on the motivation of setting up *Insight*, the Director described the historical backdrop as “a time of darkness and despair for interpreters”:

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<sup>2</sup> [Mng]=managers; [doc]=documentary sources; [jnl]= research journal; [int]= interpreters.



My heart sank when I learned that SG got the contract. Not long after that they started to change their face and slash the pay. Many of us argued with Brown [the director of SG] and questioned his motives, followed by declining jobs. That made him mad. He threatened us, claiming that he would use new people and abandon us, and he did! [Director]

These remarks help reinforce *Insight's* position as an unwavering oppositional force against the mainstream agencies. By emphasising a shared history and identity with interpreters, it is not hard for managers to discursively create a category of themselves who are sharply different from the majority. Such a context also provides important references to members who strategically framed *Insight* as a feasible solution to the chaotic landscape. To quote the remarks of the Director:

Our intention was to do something that we are all good at from on the ground. We were pushed to the cliffs already, and we can't bear the business fall into the wrong hands of the capitalist company. [A-Director]

This to some extent explains the rationale of *Insight's* organisational statement [doc] "Raising the quality and standard of PSI" and reflects the unique aspiration of *Insight* members in contrast to that of the dominant agencies from the start. As is reflected earlier in the field journal, "their premise and ambition make one feel hard not to develop attachment to them, not to be part of them, as their story is sharply evocative of a *professional ideal* that appeals to so many practitioners today" [jnl, my emphasis].

Built on the conceptualisation of identity work, it can be found that managers concentrate on two major sense-giving tasks in this unique model they experiment with. One is to attach social significance to the organisational template. The idea is to distinguish itself as a "community-interest company" [web] from conventional profit-driven corporations. By foregrounding the social course of PSI in relation to human rights and equality, *Insight* is in a position to go beyond a simple transactional relationship with interpreters and foster a sense of social responsibility and solidarity among the workforce. In the words of a manager,

Fundamentally we are still an agency, but we are a very different one. That's why I refrain from calling us agency managers —the way we do things are so much better than those cowboys. Our starting premise is the non-English speaking clients— removing the language barriers as the one of the root causes of social injustice.

This echoes the sublime values of traditional professions that 'serving for the public good' tends to be prioritised over personal compensation. It thus highlights the social mission set in the founding principles of the organisation. In an 'educational' talk intended for trainee interpreters, the purpose to highlight the consequences of cheaply outsourcing public services to irresponsible agencies is obvious. The interest of service users is highlighted:



A bad interpreter makes things so much worse, and that is the driving force for us, because they need the right access, not just any. The bottom line is, what if what you are provided is ‘rubbish’? [Mng]

One interpreters commented that managers’ often emphatic speech on their mission does help them ‘kind of stand out from the crowd’ [int]. What they feel uncertain is the commercial side of *Insight*, which seems to be less known and rarely shared. A somewhat ‘standard’ set of statements presented to outsiders looks as below:

We have to run the business and make money like everyone else, but it’s what we use our surplus makes us different. Although we set up *Insight*, we don’t own it, because the profits would not go to our pockets; it’s gonna be used to achieve social objectives, which is about raising the standard of PSI. [Mng]

The above quotes suggest no details regarding how exactly the surplus is distributed to accomplish the stated missions are given. Further observations reveal that whilst all interpreter interviewees are aware that *Insight* is a social enterprise, they are not so sure about how they would benefit from the welfare side of the organisation. Even an internal members of *Insight* feels confused about it and considers the ‘hybrid concept’ as “the so-called aura of the ethos”:

I thought that makes a difference because I know what social enterprise is about: the profit turns to something to profit the community; it is based on a certain goal. In theory it is like that. But I don’t actually see that is happening, because we don’t do free training for example. Every training we do we get money for it. So I don’t see how that money is turning toward a special goal.

Different but no less important, the other sense-giving task is to align the organisational vision with the missions of professionalisation. Managers hold the belief that *Insight* was founded to lead and unite the occupational group to resist corporatisation. As such, identity work requires a careful design of the organisational vision—a collectively construed action plan that can remove the existing economic and social status barriers and advance their professional project. Figure 1 shows how managers’ discursive action points (right column) are neatly matched with the identified problems field (left column) in the field. Notably, they interpreted the political environment (“lack of leadership” and “direction”) and economic austerity (“use procurement strategy to save money”) as top-level factors that gives rise to the subordinate issues at the provision level, such as substandard interpreting service and anti-professional development sentiments.

The above ‘identity vows’ also reveal managers’ renewed plan for staging the comeback after years of arduous yet unsuccessful attempts. For them, *Insight* provides an under-explored repertoire of resources at their discretion. This form of opposition has rarely been employed in previous attempts:

A few years ago you might remember when the court contract is awarded, there were some professional interpreters saying “No, I’m not going to work for this”.



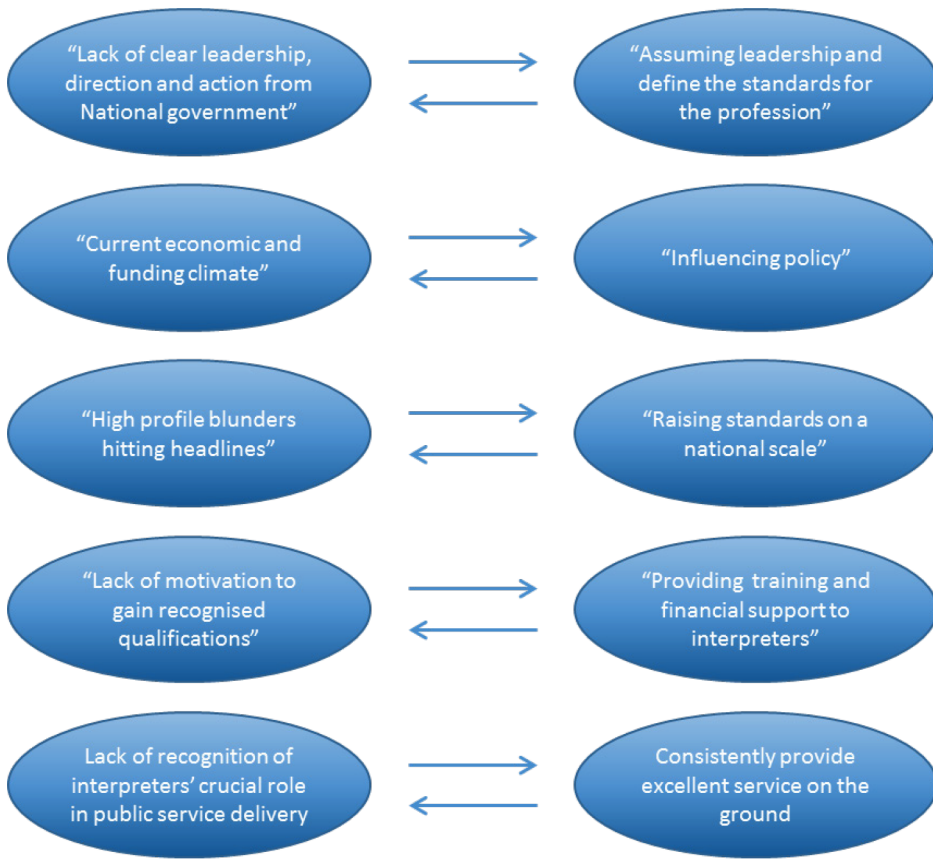


Figure 1: The Alignment of the Professional Project and the Organisational Vision<sup>3</sup>.

But the unfortunate thing is, if you don't want to do it, someone else will do it, because they [peer agencies] don't care about the qualification and experience. So if they take someone else, he or she would think, "Oh, great! I don't need qualification now and I can do it!" The boycott, if you like, has no way out. [Director]

It quickly becomes apparent that under-resourced interpreter-managers do not have much choice in the irregular price-cutting competitions. The initiative to create an organisation with a hybrid identity, though lacking heavyweight sponsors and institutional resources, opens up a new possibility for actors to articulate their protest. *Insight* is reserved as a relatively safe and private space to test ideas and

<sup>3</sup> This illustration is developed based on the coded data.





strategise for future plans, allowing interpreters to carefully “pick a battle worth fighting” in an unfavourable environment.

## 6. SOCIALISING INTERPRETERS INTO ORGANISATIONAL STANDARDS

As mentioned earlier, a key aspect of organising work that makes *Insight* unique is their recruitment procedure. It is not handled as it would be at comparable mainstream interpreting agencies, which collect candidates' CVs online and file copies of certificates, at best followed by a brief phone chat with the candidate. Each interpreter with *Insight*, however, has to go through a 1.5-hour assessment (sometimes longer) comprising interviews and interpreting assessments. Applicants' qualities beyond language proficiency are carefully scrutinised. Managers are always looking at the “full package” rather than a single aspect of the interpreting competencies. There is a strong emphasis on *person-organisation-fit* in a sense that one's personality, work attitudes and values should satisfy what *Insight* requires. A typical interview usually starts with the interviewer's explanations:

We have set our own standards, so I am going to put everything I have seen today against our standards and make a decision on whether you [applicants] meet the standards or not. [Mng]

This suggests that those who are linguistically competent but do not suit the organisational culture are likely to be excluded. Of central importance is that “people get into this profession with the right frame of mind” [Director]. Often, candidates making a poor impression in this round appear to stand little chance of being selected, no matter how well they perform in the following assessment. The goal to find like-minded people is even more obvious in the following speech in reply to a candidate:

So we are also checking if you are someone we like to work with, because if you are very inflexible, how would you work with other people? So there are various things we are looking at... If you are very closed-minded about what you are supposed to do, then you are not trainable. [Director]

Here, being open-minded suggests the kind of personality which *Insight* deems important. Being “trainable” however, reflects managers' anticipation of new entrants' obedience to their rules. This can also be traced from the following comments:

The test itself is not an end, as we look at it as an overall performance. But you need to have the attitude to look at that. Unfortunately this country hasn't taken interpreting so seriously, specialized area should only let specialized interpreters go. It should be like that, but no! [Mng]



Indeed, “interpreters must take their work seriously in order to earn the title of ‘professional’” [Mng] —This principle is instructed to all shortlisted interviewees regardless of whether they are invited to work for *Insight* or not. Adding multiple layers to screen qualified interpreters is therefore an organisational mechanism to act against substandard interpreting. Managers have particular concerns about lay interpreters:

What I find most difficult, is when you have someone who is not too sure, a bit hesitant about certain meaning, and he thinks that it is okay or at least actually better than someone who says the complete wrong thing. That is a very dangerous act. [Director, my emphasis]

This problem is also recognised by most interpreters who were interviewed:

I just think there is a lot of ignorance, bring your mother along or your daughter and she could interpret —that’s what people think. Even when I say I’m an interpreter, they don’t even believe I study for this, they just think “yeah you speak many languages”. [B-Int-9]

In the observations of training sessions, interpreters’ identification with organisational identity is consciously reinforced. Trainees are expected to be all ears when they are ‘told’ how to do the job correctly. In some extreme cases, such authority can upgrade to a confrontational level where disagreement from the candidate is not ‘welcomed’ at all. In one interview where a manager raises issues about the importance of note-taking skill:

Manager: To be honest with you, I am not honestly interested in what you said about conference interpreting; we don’t do that... Your idea of consecutive interpreting it is not applicable in a PSI situation.

Candidate: Sorry, can I disagree with you? Because we had some courses and we learned that UN or EU interpreters, and they can’t just rely on their memory. Although they have experience... (interrupted)

Manager: No! You, I find the more you talk, the more trouble you get into, which worries me when you are out to do interpreting if you get into this kind of situation. Taking note is a good technique especially for those who cannot retain all of the information, but it’s not mandatory... and you disagree with us when we have interpreted for years! [jnl]

This incident represents a characteristic *Insight* standard guiding the selection and socialisation process of “true” professionals. Although the candidate is capable of two languages, the fact that she does not match with the ethos phases her out from working with *Insight*.

Work ethics is another area that are *managed* carefully by *Insight*. Managers have specified a set of specific rules regulating professional work on top of interpreters’ general code of conduct. Routinely, new interpreters will be instructed to read thoroughly a separate “Code of Ethics Handbook” included in their induction packages [doc]. For example, existing corporate policies regarding confidentiality



include a telephone protocol that reminds interpreters to set their mobile phone withheld when making a call prior to the appointment [doc]. In addition, booking operators are told not to assign tasks to interpreters who might have prior contact with the client or the client's network.

Protocols about how to present oneself to the clients are also printed on interpreters' ID badge. On the front of this badge is an ID photo and name below *Insight's* trademark. Before an assignment starts, interpreters are obliged to recite the "Self-Introduction" text at the back of the badge, which starts with: "My name is \_\_\_\_ from *Insight*" and proceeds with a succinct explanation of the neutral role of interpreters [doc]. The purpose of that, as explained by the Director, is to "make this as a procedure" because "it's important to establish the boundary at the beginning" [Director]. Such initiative formalises the briefing stage where each conversant is supposed to understand respective position in the interpreter-mediated interaction.

A few interpreters naturally think this looks as if they were "representing the agencies that work for" [B-Int-6], which builds into *Insight's* strategy in constructing the professional identity since the trademark of *Insight* and interpreter's photo are visually presented to the public sector staff. This intention of the management has been explicitly stated on other occasions (e.g. the Director speaks to trainee interpreters):

I have to see all the candidates. I have to speak to them. That's why I know all of you and I will recognise you on the street if I see you. I just think it is important to know who is representing our organisation. [A-Director]

## 7. DISCUSSION

This paper illustrates the key role of actual discursive practices in identity work through reshaping the meaning of professionalism. The case of *Insight* suggests that processes of change in interpreters' work practices are multifaceted and contested rather than uniformed in the generalised patterns of deprofessionalisation.

Firstly, the role of hybrid managers has introduced numerous possibilities to accommodate managerial demands with professional imperatives, the principles of which are not always conflicting. Just as Noordegraaf argues that various occupational groups seek to deploy the symbolic power of professionalism through discourse, my case shows that professionalism as discursive resources are strategically employed by managers to create new understandings and endorse new actions. In particular, managers tend to invoke more of the normative values that underpin a functionalist professionalism in the process of identity and boundary construction. There, professional relations centring on collegiality, cooperation, mutual support and trust are largely promoted. One might claim that this is a resurrection of the 'service ethics' or a promising attempt to replicate the elitist model (e.g. doctors, lawyers) of professionalization, yet a closer look at the realities of recruitment process shows a different answer. Managers' motivation to shape professional identity and work practice might as well be interpreted as a means to exercise disciplinary con-



trol and that it “governs professional conduct at a distance” (Fournier 280). In this sense, professionalism can be viewed as an ideological appeal by which interpreters’ self-regulation is only conditional under *Insight’s* leadership.

Secondly, Noordegraaf made the observation that the trend towards the creation of hybridised professionalism is inevitable. This form of professionalism is not just about tightening managerial control over professional work, but also about “attempts to link work to organizational and outside realities” and “establishing socio-symbolic legitimacy in changing times” (780). This is highly applicable in the PSI domain where interpreting expertise constitutes one part of the larger socio-technical system comprising professionals of different sub-fields, policy-makers, service buyers and consumers (Dong and Turner 2016). Service provision is highly disputed as it is confronted with mounting demands with decreasing capacities. In this context, the hybrid version of professionalism is characterised by multiple, mutualistic types of control rather than the dominance of single logic. It is therefore the reflexive control —the “reflexive searches for a professional use of professionalism” (Noordegraaf 780)— that enables *Insight* managers to link the frontline practice, organizational missions and the realities outside *Insight* together. As can be seen in the managers’ “quality/professionalism” discourse, the concept of ‘quality’ is decidedly ambiguous in that the emphasis can be placed more on the pursuit of ‘quality management’ than the ‘quality’ of interpreting performance.

Lastly, connecting identity work characterised by rhetoric tactics and image management with the current professional context, this study adds to the debate on PSI professionalization by suggesting that, with the organisational identity work penetrating into the forming of professional identity, it is likely that agencies modelling on ‘professional service firms’ can enhance, rather than undermine the social standing interpreters strive for but struggle to achieve. The managerial mechanisms of *Insight* constitute a practical treatment to the blurred boundary of PSI and the currently less organized profession. This can be in part attributed to the procurement logic that favours ‘quantity’ over ‘quality’. It gives rise to the influx of commercial agencies that are born to bid for contracts and live on deskilling interpreting tasks. Professional power is accordingly devolved to contracted agencies which introduce a cohort of lay interpreters in an attempt to meet the demand and maximise the profit. As the PSI field has yet to be populated with highly-skilled, ethically acute workforce, what should be prioritized is to set a benchmark to prevent ad-hoc interpreters from compromising the service quality. In this connection, the goal of the professionals —to pursue self-regulation, and that of *Insight*— to construct the very infrastructure that this nascent profession is still lacking —are ultimately converging and mutually enhancing. It follows that autonomy is by all means a relational concept. Certain boundaries need to be established to ensure that autonomy can be rationally exercised.

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# THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRISON INTERPRETING ROLES: A PROFESSIONAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL\*

Lluís Baixauli-Olmos\*\*  
University of Louisville

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores prison interpreting from the perspective of professional role, understood as a socially, institutionally, ethically and culturally determined function. As a consequence of the growing need for language access services in most industrialized nations, ad hoc and professional interpreting solutions are provided routinely; but interpreters, currently lacking an established position of power in public service contexts, face numerous sources of tension. The purposes of this qualitative research are: first, to describe the professional function of PSI in penitentiaries adapting an existing ecological model with different nested environments or systems (individual, micro, meso, exo, macro, topo and chrono); second, to identify facilitating and hampering factors for an appropriate role development and, third, to offer a broad theoretical model that helps conceptualize the multiple interacting elements that shape the interpreter roles in penitentiary contexts.

**KEYWORDS:** prison interpreting, public service interpreting, interpreter role, professional role, ecological model.

## RESUMEN

Este artículo examina la interpretación penitenciaria desde la perspectiva del papel profesional, concebido como una función determinada social, institucional, ética y culturalmente. Como consecuencia de la creciente necesidad de servicios lingüísticos en la mayoría de sociedades industrializadas, habitualmente se ofrecen soluciones de interpretación tanto ad hoc como profesionales, aunque los intérpretes, al no gozar en estos momentos de una posición de poder en los servicios públicos, se enfrentan a diferentes fuentes de tensión. Los objetivos de este estudio de corte cualitativo son: describir la función profesional de la interpretación en los servicios públicos (ISP) en prisiones adaptando un modelo ecológico ya existente con distintos ambientes o sistemas concéntricos (individual, micro, meso, exo, macro, topo y crono), identificar factores que aporten o resten equilibrio para un desarrollo del papel profesional adecuado, y ofrecer un modelo teórico que facilite la conceptualización de los múltiples elementos que interactúan y dan forma a los papeles de los intérpretes en contextos penitenciarios.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** interpretación penitenciaria, interpretación en los servicios públicos, papel del intérprete, papel profesional, modelo ecológico.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Immigrant-receiving states often face challenges in providing services that arise from linguistic and cultural differences. These difficulties are even more acute in institutional settings like correctional facilities, where access is restricted and controlled. This, coupled with the lack of an established position of status or power, places a series of special tensions and constraints on interpreters when delivering their services in the prison context.

In general, all professions are expected to offer an array of functions in order to fulfil a historically and culturally determined set of changing social needs. Moreover, in the context of PSI, in one single encounter, all participants adopt different roles at different times in the communication, and these roles lend themselves to specific discursive and communicative practices. In the case of interpreting, the changing institutional nature and interpersonal factors impacting on interpreting work adds an additional dimension of phenomenal depth and complexity to the notion of professional role.

In light of this, we set out to answer the following research questions: What is the role of prison interpreters? How may it be described? What kind of factors shape the expected role? Do interpreters resist or yield to external pressures? If it is found to exist, how is this resistance developed?

This contribution aims to describe the notion of professional role, understood as an individually and socially defined construct that it is sensitive to environment and constantly evolving, by identifying levels and dimensions, and factors and variables, in which identity operates. Professionals in all domains take on multiple “roles,” depending on both personal, environmental, institutional, political and cultural factors. We hope to explain how these different layers interact and exert pressure on each other and, most centrally, on the individual interpreter; we will also try to show how these tensions and forces are resisted or succumbed to in order for the interpreter to strike a contextually and ecologically balanced professional role.

Among the primary rationales for this study is the researcher’s own feelings and perceptions when attempting to conceptualize the professional role of ISPs. When working on a previous study (Baixauli-Olmos “La interpretació als serveis públics des d’una perspectiva ètica”) on the characterization of prison interpreting from an ethical perspective, we often found ourselves puzzled by the myriad approaches to professional role, although central issues like interpreter’s agency did not seem to be addressed. We posit that what appears as a lack of clarity in our common understanding of role may stem from the fact that existing models are fragmentary,

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\*\* <http://www.orcid.org/0000-0001-6850-959X>.



and they do not necessarily account for the complexity and variety of factors that impact role. And we consider that there was a dire need for clear depictions of role for both the academic, professional, and educational communities.

This article is structured in four main sections. The first explores existing theories and conceptual frameworks used to define professional role. The second offers some methodological context for this research. The third section describes and discusses the results, and the fourth section summarizes and reviews this research.

## 2. BACKGROUND

Historically, the role of the interpreter has been one of the main focuses of PSI since the beginning of the subdiscipline. The attention that role and identity have attracted in PSI has paralleled the general research interest among the social sciences, beginning in the 1990s (Bothma *et al.* 24).

### 2.1. DEFINING “ROLE” IN INTERPRETING STUDIES

The concept of role has been the focal point of discussion in the PSI subdiscipline. As evidence, a cursory search in our institution’s (University of Louisville) library catalogue with the keywords “role” and “public service interpreting” or “community interpreting” yields 565 results. Although a full literature review of this concept is impossible, in our examination of role in PSI we have identified several themes and subthemes that summarize some of the most important debates: interventionism, institutional and psychosocial situatedness, vague definition and sociological approaches. These are explained in the paragraphs below.

Historically, the conceptualizations of role have evolved from less to more interventionist approaches. In the beginning, the interpreter was considered a language conduit, an invisible and neutral message converter, a kind of a “ghost” participant. Later, some authors began to understand interpreters as co-participants (Krystallidou 174) in an interaction where conflicts may arise, and where they are or should become active agents in the communicative encounter and act either as intercultural mediator (Barsky), advocate or representative (Cairncross 7, as cited in Pöchhacker 51), or a coordinator (Wadensjö), because “interpreters, as well as the norms generating their communicative practices, do not come from nowhere. They too are socially and politically situated, actively participating in the production and reproduction of macro-discursive practices.” (Inghilleri 58).

The context where interpreters perform their tasks bears on the expectations of them, as their functions operate in a situated (Angelelli 29-30) institution-driven (Ozolins) environment. We may find an example the varying scope or degree of intervention in different settings; intervention being less preferred in court vs. more acceptable in healthcare.

PSI is a vulnerable professional community, because it is not fully established and is considered to be “particularly ill-defined” (Inghilleri 59), and also because



interpreters' services are most often required "in situations of unbalanced power relationships and high emotional tension" (Smirnov 215), where a professional's impartiality may be more prone to being compromised.

These tensions have a psychological impact on interpreters. Some work has been done to understand the professional role and the emotional and potentially pathological outcomes (Wiegand, Valero-Garcés) of different sources and intensities of pressure on interpreters; as invaluable as this approach is, it does not explain how or why certain conducts emerge and identities are formed in some contexts, in spite of the fact that that individuals are "The key role-players in the identity formation process." (Bothma *et al.* 25).

Sociological approaches have enriched the debate about the status of PSI as a profession —e.g., processes of professionalization (Tseng)— and in terms of role with relation to discourse (Jiang *et al.*). In spite of the potential that social and institutional models may have for PSI research, not much attention has been given to this dimension (Pöchhacker 88; Inghilleri 58). Most conceptualizations of role focus on the rather stable collective dimension of role (PSI as a professional community of practice), which is relevant to comprehend a profession, but not necessarily applicable to the highly variable set of factors that may explain individual actions.

At the same time, not many contributions in PSI have looked at the notion of role from the perspective of social sciences and sociology whence it originates. Current approaches in the humanities regard identity "as a constructed artefact, fluid and in a recursive relationship with its environment, rather than a 'predetermined' and essentially stable 'given'" (Rudvin 435); a similar trend can be observed in Interpreting Studies (IS) where some authors (Rudvin; Jiang *et al.* 274) have transcended the binomial intervention/non-intervention paradigm and have refined the notion of role to account for its complexity by considering the changing factors in an interaction that motivate certain role and behavioural decisions. Some authors (like Krystallidou, Martínez-Gómez "Facing face" or Rudvin) stress the need to gain a more psychosocial insight into the interdependent nature of the interaction between interpreters and their environment, because according to Krystallidou "the study of the interpreter's function should benefit significantly from an approach that [...] looks at a wider range of intricacies inherent in the interpreter's behaviour." (174).

Despite the abundant work done to date, interpreters' role remains somewhat elusive. In our opinion, part of the struggle over this concept stems from a sociological understanding of role as concerning the profession (i.e., the professional function as a static attribute; e.g., an interpreter *always* operates as a language conduit), and not the professional (professional functions are dynamic; e.g., an interpreter is *currently* operating as a language conduit) ignoring the fact that both external (behavioural, environmental) and internal (psychocognitive) factors may activate certain aspects of one's individual or collective identity.

Regarding methodology, some of the most prominent literature in the field of Interpreting Studies use discourse analysis methodologies. Although these methods provide useful insight into the way interpreters respond to source language utterances, they do not necessarily look at the bigger picture to explain behaviours, as "micro-level discourse analytical approaches to interpreting research tell us more



about the particular realizations of discourse processes within interpreted interactions than about interpreters as active agents in wider social and political processes” and lack “an adequate conceptualization of how norms emerge and are sustained simultaneously at the conscious and unconscious level” (Inghilleri 58).

## 2.2. PRISON INTERPRETING: INSTITUTIONAL SETTING, INTERPRETING SETTING AND PROFESSIONAL ROLE

Prisons have been considered “total institutions,” understood “as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life. Prisons serve as a clear example, providing we appreciate that what is prison-like about prisons is found in institutions whose members have broken no laws.” Penitentiary institutions are one of five types of total institutions, and are described in these terms: “A third type of total institution is organized to protect the community against what are felt to be intentional dangers to it, with the welfare of the persons thus sequestered not the immediate issue: jails, penitentiaries, POW camps, and concentration camps” (Goffman 15).

The topic of interpreting or interpreter role does not seem to have gathered momentum in the domain of prison studies; we have only been able to find two references, in the *Encyclopedia of prisons & correctional facilities* (Bosworth) in the context of language needs and services provided (“[...] ESL instruction is being supplemented, or replaced, with electronic translation [sic] technologies”) (Wilkinson and Mentor) and in the Hispanic/Latino(a) Prisoners entry, where lack of public services interpreters is a source of discontent for inmates (Anthony B. Guevara). In addition, a search of the term ‘interpreter’ in the renowned International Center for Prison Studies website [www.prisonstudies.org](http://www.prisonstudies.org) yielded no results.

Few studies focus on interpreting services in correctional facilities. Within Interpreting Studies, the likely first historical reference to the duties of interpreters that explicitly refers to prisons is found in Giambruno (39), where, quoting a 1563 Ordinance in Spanish colonies, it is stipulated that “Interpreters must be present at all proceedings, hearings and prison visits,” although this reference seems rather tangential. Only a handful of contributions touch upon the topic in a deliberate manner. Two PhDs dissertations: Martínez-Gómez (“La interpretación en instituciones penitenciarias”) focuses on quality and interpersonal factors in prison interpreting as performed by non-professionals, and Baixauli-Olmos (“La interpretació als serveis públics des d’una perspectiva ètica”) deals with professional ethics and a description of the prison setting through an ethical prism. (These results were summarized in a chapter by Baixauli-Olmos “A Description of Interpreting in Prisons.”). A brief explanation of the nature of the setting may be found in an encyclopedia entry by Martínez-Gómez (“Prison settings”). Two articles present an international overview of language services in prisons (Martínez-Gómez “La integración lingüística” and “Interpreting in Prison Settings”). Finally, we identified two more specific contributions that concentrate on norm-shaping vs. norm-breaking on the part of



prisoner-interpreters (Martínez-Gómez “Criminals Interpreting for Criminals”) and on face-keeping in mental health interpreting (Martínez-Gómez “Facing Face”). It must be noted in this respect that this bibliographic search has mostly focused on spoken-language interpreting.

In order to briefly describe the prison interpreting setting from a communication facilitation perspective we will summarize the description in Baixauli-Olmos (“La interpretació als serveis públics des d’una perspectiva ètica” 385-386), based on Alexieva’s multiparametric model and a subsequent adaptation proposed by Abril Martí (38-39):

1. Participants in the communicative situation: *Main*: a public service representative (usually a lawyer, but also other professionals, like a social worker or doctor) and a “user” [our emphasis] (an inmate); *Secondary*: A professional interpreter (when it is a legal-type meeting) and an *ad hoc* interpreter, i.e., another inmate (when non-legal).
2. Format: Triadic but dialogic, facilitated by language transfer in consecutive (spoken languages) or simultaneous (signed) mode. Strong interpersonal dimension. Security is fundamental, and it impacts the channel and physical layout of the encounter.
3. Contextual configuration: Communication takes place in the prison setting, which may hamper the interpreting process due to security and space (poor lighting and acoustics) factors.
4. Text type and text creation strategies: Text creation is asymmetric: the service provider often produces semi-spontaneous and specialized text, whereas the user tends to produce spontaneous and unspecialized text. Text type varies during the interview, a consensual (Zimányi 257) social part where the provider asks about life and well-being, and another more conflictual part where provider asks about the case; however, this changes depending on whether the meeting happens pre- or post-trial. The interpreter is used by participants so they can either elicit or retain information.
5. Goals of communicative situation: Goals on the part of main participants are sometimes opposed (getting vs. retaining information).
6. Relationship between participants: Power is asymmetrical between main participants and the interpreter is considered to align with the service provider and perceived to have greater power than the service “user.” Cultural differences may be smaller or greater depending on the system in question and the service “user” culture.
7. Participants’ role: Main participants alternate as speaker/recipient and often use the interpreter to fulfill their communicative goals. The interpreter receives pressure from main participants in terms of communicative strategies and inaccurate expectations.

It is relevant to underline that the study from which this description was taken uses the same dataset as the present contribution.



As is apparent from the last section in the description above, it seems that prison interpreters' role is subject to the pressure of managing the discursive practices of main participants, resisting the fulfillment of unreasonable expectations and demands on the part of the main participants, and also the ethical dilemmas arising from other professionals' malpractice.

### 2.3. DEFINING "ROLE" IN SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The fact that social roles are such a focal point of the human experience may justify the heightened concern this topic elicits. The following paragraphs focus on defining "role" from the perspective of sociology and social psychology. "(...) [I]n the field of sociology, this concept relates to the social role that an individual plays within a given society. Role, therefore, can be viewed as a model of behaviour which arises concerning a certain social function and which refers to the set of expectations that the society has on the actions of an individual occupying a particular social position." (Brandle, in Ritzar and Ryan 507). In spite of this basic definition, "role" is a polysemic term, as "A role can be defined as a social position, behaviour associated with a social position, or a typical behaviour; [...] [as] expectations about how an individual ought to behave; [...] [as] how individuals actually behave in a given social position; [...] [as] a characteristic behavior or expected behavior, a part to be played, or a script for social conduct." (Hindin in Ritzar and Ryan 508).

Now, even though there is no unified conceptualization of "role," as is apparent from the previous quotation, it seems that the concepts of identity and social function, as expressed through behaviors and expectations, are central to the notion of "role."

But there is a missing link in this sociological framework. The processes of identity formation in terms of how the various levels impact a social function to be developed by an individual have not been studied. The question of identity is extremely complex because it encompasses both a summation of experiences, beliefs and thoughts that may explain behaviours, and the process of formation of a relatively stable, though changing and dynamic, set of characteristics in a constant interaction with its surroundings. In spite of this variety of usages of the term, there is some basic agreement regarding identity formation processes: they are developed in three stages (prototype formation, identity activation and behavioural outcome) through the interaction between individuals and the different environments where they operate. These environments may be grouped into three categories or levels: life spheres (culture, politics or family), life roles (position within a family or a community) and work contexts (occupation, career stage, organization or team role) (Bothma *et al.* 24-27).

Two main theoretical strands explore identity formation processes from a social science perspective. Social identity theories consider identity as mainly derived from the social category or group to which the individual belongs or self-identifies with; norms, beliefs and behaviours will tend to be similar to those held by other members of the same group, but they are likely to be different than out-groups. Role





identity theory conceptualizes Identity as mainly derived from individual roles, which are reflected in performing expected behaviours, controlling the respective resources or services and managing relationships.

In the professional context, identity formation has been described as “A multi-identity, multi-faceted and multi-layered construction of the self (in which the self-concept fulfils a core, integrative function) that shapes the roles that individuals are involved in, in their employment context.” (Bothma *et al.* 25). This “multi” attribute makes identity and role formation difficult to grasp unless it is assimilated into a greater structure onto which the multiplicity of identities, facets and layers may be affixed.

Looking at the broader environment is useful to understanding social roles. Bronfenbrenner proposed a social ecological model that explained how children develop their identities interacting with different layers of their environment. Role was defined in this contribution as “a set of activities and relations expected of a person occupying a particular position in society, and of others in relation to that person” (Bronfenbrenner 85). At its time, this definition offered a novel interactionist approach to role, as being applied both by others to the child and by the child onto others.

This concentric circle model enjoys widespread acceptance as a useful representation of the various components that interact in the shaping of identity during childhood. It starts at the individual system (made up of attributes like sex, age or health), then moves up to microsystems (direct interactions with others: family, friends, teachers or neighbours), mesosystems (interaction among microsystems: between parents and teachers), exosystems (larger systems that indirectly impact on a child: school policies, parents’ workplace), macrosystem (beliefs systems: culture, ideology surrounding children’s education) and chronosystem (time system, transitions in life that impact other systems: transition to primary school). Below is a graphic illustration of the model (Figure 1).

Although for reasons of space we will not be able to discuss this model in detail, in the Results and Discussion section we will expand on how we adapted this model in an attempt to integrate the environmental factors that condition the role of prison interpreters.

A final notion that is relevant to our subsequent analysis is that of stress as a shaping force in professional identity formation and evolution. This concept has been investigated in the field of interpreting in terms of physiological (Kurz 197) and emotional or psychological stress (Valero-Garcés).

The forces that interact in work identity and practice have been studied in depth in both interpreting and sociology (Rudvin 435) and there seems to be consensus on the fact that these happen at different levels. For example, Kurz identifies at a physiological level three types of sources of stress (mental, social and environmental). In terms of hampering factors that go against the flow of interpreters’ professional identity formation, two main levels have been identified (Rudvin 438): in relation to society (trust and exclusivity, jurisdiction and motivation) and dynamics internal to the profession (systematized training for interpreters, reward and positive impact on society). It has been posited as well that interpreters’ role functions like gatekeeping



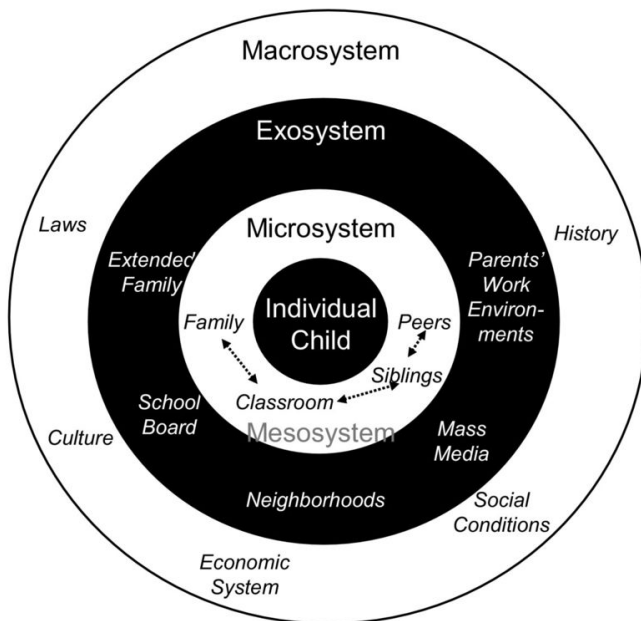


Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model (Eisenmann *et al.*).

at various levels (individual, communication routines, organization, institution and social system) (Pöllabauer building on Shoemaker and Vos).

All this work helps us zoom in or out to better grasp smaller details or greater trends in this interpreting work social map. Although most of the conceptualizations of identity we have reviewed do account for the fluidity and complexity of personal and professional identity, contributions describing how professional, personal and environmental factors interact to shape the identity and behaviours of the individual practitioner are relatively scarce. We will try to incorporate different models and notions to explain the gathered data and draw more general conclusions in order to add to the discussion on prison interpreters' role and identity.

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1. STUDY DESIGN

This observational qualitative retrospective study relies on several sets of data collected in the framework of our PhD dissertation (Baixauli-Olmos "*La interpretació als serveis públics des d'una perspectiva ètica*"). The data was gathered through the following instruments: participant observation, semistructured face-to-face interviews and online questionnaires. Three main areas were covered in



each of these instruments: demographics, opinion about and experience in prison interpreting, and the ethical dimension of prison interpreting. The subjects in this study were: professional prison interpreters, inmates and prison workers of different seniority levels. However, in this contribution we have only focused on interpreters.

### 3.2. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection took place between 2009 and 2011 at different research sites: a prison in Castelló (Centre Penitenciari Castelló I), the north-western England (United Kingdom) area and the virtual space. Although we collected data from different types of respondents, this research only focuses on the data provided by interpreters. Total sample size is N= 50, made up of two sub-sets: 47 questionnaires (filled in online by professional interpreters from the USA, UK, Australia and Argentina) and 3 in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews with professional interpreters in Manchester and Lancashire. As a brief demographic sketch, our sample is mostly made up of university-trained (96%) SpanishEnglish (67%) women (78%) interpreters of 41-50 years of age (36%) from the USA (64%) and with an experience of more than 20 interpreting encounters in prison settings (64%). A more thorough explanation of data collection procedures and sampling may be found in Baixauli Olmos (*“La interpretació als serveis públics des d’una perspectiva ètica”* 163-187).

### 3.3. DATA ANALYSIS

The present research analyses the gathered data through the prism of professional role. Even though the original study was designed to characterize the prison interpreting setting by enquiring about expectations, common practices, environmental factors and ethical principles and dilemmas, it did not address this central issue at length.

The collected primary information was analysed using grounded theory (Glaser and Straus) with the support of a qualitative data analysis software tool (Atlas ti). Grounded theory uses two important notions to gauge the relevance or usefulness (“validity” probably is not a practicable methodological notion in qualitative studies): groundedness (based on the number of quotations that are tagged with the code in question) and density (how deeply populated a code is, i.e., how many children—subordinate—codes are contained within that parent, or superordinate, code, and how many connections this code has with other codes. Even though we do not refer to these methodological concepts in the analysis, they have been used to decide what conceptual entities are more prominent and frequent.

In order to conduct an analysis of the gathered information, we proceeded as follows. First, we prepared the data so it could be analysed: questionnaire responses were transferred onto a spreadsheet, recordings were transcribed and observation journals were compiled. Second, demographic and close-ended questions were statistically described. Third, open-ended questions, interview transcripts and journals



were analysed and coded. Although these three steps relied on previous work, we re-coded the whole dataset in order to gain a fresher look at it. We enriched our theorization with existing notions, theories and models, as explained in the Background section.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We have decided to combine results and discussion of results so we can justify the groundedness or significance of the described theoretical categories with relation to the collected data.

In presenting the results of this study, we will categorize the factors raised by subjects using an adaptation to prison interpreting of Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model. We have adapted this model into five nested systems (individual, micro, meso, exo and macro) and two transversal systems (chrono and topo), which will be explained below. The overall goal of this framework is to be used as a tool to explain (external/behavioural or internal/psycho-cognitive) behaviours a professional may engage in. This classification is just an approximation; the limits are not clear-cut and differentiations are not airtight; also, there is of course a complex web of relations that we hope to be able to capture between systems, levels and factors.

We have also used a balancing vs. unbalancing dialectical relationship between different factors to try to incorporate the often divergent view of respondents, for example, in terms of security (cumbersome vs. comforting). These forces, tensions or stressors will be used to explain how a specific component of the model (e.g., acoustics—a part of the physical environment, which is a part of the mesosystem.) impacts actual professional role and practice (in this example, an unbalancing or negative effect).

### 4.1. INDIVIDUAL SYSTEM

In this proposal, the individual system refers to the self, understood as a dynamic compendium of both professional and personal attributes.

The personal level includes notions like demographics (age, gender, place of origin, native language and so on), personal history and experiences, general ideology and personal beliefs systems (religion, philosophy), and states of being or mind (including emotional responses to professional environment).

Although demographic variables are not statistically significant in our sample, references to variables like gender (“I cannot go through the metal detector machine because of the small pieces of metal hardware on my clothing”) or language pair (“Sometimes the jailer refuses to uncuff a deaf prisoner”) tend to establish a relationship of tension between those variables and security, which illustrates two main points. First, prison interpreters function in an institutional environment which imposes certain limits and restrictions especially for security reasons, and interpreters need to be aware of those constraints in order to implement strategies



and role types to better navigate them; this highlights the institutionally situated nature of the prison interpreter role and connects the micro-, meso- and exo-systems. Second, sample subjects frequently reiterated that when those barriers make communication-facilitation virtually impossible, professionals are required to speak up in order to fulfil their main role. In terms of beliefs, one of our subjects reported that deeply held religious beliefs were a moral compass that guided them in the direction of social justice; in this sense, personal beliefs are also key elements when explaining decision-making processes.

As for psychological or emotional states of mind, some of the most recurrent comments are “daunting,” “overwhelming,” “traumatic,” “difficult” or “unpleasant,” and these feelings seem to be triggered by the venue’s condition (bad smell, poor lighting and minimally furnished) and the general atmosphere (“never comfortable [or] pleasant”). Our most salient emotion as observers is “fear”; we felt insecure and scared because we did not know why the inmates we interacted with were imprisoned and the setting was intimidating; this may be explained at the individual system by our lack of experience or training in this setting. However, a few respondents portrayed the setting more positively (“The environment has always been good, very secure and the staff polite and helpful. I’ve felt safe and at ease”). These reflections seem to reinforce our proposal that different levels at various systems (the venue, other workers, security) impact the individual differently.

Another relevant component when trying to understand the emotional response to the setting is experience. In our sample, more experienced prison interpreters tend to depict the setting as less threatening, describing it in a more nuanced light (“Experiences are very individual and range from easy to difficult, pleasant to unpleasant”). They explain their experiences as dependent on the level of security of the facility, jurisdiction (federal prison vs. county jail in the United States) or type of population (juveniles vs. female vs. male). It seems that the negative emotional power of the environment diminishes over time. This evokes the temporal evolution of individual experiences, which in a way connects individual and toposystems. Again, this reflection points to the interdependent nature of the development of a professional activity and identity in such an institutionalized context; if the facility (mesosystem) is classified as one thing or another (exosystem; with the different types of funding allocated to each kind) by legislators (macrosystem), the actual psycho-social experience varies (individual and micro system).

At the professional level, we find factors like training, professional history and experience, professional affiliation, type of contract, expectations about own role and job, professional ideology and ethical dilemmas.

In terms of training, a large majority of our respondents (96%) had received formal training in interpreting, although only three had ever heard of specific training for interpreting in a prison setting. One of the respondents collaborated in the development of the UK Diploma of Public Service Interpreting Prison Service Add-on (HM Prison service *et al.*) and had received formal legal interpreting training in Germany. She reported that practicing interpreters would often complain that they were not able to train due to their very low pay (“The interpreters say ‘Listen, I’m sometimes getting paid 12 pounds an hour. Why would I do a course



that costs several hundred and then the exam, that costs me 500?"). This exemplifies how macro- (laws and policies) and exosystemic (training, pay) factors impose constraints on the kind of professional attributes (training) practitioners are able to acquire, thus also limiting the types of socialization processes that would facilitate the attainment of a strong sense of identity, trust and legitimacy. Another participant commented on how training helps professionals to better manage emotionally loaded situations ("So, I know about how to speak or keep out of any kind of emotions being involved.").

One of the questions we posed was whether interpreters had been faced with a complex dilemma. The dilemmatic situations identified by our subjects arose from their privileged position of cultural and linguistic knowledge and also from tasks unfulfilled others. One of them reported that a prisoner was "apparently from a given nationality but it was clear from the accent and general background that this was incorrect and may not have been explored earlier," and explained that it was a difficult decision because it was critical (as it may affect country of deportation) but was not considered by the interpreter to be their responsibility. A similar comment is made regarding poor interpreting during trial and the unawareness on the part of attorneys that language issues may be good reasons for appeal. These quotations imply that someone in the meso- and exosystem should have done something about this earlier, but did not.

A final factor we have considered is the actions and utterances proactively undertaken by interpreters to modify the environment. In one instance, an interpreter "mentioned [...] to the attorney that certified interpreters can study language problems, and now all the attorneys in that office look for ways to appeal on language issues." Another participant reported officers for taking children from their families after failing to use qualified interpreters. We find another example in a psychiatrist-prisoner interview, where the interpreter felt uncomfortable and asked to speak to the service provider privately to address that discomfort. These three powerful examples show us that individual interpreters are subjected to different forces, pressures and tensions, but they are also active agents who shape their environment (proposing legal strategies, reporting malpractice, expressing discomfort), from their immediate microsystem to higher systems.

#### 4.2. MICROSYSTEMS

Microsystems are made up by the constellation of relationships and interactions that take place during an interpreting assignment, mainly during the interpreted interview. In is in this system that interpreters are actually facilitating communication. At this microsystem level, the feedback between individual and environment is at its strongest, as the forces exerted by both on one another are often tangible and have an almost instant impact. A chief consideration in this system is obviously the nature of communication, including sources of stress and interpreting difficulty. We have also included here expectations by main participants and interpreters' responses to them.



As we will explain in the next section, the most common type of encounter is a meeting between an inmate and a lawyer, and it tends to follow a pattern based on the trial stage. Pre-trial encounters tend to involve a little social chatting and a good deal of organizational and factual information exchange, and they often become confrontational. Main participants engage in discursive practices to either elicit or refuse to give information. It is sometimes also the case that prisoners may not be willing or able to engage in communication, or that they may be going through withdrawal symptoms, which may cause communicative difficulties (“Prisoners are often in pretty bad shape, especially if they’re newly incarcerated. Overwhelmed or depressed, sleep deprived, suffering from withdrawal from drugs or alcohol.”). After the trial has ended, communication is more consensual, usually with an emphasis on social interaction, maybe exchanging information about the case, but with less tension and fewer communicative barriers.

Communication is also determined by stress, tension and difficulty. In terms of communicative stressors, subjects indicated that unrecorded encounters are less stressful than, for example, court interpretations, and that less intimidating questioning strategies than those used in police stations reduce interpersonal friction. Respondents also signalled the interpreting mode as a key communicative factor, as consecutive interpreting, the most common mode in spoken language prison interpreting, is said to make the task harder than in courts, where the most common mode is simultaneous for all language pairs.

The “tension” between lawyer and inmate is often reflected back onto interpreters, as they may be perceived as being aligned with the service provider (“I was perceived to be sort of on the barrister’s side. And they were quite aggressive in their tone towards me, you know, even in the general chit-chat stages and I had to make it very clear, you know.”). The tone of “aggression” toward interpreters triggers behaviours on their part, here in terms of specific utterances (“I’m just in my chair, I’m in the middle here. I’ve got no knowledge of the case other than what’s going on here.”). In this example, we see an unbalancing source of stress (feeling attacked) at the microsystem level (directly experienced with participants in the assignment), probably originating from experiences or beliefs developing in the meso- (interactions with other inmates or lawyers) or macrolevel (feeling of loneliness or abandonment by the system). The interpreter’s own voice may be construed as an attempt to balance or push the tension back. This shows how the different systems interact upon one another, and how interpreters forge their identity and stand their ground.

The nature of communication shapes and limits the expectations that main participants in an interpreting assignment have about the interpreter’s role. One of the most frequently reported instances of expectations happens on the part of the lawyer, who asks the interpreter (not) to perform a certain task: leaving the interpreter alone with the inmate to sight translate a document, asking the interpreter to give their number to the inmate to later discuss the case or to refrain from interpreting a message.

Interpreters are often expected to provide services that they feel are outside their scope of practice. These services may entail offering cultural and socio-political information about a country, giving their own general perception about inmates



(their intelligence, truthfulness or repentance), or more interpersonal functions (like comforting or calming) in situations where the end-user's needs become prominent (like self-harm, which are not uncommon in penal facilities).

As in the previous system, we found that interactions with main participants trigger actions and own-voice utterances on the part of interpreters, mostly related to role clarification ("I'm only the interpreter," "It's not my job," "I cannot advise you on the truthfulness of a message," "I can't advise you about legal matters," "No, you have to calm them down and I will interpret," "I am not allowed to speak with you," "If you want to know about the history, because here there is a cultural difference and I'm trying to fill in the gap, but I am not here to tell you the whole history about what exactly happened in that country") and ethical duties ("I explain that the code of ethics does not permit this," "I just explain that the interpreter must interpret everything that is said and I also interpret my explanation to the prisoner. It works."). As this shows, the push-and-pull among primary participants, and among participants and interpreter are two-way; interpreters are not passive forces, and they implement different strategies to dodge pressures.

At the same time, the interpreter's employment status (individual system) and contractual nature of their job (determined at external, meso-, exo- or even macrosystems) has a bearing on the type and form of the interpreter's agency (resisting or giving in to external pressures), because "it's a private business as well, so you have to keep, you know, the bookings coming in, you have to say this politely, to make sure they're not upset."

This illustrates that the individual's standing as a professional is a key explanatory variable; this kind of reasoning would probably be different in court settings, where interpreters are often publicly hired. This, in turn, expresses the moral and psychological tug-of-war between agreeing to do tasks one believes to be outside of their role and the attributes conferred onto interpreters in meso- (type of contract offered), exo- (public vs. private interpreters in the sector in question) and macrosystems (language access rights in prisons vs. courts).

#### 4.3. MESOSYSTEM

The mesosystem does not involve direct interactions, but rather connections between microsystems. In the case under study, the mesosystem is made up of the physical space where interpreting takes place (i.e., correctional facilities) and by the interpreter's constellation of professional relationships outside the specific interaction.

From an institutional setting perspective, since correctional facilities are spaces used to cut off prisoners from the wider community, all kinds of services are provided, including education, social work, security, counselling, health care, and law. Only one of our respondents has interpreted in prison outside legal encounters, and that is the reason we have focused on the inmate-lawyer encounter in this contribution. It seems that although these services are provided, they are performed by other prisoners who may (claim to) know the languages in question; this points to different standards in terms of language access of the inmate vs. general population.





This may be explained at an exo- and macrosystem level, in terms of the financial cost these services incur and the lack of political will to satisfy a need that does not rank high in general interest.

Concerning the space, the physical environment where interpreting occurs has an intensely negative effect on both the task and the general work atmosphere. With respect to the basic function of communication facilitation, the fact that interaction often happens through a glass and via a screen or a telephone in a cubicle that is designed for two main participants complicates the interpreter's task. In a similar vein, poor acoustics resulting from the simultaneous conversations in the same room, makes it difficult to hear or be heard. This hinders the interpreter's ability to fulfil their main task. With relation to the emotional environment, most respondents label the setting as "difficult," "vile," "daunting" or "overwhelming," while a few characterise it as "good," "okay," "easy and smooth" or "secure." Some factors that reinforce negative emotions are security constraints and the architectural layout of the building, unpleasant smell and the difficult life situations end users are facing. Also being in close proximity to felons may also be overwhelming at first; one subject also cited the outbreaks of contagious diseases and complained that "we often aren't informed ahead of time that a certain disease is rampant so that we can take precautions or refuse the job."

Security procedures are obviously fundamental in penal institutions. A few respondents mentioned how the time spent going through security and the non-negotiable time limits placed on visits and interviews often makes it almost impossible to comply with basic professional obligations, especially because consecutive interpreting (the most common mode in spoken language interpreting in prisons) slows communication down. This adds tension to the relationship between meso- and exosystems, and ultimately crucially questions the effectiveness or even viability of the profession in this setting, unless special arrangements are put in place. All of this increases the psychological pressures on interpreters.

With regards to professional relationships and expectations, we have identified two types of interactant forces: inter-professional relations of interpreters with professionals they may work with, but not in the situation in question, such as prison staff and other lawyers (they may be "polite and helpful," "not always the most helpful and polite people to deal with" or "very unpleasant and humiliating"); and intraprofessional relations of interpreters with other interpreters, interpreting service providers or supervisors.

#### 4.4. EXOSYSTEM

The exosystem refers to the network of agents, rules, spaces and interactions that lay outside the interpreter's experience but have an impact on their professional activity; this would include factors such as job satisfaction of service provider, living conditions of inmates, past experiences with interpreters, interactions between inmates or lawyers or prison regulations.



There are very few instances about this system in our sample. One that is relevant may be found in the expectations created by other interpreters (quoting a lawyer, “So, such and such interpreter did it [offering cultural information]”). Another that in our opinion is very revealing are the misconceptions held by other professionals within the environment; one of our interviewees organized a prison interpreting course together with prison staff, and in the preparation stages it was found that prison officers thought interpreters were the ones who should comfort inmates (this example has been discussed above), as they possess the cultural sensitivity to do so. This misconception about what other practitioners should do is frequent with underdeveloped professions, like PSI is, at least in prisons. In countering preconceived expectations, one informant also mentioned the need to stress that “maybe he or she did, but that is not what I do” to rectify those perceptions.

When asked about dilemmas, one respondent mentioned a tragic incident: they felt the inmate was psychologically unstable, and reported this to their supervisor. The supervisor decided not to take any action, and the prisoner later committed suicide. Although it is clear this interpreter did follow reasonable steps and what happened was beyond their ability to prevent, it still has an impact on their role, their emotional wellbeing, and their personal and professional history (“I’m still grappling with this.”).

#### 4.5. MACROSYSTEM

In the macrosystem, we find general beliefs, ethical values, laws and policies of a society or culture; this would also include semiotic and social psychology factors such as how prisons are imagined, defined or portrayed (for example, in media). This is the external ring in the concentric circles model, and it has an indirect, but very clear, impact on the prison interpreter. General laws and regulations about language access, public services and non-discriminatory policies also fall under this macrosystem.

With regards to the interpreting industry, for example, hiring procedures and contractual relationships tend to be dictated by macrosystemic factors. According to the data collected in this study, in the USA, certified court interpreters may be publicly hired by the judge to facilitate official communications between inmate and lawyer, although the most common type of contract is as (certified or not) freelance interpreters working with attorneys, possibly via an agency. In the UK, if the interpreter is publicly hired, they must be listed in the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (which requires some credentials, like training, an exam or some experience), from which the office in question (Barristers’ Chambers) picks an interpreter. However, all 13 of our British respondents agreed that the working conditions had worsened significantly as a result of the privatization of the market and the need by agencies to lower the costs.



#### 4.6. TOPOSYSTEM/TOPOLOGICAL DIMENSION

The topo-system (another level in the system) or topological dimension (a transversal dimension that cuts through the other lower systems) delineates the changing nature of role according to space factors, within or among different macrosystems. These space differences involve variations within the same institution (e.g., higher vs. lower security levels in different modules), from institution to institution (e.g., jail vs. prison) and from region to region (e.g., systems focusing more on punishment vs. reintegration).

In terms of regional differences, as macrosystems diverge from culture to culture, ecological factors shaping role expectations also differ. Even if we have gathered data from various countries (USA, UK, Argentina and Spain), we have not found reflections of this kind in our sample. However, we presume that it is possible that different criminal justice systems and philosophies allocate resources and structure penal systems differently, both in terms of space, security, atmosphere, language access policies (including the contractual nature of interpreting work) and conduciveness to communication. This diversity of underlying philosophical approaches to imprisonment and their evolution through time permeates whole macrosystems and trickles down to smaller (exo, meso, micro and individual) systems.

#### 4.7. CHRONOSYSTEM/CHRONOLOGICAL DIMENSION

The chronosystem or chronological dimension (this distinction has been addressed above) denotes the effect of time and history on the ecological model. This time frame of reference can refer to changes that take place in a person's life or in a culture.

At an individual level, interpreters depict the setting differently according to their history. In our dataset, those with more experience describe it in less negative terms. At the same time, repeated exposure to a difficult situation may increase the chance for vicarious trauma or burn-out syndrome to occur for some individuals (three respondents mentioned the words "traumatic," "grappling with memories" and "tragedies").

At a collective level, it is evident that socio-historical or political changes impact interpreting. Examples of this may be found in laws to regulate or deregulate the market (as our British respondents highlighted) or to privatise or deprivatise prison services. The presence of interpreters has increased dramatically since the 1980s (although, as mentioned above, they are mentioned in documents as far back as 16<sup>th</sup> century), at least in industrialized nations.



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This study has found that differently scaled sources of pressure and tension shape the interpreter's role in prison settings. These positive and negative forces operate within several nested systems. An illustrative example may be found in the problematic acoustics found in prisons as reported in this study. The architecture of correctional facilities (mesosystem), as it concerns acoustics, is different across territories and even within one institution (toposystem), and it changes over time (chronosystem); the design of these buildings depends on the amount of funding allocated, which in turn is the result of legislation, political will and general interest (macrosystem), in the sense that lack of funding may compromise the quality of materials or even the consideration of acoustics as a factor. The ability of professional interpreting institutions to exert pressure on the legislature and the administration of penal institutions (exosystem) will determine the power to ensure proper working conditions. These conditions will either facilitate or complicate the interpreting interaction (microsystem), which will help increase or reduce the amount of stress and satisfaction (individual system) on the part of interpreters. A difficult acoustic environment may elicit a greater or lesser degree of intervention (e.g., asking for repetitions or managing turns), impacting both the main participants' perception of the interpreter and the interpreter's perception of him or herself.

Even though the system we have tried to develop does not attempt to provide a thorough list of descriptors or predictors of professional role for prison interpreters, we consider this theorization provides a broad thought framework that accounts for the extremely complex and highly interactive set of variables that bear on professional role. We also hope that this proposal has the hermeneutic potential to explain expectations and behaviours of interpreters in other settings in an integrative manner, considering the whole ecological system, and to move the discussion beyond a fragmentary understanding (individual or situated vs. collective role) of interpreters' professional role.

In summary, penal facilities represent very tense tightropes for interpreters to walk, given the numerous destabilizing forces at play, both environmental and otherwise, as expressed by the interpreters who participated in this study. Nevertheless, they also delineate techniques, strategies and factors that help them be grounded. As we have illustrated, the individual remains at the centre of the cumulative forces that different levels and systems impose on interpreting in prison settings, and is an active player in this force system.

One of the main limitations of this study in terms of methodology is the lack of direct or indirect observations of interpreted encounters. Although we repeatedly attempted to gain permission to record, due to security restrictions we were explicitly barred from recording anything within prison premises.

A second potential theoretical-methodological shortcoming that we considered during this study, especially regarding data analysis (coding), was our lack of professional experience as prison interpreters. In light of this, we actively sought questioning strategies to avoid leading responses toward less positive attributes. Nevertheless, we would like to expressly contemplate the possibility that our description



of the available data could be skewed by our own feelings. Even though we spent some time in the prison where indirect data collection field work was conducted, our journals of the experience always left a negative and rather unsettling aftertaste, and this sensation seems to have permeated the whole study. Be this as it may, one can only hope that working conditions and environmental factors (and researchers' perceptions of them) will be better in the future, as they have been improving in most industrialized nations (as attested by the increasing presence of interpreters in many courtrooms, for example).

A third, closely associated limitation pertains to theory-building. The grounded theory methodology, at least its original premises (which have been questioned repeatedly), encourages researchers "literally to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study, in order to assure that the emergence of categories will not be contaminated" (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 45). We did not follow this recommendation in this research and, in fact, it is possible that earlier literature findings have shaped our making sense of the codes we had generated in order for them to fit in earlier conceptualizations of professional identity. Although this is not necessarily a negative, we had reflected on this in our analysis memos and thought it was worth making explicit here.

Finally, a route worth exploring to further the understanding of professional role in PSI from an ecological perspective, as presented in this study, involves quantifying the strength, potency or salience of each factor relative to other factors, systems or the overall ecological model. Salience is a useful conceptual tool to account for the weight of each force —i.e., to explain how strong a specific (balancing or unbalancing) force is, and thus how powerful its "shaping force" is in a given situation or context. Salience, understood in the semiotic sense of prominence, of a component in an interaction might thus help to explain behaviours that may appear difficult to justify from a theoretical point of view, or to correlate with other instances of professional practice and decision-making by the same professional or by others. Even though an interpreter may comply with most expectations in general, under specific circumstances, situations of crisis, deeply held moral or political beliefs or intense past experiences may trigger certain actions and thoughts, either consciously or subconsciously. In other words, the importance attributed by the participant or observer (be it the very agent —i.e. the interpreter— or a researcher, a colleague, etc.) to a stimulus or a factor at a given time may help to understand why other factors impacting professional identity, ethics and role might be overridden. Although during our analysis we have started to see trends in terms of salience of the analytical codes we generated, that portion of the study requires further work.

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# SOCIAL DISTANCE AND THE ROLE OF THE DIALOGUE INTERPRETER

Elena Aguirre Fernández Bravo  
Ana María Roca Ugorri  
Universidad Pontificia Comillas

## ABSTRACT

Professionals and researchers have debated the issue of the role of the dialogue interpreter for decades. Role negotiation has been tied to the degree of mediation carried out by the interpreter in the communicative act. Pragmatics still has a lot of untapped potential as an approach to explore factors that contribute to this mediation. The present paper aims at investigating the interplay between mediation, role, and the pragmatic notion of social distance in dialogue interpreting. Firstly, the relevant literature on social distance is reviewed in order to define the concept; secondly, its applicability to dialogue interpreting is analysed, along with its complex and singular dynamics in triadic exchanges; finally, the last section addresses the implications of social distance for mediation and, thus, for the interpreter's role negotiation.

**KEYWORDS:** dialogue interpreting, mediation, interpreter's role, social distance.

## RESUMEN

El debate sobre el rol del intérprete dialógico lleva décadas ocupando a profesionales e investigadores. La negociación del rol se ha vinculado al grado de mediación que lleva a cabo el intérprete en el acto comunicativo. La pragmática tiene aún mucho potencial inexplorado como enfoque para abordar el estudio de los factores que contribuyen a esta mediación. El presente artículo tiene por objeto examinar la interacción entre la mediación, el rol y la concepción pragmática de la distancia social. En primer lugar, se recoge la bibliografía pertinente sobre distancia social con vistas a definir el concepto; a continuación, se analiza su aplicabilidad a la interpretación dialógica, así como su comportamiento complejo y particular en la comunicación triádica; finalmente, en el último apartado, se dilucidan las implicaciones de la distancia social para la mediación y, por consiguiente, para la negociación del rol del intérprete.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** interpretación dialógica, mediación, rol del intérprete, distancia social.



## 1. A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON ROLE NEGOTIATION IN DIALOGUE INTERPRETING

The controversy regarding the definition of the boundaries for the dialogue interpreter's role has been studied by many authors over the years (e.g. Angelelli; Bot; Fenton; Fowler; Inghilleri; Roberts; Anderson, "Perspectives on the Role of the Interpreter" and "Interpreter Roles and Interpretation Studies"; Pöchhacker, "Interpreting as Mediation"; Wadensjö, "The Double Role of a Dialogue Interpreter"). This issue is relevant because of its implications for the ethical principles of impartiality and fidelity.

All participants in any interpreter-mediated interaction have a concept, whether conscious or unconscious, of what the role of the professional should be (Fowler 195-196; Wadensjö, *Interpreting as Interaction* 150; Inghilleri 254). Users' notions of interpreting are not always known to the intermediaries, and therefore, not under their control (Inghilleri 256). Moreover, since participants are not experts in communication, their expectations might conflict with the real requirements of the situation or even with the actual options available to the interpreter (Gentile, Ozolins, and Vasilakakos 31).

Not even professional interpreters are unanimous when it comes to defining their role beyond language transfer (Pöchhacker, "The Community Interpreter's Task" 63). Many studies point out discrepancies between the rules they declare when asked about the topic, and the actual decisions they make in their daily practice of the profession (Bot 34; Inghilleri 257; Valero Garcés and Gauthier Blasi 8; Anderson, "Interpreter Roles and Interpretation Studies"; Wadensjö, *Interpreting as Interaction* 9).

Tebble states that dialogue interpreters always play an independent role, since they are not to act as advocates for one of the parties, but as professionals who relay what is said by both sides (181-182). However, it is complicated to establish what is meant exactly by the adjective "independent" in dialogue interpreting. Ulllyatt, among other authors, emphasizes the fact that interpreters cannot be considered mere conduits in communication:

It is their task to encourage conversation management, to initiate exchanges, to ask questions, and to seek information which may be vital to a successful outcome of the interpreting assignment. It is not their task to empower anybody, but to take power and responsibility for themselves. (251)

Researchers usually agree that interpreting always entails a certain degree of mediation. According to Wadensjö, "it is not an empirical question whether interpreters are translators or mediators —they cannot avoid being both" (*Interpreting as Interaction* 206). Mediation is, indeed, key to defining role, as per Pöchhacker: "the conceptual issues underlying the view of interpreting as mediation are in a large part responsible for the controversy surrounding the community interpreter's role" ("Interpreting as Mediation" 9).

According to Pöchhacker, "different kinds of intermediaries can be posited along a continuum of active involvement and intervention, ranging from the least



involved, such as a neutral messenger, to the most involved, such as a negotiator” (“Interpreting as Mediation” 13). Several authors have attempted this type of interpreter’s role classification. Nevertheless, Pöchhacker notes that many of the concepts used overlap or are not clearly distinguishable. A great variety can also be seen in the denominations chosen by different experts (Roberts 10-14; Roy; Pöchhacker, “The Community Interpreter’s Task” 65; Wadensjö, *Interpreting as Interaction* 63-68). Plus, many classification proposals tend to be prescriptive instead of descriptive, and thus do not take into account the multiplicity and variability of communicative situations that a dialogue interpreter faces.

In a previous article on the interpreter’s role (Aguirre Fernández Bravo and Roca Ugorri), it was argued that it is useful to avoid the oversimplification of clear-cut role prototypes, considering it more productive to define the minimal and maximal poles of the mediation continuum, which allows the description of any given role as a relative position along said continuum. The minimal mediator is named “conduit interpreter” (the interpreter who does not go beyond the parties’ language needs, aspiring to maximal lexicographical fidelity to the original, regardless of the parties’ interests), and the maximal mediator is referred to as “advocate interpreter” (a non-neutral interpreter who goes beyond language transfer to perform additional tasks, such as advising, managing turns, etc.).

It is necessary to add new perspectives to this ongoing debate about the role of the dialogue interpreter in order to determine the factors that have repercussions on mediation. In this sense, Pragmatics could be a useful path. According to Valero Garcés, although research in community interpreting from the point of view of Pragmatics seems to be promising, studies “are still too few and too new” (97-98). This statement is in line with the opinion expressed by Mason and Stewart (51).

The negotiation of the interpreter’s role as a mediator between two parties requires the assumption of a certain positioning towards the interlocutors in different aspects and levels of the interaction. The concept of social distance specifically addresses this relative positioning; therefore, borrowing this notion from Pragmatics could enable dialogue interpreters to assess the degree of mediation to be put into practice in a specific communicative situation, which will, in turn, determine the role they will play.

## 2. THE NOTION OF SOCIAL DISTANCE

Social distance was first conceptualized in the domain of Sociology by Park as the degree of intimacy between individuals or groups. Following his proposal, Bogardus developed a scale to measure this distance, which has been profusely cited, discussed and adapted in the fields of Psychology and Sociology.

Decades later, Schumann studied a similar notion of social distance in the context of acculturation during second-language acquisition. According to this author, such a process is easier when the two social groups in contact (the language learners and the group of people whose language the former are trying to acquire) are closer in terms of political, cultural, technical or economic status. In order to



assess the social distance between two language groups, there are several factors that must be taken into account: (1) social dominance: whether the learning group is politically, culturally, technically or economically superior (dominant), equal (non-dominant), or inferior (subordinate); (2) integration pattern: whether the learning group has assimilated to the foreign culture, preserved their native one or adapted to the new intercultural situation; (3) enclosure: the degree to which the two groups have separate schools, religious centres, clubs, recreational facilities, professions, etc.; (4) intended length of residence: how long the learning group plans to stay in the target language area; (5) cohesiveness: the extent to which members of the learning group live, work and socialize together with those belonging to the target culture; (6) size of the learning group; (7) congruence of both cultures: the degree to which they are similar; (8) attitude: the ethnic stereotypes used by the two groups to value each other positively, neutrally, or negatively.

Although Schumann's view was originally conceived for a different purpose, it is easy to see that these factors could also be applicable to analyse dialogue interpreting situations, as they describe the relationship between two interacting social groups that speak different languages. Thus, it can be claimed that Schumann's notion of social distance is useful as a starting point.

The concept of social distance is part of the well-known theory of politeness developed by Brown and Levinson. These authors famously introduced the notion of "face," which derives from the original ideas of Goffman and has been studied with regard to interpreting by authors like Cambridge, Mason and Stewart, Pölabauer or Warchał, Łyda, and Jackiewicz. Brown and Levinson assume that all competent members of a society have (and know each other to have), on the one hand, rational capacities enabling them to reason and, on the other hand, face, "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (61). Face includes two aspects: negative face (basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction, freedom of action and freedom from imposition) and positive face (the positive consistent self-image or "personality" claimed by interlocutors that crucially includes the desire for this self-image to be appreciated and approved of):

Thus, face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction. In general, people cooperate (and assume each other's cooperation) in maintaining face in interaction, such cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of face. (61)

Together with relative power (P) and the ranking of the imposition (R) involved, social distance (D) is one of the sociological factors that determine the weightiness or seriousness of a face-threatening act (FTA), and, thus, the level of politeness which a speaker (S) uses when interacting with a hearer (H) (Brown and Levinson 74-76). Therefore, social distance is defined as follows:

D is a symmetric social dimension of similarity/difference within which S and H stand for the purposes of this act. In many cases (but not all), it is based on an assessment of the frequency of interaction and the kinds of material or non-material goods (including face) exchanged between S and H (or parties representing S or H,



or for whom S and H are representatives). An important part of the assessment of D will usually be measures of social distance based on stable social attributes. (76)

Social distance was also defined by Halliday and Hasan as one of the features of tenor, which is the element that relates the biographical details of the participants in communication to the details of the social structure (57). In their vision, social distance is a continuum with the following characteristics:

Social distance is a continuum, the two end-points of which may be referred to as MAXIMAL and MINIMAL. A maximal social distance obtains when the persons involved know each other through infrequent encounters only in the capacity of the agent of someone institutionalized activity and in the dyadic status that correlates with the agent role. [...] The more minimal the social distance, the greater the degree of familiarity between the carriers of the role. (57)

More recently, Escandell Vidal has developed a slightly different notion of social distance. She explains it as the relationship that exists between speaker and addressee, defined by the properties of individuals, both physical/intrinsic (age, sex, etc.) and social (relative power, authority, etc.). It involves objective and subjective, individual and social aspects. Our relationships, and, thus, our communication are conditioned by how we perceive others, or, better said, how we have learnt to perceive others (57-58).

According to Escandell Vidal, social distance is a complex measure made up by two dimensions (58-62):

- a) Familiarity: this dimension is related to (1) the degree of previous knowledge that speaker and addressee have acquired of each other; and (2) the degree of empathy that they achieve in their interaction. The more familiar speakers are to each other, the less social distance there is between them.
- b) Hierarchy: this second dimension addresses the flexibility with which societies stratify their members. Hierarchy is assessed according to two parameters, namely: (1) inherent physical characteristics of individuals, such as their gender, age or race; and (2) social roles, functions that have been socially assigned to individuals according to the role that each one of them is supposed to play in the social group. These roles depend on power and/or authority (boss-employee, doctor-patient, customer-waiter, etc.) and generate expectations regarding rights and obligations in communication. There is more social distance when a broader hierarchical gap exists between the parties.

It can be argued that Escandell Vidal's proposal is particularly comprehensive and can be seen as related to the notions of social distance developed by other authors, even to the precursory ideas of Park. The factors established by Schumann can be considered as different expressions of familiarity and/or hierarchy between the two social groups involved. Brown and Levinson's definition of social distance also appears to share some features with Escandell Vidal's, with the exception of



what the latter calls social roles, which the former seem to include under a different sociological factor, namely, power. There is also an apparent correspondence between Halliday and Hasan's view on social distance and familiarity.

### 3. SOCIAL DISTANCE IN DIALOGUE INTERPRETING

As it has been explained, in every interaction between two or more people there will be a certain degree of social distance. It can be inferred that such distance will also be present in interlinguistic encounters; therefore, coping with it will be an important part of the dialogue interpreter's task. Just being aware of the existence of this notion and, more importantly, of the two main dimensions that make it up, familiarity and hierarchy, could prove to be useful for the interpreter in order to analyse the communicative act.

Nevertheless, before any further explanation, it is essential to highlight that Escandell Vidal conceives of social distance as a perception (57-58). Therefore, it cannot be measured objectively, as Brown and Levinson already pointed out with regard to all politeness factors: "these are not intended as *sociologists'* ratings of *actual* power, distance, etc., but only as actors' assumptions of such ratings, assumed to be mutually assumed, at least within certain limits" (74-75). These authors also note that social distance is situational and, therefore, its value can be extremely different in similar circumstances in nonidentical contexts (79).

Since interpreter-mediated events are triadic exchanges, social distance in these cases can operate at two different levels: between the participants and between them and the interpreter. As Wadensjö emphasises, "in exploring the role of the dialogue interpreter one has to see her in relation to those *others* confirming or rejecting her in this role" ("Dialogue Interpreting and the Distribution of Responsibility" 115). Moreover, not only do the interacting parties have face; interpreters also have their own professional faces as neutral and impartial language experts, as Pöllabauer states (42). Warchał, Łyda, and Jackiewicz also recognize this professional face, to which they add "the face of the interpreter as a member of the society, with his or her beliefs, values, in-group loyalties and attitudes" (776-777). According to Brown and Levinson's theory, the recognition of the interpreter's face implies that this professional will also have to bear in mind his/her own social distances from both sides of the communicative act.

Therefore, it is worth distinguishing two different concepts: social distance between participants ( $SD_a$ ) and social distance between the interpreter and the interlocutors ( $SD_b$ ).

$SD_a$ , graphically represented in Figure 1, can be better understood with two extreme examples. In one possible situation, the interpretation users are two middle-aged businessmen with similar socioeconomic backgrounds who already know each other and have developed empathy in previous meetings. However, in a very different communicative act, the interpreter's interlocutors are an old male doctor and a young illiterate female patient who have never previously met. It is



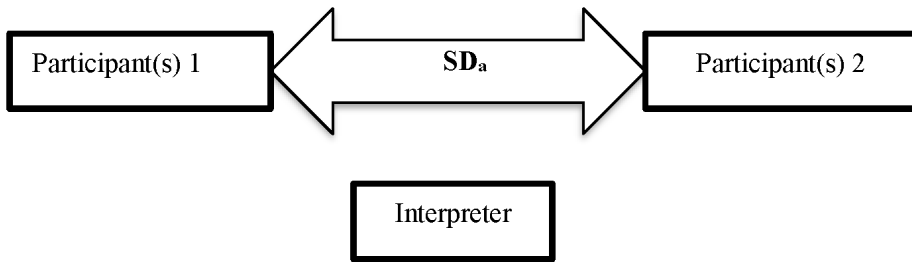


Figure 1. Social distance between participants ( $SD_a$ )



Figure 2. Social distances between interpreter and participants ( $SD_b$ )

apparent that both cases differ greatly in terms of the social distance separating the participants.

In analogy to the two examples presented for  $SD_a$ , it seems obvious that the social distance separating the interpreter from the interlocutors can vary significantly: they can share their ethnic descent or come from very different cultures; there can be a more or less clear asymmetry of power between them; they may have already worked together in previous situations; etc.

Additionally,  $SD_b$  can be further subdivided into two categories:  $SD_{b1}$ , for social distance between the interpreter and the participant(s) who speak(s) language 1, and  $SD_{b2}$ , to refer to the distance between the interlocutor(s) who speak(s) language 2 and the interpreter (see Figure 2). This is because the relationship with the interpreter can be very different for each one of the interpretation users or user groups. Indeed,  $SD_{b1}$  and  $SD_{b2}$  do not necessarily have to coincide: participant 1 could know the interpreter, while participant 2 could have never met him/her or even interacted with one; they could share or not physical features such as gender, race or age; one of the participants could have power over the interpreter, while the other could feel under his/her rule, etc.

It is important to note that  $SD_a$  and  $SD_b$  must be represented separately due to the fact that they are independent from each other. Although both will be argued to affect the interpreter, there is no way in which the relationship between the participants limits the relationships between the interpreter and each one of the interlocutors. For instance, the fact that the doctor and the patient presented in the second example provided for  $SD_a$  are not familiar with each other does not rule out the possibility that the interpreter may have already met one or both of them.





#### 4. SOCIAL DISTANCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR MEDIATION

Although several aspects could be affected by changes in  $SD_a$  and in both subtypes of  $SD_b$ , this paper focuses on the possible alterations of a key element: mediation, the task that, according to Wadensjö, is simultaneously present together with translation or relay in the interpreter's activity ("Dialogue Interpreting and the Distribution of Responsibility" 112-113).

Before analysing any possible connections between social distance and mediation, it is important to clarify that they do not imply an automatic effect on the interpreter's decisions, nor are they to be understood as prescriptive and unquestionable rules. Although the social distance in a communicative act might justify and/or favour a certain degree of mediation, it cannot be expected to restrict the interpreter's actual freedom of action or to determine a single, correct way to behave.

Inter-participant social distance can be tied to mediation by means of Alexieva's typology of interpreter-mediated events. According to this author, the more culturally specific a communicative act is, the more mediation it requires from the interpreter. Thus, a higher  $SD_a$  will involve an increase in mediation if such social distance causes cultural differences between the interlocutors to emerge.

Alexieva creates several subscales, which, in combination, determine the position of an interpreter-mediated event on a continuum that runs up from universality to cultural specificity. In one of these subscales, the universality pole is identified with "equality/solidarity", whereas "non-equality/power" describes the culturally specific end of the continuum. As the relationship between equal and solidary participants can be described in Escandell Vidal's terms as familiar (at least, regarding empathy) and non-hierarchical, a considerable social distance seems to be one of the features that contribute to culturally specific communicative situations.

Other experts also appear to support this view that social distance can be related to cultural difference. As stated above, Schumann names the congruence of the two relevant cultures among the factors that reduce social distance and, thus, facilitate the acquisition of a foreign language.

Besides fostering cultural or identity differences that need to be bridged, social distance between the participants can also be considered to encourage mediation pursuant to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. Pöllabauer states that the need to save one's own or the other participants' face by using different politeness techniques is an important aspect of interpreter-mediated interactions (41-42). According to Mason and Stewart, the negotiation of face can be seen as part of the interpreter's role as a manager of the exchange (54). Therefore, the politeness techniques that the speaker and the hearer might resort to in order to counteract face-threatening acts (FTA) in monolingual situations can be carried out by the interpreter in triadic exchanges and accounted for as mediation. This behaviour was confirmed by Pöllabauer in her analysis of interpreters during asylum interviews, in which "if possible, they apparently opt to protect the other participants' (positive or negative) face" (50). As social distance is one of the contributing factors to the



weightiness of an FTA (Brown and Levinson 76), the more prevalent it is in the interaction, the more likely the interpreter will be to mediate.

If the social distance between the interlocutors ( $SD_a$ ) determines the degree of mediation, and consequently, the interpreter's role, it seems logical to wonder whether  $SD_b$  can operate the same way.

If two different  $SD_b$ s exist, one for the relationship of the interpreter with each one of the interlocutors ( $SD_{b1}$  and  $SD_{b2}$ ), it follows that they can be analysed separately. However, in a study focusing on mediation, this divide must be discarded. Mediation is, essentially, an activity carried out by an intermediary, someone who is defined by his or her position between two parties, instead of relative to just one of them. In the field under discussion, mediation cannot be understood but as a particular type of task that the dialogue interpreter performs as a third participant in order to bridge the linguistic and cultural differences between two other speakers. In fact, because of the nature of dialogue interpreting, it is questionable that interpreter-mediated events can be analysed as if they were composed of two different parts, since the communicative behaviour of a participant depends vastly on who his/her final audience is. Furthermore, it seems impossible to determine when an interpreter is mediating for each one of the parties: would it be during the relay of the interlocutor's words or when translating the other speaker's utterances to him/her?

According to the previous argument,  $SD_{b1}$  and  $SD_{b2}$  have to be studied interdependently in order to reach conclusions about their effects on mediation. A calculation of the average  $SD_b$  or a simple addition of its two components does not seem to account for reality, as it precludes the consideration of the more than likely asymmetry between the relationships of the interpreter with each one of the primary participants. This asymmetry plays a key role for mediation, since the position of an intermediary can only be defined as relative to both parties. This is why a comparison between  $SD_{b1}$  and  $SD_{b2}$  seems a much more suitable analysis factor for the purposes of this paper. Thus, it is useful to define one other type of social distance: the comparative social distance between the interpreter and each one of the primary participants, which will be hereinafter referred to as  $CSD_b$ . It can be calculated as the differential between  $SD_{b1}$  and  $SD_{b2}$ , as explained in Figure 3.

The arguments used to explain the connection of the social distance between the participants with mediation appear to apply consistently to  $CSD_b$ . It is possible to resort to the theory of Alexieva again, since she admits that the interpreter can be taken into consideration in her "equality/solidarity vs. non-equality/power" subscale (169). According to her ideas, as long as a higher  $CSD_b$  entails an increase in the cultural specificity of the communicative act, it will require more mediation from the interpreter. In the cases in which the interpreter has a significantly greater familiarity or a much less hierarchical relationship with only one of the speakers, the professional and this interlocutor can be seen as equal and solidary, but this only emphasises the contrast with the situation of the other participant. The differential in  $SD_b$ , therefore, places the communicative act as a whole closer to the "non-equality/power" pole, a position that contributes to cultural specificity and, thus, fosters mediation.



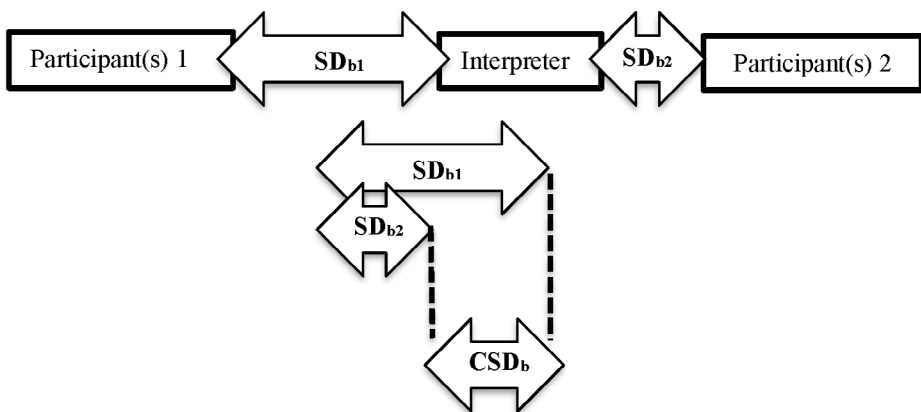


Figure 3. Comparative Social Distance between interpreter and participants.

It has been mentioned that Schumann appears to associate social distance with culturally specific situations and this seems to be true of  $CSD_b$  as well. One of the reasons why the interpreter and one of the interlocutors may have a closer social distance is their belonging to the same culture. In this sense, the other party is isolated and, as a consequence, the interpreter-mediated event can be considered polarized, that is, more specific in terms of culture, which calls for mediation according to Alexieva.

Regarding Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, as interpreters have their own faces, they will be subject to suffering FTAs and, consequently, to carrying out politeness strategies as a particular type of mediation. Considering that social distance is one of the factors that determine the seriousness of FTAs (Brown and Levinson 76), it is interesting to wonder in which particular way  $CSD_b$  can threaten an interpreter's face. It is possible to affirm that, in situations in which the social distance between the interpreter and each one of the participants differs greatly, the professionals have to deal with a challenge to their impartiality, an aspect of their face that, according to Pöllabauer, they try to protect (50).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This paper is an attempt to elucidate the dynamics of social distance in dialogue interpreting. The identification of familiarity and hierarchy as its components and the distinction between  $SD_a$  and  $SD_b$ , as well as the notion of  $CSD_b$ , can be alleged to have potential as a framework for a general analysis of triadic communicative acts. This can be useful for professional practice and interpreter training. In addition, these notions could open new paths for interdisciplinary research.

The present paper claims that both the social distance existing between the participants ( $SD_a$ ) and the comparative social distance ( $CSD_b$ ) arising from the

relationship between each one of the parties with the interpreter ( $SD_{b1}$  and  $SD_{b2}$ ) can encourage a certain degree of interpreter mediation. Through cultural specificity and politeness theory, it has been argued that the greater the social distance, the more mediation is likely to occur. This is important for interpreting performance because mediation is relevant for the interpreter's role. Since it has been suggested that an increase in mediation brings the interpreter closer to being an advocate, it can be deemed that a high social distance, at least, tempts the interpreter to assume such a role, whereas more familiar and hierarchically equal interlocutors call for a smaller degree of intervention from the interpreter and, thus, a behaviour that is nearer to the conduit pole of the mediation continuum.

For professional dialogue interpreters, being aware of the close relationship between social distance and mediation can help them make informed decisions about their role. Interpreter training should also cover this aspect, including specific pedagogically adapted exercises to teach trainees that familiarity and hierarchy can be key pragmatic factors when negotiating their role in communication.

Regarding research, it could be interesting to explore the interplay between social distance and mediation in the different fields of dialogue interpreting. It is reasonable to think that more mediation strategies will be required in community interpreting, where users are further from each other in terms of familiarity and hierarchy, contrary to the usual situation in business interpreting, where clients tend to be closer with regard to these two parameters.

The natural step that follows this paper is the development of a methodology for measuring the different constructs ( $SD_a$ ,  $SD_b$  and  $CSD_b$ ), as well as the statistical testing of the reliability and validity of such tool, in order to carry out empirical studies in different fields of dialogue interpreting. It is important to bear in mind, as it was previously explained, that social distance cannot be measured objectively, since it only exists as a subjective perception. Therefore, any statistical tool should aim at assessing assumed social distances.

Empirical studies researching the connection between social distance, mediation, and the role of the dialogue interpreter could also be illuminating. It has been argued that social distance may encourage interpreters to mediate, but it does not condition them automatically to do so, nor does it determine a single appropriate behaviour. As interpreters are free to decide the degree of mediation they want to put into practice, it is essential to study whether their role choices could alter any of the social distances involved in the communicative act. A bidirectional approach to social distance (as an aspect that both influences mediation and is affected by it) seems to be promising for future research.

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# INTERACTION MANAGEMENT SKILLS IN TELEPHONE INTERPRETING

María Magdalena Fernández Pérez  
Universidad de La Laguna

## ABSTRACT

Over the last decade, telephone interpreting (TI) has consolidated its presence in the public services of many countries around the world, including Spain. That is why increased attention is being paid to the need for training TI professionals who are able to face the challenges that this type of remote interpreting entails. Despite TI's specificities (the use of the telephone as the channel of communication, the interpreter's physical absence from the place of interaction, the lack of visual information and the immediacy with which the interpreter is accessed), it shares many features with face-to-face dialogue interpreting, one of them being the role of the interpreter as interaction coordinator to ensure communication flow between the primary parties. Nonetheless, the way coordination is performed when interpreting over the phone necessarily differs from on-site interpreting. This article aims to identify and describe the specific skills needed by telephone interpreters to manage interaction between participants in conversation. Some of them are not exclusive to TI, but must be readapted for use with the telephone. These skills could potentially be used as the starting point to design a specific comprehensive training in TI.

**KEYWORDS:** telephone interpreting, skills, translation and interpreting competence, coordinating interaction, remote interpreting.

## RESUMEN

A lo largo de la última década, la interpretación telefónica (IT) ha consolidado su presencia en los servicios públicos de muchos países, incluido España. Por ello, se le está prestando una mayor atención a la necesidad de formar a profesionales de la IT que sepan hacer frente a los retos derivados de este tipo de interpretación a distancia. A pesar de que la IT posee características específicas (el uso del teléfono como canal de comunicación; la ausencia física del o de la intérprete del lugar de la interacción; la ausencia de información visual y la inmediatez con que se accede a la o a el intérprete), esta comparte muchos rasgos con la interpretación dialógica presencial, entre ellos, el papel de quien interpreta como coordinador de la interacción para asegurar el flujo de la interacción entre los interlocutores. Sin embargo, la manera de efectuar dicha coordinación es necesariamente diferente cuando se interpreta por teléfono y cuando se hace persona. Este artículo tiene como objetivo identificar y describir las destrezas específicas que necesitan adquirir los y las intérpretes telefónicas para gestionar la interacción entre quienes participan en la conversación. Algunas de ellas no son exclusivas de la IT, pero deben ser readaptadas al uso del teléfono. Estas destrezas podrían ser empleadas potencialmente como punto de partida para diseñar una propuesta de formación específica exhaustiva en IT.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** interpretación telefónica, destrezas, competencia traductora e interpretativa, coordinación de la interacción, interpretación a distancia.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

Telephone interpreting (TI) is a type of remote interpreting in which some or all of the interlocutors (interpreters and users) are physically separated from each other and use a telephone as an instrumental channel of communication. In this article, we will deal with TI as a resource to provide language assistance to foreigners who speak oral languages and need to access their host country's public services, but who are not fluent in the official language. However, it should be borne in mind that TI is also widely utilised by other types of users such as deaf individuals, as well as by private companies as a tool for their internationalisation process.

Professional TI emerged in Australia in 1973 when the government created a telephone emergency line called Emergency Telephone Interpreting Services, which could be used by the immigrant population for assistance in their own language by professional interpreters. In the following decades, TI was exported to the United States of America, where it was privatised and progressively became a global business controlled by large corporations.

In Spain, TI has consolidated its presence as a language assistance resource in public services, namely in healthcare and social services settings. In this case, providers are also private companies whose TI services have been outsourced by the government. So far, this growing TI demand in public services has barely been acknowledged in Spanish university programmes. Currently, telephone interpreter training still relies almost exclusively on the agencies providing the service. This effectively means that, although these agencies collaborate with universities by offering internships or short seminars, the only beneficiaries of comprehensive in-depth training in TI are, therefore, the agencies' own interpreters. Moreover, training offered by agencies—although in some cases of very good quality and a reflection of the professional reality of TI—is somehow limited by the needs and requirements of those demanding the service and the conditions stipulated in the tender.

In the past few years, however, there has been a remarkable increase in research studies on TI, which will surely lead to the creation of training programmes in university undergraduate or postgraduate courses.

This article points in that direction, aiming to characterise TI in order to identify the skills needed by a telephone interpreter to manage interaction, possibly the most difficult task when interpreting over the phone. We believe the skills described herein could be of use as a starting point for designing learning goals and specific activities within dedicated training in TI that could potentially be used at both university and professional level.

## 2. SKILLS IN PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETER TRAINING

The concept of “skill” is recurring in the literature of Translation and Interpreting Studies, namely in works related to the didactics of both disciplines. Nowadays, skills in translation and interpreting are mainly considered aptitudes that can be learnt, unlike in decades-old studies which described them as a set of



abilities, mainly innate or natural, solely owned by bilinguals, who were in fact named “natural translators” by authors like Harris and Sherwood.

As the idea of translating and interpreting as an activity that could be learnt and therefore taught gained ground, numerous research studies aimed to define what professional interpreters or translators were required to know in order to carry out their work effectively. This led to a growing interest in delimiting the concept of translation competence and subsequently, and by extension, of interpreting competence. In this regard, Kaczmarek’s doctoral dissertation is of particular interest, since it includes a compilation of the different existing models describing both competences, and then proposes Kaczmarek’s own model applied specifically to Public Service Interpreting. The author claims that much research, such as that by Gentile *et al.*, Gile or Kalina (12), describes translation and interpreting competence as a list of skills, an approach he criticises for being excessively flat and linear, which does not succeed in reflecting the complexity of the task of translating and interpreting, in opposition to other models developed, for example, by the PACTE group or by Dorothy Kelly, which reflect more effectively the dynamic and interactive nature of all the aptitudes needed to perform translation and interpreting professionally. Whereas it is not our intention to feed this discussion, Kaczmarek’s work highlights the relevance of skills in the study of translation and interpreting competence, often considered its subcomponents.

Although it can be very useful for pedagogical purposes, a theoretical approach to the study of skills poses some challenges. It is an elusive concept, difficult to delimit and is subsequently (or maybe because of this) often surrounded by remarkable terminological confusion. It is not infrequent to find terms such as “technique”, “skill”, “ability”, “capacity”, even “strategy” in interpreting literature, employed almost as equivalents. In an effort to shed some light upon this matter, we have resorted to Wilss, who conceives the translation process as a cognitive behaviour based on the duality “knowledge-skills” (knowledge and experience), which are “the pillars of information-processing procedures designed to determine the conditions for situationally adequate translation processes and to substantiate them adequately” (37). As for the role of translation skills, Wilss (148) was surprised that this concept, very much used in professional circles, had not been excessively researched in Translation and Interpreting Studies literature.

In this study we draw on the difference established by Wilss between “ability” and “skill” (149). Abilities are innate and cannot be observed; their existence can be inferred from individual behaviour. Skills, on the contrary, are acquired through a learning process, but at the same time are subject to the existence of abilities, i.e., skills cannot exist without abilities. According to Wilss (149), the concept of skill has three dimensions: it manifests itself in an observable act from which its existence can be proved; it has a predictive nature because of the possibility of repetition in similar situations and depends on individuals’ physical or mental conditions. In Wilss’ words, translation skills are of an intellectual nature and therefore very difficult to measure, since their assessment may be subject to heterogeneous criteria such as semantic accuracy, speed, problem-solving capacity, or the degree of automation.



The duality knowledge-skills is also highly recurrent in translation and interpreting research in order to describe the aptitudes required to translate and interpret as an expert or professional. This is the case of Sawyer (39), who takes Wilss' two pillars of the translation process to condense interpreter training into three basic components: skills-based components, knowledge-based components (related to the acquisition of expertise in a specific domain) and deontological components (related to the knowledge of ethical behaviour, professional identity and professional best practices). Thus, Sawyer draws on Wilss' work but places special emphasis on the importance of deontology.

Regarding the duality knowledge-skills, Kaczmarek claims that knowledge is declarative by nature, whereas skills are procedural: knowledge is related to the cognitive and mental dimension of humans, and can be accessed consciously, while skills may be developed by accessing declarative knowledge and undergo proceduralisation with time (54). For this author, however, reducing translation competence to knowledge and skills is insufficient, as translation competence does not consist of components (which are static by nature), but of dimensions in which skills and knowledge are constructs of competence, are dynamic by nature and interact with other constructs.

As can be observed, there are different views in interpreting studies around the concept of skill. However, consensus has been achieved about the possibility of acquiring skills through training. Kalina makes the same claim when describing skills as subparts of the competence needed to interpret. She states that

it should be possible to break down the vague definition of skill to be acquired into subskills that are to be mastered one after the other, in distinct, well-defined learning stages, so that a fully developed teaching method for training future interpreters can be established. (12)

Kalina (18), who also understands skills as dynamic and interactive elements, puts forward the possibility of translators and interpreters receiving general training to develop shared skills, which would subsequently be complemented with the acquisition of the specific skills of both disciplines. Both these types of skills would interact with each other.

Arumí delves into this idea by connecting skills development and acquisition to interpreting quality, claiming that "Interpreting quality depends on certain skills and strategies that need to be acquired over time, usually as part of a university training program (813)".

### 3. TELEPHONE INTERPRETING SPECIFIC SKILLS

In the previous section we have seen that only when translating and interpreting began being studied thoroughly did it become apparent that they are complex activities that require a set of skills in order to be performed professionally. By the same token, in order to identify specific telephone interpreting skills it is essential



to study this type of interpretation and to define what it consists of and what makes it different from dialogue on-site interpreting.

Since distinct features of TI have been mentioned in previous essays (Fernández Pérez, *La interpretación remota en contextos de violencia de género* 109-113), they will be referred to succinctly below:

- The use of technology. As with video-mediated interpreting, TI is only practicable thanks to technological devices, in this case the telephone. The use of the telephone as the channel of communication generates a sense of isolation in the interpreter, which has an impact on the decision-making process during the interpreting performance.
- The interpreter's location (physical absence). The interpreter is usually alone and physically separated from the rest of the users, who may either be together in the same room or in different places. This determines the way in which certain skills, such as turn-taking management, are performed.
- The lack of visual access, that is, the impossibility of the interpreter seeing what is happening, hinders his/her capacity to contextualise the interpreting assignment, correctly understand utterances, manage turns-at-talk and in general coordinate the functioning of the triadic communication, making it necessary to develop compensatory skills that allow the interpreter to perform the job correctly.
- The immediacy with which users access the interpreter (usually minutes or even seconds), which gives her/him no time to prepare the assignment. This, in addition to the lack of visual information, generates the need for the interpreter to develop ways in which to contextualise the communicative encounter rapidly and efficiently.

Once TI specific features are identified, it becomes clear that we are facing a distinctive type of interpreting, different from on-site dialogue interpreting, and therefore requiring the acquisition of a set of specific skills to be performed professionally in order to offer a quality service. The development of these skills will occur, as always with professional translation and interpreting (that is, performed by experts), through a teaching-learning process.

### 3.1. TELEPHONE INTERPRETING SKILLS CLASSIFICATION

As it is widely known, Wadensjö divides the role of dialogue interpreters into two activities: translating and coordinating the interlocutors' utterances (*Interpreting as Interaction* 105). This division can also be applied to TI, since, although performed remotely, dialogue consecutive interpreting is the most common interpreting technique employed in over-the-phone interpretation. As previously mentioned, encounters mediated by telephone interpreters and by on-site interpreters share many common features, particularly when compared to other types of interpretation such as conference interpreting, where monologic consecutive is used much



more frequently. Some of these features are, for example, the use of spontaneous and improvised language; short turns at talking; interview format; role exchanges between users (sender and receiver) and the interpersonal nature of these encounters (159-160) (although in the case of TI there is no physical proximity between users and the interpreter, the interaction between them generates an interpersonal relationship between interlocutors).

In fact, it can be said that the difference between TI and on-site dialogue interpreting lies mainly (though not exclusively) in how the interpreter manages interaction among primary parties, bearing in mind that he/she cannot see them and is not with them in the same room where the interview takes place.

One of the factors hindering coordination of interaction in TI is the absence of visual information, although it is not the only cause. The growing use of video-mediated interpreting has demonstrated that access to images of what is happening in the encounter makes interaction management easier only to a certain extent and that it is the use of technology and the interpreter's remote location that isolates and prevents him/her from coordinating the conversation smoothly. This is specifically mentioned by Braun in her study on remote interpreting in criminal proceedings (19), where she makes numerous references to the difficulties experienced by interpreters working over video conference equipment to coordinate turns-at-talk or, for example, ask for clarifications.

That is why in this study we will place particular emphasis on skills related to interaction management and specifically four of them, which we consider distinctive of TI compared with face-to-face dialogue interpreting: managing the beginning of the encounter, coordinating turn-taking, performing non-renditions or interpreters' original utterances, and managing the end of the encounter.

These four skills are considered dynamic concepts, which relate to one another and are fundamental elements in the acquisition of the interpreting competence needed to become a professional telephone interpreter.

### 3.1.1. *Managing the beginning of a telephone interpreter-mediated encounter*

The effectiveness shown by the interpreter to manage the first seconds or minutes of a telephone interpretation is of great importance, to the extent that it can have a strong influence on the success of the encounter. An inefficient management of the beginning of the conversation inclines users to mistrust the interpreter, spreads confusion and occasionally conveys a feeling of uncertainty that can be difficult to eradicate if not dealt swiftly. TI providers thus consider it an essential skill and possibly the most distinctive of this type of interpreting.

The beginning of the telephone triadic conversation should logically be as brief as possible in order to deal with the matter that has motivated the encounter without delay. However, in TI it is usual for the interlocutors to feel confused about how to proceed during the first seconds of the conversation (N. Kelly 149, Rosenberg 73), particularly in three-way telephone calls, in which each of the interlocutors (users and interpreter) are in different locations and thus cannot see one another.



It is in this phase of the encounter that the interpreter must perform two tasks: on the one hand, introducing him/herself to both users for identification purposes and explaining the functioning of communication; on the other, contextualising the situation, considering that the interpreter faces the assignment with no previous or visual information whatsoever. In order to accomplish both tasks, the interpreter activates a set of protocols for which s/he must have prior training.

Although these protocols can differ slightly depending on the TI provider, the beginning of telephone interpreter-mediated encounters usually consists of two parts: the beginning of the conversation, usually by the public service provider, who calls the interpreter, who then ideally begins by identifying him/herself, and explaining the subject of the interview. The interpreter will then introduce him/herself following the TI company's protocols (usually including his/her name and a code number) and will carry out the "pre-session" (explaining his/her role as language mediator), according to the term used by Nataly Kelly (120). After this initial stage, the actual *body* of the call or "session" (N. Kelly 11) should take place without further delay, in order to deal with the subject that prompted the encounter.

Nonetheless, these steps are not always complied with in the way that has been described and many obstacles often occur, which must be dealt with by the interpreter. For instance, public service providers usually address the interpreter for the very first time without identifying themselves or do so in a confusing manner, either because they ignore the functioning of the TI service and take for granted that the interpreter has previous information about the interview or simply because of the haste with which they are forced to do their job. For this reason, it is not unusual for public service providers to start talking directly to the interpreter leaving him/her no room for introduction or for providing him/her any information whatsoever about the assignment, and not bearing in mind that the interpreter ignores the reason for the interview, the setting, location and institution from where the call is made, as well as any information about the participants (language, culture and country of origin, mood, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

By way of example, the following excerpt, provided by the TI company Interpret Solutions,<sup>2</sup> relays word by word the beginning of a real telephone interpreter-mediated encounter:

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<sup>1</sup> This situation does not occur in every country. In the United States of America, for example, a telephone operator usually acts as a middleperson between the public service provider and the interpreter, offering some basic information about the interpreting assignment before connecting them. In addition to not having teleoperators available, in Spain, the TI service is not yet digitised, which makes caller identification impossible and thus the origin of the call remains unknown until the interpreter takes the phone.

<sup>2</sup> The author would like to thank Interpret Solutions, S.L. for their valuable collaboration to this research.



*Enfermera:* ¿Hola? ¿Eres la intérprete? Mira, es que tengo aquí al otro lado de la línea a una señora que creo que es rusa, mira a ver si te puedes entender con ella<sup>3</sup>.

As can be observed, the nurse provides no space for the interpreter to introduce him/herself, offers no information about the subject of the interview and it is up to the interpreter to glean information from some textual elements in the nurse's utterances.

Whether or not the interpreter is explicitly provided with the information, it is necessary for him/her to procure as much information as possible about the interpreting assignment at the beginning of the encounter so that utterances can be interpreted correctly. This information covers three aspects: technical factors, human factors and situational context.<sup>4</sup>

Information on technical factors refers to the device used to make the phone call (landline or mobile phone, double set of headphones for both users, hands-free device, etc.).<sup>5</sup> This information is important for coordinating the encounter because it allows the interpreter to know if both users are sharing a physical space, as well as visual information or documents; to anticipate sound quality, which tends to be worse when a hands-free device is used; to determine whether interlocutors have to pass the phone to each other in order to communicate with the interpreter, which will have an impact on the way turn-taking should be organised.

Information about the human factor relates to details about participants in conversation, both public service providers (gender, entity where s/he works, position, etc.) and foreign individuals accessing the service (country or culture of origin, gender, age, reason for the interview, etc.).

The situational context refers to the location and setting where the encounter takes place (hospital, school, shelter).

These three aspects constitute basic information that an on-site interpreter would obtain effortlessly, simply by being in the same place as the other participants in the conversation. However, gathering this information while interpreting over the phone is not a simple task. To pause and ask the public service provider for all these details would excessively delay the beginning of the session. That is why the telephone interpreter is advised to obtain this information by consciously identifying contextualisation elements or cues in the speakers' utterances. Many of these elements (nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc.) would go unnoticed in an on-site interpretation, but provide very valuable information when interpreting over the phone. In the aforementioned excerpt, for example, the noun "señora" (lady) and

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<sup>3</sup> *Nurse:* Hello? Are you the interpreter? Look, I have a lady on the other side of the line who I think is Russian, see if you can understand her.

<sup>4</sup> Terminology employed by the company Interpret Solutions.

<sup>5</sup> Rosenberg (68-72) identifies three types of calls in telephone interpreting: three-way telephone conversations, when all interlocutors are in different locations; telephone passing, when the telephone is passed from one party to another; and speaker phone calls, when a hands-free device or a speaker phone is used.



the adjective “rusa” (Russian) provide the interpreter with details about the human factor (the user’s gender, and potential language and country of origin); in addition, the expression “al otro lado de la línea” (on the other side of the line) refers to the technical factor (it is a three-way telephone call).

As mentioned before, another relevant part of managing the beginning of the encounter is the interpreter’s introduction to both users, just as in on-site interpreting. In TI, this is even more important, since the interpreter’s physical absence may generate greater confusion about the functioning of communication. That is why, besides mentioning his/her name and profession, as well as other relevant aspects of his/her role (for instance, the fact that everything said will be translated and treated as confidential), the interpreter should briefly explain how turn-taking works and clearly announce the beginning of the conversation to both users (“You may begin to talk”).

In the event that the public service provider does not offer the interpreter the opportunity to introduce him/herself, the interpreter is advised to kindly interrupt him/her and carry out the presentation to both parties. This could be done in a non-invasive manner by using the transition spaces between utterances (Schegloff 97), which can be anticipated by paying attention to descendent intonation or breathing patterns, indicating that a pause is approaching.

Needless to say, interrupting public service providers to carry out the pre-session requires considerable amounts of common sense. Even if done courteously, the information they are providing may be highly valuable to contextualise the encounter (they might be giving us details about the human or technical factor, explaining the reason for the conversation, or identifying the other user, his/her language or nationality). In this case, it is advisable to take notes of everything the public service provider says and wait until the end of his/her turn to carry out the pre-session.

### 3.1.2. *Managing turn-taking in telephone interpreting*

That the alternation of turns-at-talk constitutes the essence of dialogic communication is well known (Sacks et. al.). As Wadensjö states in *Interpreting as Interaction* when drawing on Bakhtin and Goffman’s work, turn-taking transforms the message conveyed through conversation into a shared product which is constantly renegotiated and redefined by both interlocutors. Simultaneously, interlocutors become senders and receivers of turns-at-talk, competing for the floor.

In TI, turn-taking management is a very complex activity, even more so than in face-to-face dialogue interpreting, since it goes beyond the task of reconducting the discourse flow when the alternation of turns is breached for any reason (i.e., overlapping talk or interruption). When interpreting over the phone, the mere fact of maintaining the flow of turns when the parties cannot see each other and do not know to whom or when to talk may become a challenge. Already in their study carried out in 1992, Oviatt and Cohen described telephone interpreters’ active role as turn-taking coordinators and said that “most of their initiative [...] appeared to focus on the management of information sequencing” (286).





The most common and effective way for interpreters to manage turn-taking in face-to-face dialogue interpreting is by using gestures or gaze, that is, non-verbal language: making a hand movement, addressing or averting gaze or orientating body posture towards one interlocutor. However, since lack of visual information does not allow this in TI, turn-taking management becomes a voice-based skill, where prosody reveals itself as key. In the words of Couper-Kuhlen, “Prosody can be seen as one of the resources at their disposal for handling the tasks of turn construction, sequential organisation and floor management” (178).

One of the difficulties posed by turn-taking organisation is to manage utterance density or length in easy-to-handle fragments, facilitating an accurate conveyance of content. Telephone interpreters often avoid cutting speakers’ interventions even if they are too long, due to the difficulty of interrupting the interlocutor without using gestures or gaze. That same conclusion is reached by Wadensjö in her study on TI (*Telephone Interpreting and the Synchronization of Talk in Social Interaction*), the results of which demonstrate that, of both the communicative events analysed (one mediated by a face-to-face interpreter and the other by a telephone interpreter), more words and more turns-at-talk were used during the on-site encounter, despite it being remarkably shorter and more dynamic. In their study, Oviatt and Cohen also worked on the premise that telephone interpreter-mediated conversations would not have frequent alternation of turns-at-talk “because of their high cost in loss efficiency” (279). In order to interrupt excessively long interventions in an effective and non-invasive manner, it is useful to anticipate or identify through prosody the previously mentioned “transition spaces” between utterances (Schegloff 97). These spaces are usually preceded by descendent intonation patterns, indicating that the end of an utterance or a change of topic is approaching, and are normally followed by a brief pause that can be used by the interpreter to intervene. It is also useful to interpret whenever a natural pause in breathing patterns is perceived (N. Kelly 148).

Some telephone interpreters have been observed raising their voices when competing for the floor to start interpreting, thus capturing the speaker’s attention in a way that s/he feels forced to yield the turn. This is not an advisable way to manage turns-at-talk, since it could be understood as an attempt by the interpreter to impose his/her will and take control of the conversation. However, it has to be admitted that it can be effective in some cases when users’ interventions are particularly long, dense and rapid.

When turns-at-talk alternate smoothly, telephone interpreters only have to designate change of speaker by translating each utterance into the other language, as a clear indication of the beginning and closing of the communication channel. Nonetheless, this strategy is only effective if both interlocutors are listening to the interpreter at the same time (for example, through a hands-free device or a double headset) or if one of the users has not moved away from the telephone and stopped listening (for instance, to speak to another person).

Telephone interpreters usually indicate the beginning of their interventions with a language mark, such as a simple “Hello?”, in order to verify whether they are being heard (Oviatt and Cohen 284). TI providers do not recommend this tactic, which they find quite annoying, repetitive and hampering, although admittedly



it may be useful to ensure that users are receiving information during calls where only one telephone device is available and being constantly passed from one speaker to the other.

### 3.1.3. *Carrying out non-renditions or interpreters' original interventions*

According to Wadensjö, when the interpreter merely translates the utterances in each interlocutors' turn in a fluent manner, s/he is implicitly coordinating interaction. On the contrary, each time s/he speaks to make her own comments, s/he is coordinating explicitly (1998: 109). According to this author, the interpreter's original utterances can be «text-orientated», when s/he considers talk as text and attempts to elucidate what the interlocutors said (for example, asking for clarifications) or «interaction-orientated», when they aim at assuring the compliance of conditions for communication (for example, by observing the turn-taking order) (*Interpreting as Interaction* 109, 110).

Non-renditions entail two challenges in TI: performing them in a courteous and non-invasive manner so that information flow is not interrupted; doing so without gestures, gaze or body posture; and finally, by establishing the author of the utterance (the interpreter and not the other interlocutor) without generating a feeling of confusion.

Hale (203) compiles the reasons why interpreters interrupt interaction to make their own comments.<sup>6</sup> We will place particular emphasis on those recommended by public service interpreting professional standards: to ask for clarifications; to finish interpreting a previous, interrupted utterance; to protest at being interrupted (and to return to interpreting).

We could add three more reasons why telephone interpreters interrupt: to redirect turn-taking (for instance, in the case of overlapping speech); to clarify any cultural misunderstanding that may affect communication; to verify information accuracy; to correct an interpreter's mistake; and, specifically in TI, to solve technical problems that have an impact on the interpreter's performance.

The strategies needed to carry out these interventions in TI are the same as those recommended for turn-taking management: using prosodic elements such as natural pauses or breathing patterns to intervene with minimum disruption for the interaction between primary parties (N. Kelly 121, 148). Besides that, it is recommended to interpret as in face-to-face encounters, announcing interpreter's own comments in indirect speech and then speaking in direct speech for the rest of the intervention.

As for TI, special relevance should be placed on interruptions to confirm the correct comprehension of an utterance before translating it, since telephone

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<sup>6</sup> Hale's work refers to interpreting in legal settings, but this description of the interpreter's reasons for interrupting is easily comparable to public service interpreting in general



interpreters often need to clarify references to extra textual elements that cannot be seen or are mentioned solely through deictics (“Does it hurt when I touch you *here?*”). Interruptions to solve technical incidences are also particularly important. TI providers usually train their interpreters to detect problems of this kind in order to attempt to solve them. A way to anticipate them is to obtain information about the device that is being used during the call, since, as Rosenberg points out (247), hands-free devices often capture more background noise, making the interpreter’s task more difficult (although, as this author admits, noise is to some extent unavoidable in TI). Interpreters may ask for interlocutors’ collaboration to solve the incidence if appropriate (for example, by moving the telephone away from the source of noise or from their mouth if the sound of their breath is preventing the interpreter from hearing). Any other technical problem exceeding the interpreter’s competencies should be referred to the company responsible for the service, and the call should be cancelled if necessary.

### 3.1.4. *Managing the end of a telephone interpreter-mediated encounter*

The end of a telephone interpreter-mediated encounter, or “post-session”, follows certain specific protocols that go beyond conventions of monolingual telephone conversations. Before finalising the phone call, the interpreter should ensure that neither of the primary parties wishes to intervene again, since, once the telephone receiver has been replaced, it is not always possible to resume the interview with the same interpreter. Moreover, if one of the parties leaves before the conversation has finalised it is more complicated to locate him/her without being in the same room as her. This is something that occasionally occurs in TI: for instance, a doctor has finalised her last turn-at-talk and leaves while the interpreter is still translating her words to the patient, who will not have the possibility to react. Although it is sometimes the public service provider who ensures that the other party has no further questions or comments, it does not always occur in that way. For this reason, it is useful for the interpreter to anticipate the end of the conversation, which can be preceded by descendent intonation or by certain expressions (examples in Spanish could be “Bueno, pues nada más, entonces”; “Vale, muchas gracias”<sup>7</sup>), by asking the parties if they wish to make some final remarks.

Generally speaking, telephone interpreters use a formal ending consisting in several sentences provided by TI providers, mentioning the name of the company, the interpreter code number, followed by a customer service expression (“Thank you for choosing our services”). This ending should be repeated in both languages.

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Well, that’s it for the moment’; ‘OK, thank you’.



#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As a type of interpreting that has only relatively recently been the subject of researchers' attention, the study of telephone interpreting is still in its infancy, particularly with regard to the development of pedagogical methodology for professional training. The aim of this article is to offer a starting point for specific training in telephone interpreting, by identifying and defining the skills an interpreter needs to acquire and develop to manage interaction between interlocutors, that is, skills related to the dialogue interpreter's activity of coordinating talk. These skills can also be used as learning goals when designing role-play activities that allow trainees to focus on each of them separately, thus facilitating their acquisition (Fernández Pérez, *Designing Role-play Models for Telephone Interpreting Training*). It should be noted, however, that comprehensive training in TI would also need to include skills related to the activity of translating, once more drawing on Wadensjö's dichotomy (*Interpreting as Interaction* 145). These would include, for example, skills needed for using direct or indirect speech in TI or how the use of the telephone as the channel of communication impacts on note-taking.

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# 'YOU ARE FOREIGN, YOU ARE NOTHING IN THIS COUNTRY': MANAGING RISK IN INTERPRETER-MEDIATED POLICE INTERVIEWS WITH VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE\*

Rebecca Tipton  
University of Manchester

## ABSTRACT

This article examines approaches to police interviews involving limited language proficient victims of domestic abuse. The discussion critically examines the concept of risk in order to better understand how it is currently managed from procedural, translatorial and intercultural perspectives. The critique takes account of discourses relating to contemporary policing in England and Wales, and recent research in translation studies on cross-cultural communication as a risk management activity. I propose that risk management be viewed as an individual and interactional achievement, and explore the implications of both for the investigative interview through an analysis of current police guidelines. The analysis is supported by evidence of interpreter perceptions of police interviews elicited through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews at one Constabulary in England. I conclude that the scope of the guidelines needs to be broadened and call for additional empirical research on 'what works' to support developments in authorised professional practice (APP).

**KEYWORDS:** domestic abuse, police interpreting, police guidelines, risk assessment, risk management

## RESUMEN

El presente artículo examina la manera en la que se conducen interrogatorios policiales en los que participan víctimas de violencia de género con un dominio limitado del idioma. El trabajo examina críticamente el concepto de riesgo a fin de comprender mejor cómo este es gestionado actualmente, examinándolo desde una perspectiva procedimental, traductológica e intercultural. El análisis considera los discursos de las prácticas policiales actuales en Inglaterra y Gales, y considera asimismo investigaciones recientes de traductología en el campo de la comunicación transcultural como actividad de gestión del riesgo. En este artículo se propone que la gestión del riesgo se considere como un quehacer individual y compartido, y se exploran las implicaciones de ambos para los interrogatorios policiales a través de un análisis de la normativa actual que regula la actuación policial. El análisis se sustenta en las percepciones del intérprete sobre interrogatorios policiales, que fueron recabadas mediante un cuestionario y entrevistas semiestructuradas en una comisaría de Inglaterra. Se concluye que hay que ampliar el alcance de la normativa y que se precisa de más investigación empírica sobre "lo que funciona" para así sustentar los avances en prácticas profesionales autorizadas (APP).

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** directrices policiales, evaluación de riesgos, gestión de riesgos, interpretación en el ámbito policial, violencia de género.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

A review of extant literature on police interpreting reveals limited attention to the victim-witness interview. The timeliness of the focus here is supported by recent evidence of the range of challenges facing limited language proficient victims in reporting domestic abuse and engaging with the criminal justice system (e.g. Powell and Cauchi; Elliot, Thomas and Ogloff). It is further underscored by the 2013 inspection of the 43 constabularies by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) with regard to the handling of domestic abuse-related cases. The inspection identified language provisions as an area for improvement in several cases as illuminated by the following extract from a focus group:

Been here for seven and a half years. Called police after one and a half years. English not very good. Never asked me for interpreters. Would have made a difference. My ex always said you are foreign, you are nothing in this country —they won't believe you. I could have asked more questions with interpreter. Didn't ask me if help to interpret or translate. They didn't want to help. My ex is English. He said they would always believe him because he's English. (HMIC 32-33)

At a conceptual level, language provisions are discussed in relation to governmentality, which is understood, following Foucault, as the various practices involved in the government of others. The concept helps to foreground the role of language provisions in relation to the use of risk in the various technologies of government. It has also influenced analyses of contemporary policing in relation to its organisation, operations, techniques and accountability<sup>1</sup> among others, leading O'Malley to highlight its empirical value because “it attends to demonstrable plans and formal procedures” (126).

The contextual backdrop to the discussion also supports an emphasis on governmentality. The outsourcing of language provisions in the criminal justice system in England (since 2012) has led to the use of some semi- and unqualified interpreters in police and court settings and a failure to supply interpreters in some instances.<sup>2</sup> This has implications for procedural and distributive justice, and police accountability to victims and witnesses with limited language proficiency. However, a governmentality-informed approach to language provisions in policing needs to go beyond matters of interpreter supply —important though these are— and address

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<sup>1</sup> Accountability to whom and for what is the subject of much debate in policing (see for example Rowe and Lister).

<sup>2</sup> See the Justice Committee-Sixth Report (Volumes 1 and II).



issues of organisational practice and knowledge management.<sup>3</sup> The current guidelines on interviewing victims of domestic abuse (NICC 2008), for example, make only cursory reference to interpreter mediation. Wadensjö's assertion that the presence of interpreters transforms judicial proceedings but is seldom acknowledged in practice (45) resonates with these preliminary observations and therefore merits attention.

The potential transformative impact of interpreter mediation on victim interviews is evaluated in what follows in relation to Pym's analysis of risk in translation (understood in its written, signed, spoken and audiovisual modes). I propose to extend Pym's approach, based on an understanding of risk management as an individual *and* interactional achievement. In so doing, the possibility emerges of a distributed approach to risk management in interviews and co-responsibility is emphasised between officer and interpreter. This is particularly relevant to interviews with limited language proficient victims in which the credibility of both the officer and interpreter are often at stake.

The article firstly outlines developments in police responses to domestic abuse in England and Wales before examining specific features of risk management in general terms, and in relation to police interviews. The analysis of current police interview guidelines is supported in sections three and four by a review of extant literature on police interpreting and risk in translation, extending Pym's typology of risk management beyond the individual translator to all agents in the interaction. The final section examines relevant extracts from current guidelines, supported by interpreter accounts of their experiences in police interviews with victims of domestic abuse. I conclude by proposing the guidelines be extended in scope, and call for further empirical evidence to support enhancements to authorised professional practice (APP).

## 2. POLICE APPROACHES TO DOMESTIC ABUSE IN ENGLAND AND WALES

“For many years the police response to allegations of domestic violence was insensitive, ineffective and unprofessional” (Richards *et al.* 10); although it was an area of policing that some argue (e.g. Hallam) benefitted from the introduction of reforms in the 1990s and early 2000s (e.g. Police and Magistrates' Court Act 1994 and the Police Act 1996), the 2014 report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) expressed serious concerns that “it is often a poor relation to other policing activity.”

The most recent Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) published in 2016 provides an indication of the scale of the problem. The estimates are based on a relatively broad definition of domestic abuse “covering male and female victims

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<sup>3</sup> Knowledge management is understood broadly speaking a systematic approach to identify, capture, structure, value, leverage and share an organization's knowledge base.



of partner or family non-physical abuse, threats, force, sexual assault or stalking” (Woodhouse and Dempsey 3). According to the report, 8.2% of women and 4% of men were estimated to have experienced domestic abuse in 2014/15. The CSEW, however, makes it clear that “[a]s domestic abuse as a whole is not a specific criminal offence, offences that are domestic abuse-related will have been recorded under the respective offence that has been committed, for example, assault with injury.”

Ascertaining the number of people affected who do not have English as their first language is particularly difficult. Although research provides a mixed picture of prevalence of domestic abuse among immigrant groups (e.g. Morgan and Chadwick; Ghafournia), there is evidence that it is less likely to be reported (Bhuyan and Senturia; Keller and Brennan). The figures cited above may therefore at best only include a conservative estimate of the numbers of limited language proficient speakers affected.

In recent years, domestic abuse has been given greater priority in policing in England and Wales. This is reflected in risk management and risk assessment approaches designed with a view to medium-long term protection, and “the need to secure victims’ safety, better manage potentially lethal situations, and to gather and make sensible use of intelligence” (Hoyle 326). Hoyle makes a connection between neoliberal discourses and shifts in approaches to policing (and other areas of public administration), through which victims are supported to take responsibility for their own future personal safety.

Developments in policing this area have been supported through the introduction of new legislation such as the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004), the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, and risk assessment tools and models aimed at preventing serious injury or death through risk management plans. The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (Amended) 2012 and, at the European level, EU Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime have also supported developments, together with the government strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls (WAWG) in 2016.

### 3. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT IN POLICING AND POLICE INTERVIEWS

Whitty (2) asserts that “[o]ver the last decade, many areas of public administration in the United Kingdom, notably in the field of criminal justice, have been influenced by concerns about risk.” In police services, risk management concerns both administrative and operational matters, from finance to fire arms, risk of trauma (to officers), risk assessment of sex offenders and mentally disordered offenders. Risk assessment in cases of domestic violence is also part of this trend and is a phenomenon described as “not only high volume but also high risk” (College of Policing).

Assessing risk in order to predict the likelihood of an escalation of violence and abuse to which a victim is exposed has been the subject of considerable research (e.g. Bennett *et al.*; Campbell *et al.*; Robinson), although the reliability of such assessments



has been widely debated. This is despite significant improvements in intelligence collection (e.g. through the Domestic Violence and the National Intelligence Model from 2000) and evidence-based risk assessment models such as DASH (Domestic Violence, Stalking and Harrassment, and Honour-based Violence Risk Model from 2008). Problems have been identified in relation to staffing capacity and confidence in coding and interpreting information, and in particular understanding the nature of (often very subtle) coercive behaviours impacting victims (e.g. HMIC).

In relation to police interviews, Clarke and Milne (qtd in Mayfield 13) assert that interviewing victims and witnesses has “equal, if not more, importance than the interviewing of suspects”; however, in terms of police interview training, more time is devoted to interviews with suspects. In England and Wales, investigative interviews are conducted on the basis of the PEACE model that is supported by cognitive interviewing (CI) (e.g. Geiselman and Fisher) and conversation management (CM) (Shepherd). The PEACE interview model is a phased approach that places emphasis on planning and reviewing, whereas cognitive interviewing techniques concern a holistic approach to the interview and interviewee, promoting attention to issues of affect (verbal and non-verbal) as a means to generate rapport and encourage memory recall. Conversation management is an approach that maximises the spontaneous disclosure of information. According to Clarke and Milne (56) “[b]oth methods advocate that having explained the outline of the interview, the interviewee should be encouraged to give their account of events in an uninterrupted manner,” suggesting that interpreter mediation in the account-giving process is likely to present challenges and potentially impact on Achieving Best Evidence (Ministry of Justice).

Several studies in Britain and beyond (e.g. Clarke and Milne; Yi *et al.*) have evaluated the way in which interviewers apply available guidelines, finding significant discrepancies between reported and actual practice. Although police training in investigative interviewing has developed considerably in England and Wales since Clarke and Milne’s 2001 research (e.g. with the implementation of a tiered approach to interview training recommended in their report), there is a gap in relation to training and evaluations of interviews involving limited language proficient victims and interpreters.

Investigative interviews with victims of domestic abuse serve several purposes: they provide an opportunity for an account of events to be given (known as the witness statement) and scope for assessing the risk of an escalation in abuse and violence. Such interviews are increasingly shaped by the need to promote procedural justice and therapeutic justice (see Elliott, Thomas and Ogloff). This relates to the fairness of procedure and the effect of the law on the wellbeing of the individual, and means that special emphasis is placed on attending to the psychological needs of the interviewee in order to promote psychological health and maximise recollection.

The therapeutic interview requires due assessment of both verbal and non-verbal reactions on the part of the interviewee. The involvement of the interpreter in the exchange may limit the interviewing officer’s access to critical cues, either because of the interpreter’s omission or neglect of certain discourse features such as discourse markers (see Gallai), or because of a general lack of awareness of how interpreting impacts on interaction in such cases (Mayfield). The issue of the inter-



preter's wellbeing in investigative interviews has also been highlighted as an area that some senior police officers would like to improve, suggesting that the therapeutic interview could be more usefully conceived in terms of trauma-informed practice.<sup>4</sup>

In this regard, a study by Risan *et al.* in the field of forensic cognitive psychology provides valuable insight into preferred approaches of police interviewers to regulating distress, managing rapport and promoting the wellbeing of the victim-witness. Based on 21 interviews with officers involved in interviews following the gun rampage on the island of Utøya in Norway in 2011, the authors found that approximately 10% of interviewees reported finding the interview distressful, and 10% experienced strong emotional reactions during or afterwards (737). They recognise that the interview context itself may present a vulnerable context for interviewees who may experience flashbacks, disturbance in attention, feelings of shame and guilt (*ibid*).

The study shows that officers adopt different strategies in the course of the interviews, among which the following emerge as salient: showing acceptance and understanding, and affirming the experience of the interviewee; and increasing the interviewee's sense of control at critical moments (e.g. using breaks and artefacts to deflect attention away from the self to an external stimulus). The authors draw on research on emotional arousal (Siegel) to highlight the fact that during an interview about a traumatic event, processes can be triggered in the victim that block their capacity to adapt to the here and now. As a result, the challenge of providing a coherent account is acknowledged.

#### 4. INTERPRETING STUDIES RESEARCH ON DOMESTIC ABUSE AND POLICE INTERVIEWS

Although police responses to limited language proficient speakers in cases of domestic abuse have been under-researched in interpreting studies, there is growing interest in the phenomenon, particularly in Spain through the SOS-VICS project (University of Vigo 2012-2015). In an article relating to the SOS-VICS project findings, Ortega Herráez *et al.* outline the institutional itinerary of victims in police services from the point of initial contact. The findings highlight parallels with research in other countries such as Australia (e.g. Menjivar and Salcido). Specifically, the authors show that where professional language provisions are available, the interpreter's lack of specialised knowledge about police procedure in domestic violence cases can and does impact on victim experience and understanding (e.g. of the consequences of their decisions). They also reflect reluctance on the part of many victims to report violence if their immigration status is uncertain.

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<sup>4</sup> Comments made by a serving police officer in the context of the Languages Working Group meeting 13 January 2017 organised by Cambridgeshire Constabulary.



Mayfield's study of interpreter-assisted investigative interviews with non-English speaking victims-witnesses and the witness statement-taking procedure also illuminates the challenges experienced by both interpreters and police officers. Although the study does not focus on domestic abuse specifically, it is one of the first surveys to incorporate interpreter and police officer perspectives: 138 investigators and 90 interpreters. Of particular interest to this discussion is the response by both groups to the question of whether any issues or challenges had ever occurred in the course of the investigative interview and the subsequent statement-taking procedure. Almost two thirds of interpreters, 69% (61 responses) answered "yes," whereas more than a half of the investigators, 53% (74 responses) answered "no" (29).

Issues reported by interpreters ranged from being left alone in the room with the victim-witness, being asked to take the statement on their own (and even being coerced into taking the statement), officers marginalising victims by only speaking to the interpreter directly, the lack of officer awareness of the complex linguistic trajectories of migrants as they travelled to the UK, among many others. By contrast, the officers raised issues such as interpreter bias, partial interpretation, instances in which emotions were expressed in an intrusive manner, but did not comment on specific challenges of interpreter mediation in interviews.

## 5. TRANSLATION, INTERPRETING AND RISK

Preliminary analysis of police guidelines on interviews involving interpreters shows an emphasis on practical issues of interpreter provision and limited attention to interview procedure and strategy. Research has shown that the involvement of interpreters in police interviews frequently creates many challenges in relation to rapport building (Houston *et al.*), narrative flow and free recall (Böser), cross-cultural understanding (Krouglov) and pragmatics (Nakane) among others; risk management, by contrast, is only indirectly addressed in such studies.

Given the centrality of risk assessment to interviews with victim-survivors of domestic violence, Pym's typology of risk supports a structured analysis of the actions of (or rather, as Pym emphasises, the distribution of efforts by) interpreters and translators. His approach is underpinned by an assumption that cross-cultural communication is to some extent an exercise in risk management. The three types of risk identified are: 'credibility risk,' 'uncertainty risk,' and 'communicative risk.' "Credibility" is concerned with issues of trust and belief in the process and product of translation/interpreting, "uncertainty" concerns the actions taken by translators/interpreters when faced with comprehension issues, and "communicative risk" concerns decisions taken to ensure the success of the interpretation as a communicative act.

Although Pym acknowledges the role of others in translation and interpreting events, he does not emphasise risk management as an interactional achievement. Taking a dialogical approach to interpreter-mediated interaction, that is one that "[foregrounds] *actions and interactions* taking place in *a concrete situation* which represents a mixture of linguistic and social conventions and personal preferences" (Wadensjö 44, original emphasis), Pym's focus is broadened here to take account



of the level of responsibility of each agent (police officer and interpreter) in relation to risk management.

“Credibility risk,” according to Pym, concerns the manner in which trust is established and maintained in the translator and in the translated product. Research with (monolingual) victims on their experiences of the criminal justice system highlights the importance of credibility to the success of the interview. In interpreter-mediated interviews, credibility concerns both the interpreter and the officer, extending beyond the translated product. For instance, trust in officers can be diminished where there are perceptions that the victim’s story is not being taken seriously, that the victim is not being treated as an individual with individual needs, among others (Powell and Cauchi; Elliot, Thomas and Ogloff). In interpreter-mediated interviews, victims often seek assurances about the interpreter’s credibility before disclosing information, for example by seeking information about the interpreter’s family and neighbourhood connections.

If Pym’s emphasis on effort distribution is applied to interaction in the interview, it suggests that police officers need to take account of interpreter credibility in the early phases and how it may be achieved. For example, officers may be unaware of the challenges interpreters face by being asked questions about personal connections. They may not understand why an interpreter may reject such requests (i.e. out of concern to maintain impartiality). Officers also need to develop awareness of how an interpreter’s delivery and intonation can impact on their (the officers’) credibility. For instance, meta-discussions to guide the interpreter not just in *what* is being said but also *how* it is being said may help to establish the officer’s credibility as a listener.

There is some overlap here with the concept of “communicative risk.” However, the important point is that the management of such risk often needs to be a joint enterprise. Lai and Mulayim, for example, found that when interpreters were asked to interpret “tell,” “explain,” and “describe” questions (i.e. open questions), in almost 55% of cases interpreters opted for a meaning-based interpretation. This was manifested by a change in the wording to a more accusatory “why.” This research, coupled with reports of interpreter bias and victim blaming, suggests that interpreter impartiality is a particular challenge in these interviews, and is supported by findings from Mayfield’s study. More research is needed, however, on why this arises, even among qualified interpreters.

“Uncertainty risk” in interpreter-mediated police interviews encompasses the kind of comprehension issues identified by Pym. Additionally, in this setting, the lack of specialist training for interpreters in police interviews leads to a deficit of knowledge about interview strategy, leading to uncertainty about the purpose of a question or the particular choice of phrasing, as seen in the example of open questions above.

Knowledge deficits manifest themselves in various ways. However, the extent to which officers take time to explain police procedure, manage expectations about how domestic abuse is handled by the police, and provide details on support available for victims has not been empirically verified. Anecdotally, it appears that very limited attention is given to such aspects in interpreter-mediated interviews.



The lack of contextualisation risks generating uncertainty for victims, impacting on their understanding of the consequences of decisions they take. This means that although interviewing officers may reasonably expect an interpreter to flag up a relevant cultural issue during the interview, they may under-estimate the need for pro-active cultural interventions on their part.

## 6. ARTEFACT ANALYSIS

In this section, I analyse current Authorised Professional Practice (APP) in relation to interviews with victims of domestic abuse. The analysis takes account of the conceptualisations of risk described above in relation to interpreter mediation and interpreters' reported experiences of police interviews with victims. The two artefacts concern the document *Major Investigation and Public Protection, Understanding Risk and Vulnerability in the Context of Domestic Abuse*, published by the College of Policing, and the National Police Chief's Council *Guidance on Investigating Domestic Abuse* (Checklists 12 and 16, see Appendix).

The first document (*Major Investigation and Public Protection*) provides officers with a clear and accessible list of factors often experienced by victims and witnesses from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, reflecting the findings of research on barriers to reporting and accessing police services. However, the implications of the items for police interviews is not acknowledged in the document, leading to questions about how an issue such as a fear in the authorities might manifest itself discursively or how it might be handled effectively. There is also no mention of the difficulties faced by individuals from some language communities in expressing instances of sexual violence (see Pande), or the problems this might generate in terms of risk assessment. Finally, no connection is made between this list and the checklist on the use of interpreters in interviews, which perhaps serves to perpetuate the idea that interpreter-mediation is inherently unproblematic in interview procedure.

With regard to Checklist 12 (*Conducting the victim interview*) in the 2008 NPCC guidelines, reference to victims from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds is conspicuous by its absence. Furthermore, the extent to which interpreters have been involved on a case (e.g. during the initial response) is not highlighted, meaning that officers are likely to overlook its importance in considering how a case has been handled to date.

Checklist 16 (*Considerations when using interpreters in domestic abuse cases*) focuses almost exclusively on structural issues of interpreter provision, and pays minimal attention to interpreter mediation in the interview procedure. It is important to note that the guidelines do not reflect changes that have occurred since 2008, such as the outsourcing of language provisions, meaning that an officer's ability to 'select' interpreters no longer applies to the same extent. No mention is made of the potential involvement of the interpreter in interview planning phases or any of the police-compliant models of risk assessment that might be used in interviews. This suggests little or no scope is provided to address cultural issues in relation to risk





assessment prior to the interview. Finally, reference is made to the 'normal flow' of victim accounts in relation to interruptions by the interpreter to ask a question or clarification, but other salient features of interpreter mediation are absent.

These initial reflections are supplemented below by reference to the findings of a questionnaire and series of interviews that were conducted with Cambridgeshire Constabulary following relevant ethical approval processes at the University of Manchester. Cambridgeshire Constabulary was approached because of the high number of interpreter-mediated interviews conducted, and because of measures it had implemented to support victims, including a 'victim hub' and a dedicated training event in 2014 on interpreting in domestic abuse cases. Information was sought on the interpreters' experiences of the training event and the impact on subsequent practice. This explains why the circulation of questionnaires was limited to the population of registered interpreters at this Constabulary. Through the questionnaires, interpreters were invited to put themselves forward to take part in a one-to-one semi-structured interview with the principal investigator: 8 interpreters came forward for a one-to-one interview. An additional interview was undertaken with the Interpreting Services Manager.

The dedicated training event attracted approximately 55 participants out of the approximately 300 registered, security-cleared and qualified interpreters at the Constabulary. The questionnaire was circulated using an online survey instrument and two reminders were sent via the Interpreting Service Manager. In total, 18 responses to the questionnaire were received, giving a very low response rate of 6 %. Nevertheless the responses represented different levels of interpreting experience and a wide range of languages and cultural backgrounds: Urdu/Punjabi (2), Arabic (2), Turkish (1), Lithuanian (1), Russian (2), Spanish (2), Hungarian (1), Portuguese (1), Polish (1), Romanian (1), Russian/Georgian (1), French/Romanian (1), Romanian/Moldovan (1), Italian/French (1). The purpose of the questionnaire was to identify issues encountered in practice as a support for the themes addressed in the semi-structured one-to-one interviews. The interviews involved interpreters who spoke Hungarian, Arabic (2), Russian, Romanian (2), Spanish, and Turkish.

The questionnaire and interviews focused on the following main themes: training experiences; interpreter perception of officer approach to victim/witness interviews; pre-interview briefing; use of artefacts (e.g. risk assessment models); interpreter involvement in trust/rapport building, handling of narrative flow; cultural issues and recommendations for service improvements. These themes were supplemented with others that emerged from the interviews, such as the issue of interpreters serving as an information link between different statutory services; funding cuts and implications for interpreting quality.

## 6.1. POLICING CULTURE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The findings suggest that domestic violence is taken more seriously by the police in Britain than in the cultures represented by the respondents where it was



typically described as a private matter for families. The interpreters were asked in the interviews whether, in light of this cultural difference, interviewing officers made efforts to contextualize the police response to domestic abuse. In this regard, one interpreter highlights how certain framing devices are used to reassure victims and create a culture of safety:

... things like, well, you know, erm, 'you're not going to be in trouble' or 'what happens next' or 'what happens now', you know that kind of thing, to give people a sense of the fact that now we've got to this stage, you'll be protected but equally this has to go further, it can't just be dropped, [that] kind of thing.

## 6.2. TRAINING

The questionnaire sought to gauge how many of the respondents had attended the dedicated training offered by the Constabulary. Out of the 17 responses to this question only four confirmed that they had, leaving little scope for evaluating (perceived) impact on subsequent practice as intended. Nevertheless, what these participants were able to recall from the event provided a degree of insight into what is important in victim interviews and insight into how the police assess risk and handle victim wellbeing. One interviewee recalled:

... the forensic part and they actually got us into thinking about... how they are actually taking the statement and the video interview, achieving best evidence... and that was very useful because, getting to see the structure and rationale behind it... it makes much more sense.

I remember correctly they talked to us about memory and about how it can be quite difficult to recall, especially if it's been a traumatic event, and how they would like the person to tell them about what happened, and how they would need to start asking specific questions to get the information, the necessary information.

The ability to make sense of an officer's approach is stressed as an enhancement to knowledge gained through participation in the specialised training event. This contrasts with an account from an interpreter who had not attended the training and who was therefore less able to contextualise the officer's approach:

[the officer] might ask the same question like three times in a different way but it's still the same. So, that sort of thing either irritates or surprises the person who has already told them that. I just relate the message.

## 6.3. PRE-BRIEFING

In terms of pre-briefing the interpreter prior to a victim interview, experience is mixed. Where briefings do occur, they are reported as being short, corroborating Mayfield's findings based on a much wider interpreter population. One respondent



comments: “Only if victim is reluctant to give written statement I would be told more details and explained that the aim is to convince victim that it is in their best interest” (sic).

This response is salient because of the emphasis on the aim of the interview. This will alert the interpreter to the need to pay attention to the language of persuasion and emerges as an area worthy of further attention, for example in analysing actual interview recordings.

#### 6.4. INTERPRETER PERCEPTION OF OFFICER APPROACHES TO VICTIM INTERVIEWS

The interview with the Interpreting Service Manager revealed that during the dedicated training event quite a number of interpreters had expressed surprise at how ‘cold’ and ‘distant’ officers appeared in the interviews, prompting the inclusion of a question on this subject in the one-to-one interviews. While some variability in the interpreter interviews was noted, most rejected the claim, although it must be acknowledged that the sample of interviewees is too small to be considered representative of the Constabulary’s pool of interpreters. However, it is interesting to observe the differences in approach reported by two of the interpreters interviewed. The first proposes to mitigate issues of demeanour, whereas the second mimics the approach of the officer:

So I always adopt a warm and friendly demeanour. I know that I must have understanding and empathy with all the parties involved, otherwise I cannot fulfill my obligations if I have a ‘cold’ attitude.

To be fair the officers I have worked with in domestic violence cases are normally very empathic and supportive. However if they were not I would not try to imply a different tone to them to establish rapport.

In terms of more general experiences of interpreting for victims of domestic abuse, one interpreter provides valuable insight into the impact of emotional distress on the statement giving process:

All the victims, whom I interpreted for, were females. With memories of abuse still being fresh, they were in distress. Obtaining a victim-witness statement is often a lengthy process. It can be difficult for police officers to keep the victims focused on the questions, the victims can be very emotional and mention too many details, which are, obviously, important to them, but can be very distracting and unnecessary for the police officers and for the purpose of the statement. Sometimes, victims can change their mind on whether to give a statement or not, a few times in the course of statement taking, thus putting pressure on both the police officer and the interpreter.

The ‘pressure’ mentioned in the above quote appears to relate to the pressure to try to persuade the interviewee that it is in his/her best interest to provide a statement. This is an area requiring further research, since the success or otherwise



of persuasive techniques requires attention to pragmatic competence, something reported as often lacking in legal interpreter training.

## 6.5. ARTEFACTS

The interviews elicited information on interpreters' knowledge of risk assessment processes and models. Despite not mentioning a particular approach by name (e.g. DASH), several interpreters made reference to a 'pack' used by officers to structure the interview, which was viewed positively in terms of helping to shape the victim's understanding of the police's role:

... going through the pack... the officer is giving more information and telling them about the services that could be helpful for them. And the victims understanding of "I'm not alone," I think that has slightly changed.

## 6.6. TIMING OF INTERPRETER INVOLVEMENT IN A CASE

The difficulty in ascertaining language proficiency and managing variability of proficiency in interviews is highlighted in the interview accounts. One account details how an interpreter had not been involved at all stages of the investigation and where different types of interpreting had been used (e.g. family member/telephone interpreter). In such cases, it was suggested that the victim's grasp of the situation and wider context of the police approach can be quite poor, despite appearances to the contrary. The involvement of an interpreter was felt to change the dynamic significantly:

... because once you have an interpreter, there will be much more reflection about what is happening —when you're actually taking a statement in writing— but sometimes you can get... if they haven't had an interpreter, the case can be quite advanced and [the victims] don't know those things... it can be so different.

This comment clearly suggests that officers may overestimate linguistic competence in early phases of dealing with a case, and may therefore require more support in obtaining timely interpreting services.

## 6.7. CODE SWITCHING

The one-to-one interviews present interesting examples of code-switching (i.e. attempting to speak in English and bypass the interpreter):

[code switching] is a very, very difficult moment. It is because you feel helpless. You can't really help them because you should not really correct what they're saying because it's their words, but you see that they don't sometimes make sense at



all because they use the wrong order, and what they're trying say is completely different. Yes, it's very, very difficult. So you wait, and you just look at the officer, and you wait for the officer to say 'could you please answer in your language.' So you kind of give the officer the signal that if you want to know what the person really says, tell them to...

There seem to be certain trigger points for code switching as one interpreter explains:

Also, there is sometimes, there's words which is very difficult to explain in Russian. For example, National Insurance Number, we don't have it. So instead of saying whatever it is in Russian, which will be four or five words, they just say "National Insurance." And as soon as they say "National Insurance" they will follow it with more English words.

Another example from the same interview exchange shows a suspect intervening to clarify language use in order to defend actions taken:

It's interesting, and in Russian we don't have different words for "punch," "kick," and, well we have "slap," but we don't have "punch" and "kick," so we say "hit with the foot," "hit with the...fist." So sometimes they confuse it, and all of a sudden [the suspect] will switch into English and he will say 'I just punched her once'. And the officer will say 'so you punched her?,' 'Yes! But it was open palm so it's not punch.'

What do these limited findings tell us about the quality and user-friendliness of the current guidance available to officers on working with interpreters? As mentioned earlier, the guidance contains very little attention to the interview process aside from brief mention of the interpreter being able to interrupt proceedings to ask for repetition or seek clarification. However, the interpreter experiences presented above suggest that particular strategies are needed for handling emotional distress, rapport-building, the explaining the purpose of certain questions and why repetitions are needed, identifying linguistic features that can impact on the assessment of abuse, and the use of risk assessment models. Given the difficulties in assessing the level of coercion a victim may be under at the time of the interview, reference to the interview strategies used in assessing risk appear particularly conspicuous by their absence in the available guidelines.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This article has brought to prominence the lack of research on interpreter-mediated victim interviews in police settings, specifically in relation to domestic abuse. It has also highlighted the role of language provisions as salient to issues of governmentality in policing. The tendency to treat provisions as largely peripheral and unproblematic is seen as a potential consequence of outsourcing, since it draws attention away from what the organisation needs to do to effectively accommodate



such provisions in its practice. The analysis of current guidelines highlights a number of gaps in institutional knowledge about interpreter mediation and how such knowledge is managed, particularly in investigative interviews.

Eliciting experiences of interpreters helps to shed light on the challenges of victim interviews, which are usefully viewed through the lens of risk management. The proposed emphasis on co-responsibility between officer and interpreter in victim interviews is not intended to elevate the interpreter's position to co-interviewer, but is simply a means to highlight the extent to which risk management needs to be co-managed in the interaction.

From the preliminary analysis above, it would appear that there is scope to expand the guidelines to address issues such as interpreter involvement in pre-interview planning, code-switching, artefact use, and bias. This would need to be accompanied by a simple list of strategies that officers can employ to mitigate the impact of such issues on interviews. The limited scale of this study means that it can only provide a starting point for improvements to practice in the longer term. Furthermore, authorised professional practice (APP) in this area would need to be supported by a broader evidence-base drawing on analysis of interpreter-mediated interviews, as this would enable a comparison between reported and actual practice.

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# APPENDIX

## EXTRACTS TAKEN FROM

1. College of Policing, Authorised Professional Practice, *Major Investigation and Public Protection, Understanding Risk and Vulnerability in the Context of Domestic Abuse*.
2. National Police Chief's Council *Guidance on Investigating Domestic Abuse*, 2008.

### 1. VICTIMS FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS (N.P.)

A person's cultural background or immigration status may make them more vulnerable to domestic abuse and create barriers to leaving an abusive partner.

Possible issues a victim may face include the fact that:

- They may not speak much English or know where to turn to for help.
- They may be reliant on their partner or partner's family for financial support and be isolated from people outside their immediate family or community.
- They may have an insecure immigration status and fear contact with the authorities.
- Their right to remain may depend on their relationship with the abuser continuing.
- They may have been forced into marriage or be subjected to honour-based abuse (HBV).
- Certain forms of domestic abuse, eg, between husband and wife or father/uncle and daughter/niece, may be accepted in some families or households and cultural background may be a factor —if it is considered normal by the victim, perpetrator and their community, the victim may not seek help or be aware of what help is available.
- The police in the victim's country of origin may not enforce laws against domestic abuse effectively or at all, resulting in a lack of trust by victims.
- The police may be mistrusted by the community as a whole due to involvement in persecution in the country of origin.
- Police attendance may be viewed as shameful, discouraging those involved as well as neighbours from calling the police.

### 2. NPCC CHECKLIST 12 CONDUCTING THE VICTIM INTERVIEW (50)

Interviewers should elicit the following information, depending on the individual circumstances of each case:

- Full details of the current incident, including evidence to support the alleged offence;
- Details of witnesses present during the incident;
- Nature and seriousness of the victim's injuries (physical and emotional);
- Details of family members;
- History of the relationship and any other incidents;
- Reference to previous incidents including those with previous partners;
- Whether a weapon was used (how and what type) and whether any attempt at choking, suffocation or strangulation was made;
- Details of any threats made before or since the incident;
- Whether any children were present and, if so, the effect that the incident has had on them;



- Whether the suspect planned the incident;
- Whether the parties are separated;
- Whether any civil action has been taken by the victim or any previous partners;
- Whether any sexual offences have been disclosed;
- Points to prove;
- Victim's view of the likelihood of further abuse and victim's views about their own safety and that of any children;
- Victim's view of the future of the relationship.

#### NPCC CHECKLIST 16 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN USING INTERPRETERS IN DOMESTIC ABUSE CASES (61)

- Checking the identity of the interpreter and whether they have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure certificate and can show it;
- That the suspect, victim or witnesses are not known to the interpreter, where possible;
- If the interpreter is known to the victim, witness or suspect, this should not be in anything other than a professional capacity;
- Check that the interpreter has no other interest in the case, whether personal, financial or commercial;
- Where possible, select the interpreter to conform to reasonable criteria set by the suspect, victim or witnesses, which may include a preference for specific sex, religion, regional origin, political affiliation and cultural background;
- General guidance is that interpreters live in close proximity to the interview premises, but in domestic abuse and HBV cases it might be prudent to use interpreters that meet the criteria of the suspect, victim or witness but who do not live within the immediate community;
- Interpreters should be allowed to interrupt the normal flow of the interview to ask the officer for repetition, clarification or to alert the officer to the possibility of a cultural inference that might have been assumed. Interruptions should be explained to all parties.



# COURT INTERPRETING AS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: JUDGES AND LAWYERS IN A CORPUS OF INTERPRETED CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS\*

Mireia Vargas-Urpí  
Universitat Pompeu Fabra

## ABSTRACT

This article seeks to examine and describe the role of judges and lawyers in criminal proceedings when interpreting is required for the defendant or witness. It is based on the analysis of the first corpus compiled from real criminal trials in different Criminal Courts of Barcelona. The corpus contains interpreting between Spanish and English, French or Romanian and was transcribed and annotated using EXMARaLDA, a software tool for working with oral corpora. The annotation used Cecilia Wadensjö's distinction between "talk as text" and "talk as activity" to classify the various problems that interpreters encounter when working with criminal proceedings and the strategies or techniques that they use to solve those problems. The present article focuses on the interactional problems that arise when judges and lawyers are talking. By analysing to what extent judges and lawyers deviate from recommended standards of practice when communicating through interpreters, the author critically examines some of the factors that come into play in the characterisation of court interpreting practices in Spain.

**KEYWORDS:** court interpreting, oral corpora, naturally-occurring data, conversation management, speech style.

## RESUMEN

Este artículo examina y describe el rol de los jueces y abogados en procesos penales en los que se requiere interpretación para la persona investigada o el testigo. Se basa en el análisis de un corpus compuesto, por primera vez, por transcripciones de grabaciones de juicios penales reales celebrados en distintos Juzgados de lo Penal Barcelona. Incluye tres combinaciones lingüísticas: castellano – inglés/francés/rumano. El corpus se ha transcrito y anotado con el programa EXMARaLDA para la investigación con corpus orales. La anotación ha tenido en cuenta la distinción entre *talk as text* y *talk as activity* de Cecilia Wadensjö para clasificar los diversos problemas que los intérpretes encuentran en la interpretación en procesos penales, así como las estrategias o técnicas que aplican para resolverlos. El artículo se centra en los problemas de interacción que surgen del discurso de los jueces y abogados, de modo que se analiza hasta qué punto se alejan de las recomendaciones sobre cómo comunicarse a través de intérpretes. Se pretende explorar desde una perspectiva crítica algunos de los elementos que entran en juego en la caracterización de la práctica de la interpretación judicial en España.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** interpretación judicial, corpus oral, datos reales, gestión de la conversación, estilo directo o indirecto.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Many descriptions of public service interpreting (PSI) use the triangle metaphor, where each side of the triangle represents a different participant: the public service provider, the user and the interpreter. This triangle is often depicted as equilateral to reflect the interpreter's impartiality. However, a closer look at the role of interpreters in criminal proceedings reveals a much more complex situation, with other participants also involved (prosecutors, attorneys, clerks, witnesses, etc.) and some dialogues not involving the person with no knowledge or limited proficiency in the official language, who is sometimes left outside the triangle (cf. Bestué).

The Spanish Parliament passed a new bill in 2015 (Organic Law of 28 April 2015) amending the Code of Criminal Procedure. The new legislation stated that it “significantly reinforces procedural guarantees in criminal proceedings, as it provides detailed regulation on the right to translation and interpreting in criminal proceedings as well as on the defendant's right to information in relation to the subject of the criminal proceedings so that they can efficiently exercise their right to self-defence”. Court interpreting is therefore essential to ensure that three rights are upheld: (1) the right of the defendant to be informed of the accusation against him or her, (2) the right to a public hearing with all procedural guarantees, and (3) the right to counsel, as enshrined in Article 24 of the Spanish Constitution.

The quality of court interpreting, however, depends not only on the interpreter, but also on internal and external factors. Among the internal factors, the members of the judiciary (judges, public prosecutors, court officials, attorneys and all legal professionals) have an important role to play in ensuring effective communication through the interpreter and in ensuring that the rights of defendants with limited proficiency in the official language are fully upheld, but they do not always fulfil this role.

The MIRAS research group is conducting research as part of the TIPp project (cf. Orozco-Jutorán; Arumí and Vargas-Urpi) in which it has been granted access to recordings of real interpreted criminal proceedings from ten Criminal Courts in Barcelona. This paper describes the objectives and methodology of that research and analyses a pilot sample of 20 criminal proceedings in which interpreting took place between Spanish and three other languages: English, French and Romanian, looking specifically at the various problems arising from the discourse practices of judges and lawyers (long turns, interruptions, overlaps, speech style, etc.). Based on this analysis, the paper describes the role of members of the judiciary in criminal proceedings in which the defendant requires interpreting services. It also critically examines some of the factors that come into play in the characterisation of court interpreting practices, as discussed in the conclusions.

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\* This paper is part of the project “Translation quality as a guarantee of criminal proceedings.” Development of technological resources for court interpreters in Spanish-Romanian, Arabic, Chinese, French and English language pairs (TIPp project), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (FFI2014-55029-R).



## 2. JUDGES AND LAWYERS IN PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON COURT INTERPRETING

Research on court interpreting has grown significantly in recent years, as already pointed out in previous contributions (e.g. Hale; Shlesinger and Pöchhacker).<sup>1</sup> Some topics, however, remain underexplored, especially given the main issues in court interpreting research, which Sandra Hale classifies into two main groups: (a) the type of language that is used in the courtroom: question types, the interpretation of style and register in witness testimony, and pragmatics; and (b) the expectations of the role of the court interpreter by the different participants: the respective perceptions of service providers, interpreters and minority speakers.

Most studies of the language of the courtroom analyse “anecdotal evidence” (Hale 207) or small samples, whereas studies of participants’ perceptions tend to use questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. Miriam Shlesinger and Franz Pöchhacker acknowledge that “empirical studies based on naturalistic data obtained in authentic settings are still the exception” (1).

One of those exceptions was Susan Berk-Seligson’s ethnography of the bilingual courtroom, which involved extensive fieldwork in which 114 hours of tape-recorded judicial proceedings were collected from courthouses over a seven-month period. These recordings were accompanied by “detailed note-taking and extensive interviewing of court interpreters and attorneys” (43). Berk-Seligson’s book *The Bilingual Courtroom* presents numerous examples taken from real interpreted court proceedings, most of them serving to illustrate various aspects of the language of the courtroom, which is the focus of her research. The author does not *directly* discuss the role of judges and attorneys in this form of mediated communication, but she does do so *indirectly* by offering examples where a judge or attorney addressed the interpreter rather than the witness or defendant (60-62), a habit that Berk-Seligson attributes mainly to attorneys “who have never examined a witness through an interpreter,” but also to “moments of confusion and frustration, when the examiner has asked the same question more than once but is not getting an appropriate reply to the question” (61).

Ten years after Hale’s state of the art, some topics remain under-researched, including the role of judges and lawyers in interpreted court proceedings. Few studies use naturally occurring data and focus on the interaction (rather than on the language of the courtroom). There is therefore a need for studies that describe how judges and lawyers interact through an interpreter with defendants or witnesses who have limited proficiency in the official language, and on how this interaction may influence interpreters’ performance.

One such example is Philipp S. Angermeyer’s study of interpreting in arbitration hearings conducted in small claims courts in New York. It used a corpus of 200

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<sup>1</sup> At the most recent Critical Link conference at Heriot Watt University (2016), as many as 28 papers focused on issues related either to legal or court interpreting.



observed court proceedings and 60 tape-recorded hearings, large enough to generate statistically significant results. Angermeyer explores arbitrators' *modus operandi* (he distinguishes between "fast" and "slow" arbitrators) and how interpretation modes (consecutive vs. simultaneous) may influence the outcomes of the task depending on the nature of the speech (narrative vs. question-answer parts). He also considers naturally occurring phenomena such as overlaps and interruptions.

Other studies that have focused on the role of judicial staff in interpreter-mediated court proceedings have been based on much smaller samples. For instance, Tina Paulsen Christensen's analysed the speech style of just three judges, while Bodil Martinsen and Friedel Dubslaff conducted a case study on a single trial. Research based on larger corpora, such as Jieun Lee's contributions on Korean interpreting in Australian courts, have focused on other aspects, whether linguistic (e.g. the interpretation of reported speech in witnesses' evidence or the translatability of their speech style) or pragmatic (e.g. facework in interpreter-mediated courtroom examinations).<sup>2</sup>

Despite the lack of empirical research concerning the role of judges and lawyers in interpreted trials, there is a wealth of literature covering recommendations and guidelines given to judges on how to work with interpreters. *Fundamentals of Court Interpreting*, a pioneering contribution by Roseann Dueñas González, Victoria F. Vásquez and Holly Mikkelson, is perhaps one of the most exhaustive handbooks. It describes the court interpreter's role and functions in detail, and makes recommendations on how judges and judicial staff should work with interpreters. Other, more concise publications also exist, such as the handbooks by Bruno G. Romero and the Supreme Court of Florida. The latter specifically mentions that the "judge shall monitor the proceeding and ensure that the interpretation process is flowing smoothly" (74), among other recommendations. Anabel Borja Albi also offers practical advice. She suggests, for instance, that judicial staff should talk clearly, and not too fast, and should address the person who has limited proficiency in the official language, rather than the interpreter. She also makes other specific recommendations concerning sight translation tasks.

This kind of prescriptive approach is also found in online training material for judges and judicial staff (such as on the New York State Unified Court System's website on "Language Access and Court Interpreters," which even includes videos) and in the popular bench cards available at many courtrooms across the United States, which provide "tips for communicating through interpreters" such as: "Speak directly to the non-English speaking person. Do not refer to him/her in the third person" (South Dakota Unified Judicial System).

Such material reinforces the idea that "effective communication" (García-Beyaert) through court interpreting should be regarded as a shared responsibility among all parties, and in this respect, judges and lawyers play a crucial role, given

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<sup>2</sup> For more exhaustive reviews of corpus-based research on interpreting in general or court interpreting, see Arumí and Vargas-Urpi.



their hierarchical position. More research is needed to generate empirical data to support this notion of shared responsibility.

### 3. THE TIPP PROJECT: OBJECTIVES AND METHOD

This section describes the ongoing TIPP research project, for which this paper was written.<sup>3</sup>

#### 3.1. OBJECTIVES

One of the TIPP project's main objectives is to provide significant information about court interpreting in Spain based on a large corpus of naturally-occurring data (i.e. real interpreter-mediated criminal court proceedings). The project uses authentic data drawn from a large, representative corpus. The data therefore describe reality, so the results are significant from the point of view of the research methodology (Orozco-Jutorán).

We will use the results of this research to produce online resources to facilitate court interpreter performance, namely a code of good practice, a protocol for conduct in the most frequent situations encountered by court interpreters, a set of guidelines for courtroom personnel on the role of interpreters and how to interact with them, and a database containing the terms most frequently used in criminal proceedings, including comments and two-way translation options between Spanish and the other languages most frequently used in Spanish courts: Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Romanian.

The following sections discuss part of our preliminary results, which we will use to produce the set of guidelines for judges and judicial staff.

#### 3.2. THE DATA: A DESCRIPTION OF THE CORPUS AND THE PILOT SAMPLE

The MIRAS research group was granted access to the video recordings of criminal trials where interpreting took place in ten criminal courts in Barcelona between 2010 and 2015. Having access to these recordings was essential to compile a representative corpus. Mainly due to time constraints (producing transcriptions is time-consuming) and limited human resources, in this first stage of the project, the corpus contains transcriptions only from video recordings of trials held during the first half of 2015 (January-June) in which interpreting took place between Spanish and English, French or Romanian.

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<sup>3</sup> For more detailed descriptions of the project's methodology, see Orozco-Jutorán; and Arumí and Vargas-Urpi.





To compensate for the trials not included in the corpus, we created a spreadsheet containing metadata for all the trials for which we received recordings. The metadata cover general characteristics of trials that can be described without the need for a transcription. Examples of these features include the overall length of the trial, the number of minutes during which interpretation was taking place, the type of crime, the language of the trial (Spanish or Catalan), whether the judge introduced the interpreter or not, whether the judge gave instructions to the interpreter, and whether the interpreter used *chuchotage* or note-taking.

The actual corpus currently contains transcriptions from 55 trials. Table 1, adapted from Mariana Orozco-Jutorán, shows the composition of the corpus.

| TABLE 1. CORPUS OF INTERPRETED COURT PROCEEDINGS TRANSCRIBED – JANUARY-JUNE 2015 |                    |                               |                           |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| FOREIGN LANGUAGE   | TRANSCRIBED TRIALS | BILINGUAL MINUTES TRANSCRIBED | TOTAL MINUTES TRANSCRIBED |
| French   | 9                  | 92                            | 286                       |
| English  | 19                 | 120                           | 393                       |
| Romanian   | 27                 | 123                           | 568                       |
| <i>Total</i>   | 55                 | 335                           | 1247                      |

The 55 trials transcribed lasted 1247 minutes, or almost 21 hours, but proceedings conducted bilingually total only 335 minutes (less than 6 hours).

The analysis and results below are from a pilot sample of 20 trials, with 86 bilingual minutes transcribed. Table 2 shows the minutes transcribed for each language combination.

| TABLE 2. PILOT SAMPLE OF INTERPRETED COURT PROCEEDINGS TRANSCRIBED AND ANNOTATED – JANUARY-JUNE 2015 |                    |                               |                           |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| FOREIGN LANGUAGE   | TRANSCRIBED TRIALS | BILINGUAL MINUTES TRANSCRIBED | TOTAL MINUTES TRANSCRIBED |
| French   | 7                  | 35                            | 100                       |
| English  | 6                  | 37                            | 97                        |
| Romanian   | 7                  | 14                            | 62                        |
| <i>Total</i>   | 20                 | 86                            | 259                       |

One important limitation in the videos to which we were granted access is that *chuchotage* was either not recorded or had such poor sound quality that it was impossible to understand correctly. The “bilingual minutes transcribed” are therefore mainly the interpretation of questions addressed to defendants and witnesses with limited proficiency in the official language, as well as the responses of those defendants and witnesses. We were able to transcribe many of those responses because the interpreter would often speak near the microphone, ensuring good sound quality in the video recording. In the pilot sample, *chuchotage* was used at some point in 16 of the 20 trials. In two of those 16 trials, *chuchotage* was used for the entire hearing,



but in the remaining 14 trials, it was used only for some parts of the hearing. In the remaining four trials, *chuchotage* was not used at all.

### 3.3. TRANSCRIPTION AND ANNOTATION USING EXMARALDA

We transcribed the trials verbatim using EXMARaLDA.<sup>4</sup> The software's interface resembles a musical score, with each speaker's interventions annotated on a different tier. This format makes features that are unique to spoken language, such as overlaps and interruptions, clearly visible and marked by time frames, thus rendering certain transcription symbols unnecessary.

EXMARaLDA also allowed us to annotate the transcriptions using *ad hoc* categories, each placed on a different tier, and to convert the transcriptions into quantifiable data. When annotating the transcriptions, we applied the distinction between “talk as text” and “talk as activity” suggested by Wadensjö in her description of community interpreting. We used “talk as text” to refer to textual problems (e.g. specialised terminology or forensic language and fidelity in the rendition of the message), and to annotate the strategies used by interpreters to cope with those problems. For “talk as activity”, our annotations fall into three broad categories:

- (a) conversation management problems: overlaps (when two members of the judicial staff speak at the same time), interruptions (when the interpreter is interrupted by any member of the judicial staff and therefore cannot finish his or her rendition) and long turns (when the judge or any member of the judicial staff speaks nonstop for more than two minutes);
- (b) interpreters' non-renditions, which may be *justified* (when the interpreter asks for a pause, for clarification of ambiguous information, for confirmation that an utterance was correctly received or understood, or for information that he or she did not obtain) or *unjustified* (when the interpreter warns the defendant or gives the defendant instructions on how to behave, answers on behalf of the defendant, or provides extra information or asks questions not included in the original utterance);<sup>5</sup>
- (c) speech style used by the judge, judicial staff or interpreter: direct, indirect or reported (see the results section for specific examples).

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<sup>4</sup> EXMARaLDA was originally developed at the Collaborative Research Center “Multilingualism (Sonderforschungsbereich “Mehrsprachigkeit” – SFB 538) at the University of Hamburg. In 2011, the Hamburg Centre for Language Corpora took over the software's development, working in cooperation with the Archive for Spoken German at the Institute for the German Language in Mannheim. For more information, visit <http://www.exmaralda.org/en/>.

<sup>5</sup> For results and specific examples of non-renditions in the pilot sample, see Arumí and Vargas-Urpi.



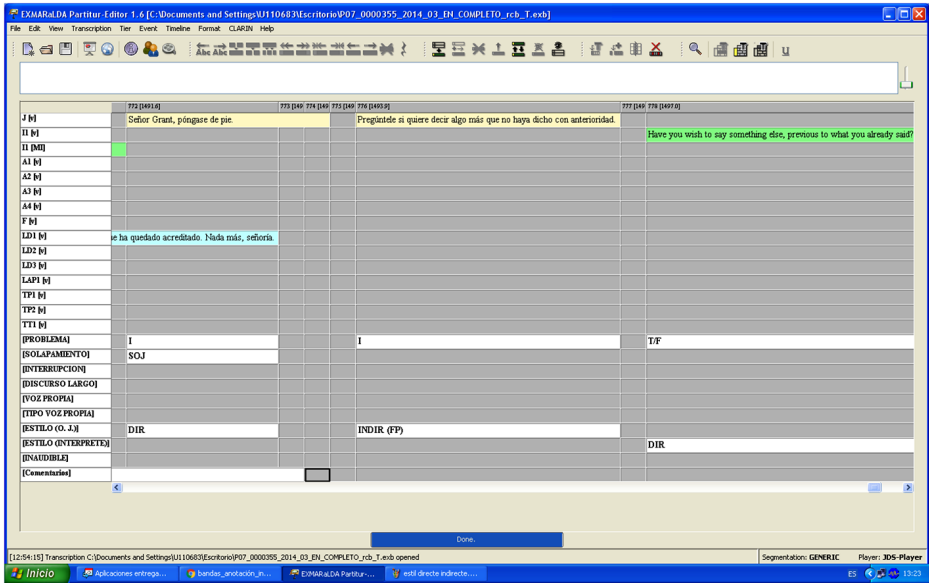


Figure 1. Screenshot of the EXMARaLDA interface.

Figure 1 shows a screenshot of the EXMARaLDA interface with examples of annotations for the first and third categories. On the left-hand side, there is an overlap between the judge, in the first tier, and the defence counsel, below, annotated as “SOJ”, from the Spanish *solapamiento entre operadores judiciales* (overlap between members of the judiciary). Also on the left, the label “DIR” refers to direct speech by the judge (“Mr. Grant, please stand up”). In the central section, “INDIR (FP)” refers to reported speech by the judge, who has addressed the interpreter instead of the defendant (“Ask him if he wants to add anything he has not said before”). The “FP” in brackets means *frase principal*, Spanish for “main sentence”, which was used for reported speech.

We exported the annotations made in EXMARaLDA to Excel spreadsheets created specifically for the present project.<sup>6</sup> We also recorded the overall results of the annotation of each trial in a spreadsheet, with all the spreadsheets for trials involving the same language pair placed into a single workbook. This means that a single workbook shows the results of annotations for individual trials as well as a summary sheet with global results for all trials involving a certain language pair.

<sup>6</sup> We would like to thank Thomas Schmidt of the Hamburg Centre for Language Corpora, one of the creators and developers of EXMARaLDA, for his help in creating the spreadsheet and the export option.

## 4. RESULTS

This article focuses on the results extracted from two categories included in the annotation of “talk as activity”: conversation management problems and speech style used by judges and judicial staff. These two categories clearly involve the discourse practices of judges and judicial staff and the problems that may arise from those practices.

### 4.1. CONVERSATION MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

Table 3 presents the number of conversation management problems that were annotated for each language in the transcriptions of the pilot corpus, which contained 20 trials and 259 minutes of transcriptions.

| PILOT SIMPLE                  | OVERLAPS | INTERRUPTIONS | LONG TURNS | LONG TURNS WITH <i>CHUCHOTAGE</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Spanish-French (100 minutes)  | 39       | 41            | 6          | 2                                 |
| Spanish-English (97 minutes)  | 33       | 27            | 0          | 0                                 |
| Spanish-Romanian (62 minutes) | 42       | 1             | 3          | 0                                 |
| <i>Total</i>                  | 114      | 69            | 9          | 2                                 |

The table shows that overlaps were the most frequent conversation management problem, though interruptions were more common for Spanish-French interpretation. A more detailed analysis of the corpus reveals that overlaps were frequent in exchanges involving judges on the one hand and the prosecutor and/or defence counsel on the other. By way of example, Extract 1 shows a judge asking the members of the defence counsel whether they have more questions to ask after the prosecutor has interviewed the defendant.

#### Extract 1. Court proceedings with Romanian-Spanish interpreting<sup>7</sup>

- 1 Prosecutor: ¿Cuándo le detuvo la policía, estaban los tres juntos?  
*When the police arrested you, were the three of you together?*
- 2 Interpreter: Dacă atunci când v-au oprit polițiștii erați toți trei împreună.  
[He's asking] If when the police arrested you, the three of you were together.

<sup>7</sup> See annex 1 for screenshots of the EXAMARaLDA annotation interface displaying the extracts selected for the article.



- 3 Defendant: Ei doi erau afară și pe mine m-a luat dinăuntru politia.  
*The two of them were outside and me I was caught inside.*
- 4 Interpreter: No. Los dos chicos estaban fuera, solamente estaba él solo dentro.  
*No. The guys were outside; only he was alone inside.*
- 5 Prosecutor: De acuerdo. Pues ninguna pregunta más.  
*Okay. No more questions then.*
- 6 Judge: ¿Alguna [pregunta por parte]  
*Any [further questions from]*
- 7 Defence c. 2: [No hay preguntas.]  
*[No more questions].*
- 8 Judge: de [los letrados]?  
*[the counsel]?*
- 9 Defence c. 3: [Ninguna], señoría.  
*[None], your honour.*
- 10 Judge: Por parte de la [letrada de la defensa.]?  
*From the [defence counsel]?*
- 11 Defence c. 1: [Sí, con la venia señoría.] Cuando le detuvieron...  
*[Yes, with the permission of the court.] When you were arrested...*

In Extract 1, after the Romanian-speaking defendant had been questioned by the prosecutor (lines 1-5), the judge asked the three members of the defence counsel if they had any further questions. Lines 6-11 reflect three overlaps in just two seconds (highlighted in the previous extract and marked with square brackets). The judge's first question (*Any further questions from the counsel?*) — a routine question — was answered simultaneously by defence counsel 2 (*No more questions*, line 7) and defence counsel 3 (*None*, line 9), while the second question (*From the defence counsel?*, line 10) was also answered before the utterance was complete. These brief exchanges were not interpreted to the defendant, even though it was part of the questioning, because the interpreter interpreted only those questions that were explicitly addressed to the defendant.

According to Carmen Bestué, the questioning and the granting of the right to the last word are the only parts of the trial that really seek to attract the hearer's attention. In the other parts, though, the communicative situation becomes a "closed circuit among specialists," where complex syntactic formulations and specific terminology abound. Overlaps could be regarded as a natural consequence of this automation of routine discourse practices.

The annotation also covers interruptions by a member of the judiciary when consecutive interpreting (not *chuchotage*) is used. Extract 2 shows an example of an interruption from the French-Spanish interpreting sample.

#### Extract 2. Court proceedings with French-Spanish interpreting

- 1 Interpreter: [...] Él declara que se encontraba en el restaurante con su mujer, que esta se fue al baño, cuando volvió, el declarante se fue al baño, cuando volvió, estaba el restaurante semivacío, [había un bolso sobre



la silla, pensaba el declarante que es el bolso de su mujer. ¿Que siga?  
¿Que siga explicando?]

[...] *He testifies that he was in the restaurant with his wife, that she went to the toilet, and that when she came back, the defendant went to the toilet, and when he came back, the restaurant was half empty, [there was a bag on a chair and the defendant thought it was his wife's bag. Shall I continue? Shall I continue explaining?]*

- 2 Prosecutor: [Cogió, no, pregúntele si cogió ese bolso... pregúntele si cogió ese bolso y salió del restaurante con el bolso.]  
*He took, no, ask him if he took that bag... Ask him if he took that bag and went out of the restaurant with the bag.*
- 3 Interpreter: Alors, c'est vrai que tu a pris ce sac et tu es sorti?  
*So, is it true that you took the bag and went out?*

In Extract 2, the interpreter's rendition of the defendant's statement is interrupted by the prosecutor (marked with square brackets), who wants to ask a question. In this specific example, the interpreter asks whether she should continue interpreting or not.

We also classified long turns lasting longer than two minutes as conversation management problems. This occurred nine times in the 20 trials that make up the pilot sample. Only two of those long turns were interpreted by means of *chuchotage* to the defendant. These figures may be understated, however, since only those turns involving a single participant were included. Long turns were not included where there were monolingual exchanges among various participants. As shown in Table 2, only 86 of the 259 transcribed minutes of court proceedings were conducted bilingually, so 173 minutes (or 66.8% of the total proceedings) consisted of monolingual exchanges.

#### 4.2. SPEECH STYLE

The speech style employed by the judges and the judicial staff was annotated using the categories presented in Table 4, adapted from Arumí and Vargas Urpí.

TABLE 4. SPEECH STYLE BY JUDGES AND JUDICIAL STAFF  
(ADAPTED FROM ARUMÍ AND VARGAS-URPÍ)

| ANNOTATION (CATEGORY) | EXAMPLE   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Direct speech         | <i>Were you in that club on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2012?</i>                                |
| Indirect speech       | <i>Was the defendant in that club on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2012?</i>                       |
| Reported speech       | Please ask the defendant <i>whether he was in that club on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2012.</i> |

Table 5 shows the number of occurrences of each of those categories in the pilot sample.



| TABLE 5. OCCURRENCES OF EACH SPEECH STYLE USED BY JUDGES AND JUDICIAL STAFF |               |                 |                 |
|---|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| PILOT SAMPLE  | DIRECT SPEECH | INDIRECT SPEECH | REPORTED SPEECH |
| Spanish-French  | 21            | 12              | 40              |
| Spanish-English   | 44            | 11              | 44              |
| Spanish-Romanian  | 13            | 6               | 18              |
| <i>Total</i>  | 78            | 29              | 102             |

In all three language pairs, members of the judiciary used reported speech more often than direct speech, the recommended speech style. In 131 of the 209 utterances, members of the judiciary used indirect or reported speech, thus addressing the interpreter rather than the defendant or witness with limited proficiency in the official language.

A more detailed analysis of the results of the annotation of each of the trials included in the pilot sample shows that speech styles are not used consistently throughout a trial. In some trials, for instance, the members of the defence counsel use more direct speech than the judge or prosecutor, while in some trials the same person changes speech style depending on the message being conveyed. Figure 1 (in the previous section) shows an example of a judge changing from direct to reported speech in two adjacent sentences, first addressing the defendant (“Mr. Grant, please stand up”), then, immediately after, addressing the interpreter (“Ask him if he wants to add anything he has not said before”).

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results presented in this paper reflect relatively common features of the discourse practices of members of the judiciary, such as overlaps and interruptions. Angermeyer also discusses the presence of overlaps and interruptions in his corpus and the difficulties they pose to interpreters, who very often must decide whose words to interpret. Furthermore, in these instances where fast dialogues take place and various participants compete for the floor, if interpreters adhere to the “first-person” interpreting norm, interpreting certainly becomes more challenging and may even be confusing for the recipient (Angermeyer 132-133).

Turns lasting longer than two minutes do not occur frequently in this sample. However, 66.8% of the total duration of the trials transcribed was monolingual. This significant finding shows that the questioning of the defendant or witness with limited proficiency in the official language accounted for only a third of the proceedings in the sample. Short consecutive (or liaison) interpreting is commonly used during this questioning.

The two-thirds of proceedings that were monolingual should have been interpreted for the defendant according to the new legislation passed in Spain. However, in our sample, only two of the nine long turns were accompanied by *chuchotage*; the remaining seven had no kind of interpretation. Furthermore, in the monolingual parts of proceedings, especially the ritualised parts such as the closing arguments,



overlaps are more likely to occur between members of the judiciary because routine answers are given to the questions.

Regarding speech style, the results reveal that judges, attorneys and other members of the judiciary frequently go against recommendations on how to work with interpreters, using indirect speech and especially reported speech, thus addressing the interpreter instead of the defendant or witness with limited proficiency in the official language. This suggests there is scant knowledge of the recommendations among members of the judiciary in Spain.

This paper is part of a work in progress and the results presented here are taken only from the pilot sample of 20 trials. We will need to compare these preliminary results with results for the entire corpus to confirm these trends. Nevertheless, the results make a valuable contribution to the study of court interpreting, addressing the role of judges and other members of the judiciary in interpreted court proceedings. This represents an initial step towards producing recommendations and guidelines for judiciary members working with interpreters considering the particular situation of court interpreting in Spain. This research also contributes to enrich the body of “empirical studies based on naturalistic data obtained in authentic settings,” which has been described as relatively scarce by Shlesinger and Pöchhacker.

The results also suggest new lines of inquiry to be explored in future publications, such as what impact the use of indirect or reported speech by judges, attorneys and prosecutors has on the speech style used in interpreters’ renditions; why individual members of the judicial staff switch between direct and indirect speech; and how interpreters react to interruptions by members of the judiciary or overlaps between the speech of one member and another.

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# ANNEX 1. EXMARaLDA SCREENSHOTS OF THE EXTRACTS INCLUDED IN THE ARTICLE

## EXTRACT 1. OVERLAPS BETWEEN THE JUDGE AND THE DEFENCE COUNSELS

|                | 243 [0: 244 [07:34.2]                       | 246 [07: 247 [07:35] | 248 [07:3 249 [07: 250 [07:35.9] | 251 [07:36.5]   |
|----------------|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| J [v]          | ¿Alguna pregunta por parte de los letrados? |                      |                                  | Por parte de la letrada de la defensa.                |
| II [v]         |   |                      |                                  |   |
| II [MI]        |   |                      |                                  |   |
| II [Retrad_II] |   |                      |                                  |   |
| A1 [v]         |   |                      |                                  |   |
| A1 [Retrad_A1] |   |                      |                                  |   |
| A2 [v]         |   |                      |                                  |   |
| A2 [Retrad_A2] |   |                      |                                  |   |
| A3 [v]         |   |                      |                                  |   |
| A4 [v]         |   |                      |                                  |   |
| F [v]          |   |                      |                                  |   |
| LD1 [v]        |   |                      |                                  |   |
| LD2 [v]        | No hay preguntas.                           |                      |                                  | Si, con la venia, señoría. Cuando le detuvieron ¿en q |
| LD3 [v]        |   | Ninguna, señoría.    |                                  |   |
| TT1 [v]        |   |                      |                                  |   |
| [SOLAPAMIENTO] | SOJ   | SOJ                  |                                  |   |

## EXTRACT 2. INTERRUPTION BY THE PROSECUTOR

|                         | 93 [02:48.8]  | 94 [02: 95 [02:53.8] | 96 [02:56.1]                           |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| J [v]                   |   |                      |  |
| II [v]                  | ... de semirráo, había un bolso sobre la silla, pensaba el declarante que es el bolso de su mujer. ¿Que siga? ¿Que siga explicando? |                      | Alors, c'est vrai que tu a pris ce sac |
| II [MI]                 |   |                      |  |
| A1 [v]                  |   |                      |  |
| A2 [v]                  |   |                      |  |
| A3 [v]                  |   |                      |  |
| A4 [v]                  |   |                      |  |
| AJ [v]                  |   |                      |  |
| TT1 [v]                 |   |                      |  |
| TT1 [v]                 |   |                      |  |
| F [v]                   | Cogió, no, pregúntele si cogió ese bolso... pregúntele si cogió ese bolso y salió del restaurante con el bolso.                     |                      |  |
| LD1 [v]                 |   |                      |  |
| LD2 [v]                 |   |                      |  |
| LD3 [v]                 |   |                      |  |
| [PROBLEMA]              | I/F   | F                    |  |
| [SOLUCIÓN TEXTUAL]      |   |                      |  |
| [TIPO SOLUCIÓN TEXTUAL] |   |                      |  |
| [SOLAPAMIENTO]          |   |                      |  |
| [INTERRUPCIÓN]          | IR  |                      |  |
| [DISCURSO LARGO]        |   |                      |  |



# COMMUNITY INTERPRETING RESEARCH WITHOUT DIRECT EMPIRICAL ACCESS: A METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL

Marta Estévez Grossi  
Leibniz Universität Hannover

## ABSTRACT

This contribution offers a methodological proposal for empirical research on Community Interpreting without direct access to the object of study, i.e. the interpreter-mediated encounters. The design of the proposal draws on the experience gained by the conduction of a diachronic non-professional Community Interpreting research project on the communicative situation of the migrant workers from Galicia (Spain) in Hanover (Germany) in the 1960s and 1970s and their need for Community Interpreting. The model aims, however, to be applicable for studies on Interpreting with no direct empirical access to the object itself of any kind. The proposed model is divided into four main methodological stages, 1) background research, 2) corpus creation, 3) corpus analysis and 4) presentation of the results. Each of the stages is divided different methodological steps. In addition to the thorough description of the methodological stages and steps of the model, the paper also offers information on the software and the theoretical frameworks specifically used in the referred research project.

Keywords: Community Interpreting Methodology, Qualitative Research, Corpus Creation, Corpus Analysis, Interview, Oral History, Qualitative Content Analysis

## RESUMEN

Esta contribución ofrece una propuesta metodológica para investigación empírica en Interpretación en los Servicios Públicos sin acceso directo al objeto de estudio, es decir, a los encuentros mediados por intérpretes. El diseño de la propuesta se basa en las experiencias recogidas mediante la realización de un proyecto de investigación en Interpretación en los Servicios Públicos de carácter diacrónico y no profesional sobre la situación comunicativa de los/as migrantes laborales de origen gallego que llegaron a Hanover (Alemania) en la década de 1960 y 1970, prestando especial atención a las necesidades de interpretación de la comunidad. El modelo aspira, sin embargo, a ser aplicable a cualquier tipo de estudios en Interpretación sin acceso empírico al objeto de estudio. El modelo propuesto se divide en cuatro fases metodológicas, 1) investigación preliminar, 2) creación del corpus, 3) análisis del corpus y 4) presentación de los resultados. Cada fase está dividida, a su vez, en diferentes pasos metodológicos. Además de proporcionar una descripción detallada de las fases y pasos metodológicos del modelo, esta contribución también aporta información sobre el *software* y el marco teórico utilizado específicamente durante el proyecto de investigación que ilustra el modelo.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Metodología en Interpretación en los Servicios Públicos, investigación cualitativa, creación del corpus, análisis del corpus, entrevista, Historia Oral, Análisis Cualitativo del Contenido.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the main challenges when doing research on Interpreting is finding an adequate methodology for the object of study. This holds true for any type of interpreting, but is even more pressing for less privileged areas of research such as Community Interpreting or any kind of diachronic studies on Interpreting. One of the recurring problems of research on Interpreting is the difficulty of obtaining data and gaining access to real interpreter-mediated encounters. This often necessarily leading to the use of alternative methodologies in order to obtain reliable information as the only way to explore some areas of research.

This contribution aims to present a methodological proposal for empirical research on Community Interpreting with no direct empirical access to the object of study, i.e. the interpreter-mediated encounters. The proposed model will be illustrated by a diachronic project on the communicative situation of the migrant workers from Galicia (Spain) in Hanover (Germany) in the 1960s and 1970s and their need for Community Interpreting.

The paper will first contextualise the methodological proposal by presenting the research question to be analysed within the Community Interpreting research project, which will then be situated within the Community Interpreting research paradigm. This will lead into the actual methodology of the project. In the proposed model, four main methodological stages will be distinguished, namely the background research, the corpus creation, the corpus analysis and the presentation of the results. The specific methodological steps followed in every stage will then be presented, also offering information about the software used and the theoretical and methodological frameworks adopted within the research project.

## 2. CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL: PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

On March the 29th 1960 the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) signed its bilateral recruitment agreement with the Spanish Government, marking the official start of what is considered the 1<sup>st</sup> Spanish migration wave in Germany. Between 1955 and 1982 it is estimated that around 800 000 Spaniards emigrated to the FRG (Sanz Díaz 168-169). The official statistics show that the migrants from the region of Galicia were the second largest group within the Spanish contingent, accounting for 20,03% of the total Spanish migration in the FRG (Leib y Mertins 199).

Upon their arrival in the FRG, the Galician migrants were categorised as Spanish citizens and therefore speakers of Spanish. The vast majority of them was however monolingual Galician speaker with only limited active competences in Spanish and none in German. This collective was therefore immersed in a trilingual environment (Galician, Spanish and German) and confronted with two different languages (Spanish and German).

The objective of the research project was to describe the practices that regulated the provision of Community Interpreting within the Galician community



from the 1960s on. This should be based on a thorough description of the linguistic situation of this migrant group taking the city of Hanover as a paradigmatic example for the situation of Galician migrants living in an urban environment in the FRG.

This project can be situated in two traditionally neglected areas of research which have recently been gaining a growing academic interest, the History of Interpreting (Fernández Sánchez, “History and Historiography”) and Non-professional Community Interpreting (Martínez-Gómez) within the paradigm research of Community Interpreting. Despite the revival of both areas of research, the history of community interpreting practices in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has only counted with testimonial studies (see Otero Moreno, “La interpretación social en Alemania desde 1950 hasta hoy”; Otero Moreno, “Migración Y Mediación Intercultural En Alemania”; Baigorri Jalón and Otero Moreno; Takesako).

A factor which has traditionally hindered the conduction of diachronic research in any area of Interpreting is the exiguous number of accounts that can be found about interpreter-mediated encounters of any sort. Apart from the obvious fugacious nature of the spoken word, the latter is also related to the lack of social recognition that interpreting as an activity has historically received (Pöchlacker 159). In this respect, Baigorri Jalón (“La Lengua Como Arma” 90) pleads for the adoption of alternative research methods in order to be able to “track” the presence of interpreters through history. These alternative methods may involve the use of declassified and administrative documents, chronicles, photographs, memoirs, audio files, archives, press or, provided that the object of study lies in the recent past, the conduction of interviews. In this respect, various authors suggest the use of modern historiographical methods, such as Oral History, as framework to carry out those interviews (Baigorri Jalón, “La Lengua Como Arma” 103; Baigorri Jalón, “Perspectives on the History of Interpretation” 103; Fernández Sánchez, “Sobre Un Eslabón Clave” 95; Kumiko; McDonough Dolmaya).

### 3. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN OF THE PROJECT AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the next sections I intend to linearly show what the conduction of a Community Interpreting research project can look like when there is no direct empirical access to the object of study. This will be exemplified by the aforementioned research project on the provision of Community Interpreting within the Galician community in Hanover from the 1960’s on. In order to do so the different methodological stages will be described taking into account the steps undertaken in each stage along with the software used and the theoretical framework that supported them.

The methodological design of the project can be divided in four main stages: background research, corpus creation, corpus analysis and presentation of the results. These four stages represent the main phases every empirical study of this kind (i.e. studies on Interpreting with no direct empirical access to the object itself, in this case the interpreter-mediated encounters) should necessarily follow. The specificities of each stage, though, may vary according to the particular object of study.





As for the theoretical and methodological frameworks, it is important to state that the whole project presented here rests in two main pillars. The three first stages of the project —background research, corpus creation and in a lesser extent corpus analysis— were carried out taking into consideration the theoretical underpinnings and methodological recommendations of the Oral History. Additionally, the methodological framework of the Qualitative Content Analysis (in German *qualitative Kontentanalyse*, also translated in English as Qualitative Text Analysis) was extensively used mainly during the corpus analysis but also for the data processing within the corpus creation and the presentation of the results. Even though the specific use of these two main frameworks will be shown in the description of every stage, I would like to draw some introductory lines about both of them first.

Dating back to the 1960's and 1970's, Oral History can be considered a relatively new and alternative historiographical approach, which aspires to write history “from the bottom-up” (Ritchie 23) by gathering recounts of the past from traditionally neglected members of society through recorded, biographical interviews. From a theoretical point of view, Oral History scholars have extensively addressed how memory and the process of recalling work, since memory is considered the be core of this historiographical approach (Abrams 78; Ritchie 19). From a more practical-oriented perspective, different studies on Oral History provide practical strategies for the (preparation of the) conduction of interviews. Even if the adoption of this methodology has still only been testimonial within Interpreting research (see for example Arias Torres and Feria García; Baigorri Jalón, “La Voz de Los Intérpretes: Ecos del Pasado”; Takesako and Nakamura; Takesako; Torikai, *Voices of the Invisible Presence*; Torikai, “Conference Interpreters and Their Perception of Culture”), it already counts with scholars who advocate for its use when carrying out diachronic studies on translation or interpreting (Baigorri Jalón, “La lengua como arma” 103; Baigorri Jalón, “Perspectives on the History of Interpretation” 103; Kumiko; McDonough Dolmaya).

Qualitative Content Analysis, on its turn, is a methodological framework originally used within the Social Sciences for the analysis of material based on any kind of communication. This methodology provides a systematic approach for the qualitative analysis of linguistic material, allowing flexibility while offering clear rules to follow in each step of the analysis (Kuckartz, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse*; Schreier 170).<sup>1</sup> It proved to be best suited for analysing a corpus based on semi-structured interviews in a structured way, focusing on the content underlying the Oral History-based interviews carried out within the research project. The use of this methodology already counts with some precedents in linguistic studies (see Knapp) and interpreting ones (see Liu 88 ff.). Given the fact that a significant amount of empirical research on Interpreting seems to be following a qualitative approach (Liu 88), I believe Interpreting research could most definitively profit from the adoption of Qualitative Content Analysis as a data analysis methodology.

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<sup>1</sup> For an English translation of Kuckartz's book see Kuckartz (*Qualitative Text Analysis*).

### 3.1. STAGE I: BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Once a preliminary research question has been formulated, the first stage in every research project should be the background research. During this stage it becomes clear whether it is possible to access the object of study directly (i.e. generally the interpreter-mediated encounter itself) or if alternative ways of gaining access to the critical information should be sought.

The first step involves a thorough documentation on the object of study. This step, along with the necessary formulation of the research question (or at least a preliminary one), is fundamental in order to evaluate and decide on the particular methodology that best fits the purpose of the project. The documentation for a research project where there is no direct access to the object of study goes beyond the literature review on the selected topic. Both oral historians and Interpreting scholars specialised in historiographical or diachronic Interpreting agree on the need for the revision of sources such as official and private archives, literature, press, memoirs (of the interpreters, for instance) and photographs among others (Alonso Araguás, Fernández Sánchez, and Baigorri Jalón; Baigorri Jalón, “Perspectives on the History of Interpretation” 105 ff. Baigorri Jalón, “The History of the Interpreting Profession”; Fernández Sánchez, “Sobre el tratamiento de las fuentes en la historiografía posmoderna”; Ritchie 85; Thompson 222). When the object of study lies on the near past, there is also the possibility of reviewing recorded oral testimonies, such as interviews present in Oral History archives.

In my research project, the documentation consisted in the visit of archives in both in Hannover (Germany) and Galicia (Spain) and an extensive literature review on the migrant community object of study. The archival research conducted provided scant pieces of information about the (linguistic situation of the) community object of study. The literature review, on its turn, revealed the existence of a great deal of studies about the Spanish migration in Germany from an array of disciplines such as Statistics, Social Sciences, Psychology or Historiography. In all these studies, however, the linguistic situation of the migrant group object of study is only tangentially addressed. Only a couple studies were found where the linguistic situation builds the focus of the research (Sanz Lafuente; Vilar Sánchez), and only the works of Otero Moreno explicitly deal with the Community Interpreting situation of the Spanish *Gastarbeiter* or migrant workers in Germany (“La interpretación social en Alemania desde 1950 hasta hoy”; “Migración y mediación intercultural en Alemania”; Baigorri Jalón and Otero Moreno). After this background research stage it became clear, thus, that it would be necessary to collect data and create a corpus in order to be able to answer the initial research question.





### 3.2. STAGE 2: CORPUS CREATION

The completion of the background research stage allows to decide whether it is necessary to create a corpus.<sup>2</sup> Should the encountered information not be enough to adequately address the research question, it is imperative to collect empirical data and hence create a corpus. An essential condition for the creation of the corpus, however, is for the object of study to lie in the present or in the near past.

This second stage, corpus creation, can be divided into two different sub-stages: data collection and data processing.

#### 3.2.1. *Data collection*

The form of the data collection is determined not only by the research question but also by the target informants and their probability of better responding to the different data collection methods. Whether the empirical data is to be collected through a questionnaire, an interview or a (participant) observation, gaining access to the informants remains a common first challenge for every research project. In this respect, Oral History provides some practical strategies in order to establish contact with the potential informants.

In research projects based on communities or collectives, such as the one which exemplifies this methodological proposal, the fact of belonging to the studied community enables a direct access to its members and allows the researcher an experience-based reflection on the object of study. Conversely, in those cases where the researcher is a community outsider, it is highly recommendable to seek the contact of the community gatekeepers, prestigious personalities within the community, who are usually key in order to locate other community members, inform them about the research project and convince them to collaborate (Ritchie 88). Although it is also possible to use other methods in order to gain access to the informants —e.g. through the internet and social media, checking the telephone directory or placing advertisements in newspapers or magazines— oral historians seem to agree on the use of snowball sampling (i.e. to ask an informant to provide the next contact(s)) to be a more effective way of gaining access to communities and collectives (Thompson 235; Yow 80-81). Snowball sampling also seems to be a typical technique used in Interpreting research (Hale y Napier 73).

The data collection method selected for my research project was the interview, since most of the informants were of advanced age and the filling in of a writ-

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<sup>2</sup> There are precedents of empirical research in Interpreting where the authors made use of existent interviews from Oral History archives scholars (see Fernández Sánchez, “Sobre Un Eslabón Clave”; Kurz). When using such an archive it may be possible to skip the second stage, corpus creation, and directly proceed to the third one, corpus analysis, provided that the oral sources have already been transcribed.



ten questionnaire was here deemed as uninviting for this specific group.<sup>3</sup> Drawing on this experience, I will now focus on the possible interview methodologies and discuss the reasons for the choice of a semi-structured interview in order to carry out my research.

There are three main interview types, namely the structured interview, the open interview and the semi-structured interview (Hale y Napier 97-98; Richards 184-186). Structured interviews are characterised by the use of a set of close questions, resembling “a kind of a spoken questionnaire” (Richards 184), which enable the conduction of quantitative studies as they allow to achieve a high comparability between the single interviews. Open interviews (also known as in-depth or unstructured interviews), on the contrary, are distinguished by the absence of fixed questions but rather the establishment of a topic to be addressed during the interview. In this context, the interview takes the form of a conversation, where the specific information and topics depend mostly on the interviewee. The interviewer can use her open-ended questions mainly to encourage the interviewee to keep talking, only been allowed to slightly nudge the conversation in a particular direction (Richards 185). The nature of open interviews implies a low comparability between the interviews carried out within a research project. A mixed form between these two poles is the semi-structured interview, which usually makes use of an interview guide with open-ended questions, still allowing interviewees to speak freely. This is reportedly the most common interview methodology within Applied Linguistics research (Hale y Napier 98; Richards 185). Within Oral History, the conduction of not only open interviews but also of semi-structured interviews seems to be likewise widespread (Abrams 21; Thompson 222). As a result, not few oral historians have given some thought to the principles that should apply to the composition of interview guides (Morrisey 188; Ritchie 102-103; Thompson 228-229; Yow 71 ff. to name a few).

The semi-structured interview methodology proved to be the best suited for the conducted research project. The use of an interview guide ensured that certain topics, central for the objectives of the research, would arise, while allowing the informants to develop their own narrative and come up with their own topics. Those spontaneous topics which resulted interesting for the research question were then integrated in the interview guide used in the subsequent interviews. The use of an interview guide proved to be highly beneficial. During the conduction of the interviews, the interview guide worked as a memory aid in order to not lose track of the research question in the midst of the interviewees’ narratives. Besides, it also enabled the comparability between the interviews.

The fieldwork encompassed 25 interviews with over 30 participants carried out either in Galician, Spanish or German. From this preliminary corpus 22 interviews were selected to integrate the final corpus of the research project.

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<sup>3</sup> The informants’ unwillingness to fill in even short questionnaires was experienced during an encounter with some community gatekeepers, which was also used as a pretest before beginning the actual fieldwork.



### 3.2.2. Data processing

The second phase in the corpus creation is the data processing, which in the case of qualitative studies based on interviews means the transcription of the interviews. The resulting transcripts constitute the corpus to be analysed in the next stage.

There are a myriad of transcription systems that can be applied to the transcription of the data, being the Jeffersonian Transcript Notation, the *Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem 2* (GAT 2), the Discourse Transcription (DT) and the *Halbinterpretative Arbeitstranskriptionen* (HIAT), some of the most common transcription systems for qualitative research nowadays (Kowal and O'Connell, "Transcription as a Crucial Step of Data Analysis" 74). In my research project, the selection of GAT 2 as transcription system was mainly motivated by the imperatives of Oral History and Qualitative Content Analysis as the methodological and theoretical frameworks of the study.

From the point of view of Oral History, the original source of information is composed by the audio (or video) file of the conducted interview, being the transcripts no more than the rendering of the interview in written form to facilitate its analysis (Abrams 19; Ritchie 66-67; Yow 3). Some oral historians therefore contend that it is necessary to also note paralinguistic features in order to not distort the oral character of the interview and to be able to correctly interpret and analyse it (Abrams 19-20; Errante 22-23). In this respect and unlike other transcription systems, GAT 2 allows to notate not only paralinguistic features (such as laughter, sighing or breathing) but also extralinguistic ones (such as gestures, applauses or banging on the table) (Kowal and O'Connell, "The Transcription of Conversations" 250-251), which I also deemed important for better interpreting the transcripts.

Since the analysis of the corpus was to be carried out under the Qualitative Content Analysis paradigm, the fact that GAT 2 counts with three levels of detail,<sup>4</sup> the simplest of them specifically created for content analysis (Kowal and O'Connell, "Transcription as a Crucial Step of Data Analysis" 75), also favoured the use of this system over other alternatives. The interviews were therefore transcribed following the GAT 2 minimal transcript conventions (Selting *et al.* 7-17), which is relatively easy to learn for novice transcribers (Kowal and O'Connell, "Transcription as a Crucial Step of Data Analysis" 75) and allows to create transcripts with a high degree of legibility (Fuchs 127). Additionally, GAT 2 is a flexible transcription system, since one of its ruling principles is the granularity of the notation levels (see Selting *et al.* 4). This means that the simpler notation level(s) (such as the minimal transcript) can be expanded with features of the subsequent notation level(s) without further revision. The latter proved to be very powerful and allowed me to contemplate in a simple way certain prosodic features, distinctive for the next GAT2 transcription level, the basic transcript (Selting *et al.* 18 ff.).

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<sup>4</sup> These three levels of detail in the GAT transcription system are 1) the minimal transcript, 2) the basis transcript and 3) the fine transcript.



Qualitative Content Analysis contends that it is necessary to work with the whole corpus and not only with fragments deemed important by the researcher (Kuckartz, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 39; Schreier 174). Basing on this postulate the interviews were transcribed in full, only ignoring those fragments where the conversation went completely off topic.

The use of specific transcription software is most recommendable. One of the main advantages of this kind of programs is the automation of many processes involved in the transcription of audio or video. Some of these automations may encompass the synchronisation of the audio or video file with the transcript, the addition of time stamps and the names of the interlocutors, the existence of pre-defined keyboard shortcuts, the possibility of changing the pace of the recording, etc. Furthermore, transcription software usually support the usage of foot pedals<sup>5</sup>.

The transcription of the interviews was performed on the transcription software *f4transkript* (F4). This was mainly due to the fact that synchronised transcripts can be directly loaded in two of the most commonly used data analysis software packages: MAXQDA and ATLAS.ti, the former used to carry out the analysis of the corpus.

For the transcription of the interviews carried out in Spanish, the use of the transcription software F4 was enhanced by the voice recognition software Dragon NaturallySpeaking. This kind of programs does not allow the automatic transcription of an audio file, but can be trained to recognise the voice of a person in a given language.<sup>6</sup> In this respect, by re-voicing the contents of the audio file already in the text field of the transcription software F4 I was able to deliver a first draft of the transcript with linguistic content only. The audio file was then listened to a second time in which I corrected possible errors and notated paralinguistic and extralinguistic features. Even if as contended in some studies the speed of the process was not increased by the use of a voice recognition software (Dresing, Pehl, y Lombardo), the combination of Dragon NaturallySpeaking with F4 had a positive effect on the productivity of the transcription process, since it allowed me to transcribe for a longer period of time without experiencing physical discomfort.

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<sup>5</sup> A comparative of transcription software packages (Express Scribe, Audio Notetaker, InqScribe and F4) can be found in Paulus *et al.* (101 ff.).

<sup>6</sup> The interviews were conducted in Galician, Spanish and German. There are different reasons for not using this software for transcribing the interviews in Galician and German. On the one hand, the version Dragon NaturallySpeaking 11, used within the project, does not support the Galician language. On the other hand, it was not deemed worth it to train the program to recognize my voice in German, since I am not a native speaker of German and only a couple of interviews were carried out in this language.



### 3.3. STAGE 3: CORPUS ANALYSIS

Once the final corpus has been created, it is time for the corpus analysis. There are different methodological frameworks that can be used in order to analyse empirical data, being Discourse Analysis one of the most broadly used analysis paradigms within Interpreting and Community Interpreting (Hale y Napier 117). Another methodological paradigm which also seems to be frequently used within qualitative studies on Interpreting is Content Analysis (Liu 88), sometimes in combination with a Discourse Analysis approach (Liu 112).

In my research project the focus was neither on the construction of meaning through the discourse nor on the analysis of the actual interaction within the interpreter-mediated encounter (to which I had no access). Accordingly, it was decided against Discourse Analysis and in favour of Content Analysis. In this respect, I chose to follow the Thematic Qualitative Content Analysis proposed by Kuckartz (*Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 77 ff.).<sup>7</sup> This approach seeks to structure the content and topics covered in the collected data and specifically contemplates the analysis of semi-structured interviews guided by a questionnaire.<sup>8</sup> In the following lines I will describe this specific methodology in more detail.

The performance of a Qualitative Content Analysis is an iterative process where the research question is given a central role in every step of the analysis. The general process of Qualitative Content Analysis extracted from Kuckartz (*Qualitative Text Analysis* 41) can be visualised in a simplified manner in the Figure 1.

It is important to state that the steps depicted in the diagram above are not necessarily sequential, but often occur concurrently. The arrows going from and to the research question show the importance of taking the research question into account in every step of the analysis, while pointing out the mutability of the research question itself during the process.

After a previous step where the corpus is to be critically read and interpreted—i.e. the transcripts of the interviews—the step of category creation follows. Depending on the initial research question and whether initial hypothesis have been formulated, the process of category creation will be deductive, inductive or, more commonly, a mix of both (Kuckartz, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 77). The categories, however, are not created in a vacuum but rather within a coding frame or category system, where categories are structured and defined (Schreier 174). Coding frames are formed by at least one main category and two subcategories and should comply with the following three criteria: 1) unidimensionality, i.e. main categories can only cover one aspect or dimension, 2) mutual exclusiveness, i.e. subcategories within a

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<sup>7</sup> In the English translation Kuckartz uses the term “Thematic Qualitative Text Analysis” (see Kuckartz, *Qualitative Text Analysis* 69 ff.)

<sup>8</sup> The other two approaches proposed by Kuckartz are the Evaluative Analysis (which seeks to assess, classify and evaluate the contents of the corpus) (Kuckartz, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 99 ff.) and the Type-Building Analysis (seeking to build types and typologies) (Kuckartz, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 115 ff.).



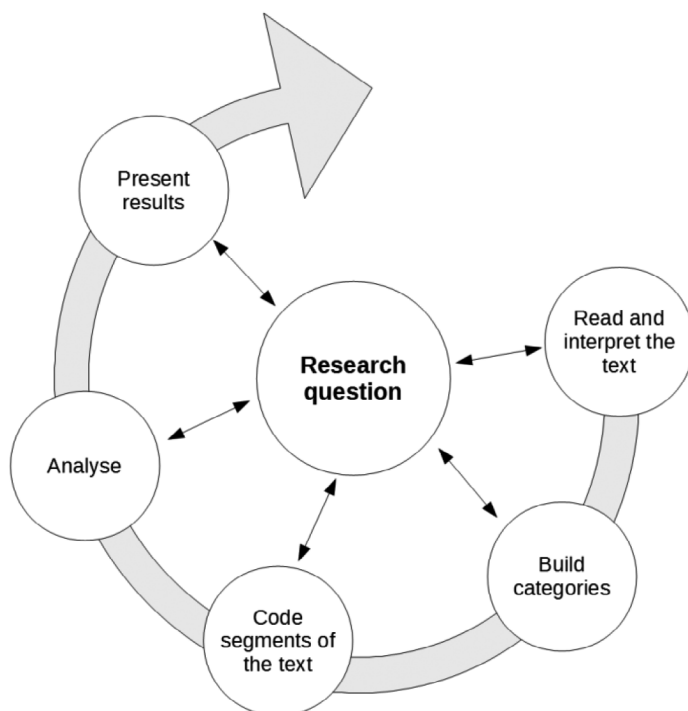


Figure 1: General Process of Qualitative Content Analysis as presented in Kuckartz (Qualitative Text Analysis 41).

main category should be mutually exclusive and 3) exhaustiveness, i.e. every relevant aspect should be covered by a category (Schreier 174-175).

In my research project I started from a deductively created set of categories based on the research question, the literature review, the background documentation on the topic and some of the questions formulated within the interview guide. My initial coding frame was composed by two main categories, one for the analysis of the linguistic situation of the migrants from the point of view of the Migration Linguistics and another for the analysis of the provision of linguistic services from the point of view of the Community Interpreting. This enabled me to perform two different sets of analysis.<sup>9</sup>

A trial coding of part of the data was then performed. This was useful not only for the revision of the deductive categories, but also for the whole project. During

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<sup>9</sup> A brief section of the analysis on Migration Linguistics can be found in Estévez Grossi (“Diachronic Research on Community Interpreting”).



this process I became aware of the contradictions within the interviews of the community members I had interviewed. In this respect, the theoretical underpinnings of Oral History around memory and the tensions that may arise when interviewing informants of advanced age (Abrams 78 ff. Green; Hoffman y Hoffman; Ritchie 33 ff. Yow 35 ff.) helped me to understand the contradictions and ultimately moved me to carry out expert interviews, in order to contrast the information provided by the community members.<sup>10</sup>

Once the corpus creation was completed, the final corpus was coded with the deductively created categories. During this process the existing categories were revisited and new categories and subcategories were inductively generated and integrated in the coding frame. This iterative process of category creation and text coding was repeated until a final coding frame was achieved and the whole corpus had been coded.<sup>11</sup> The latter allowed to evaluate the data according to the formulated research question and thus analyse the corpus and respond to the research question(s). The next step depicted in the image 1, the presentation of the results, will be handled in the next section.

The analysis of the corpus was carried out on the computer-assisted data analysis software (CAQDAS) MAXQDA11. Most of the common CAQDASs share a series of main features like the coding and annotation of the corpus, linking of different parts of it, searching and querying of data sets coded with one or several categories, etc. (Paulus, Lester, y Dempster 123 ff.). The decision of using particularly MAXQDA11 was motivated by the possibility of directly using the synchronised transcripts made under F4, the visualisation of the hierarchical relationships between the categories within the coding frame and the existence of a free official program, MAXQDA Reader, which enables to share the analysis with other people even if they do not have a MAXQDA licence.

### 3.4. STAGE 4: PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

Once the analysis has been carried out, the last stage involves the presentation of the results. This section will deal with the different possibilities available in order to present research results based on Qualitative Content Analysis. I believe, however, that many of the options displayed here are also applicable to qualitative studies based on other methodologies.

Schreier (180) points out some general options to present the results of a Qualitative Content Analysis. On the one hand, the findings can be displayed by presenting the coding frame or category system itself, providing quotations from

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<sup>10</sup> A larger discussion on this matter which also provides an example from the corpus can be found in Estévez Grossi ("Interpretación en los Servicios Públicos en la comunidad gallega en Hannover desde la década de los 60").

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed explanation of the process see Schreier (175-179).



the corpus. This can be done by focusing on the different categories and subcategories but also by showing the relations between them. On the other hand, a more quantitative approach can be adopted by, for example, presenting the frequencies and percentages of the different categories within the corpus.

Consistently, Kuckartz (*Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 94 ff.) proposes seven options for the presentation of the results of a Thematic Content Analysis, namely 1) the presentation of the category-based analysis of the main categories, 2) the presentation of the relations between the subcategories within a main category, 3) the presentation of the relations between categories within the category system, 4) use of qualitative and quantitative crosstabs, 5) use of graphics and graphical visualizations, 6) case overviews and 7) in-depth interpretations of case studies.<sup>12</sup>

In order to present the findings of my research, I combined a variety of these options. In this respect, I provided a comprehensive description of every category and subcategory in the system and the relations between them, offering numerous quotations from the corpus in order to illustrate the category-based analysis. Furthermore, I adopted a quantitative-like approach by mentioning the frequencies and percentages of the different categories. In this respect, it should be noted that even if the relative low number of interviewees does not allow to achieve statistical significance, the research results allow to point out some tendencies found in the corpus. So, this approach allowed me to compare the obtained results with similar studies, for instance the incidence of the roles adopted in the use and provision of interpreting services within the community object of study. Finally, crosstabs and graphics were provided in order to better illustrate some parts of the analysis and to openly demonstrate the conclusions I came to establish at the end of the analysis.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The objective of this contribution was to propose a methodological model in order to carry out a Community Interpreting research project with no direct empirical access to the object of study. Even though the model was originally developed to fit the needs of diachronic research on Community Interpreting, I believe it can be applied to any kind of Community Interpreting research with no direct access to the interpreter-mediated encounters. Since this kind of projects usually poses a series of methodological challenges, I sought to present hereby a well-founded yet flexible methodological proposal, while showing the potential of some methodological and theoretical frameworks and software, which I hope may be of use for future research projects.

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<sup>12</sup> Due to space constraints it is not possible to describe each option in detail, which can be found in Kuckartz (*Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse* 94 ff.). In the English version this can be found in (*Qualitative Text Analysis* 84 ff.).





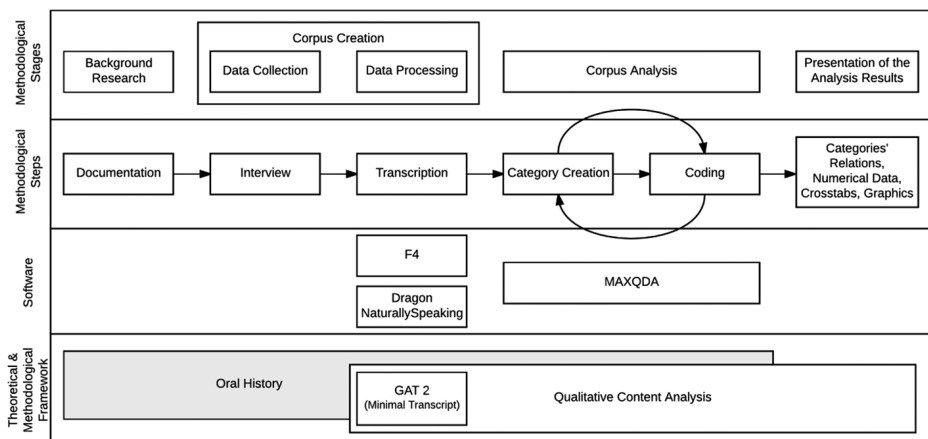


Figure 2: Methodological model for CI research with no direct empirical access to the object of study.

The proposed methodological model, which draws on the gained experience by the conduction of a diachronic non-professional Community Interpreting research, has been depicted in the Figure 2

The first row, methodological stages, shows the four main stages which I believe to be common to any kind of empirical research when there is no direct empirical access to the object of study. The remaining rows, on their turn, are based on the research project I conducted, which was used to illustrate the model. It should be noted, therefore, that the methodological steps depicted in the second row are typical for qualitative research based on interviews.

The elements of each row are organised in columns, making clear which specific methodological step, software or theoretical and methodological framework was applied in each stage of the project.

The first stage is the background research, which occurs immediately after a possible research question has been formulated. This stage involves the background documentation through the review of any source of information available about the selected topic, which most definitely includes a literature review, but also possibly the visit of archives and documentation through the press, photographs, audio and video files, etc. Once the phase is concluded it will be clear whether the collection of data of our own is needed and if so which data collection methodology is more suitable for the chosen research question and object.

The second stage, corpus creation, usually involves both data collection and data processing. In the case of an interview-based corpus this means respectively the conduction and transcription of the interviews.

In the third stage, corpus analysis, the corpus gained through the process of corpus creation should then be analysed. The particular methodology used in order to do so depends on the research question and the focus of the research. By



category-based methodologies, such as Qualitative Content Analysis, the process of analysis most definitely implies an iterative process in which a coding frame or category system is built and the corpus is coded with the created categories.

Finally, and once the analysis has been completed, its results should then be presented in an organised manner. The latter may take the form of a description of the category system, the categories and the relations between them (usually exemplified by quotations of the corpus), the use of crosstabs and graphics or the report of the incidence rate of the different categories to name a few possibilities.

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## MISCELLANY



# TYPOGRAPHICAL, ORTHOGRAPHIC AND MORPHOLOGICAL VARIATION OF ANGLICISMS IN A CORPUS OF SPANISH NEWSPAPER TEXTS\*

Eugenia Esperanza Núñez Nogueroles\*\*  
Universidad de Granada

## ABSTRACT

It is an unarguable fact that English exerts a powerful influence over Spanish nowadays. This is revealed by the large number of Anglicisms that are found in general everyday language as well as in different specific discursive fields. Since the state of a people's language at a given moment is recorded faithfully in the press, this written mass media can be considered as an appropriate source when carrying out an analysis of the situation of the Spanish language in relation to the English loanwords that have entered it. Adopting a qualitative approach, in this piece of research I will analyse the different types of variation that characterise a series of Anglicisms found in a corpus of journalistic texts extracted from the Spanish local daily *Ideal*. By displaying these terms in context, I aim to study the way they behave when employed in Spanish surroundings. Using the findings obtained in this piece of research, I will inductively establish a classification of types of variation in Anglicisms in Present-Day Spanish.

KEYWORDS: Anglicism, press, context, variation, language in use, qualitative analysis.

## RESUMEN

El inglés ejerce indiscutiblemente una notable influencia sobre el español en la actualidad. De ello dan buena cuenta los numerosos anglicismos usados en la lengua cotidiana, así como en distintos campos discursivos específicos. Dado que la prensa refleja fielmente el estado de la lengua que un pueblo posee en cada momento, podemos considerar este medio de comunicación escrito como una fuente adecuada para llevar a cabo un análisis de la situación del español en lo que a los préstamos de origen inglés se refiere. Con un enfoque cualitativo, en este trabajo analizaré los diferentes tipos de variación que caracterizan a una serie de anglicismos encontrados en un corpus de textos periodísticos del diario local español *Ideal*. Mostrando dichas palabras en contexto, me propongo estudiar la forma en la que estas se comportan cuando se emplean en textos españoles. Utilizaré los resultados obtenidos en la presente investigación para establecer, de manera inductiva, una clasificación de los tipos de variación que aparecen en los anglicismos usados en el español actual.

PALABRAS CLAVE: anglicismo, prensa, contexto, variación, lengua en uso, análisis cualitativo.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

The use of Anglicisms in the Spanish language is a phenomenon undergoing an exponential increase. As Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría and Durán Martínez (251) state, it is more and more frequent to find texts written in Spanish that, nonetheless, include English lexical expressions. This fact actually reflects the powerful influence that English exerts nowadays in different spheres worldwide. In Jódar Sánchez and Tuomainen's words (99), "English is undoubtedly the main linguistic influence on global communication, trade and education."

The aforementioned presence of English elements in the Spanish language can be traced by analysing the Spanish press. Indeed, this written medium is characterised by recording faithfully the state of the language a people possesses at a given moment and, at the same time, it spreads the current neologisms that have recently been coined (Medina López; Luján García; del Pino Romero; Casado Velarde). According to Esteban Asencio (8), it seems that, in Spain, the man in the street has got used to handle Anglicisms as a part of their vocabulary, obviously influenced by the mass media, mainly the press and the television.

Therefore, in this paper I will employ a corpus extracted from the Spanish contemporary press in order to carry out an analysis of the Anglicisms that its texts contain. To be precise, I will focus on the cases of variation that are reflected when these words of English origin appear in a written medium. The results obtained will allow me to establish a classification of the different kinds of variation that Anglicisms currently present.

## 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"In the Romance languages [...] the great majority of Anglicisms belongs to the class of nouns (80% as calculated for French) so that morphological integration regards the attribution of gender and number" (Furiassi, Pulcini and Rodríguez González, 9). This statement reveals the relevant role that the assignment of gender and the way of forming the plural number have in the process of adaptation of an Anglicism into the Spanish language.

In relation to these two issues, Diéguez Morales sheds light into some of their most important aspects. First, she remarks the fact that English gender has lost its function as a grammatical category, which only survives in the case of pronouns. Thus, since nouns, adjectives and articles do not present a specific gender in English, speakers/writers must assign them a certain gender when using them in Spanish

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texts (in the latter language concordances are compulsory). On the grounds that her findings provide, she offers the main criteria for assigning gender to Anglicisms (126). As regards number, this same author concludes that normally the plural of Anglicisms is formed by following the English rules; however, there are also cases in which the Spanish patterns are applied —see Diéguez Morales as well—.

Pratt deals with the topic of gender and number in Anglicisms too, but from a different perspective since he carries out a series of interviews to Spanish speakers, thus focusing on the oral aspect (pronunciation), whereas Diéguez Morales tackles a corpus of written texts. This way, Pratt concentrates on issues such as the morphology of the plural in monosyllabic lexical Anglicisms that end in one or more consonants (including voiced plosives) due to the difficulty that these groups entail for those Spanish speakers who are not used to the English pronunciation.

Approaching variation in a wider perspective, there are other types of variants which characterise Anglicisms in Spanish. Some of them are motivated by diatopic reasons, as those dealt with in Rainer and Schnitzer, which can be illustrated by the case of *coste de (la) vida / costo de (la) vida* (cost-of-living —index—). Indeed, this example is geographically distributed as follows: while the first option is more frequently used in Spain, the second one commonly appears in Latin American countries. In this article the authors focus on the regional variation that exists in the Spanish terminology of economics.

Sánchez Ibáñez covers the formal variation that is observed in *on line/on-line/online*. He expounds that the presence or absence of typographical resources (such as inverted commas or italics) can be interpreted as marks of novelty or foreign character. In fact, they reveal to what extent the writer considers the word should be highlighted as foreign or not. This constitutes a relevant piece of information when tracing the evolution of an Anglicism by adopting a diachronic perspective. Considering his findings, he states that the most employed form (in the corpus he analyses, which spans from 2005 to 2012) is *on line*. Generally speaking, the use of the three options without typographical resources is higher than their marked version (although in the case of the variant *online* the tendency across the years is the opposite one), which leads the author to think that this word (in its three forms) is not perceived as a completely foreign element, thus being in a clear process of adaptation.

As far as variation in the morphology and spelling of Anglicisms is concerned, Rodríguez González carries out an analysis of different graphemic fluctuations found in Anglicisms as well as in some derivatives of Anglicisms, identifying trends and suggesting the linguistic (phonetic, morphological, stylistic) and sociolinguistic factors affecting them.

Focusing this time on Anglicisms in the area of sports, Rodríguez González covers several types of linguistic and sociolinguistic variation: (i) dialectal, (ii) lexical and morphological (iii.) stylistic and semantic, the last one including: lexical, graphematic, orthographic, phonological and morpho-phonological.

To conclude this section I will refer to Mateescu, who analyses the “group-level adaptations that Anglicisms experience” (64) in the Spanish language as they are reflected in the spelling the words show in different phases of their evolution.



### 3. ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION PROPOSAL

This paper aims to classify the different types of variation that Anglicisms present when they are used in the Spanish contemporary press. Leaving aside socio-linguistic considerations, I will concentrate on a wide range of linguistic issues. Thus, unlike previous pieces of research that focus on one or a few types of variation (see section 2), this study covers a broad array of variation kinds. In order to do that, a sample of English words extracted from the local daily *Ideal*<sup>1</sup> during the period that goes from November 2010 to June 2011 will be analysed. Due to the fact that this study aims to establish a classification as wide as possible in the number of types registered rather than taking into account issues related to the frequency of use that each one presents, the data collection process has not employed any specialised software. The present piece of research constitutes a first approach to this area of study; therefore, a relatively small sample of instances representing different types of variation would be sufficient for this initial stage. Further research will be needed in order to complement the results obtained here. A manual selection of cases, based on a systematic reading of the daily, has been carried out. The instances that have been identified show fluctuations in several aspects, such as differences in the way in which the same foreign word is written, the various graphic possibilities that a term can display in its process of adaptation to the recipient language, or the rules that are adopted in the formation of its plural. These variants are easily identifiable when Anglicisms are analysed in use; thus, employing a corpus offers an interesting possibility in order to carry out this kind of study.

The following data about each word will be provided: localization (date and page), word class, the complete sentence where it is included, the original English word, a Spanish equivalent (if it exists) and some commentaries if there is something remarkable to add. In doing this, I have adapted the model provided in the project *Anglomaquia* (Martínez-Dueñas Espejo *et al.*).

By collecting the complete sentence where the word is included, it is possible to analyse how the foreign term behaves when employed in a Spanish text, e.g., the way in which its plural form is created, the gender it adopts, etc. The observation of the real linguistic contexts where the loanwords appear constitutes, therefore, a crucial factor when studying how a term from another language has been integrated into Spanish. In this piece of research, a series of examples from those found in the

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<sup>1</sup> Out of the three editions of this newspaper (Granada, Almería and Jaén), I employ the one from Granada. Focusing on a daily published in this Spanish city when carrying out a study on Anglicisms in the press is relevant because of the specific features that characterise this place. First, the University of Granada receives a huge number of foreign students who have English as L1, L2 or FL; second, this city is a touristic destination which attracts an influx of international visitors whose mother tongue or lingua franca is English. These circumstances can influence the use of Anglicisms by the local press in the contents it devotes to leisure as well as cultural, sports or gastronomic issues. Therefore, it turns out to be reasonable to select a local newspaper from Granada in order to analyse the phenomenon of Anglicisms in the Spanish language.



press are presented. They provide the contexts of the Anglicisms, showing these loanwords in use. It allows us to observe the variation a foreign term can have; for instance, the use or absence of simple inverted commas (connected to the degree of integration the Anglicism enjoys in the recipient language), the way of writing some compounds (as two separated words, with a hyphen, or as one word), whether the term carries a Spanish graphic accent—in those cases where it would be necessary according to the target language rules—or not (the employment of this element indicates that the word is being integrated into the recipient language), or the plural form of a word. Adopting a qualitative approach, I focus on those instances of variation that are appreciable by collecting real uses of the loanwords in a corpus of texts (in this case, a corpus of journalistic texts from the daily *Ideal*). I analyse occurrences of the same word in which there is a difference between the two or among the three instances of it that I have found. Compiling real uses of Anglicisms extracted from a corpus makes it possible to recognise these cases of fluctuation clearly.

Based on the types of variation I have detected in the sample from the newspaper analysed in this study, I present here a classification proposal which will be illustrated by these real uses found in the corpus I have employed.

### 3.1. TYPOGRAPHICAL VARIATION

#### 3.1.1. *Use (or absence) of simple inverted commas*

The addition of this mark indicates that the word is felt as foreign and not completely incorporated into the Spanish lexicon, so the vacillation in its employment by different (or even the same) writer(s) can be significant.

1. *frikil*/'friki', *hackerl*/'hackers', *online*/'online', *publ*/'pub', *tablet*/'tablets'  
*friki*. 08/02/11; p. 69. Noun. "Este año no habrá ningún friki defendiendo los colores de España en el festival europeo". *Freak*. Bicho raro (*Oxford Living Dictionaries*).  
*'friki'*. 30/06/11; p. V62.<sup>2</sup> Noun. "A diferencia de la imagen que cualquiera pueda tener de este oficio, y aunque él mismo reconoce que es un 'friki' de los videojuegos, su perfil no es el de un programador informático encerrado en su pantalla de ordenador". *Freak*. (See above, *friki*).  
*hacker*. 24/02/11; p. V61. Noun. "Reventada por un hacker". *Hacker*. Pirata informático (*Oxford Living Dictionaries*).  
*'hackers'*. 08/03/11; p. 36. Noun. "Y detalló que solo las informaciones «relacionadas con el G-20 interesaban a los 'hackers'»". *Hackers*. Piratas informáticos (*Oxford Living Dictionaries*). In this instance, the plural has been formed by the addition of an '-s', following therefore the English rules.

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<sup>2</sup> V: '*Vivir*', a supplement which is included once a week among the pages of the newspaper *Ideal*.





online. 06/06/11; p. 49. Adjective. “Dentro de esta enorme tarea para reorganizar la defensa del copyright, la UE se ha decidido a intervenir en la lucha contra la piratería online”. Online. En línea, en Internet.

‘online’. 27/01/11; p. 69. Adjective. “Los reguladores investigan y pleitean con Google, Facebook, Microsoft y otros para defender la privacidad en tiempos de máxima transparencia y donde la reputación ‘online’ marca una vida”. Online. En línea, en Internet.

pub. 21/12/10; p. V58. Noun. “Hay tiendas y clubes sociales, pero ningún pub por orden de los primeros monarcas inquilinos, Eduardo VII y Alejandra”. Pub.

‘pub’. 09/12/10; p. 7. Noun. “«Esto significa que cuando un ‘pub’, discoteca o un bar con música, piden licencia para abrirse saben que no pueden realizar actuaciones en vivo», dice la concejala”. Pub.

tablet. 15/02/11; p. 55. Noun. “Los tablet, el 3D y los superteléfonos con sistema Android marcan tendencia”. Tablets. (Las) tabletas. *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*: (computer) (also tablet PC): ‘a small computer with a screen that you can write on using a special pen or that you can connect a keyboard to’ The DRAE has added this meaning as the 4<sup>th</sup> sense of the word “tableta”: ‘Dispositivo electrónico portátil con pantalla táctil y con múltiples prestaciones’.

‘tablets’. 07/01/11; p. V63. Noun. “La gran novedad tecnológica que ha traído este año son los ‘tablets’, ordenadores que se manejan a través de una pantalla táctil, sin teclado”. Tablets. (See above, tablet).

2. ‘gangster’ / gánster / gánsters:<sup>3</sup> the form which is faithful to the original one in relation to the spelling (maintaining its foreign appearance intact) is written with inverted commas. On the contrary, the orthographically adapted ones (even with the Spanish graphic accent) do not carry this mark. Therefore, since the latter are not perceived as alien words (thanks to the mentioned adaptations), they do not need these typographical symbols. The three instances found in this study seem to point to a correlation between these two factors. However, it can only be considered as a tendency, as further research would be necessary to arrive at any satisfactory conclusions on this issue.
3. ‘vip’/‘vips’/VIP: in this case, the occurrence without inverted commas is also capitalized (although there is no direct relationship between these two features). ‘vip’. 15/02/11; back page. Noun (DRAE). “Así lo dejó patente en su desfile ante la atenta mirada del cantante Wyclef Jean, ex de The Fugees, o alguno de los concursantes del programa de televisión ‘American’s next top model’ (el hermano norteamericano de ‘Supermodelo’), presentes entre los ‘vip’ de las primeras filas”. VIP (very important person). (See below, ‘vips’). ‘vips’. 08/02/11; p. V63. Noun. “Ante los cien millones de pares de ojos —incluidos los de ‘vips’ como Hugh Jackman, John Travolta, Jennifer

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<sup>3</sup> For the data on these words, see sections 3.2.1. and 3.3.2.

Aniston, Catherine Zeta-Jones y Michael Douglas, que pagaron más de 5.000 dólares por un asiento en el palco de lujo del Cowboys Stadium de Texas—, Aguilera confundió algunas frases”. VIPs. Personalidades. DRAE: “Del ingl. *vip*, acrón. de *very important person*, persona muy importante”. VIP. 09/03/11; p. V62. Adjective. “Los multimillonarios se dedican a sacar brillo a la tarjeta de crédito VIP con más alegría que nunca”. VIP (very important person). (See above, ‘vip’).

### 3.2. ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIATION

#### 3.2.1. *Spelling variation*<sup>4</sup>

1. *bikini / biquini; magazines / magacines; puzzle / puzle*: the former maintains the English form while the latter has been adapted to the Spanish orthographic rules.

bikinis. 23/12/10; p. V65. Noun. “Se las prometía felices, con la maleta a reventar de bikinis”. Bikinis. As we can read in the DRAE, this swimming costume comes from the English word “bikini,” which is named after Bikini, an atoll belonging to the Marshall Islands. This dictionary also states that there is an influence of the prefix ‘bi-’ due to the allusion to the two pieces. In relation to the gender this word adopts, although the most extended one is the masculine, the DRAE indicates that in Argentina it is employed as a feminine word. It is interesting to note that all these data appear in the entry “bikini,” while “biquini” simply refers us to the non-adapted form.

biquini. 27/01/11; p. V58. Noun. “La llegada del pequeño Bardem —o más bien Encinas, que es en realidad el apellido paterno— ensombrecería a la principal ‘exclusiva’ de la temporada pasada: las imágenes de Sara Carbonero en biquini pasando sus románticas vacaciones con Iker Casillas tras el Mundial de Sudáfrica”. Bikini. (See above, bikinis).

magacines. 18/02/11; p. 69. Noun. “Al mejor conductor de magacines optan Florentino Fernández, Pablo Motos y Ana Rosa Quintana; y ‘GH’, ‘Pekín Express’ y ‘Esta casa es una ruina’ pelean por el de mejor reality”. Magazines. Programa de entrevistas y variedades (*Oxford Living Dictionaries*). DRAE: “magacín”: “Del ingl. *magazine*, y este del fr. *magasin*”. In this dictionary, the entry “magacín” refers us to “magacín”.

magazines. 01/06/11; p. 69. Noun. “Puso en marcha los 40 principales, se atrevió con la música de vanguardia en TVE en ‘Último Grito’, dirigió programas como ‘Estudio Abierto’ o ‘Fiesta’, ha presentado magazines y publicado la friolera de cuarenta libros”. Magazines. (See above, magacines).

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<sup>4</sup> To know more about orthographic variation, see Diéguez Morales.



puzles. 07/02/11; p. V71. Noun. “Hoy haré huelga de ‘on-off’, vuelvo a las maquinillas desechables, a los puzles y al teléfono fijo”. Puzzles. Rompecabezas. DRAE: “puzle”: “Del ingl. *puzzle*”. See Lorenzo Criado (355).  
puzzle. 24/05/11; p. 33. Noun. “Les vino a decir que se iba a tomar dos o tres días para encajar el gran puzzle de la compleja gestión municipal”. Puzzle. Rompecabezas. (See above, puzles).

2. *hippie* / *hippy*: both are employed in the donor language. In Spanish, although at present the most frequent ways of writing this word are still the original English ones (as the following two examples illustrate), when any of them is looked up in the DRAE, this dictionary refers us to the form “jipi.” According to Rodríguez González (281), when proposing variants which are not based on real use, you run the risk of not being followed and having to backtrack.

hippie. 16/02/11; p. V61. Adjective. “Pero es que la obra recrea la época hippie, con sus melenas y sus porros, que aunque no quiera alguno, existieron, y no sería bien recibido que los personajes aparecieran con cigarrillos mentolados de plástico de farmacia, o si me apuran, con parches de nicotina”. Hippie.  
hippy. 09/02/11; p. V60. Adjective. “La señora iba de hippy e incluso fabricaba baratijas que luego vendía por las calles, pero a su primogénito lo matriculó en un colegio elitista de Roma, el St. George British International School”. Hippy.

3. *‘gangster’* / *gánster*: the first case remains faithful to the original spelling and is written in simple inverted commas (see below), whereas the second one has undergone a process of adaptation to the Spanish rules and appears without any mark indicating its foreign origin.

‘gangster’. 22/12/10; p. 72. Noun. “No propongo que nos matemos a tiros en carreteras poco transitadas ni que recuperemos las tradiciones ‘gangster’”. Gangster. In the DRAE we find the word “gánster,” from the English term “gangster”. See Lorenzo Criado (34, 221, 358).

gánster. 21/01/11; p. 34. Noun. “No se sabe qué le dijeron en privado, pero en las entrevistas previas Reid se refirió a él como «dictador», mientras que la congresista republicana Dana Rohrabachner le llamó «Gobierno de nazis» y «régimen de gánster que asesina a su propia gente»”. Gangster. (See above, ‘gangster’).

### 3.2.2. *Compounds written as two separated words, with a hyphen or as one word*

1. *online* / *online* / *on-line*: In this case, the Spanish language has adopted a variation that exists in English: the term can include a hyphen or it can appear as one word (see above, Sánchez Ibáñez).

online. 06/06/11; p. 49. Adjective. “Dentro de esta enorme tarea para reorganizar la defensa del copyright, la UE se ha decidido a intervenir en la lucha contra la piratería online”. Online. En línea, en Internet.



'online'. 27/01/11; p. 69. Adjective. "Los reguladores investigan y pleitean con Google, Facebook, Microsoft y otros para defender la privacidad en tiempos de máxima transparencia y donde la reputación 'online' marca una vida". Online. En línea, en Internet.

'on-line'. 03/02/11; p. V63. Adjective. "En España, tiendas 'on-line' de estos aparatos, como ZocoCity, aseguran que en estas Navidades «se ha disparado» su venta, aunque tampoco dan cifras". On-line. En línea, en Internet.

2. *'playoff' / 'play off'*

'playoff'. 27/06/11; p. 39. Noun. "Su manía: coger el barco antes de cada 'playoff'". Playoff. (Partido de) desempate. See Lorenzo Criado (342). *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*: 'an extra game in a competition played between teams or competitors who have both got the same number of points, in order to decide who wins the competition'. The DRAE does not record this Anglicism.

'play off'. 29/06/11; p. 13. Noun. "POLOS 'PLAY OFF', FUNDA NÓRDICA Y PIJAMA NIÑO de tu equipo" [capital letters in the original text]. Playoff. Eliminatoria. (See above, 'playoff').

### 3.2.3. *Capital letters*

*'vip' / VIP*: The Real Academia Española recommends the employment of small letters when writing this word: "Debe evitarse su escritura con mayúsculas, habitual en inglés por su condición original de sigla" (*Diccionario panhispánico de dudas*—hereinafter, DPD—). However, in the press this practice has not permeated completely since we find cases like the second one: VIP.

### 3.2.4. *Graphic accent*

1. *'gangster' / gánster, gánsters*:<sup>5</sup> the form which is faithful to the original English one in relation to the spelling does not carry the graphic accent, whereas the variants that have been adapted in this respect have also adopted this Spanish element.
2. *marketing / márketing*: These two cases display an example of the adaptation of an English word to the Spanish language by means of the graphic accent. This fluctuation indicates that the word is undergoing a process of integration. Further research would be needed to establish which one is the most frequent nowadays and what the tendency showed by the evolution of their use in the last years is. The variation can be present in the recipient language for a long period of time.

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<sup>5</sup> For the data on these words, see sections 3.2.1. and 3.3.2.





marketing. 27/04/11; p. 58. Noun. “Carrozas y marketing para sacar lustre a la monarquía”. Marketing. Mercadotecnia. The Spanish equivalent *mercadotecnia* has not been a successful one (at least in Spain).  
márketing. 16/02/11; p. V63. Noun. “Ahí radica el secreto de su éxito, aseguran los expertos en moda y en márketing”. Marketing. Mercadotecnia. (See above, marketing).

### 3.3. MORPHOLOGICAL VARIATION

#### 3.3.1. Gender

1. *un fan / una fan*: there is no change in the form of the word. These entries exemplify that this Anglicism is, as the DRAE states, a “nombre masculino y femenino”.<sup>6</sup>  
fan. 17/06/11; p. V68. Noun. “John Lennon cosechó 27.000 euros por dejar su dedicatoria en un ejemplar de su álbum ‘Double Fantasy’, 14.200 euros por una carta que escribió a mano a un fan y 12.000 por una lata de aluminio que dedicó a su hijo Julián”. Fan. Admirador, seguidor. DRAE: “Del ingl. *fan*, acort. de *fanatic*”.  
fan. 14/06/11; p. V63. Noun. “Soy una gran fan suya”. Fan. Admiradora, seguidora. (See above, fan).
2. *los tablet, los ‘tablets’*: As these examples show, at the beginning of 2011 this word was considered as masculine in Spanish; however, it is employed with feminine articles nowadays, probably due to the influence of its Spanish calque’s gender (“tableta”).<sup>7</sup>  
tablet. 15/02/11; p. 55. Noun. “Los tablet, el 3D y los superteléfonos con sistema Android marcan tendencia”. Tablets. (Las) tabletas. *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*: (computer) (also tablet PC): ‘a small computer with a screen that you can write on using a special pen or that you can connect a keyboard to’ The DRAE has added this meaning as the 4<sup>th</sup> sense of the word “tableta”: ‘Dispositivo electrónico portátil con pantalla táctil y con múltiples prestaciones’.  
‘tablets’. 07/01/11; p. V63. Noun. “La gran novedad tecnológica que ha traído este año son los ‘tablets’, ordenadores que se manejan a través de una pantalla táctil, sin teclado”. Tablets. (See above, tablet).

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<sup>6</sup> Masculine and feminine noun.

<sup>7</sup> As Dr. Martínez-Dueñas Espejo has accurately pointed out to me in an oral communication, the nowadays common word “Brexít”, which has been assigned the masculine article by the mass media, should actually be considered as feminine in Spanish, since “exit” corresponds to the Spanish feminine noun “salida”.



### 3.3.2. Plural formation

1. *fans*. 19/11/10; p. 51. Noun. “Con las fans alguna vez hemos pasado miedo; no solo por nosotros, sino por su integridad”. Fans. Admiradores/as, seguidores/as. (See above, fan). In this case, Spanish has taken the English plural form instead of forming the plural according to its own rules, i.e., adding ‘-es’ to the nouns and adjectives which end in vowel + ‘n’, e.g. *pan/panes; flan/flanes*.
2. *gánsters*. 23/12/10; p. 73. Noun. “Además, suyo es solo el piloto de la superproducción de gánsters”. Gangsters. (See above, ‘gangster’). Considering the plural form, in this case the original one has been adopted instead of following the Spanish rules. Nevertheless, although its plural has been formed according to the source language pattern, the word is not accompanied by the inverted commas (maybe because, even though it is not morphologically integrated, the use of the graphic accent as well as the simplification of the hardly pronounceable alien consonant cluster ‘-ngs-’ makes it partially—orthographically— adapted to Spanish).
3. *‘hackers’*. 08/03/11; p. 36. Noun. “Y detalló que solo las informaciones «relacionadas con el G-20 interesaban a los ‘hackers’»”. Hackers. Piratas informáticos (*Oxford Living Dictionaries*). In this instance, the plural has been formed by the addition of an ‘-s’, following therefore the English rules.
4. *pubs*. 13/12/10; p. 23. Noun. “Quien lo permite puede que en otros casos obligue a insonorizar con multas, con apercibimientos o con el cierre de locales, pubs, academias de baile...”. Pubs. It forms its plural by adding an ‘-s’ to the singular *pub*, whose final consonant (‘-b’) is not a Spanish but a foreign ending. The DPD explains that those nouns and adjectives which end in any consonant other than ‘-l’, ‘-r’, ‘-n’, ‘-d’, ‘-z’, ‘-j’, ‘-s’, ‘-x’, and ‘-ch’ should form their plural in ‘-s’ (e.g. *esnob*, pl. *esnobs*), except for a few exceptions like *club*, which admits two plural forms: *clubs* (as in the original English word) and *clubes* (which means an adaptation to the Spanish language by following its plural formation rules).
5. *radares*. 07/03/11; p. V69. Noun. “Pasen buen día y piensen que los radares solo hacen lo que les dicen, no tienen la culpa de nada”. Radars. It forms its plural following the Spanish rules. According to the DPD, those nouns and adjectives that end in a vowel + ‘r’ should add ‘-es’ to their singular form. Lorenzo Criado (183): radio detecting and ranging. American neologism.
6. *rallys*. 09/02/11; p. 70. Noun. “Albert Llovera, el piloto de rallys que quedó paraplégico tras un accidente, presentará esta noche el libro que acaba de publicar, ‘No limits’, en el que reflexiona sobre la ausencia de límites cuando se cree en uno mismo”. Rallys. See Lorenzo Criado (57, 361). DRAE: *rally*: “Voz inglesa”. In this case, neither the original English plural form has been employed nor the Spanish rule has been observed (the former would be *rallies* whereas the latter would consist of adapting the final ‘-y’ to a Spanish ending in ‘-i’ and then adding an ‘-s’). Normatively, the DPD defends an adaptation of the singular term (“rally” > “rali”) whose plural would be “ralis”.



7. *sandwiches*. 01/03/11; p. 64. Noun. “Compramos unos sandwiches y un par de refrescos”. Sandwiches. Emparedados de pan de molde. DRAE: “sándwich”: “Del ingl. *sandwich*, y este de J. Montagu, 1718-1792, cuarto conde de Sandwich, de quien se cuenta que se alimentó de esta clase de comida para no abandonar una partida de cartas”. Although in this case the word follows the Spanish rules in the formation of the plural (nouns and adjectives ending in ‘-ch’, which are all foreign terms, remain invariable or add ‘-es’ to the singular form), “sandwiches” is not a completely adapted word (it lacks the Spanish graphic accent); therefore it actually adopts the English plural form.
8. ‘*tablets*’ / *los tablets*:<sup>8</sup> In these two examples we discover the variation that exists when using this word in plural: on the one hand, the original English plural form is adopted (*tablets*), whilst on the other hand, the term is employed in its singular form and is complemented by the Spanish definite plural article *los*.<sup>9</sup>
9. ‘*vips*’ / *los ‘vip*’: The DPD (2005) recommends the use of the form *vips*. ‘*vips*’. 08/02/11; p. V63. Noun. “Ante los cien millones de pares de ojos —incluidos los de ‘vips’ como Hugh Jackman, John Travolta, Jennifer Aniston, Catherine Zeta-Jones y Michael Douglas, que pagaron más de 5.000 dólares por un asiento en el palco de lujo del Cowboys Stadium de Texas—, Aguilera confundió algunas frases”. VIPs. Personalidades. DRAE: “Del ingl. *vip*, acrón. de *very important person*, persona muy importante”. ‘*vip*’. 15/02/11; back page. Noun (DRAE). “Así lo dejó patente en su desfile ante la atenta mirada del cantante Wyclef Jean, ex de The Fugees, o alguno de los concursantes del programa de televisión ‘American’s next top model’ (el hermano norteamericano de ‘Supermodelo’), presentes entre los ‘vip’ de las primeras filas”. VIP (very important person). (See above, ‘vips’).

### 3.3.3. Plural adjectives without ‘-s’/‘-es’ (as in English)

Las tradiciones ‘gangster’ (the gangster traditions): This specific case seems to be an exception, since the three results obtained by searching for “las tradiciones gangster” in Google correspond to the example found in *Ideal* (see above, section 3.2.1.). It would be interesting to look for this pattern in a wider corpus in order to find out whether it is spreading or not.

<sup>8</sup> For the data on these words, see sections 3.1.1. and 3.3.1.

<sup>9</sup> This pluralisation of the article while the Anglicism is kept invariable has also been recorded by Diéguez Morales.



### 3.3.4. *Word class*

'*vip*', '*vips*' (noun) / *VIP* (adjective)<sup>10</sup>: For the examples found in the corpus, see sections 3.2.3. and 3.3.2. The DPD provides us with the following piece of information about this Anglicism:

Voz tomada del inglés *vip* —*v*[ery] *i*[mportant] *p*[erson]—, que se usa, como sustantivo común en cuanto al género [...], con el sentido de 'persona socialmente relevante que recibe un trato especial en ciertos lugares públicos'; como adjetivo significa 'de los vips' [...]. Aunque es anglicismo admisible, se recomienda usar con preferencia, para el sustantivo, la voz española tradicional *personalidad*.

## 4. CONCLUSION

In this piece of research, I provide a classification of three different types of variation (which are subdivided into nine sub-kinds) that characterise Anglicisms currently employed in the Spanish language. This study brings about an in-depth treatment of the phenomenon of variation in relation to the English loanwords employed in the Spanish non-specialised press, since it covers a wide range of kinds of variation —rather than focusing only on one or a few types, as some previous pieces of research do. To be able to establish the taxonomy displayed above, I have followed an inductive method: first, I have compiled a sample of Anglicisms presenting variants, which I have extracted from a Spanish local newspaper (the daily *Ideal*), and second I have carried out an analysis of these instances, what has allowed me to identify a series of different kinds of variation that characterise Anglicisms in the recipient language at hand.

This variation that exists in several formal aspects of many borrowings can only be appreciated when we collect examples of the real use of these words and analyse them in context. As I have commented upon above, the press is a perfect source for examining features related to the writing of Anglicisms: instability in the plural forms, variation in spelling, presence or absence of simple inverted commas, etc. Thus, the instances collected illustrate that the way in which a foreign word is written in Spanish may vary, reflecting this way some deeper phenomena, such as the stage of the integration process into the recipient language at which the word currently is.

This study, therefore, aims to display an introductory view on variation in relation to the Anglicisms employed in the Spanish contemporary press. A qualitative approach has been selected, since the purpose of this piece of research is to carry out a linguistic analysis of the different kinds of typographical, orthographic and morphological variation that are found in the Anglicisms arising in Spanish

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<sup>10</sup> Sánchez Ibáñez deals with the use of the variants *online/on-line/on line* as adjectives and as adverbs.



newspapers nowadays. A quantitative approach would, otherwise, exceed the scope of the present project. Nevertheless, the latter kind of study should be implemented in more in-depth investigations on this topic in order to reach sound conclusions in terms of trying to find out patterns in the way in which the different types of variation of Anglicisms in Spanish behave. For instance, an interesting issue would be to verify whether, as time goes by, the use of simple inverted commas with a certain loanword disappears, and whether it happens with or without a period of coexistence with the non-marked form. The best tool for carrying out these larger scale analyses are the corpora of the Spanish language available online, such as those compiled by the Real Academia Española and which can be freely consulted on the website [www.rae.es](http://www.rae.es): CORDE, CREA and CORPES XXI. As Oncins-Martínez (217) states, “[these] electronic resources can help us track down the occurrence of foreign usages more systematically and assess the extent of their presence in Spanish more accurately.”

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# WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT? MITIGATION IN SPANISH AND BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES

Isabel Íñigo-Mora  
Universidad de Sevilla

## ABSTRACT

The main goal of this paper is to analyse the mitigation strategies politicians use in parliament. We will compare the different strategies that two different head of states use in their speeches. Specifically, we will study the speeches uttered by Mr. Cameron (Ex-Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) and Mr. Rajoy (President of Spain). Both of them delivered speeches that dealt with, among other subjects, the European Council. When dealing with mitigation strategies, Fraser and Caffi say that there are “shields” that “dislocate,” “displace” or “de-focalize” the source of the utterance. These displacement strategies are related to any of the three basic components of the deictic expressions: the “actantial” and the spatio-temporal component. In this specific corpus, we will analyse the role of the first person plural pronouns as mitigation strategies. As we will see, in both cases we could observe a dislocation of the action but they go in different directions depending on the nationality of the head of the government. In the case of the British Ex-Prime Minister the dislocation is going inwards (House of Commons and British citizens) and in the case of the Spanish President is going outwards (EU).

KEYWORDS: mitigation strategies, political discourse, inclusive and exclusive “we,” parliament.

## RESUMEN

El objetivo principal de este trabajo es analizar las estrategias de mitigación que los políticos usan en el parlamento. Compararemos las diferentes estrategias que dos diferentes jefes de estado utilizan en sus discursos. Específicamente, estudiaremos los discursos pronunciados por el Sr. Cameron (Ex Primer Ministro del Reino Unido) y el Sr. Rajoy (Presidente de España). Ambos pronunciaron discursos que abordaron, entre otros temas, el Consejo Europeo. Cuando se trata de estrategias de mitigación, Fraser y Caffi dicen que hay «escudos» que «dislocan», «desplazan» o «desfocalizan» la fuente del enunciado. Estas estrategias de desplazamiento se relacionan con cualquiera de los tres componentes básicos de las expresiones deícticas: el *actantial* y el componente espacio-temporal. En este corpus específico, analizaremos el papel de los pronombres plurales de primera persona como estrategias de mitigación. Como veremos, en ambos casos podemos observar una dislocación de la acción pero van en diferentes direcciones dependiendo de la nacionalidad del jefe del gobierno. En el caso del Ex Primer Ministro británico la dislocación va hacia adentro (Cámara de los Comunes y ciudadanos británicos) y en el caso del presidente español va hacia fuera (la UE)

PALABRAS CLAVE: estrategias de mitigación, discurso político, «nosotros» inclusivo y exclusivo, parlamento.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

In real life, our utterances are usually modulated. This is something we cannot negate, when we are not sure about something or when we do not want to be rude or when we want to de-responsabilize ourselves of an action, we weaken the operation that is taking place.

Some authors (Brown and Levinson; Haverkate) agree that the main reason for this modulation or mitigation process is facework but others (Caffi) claim that this is a cognitive strategy in which an “actant” goes through a de-responsabilization process. Additionally, mitigation strategies increase the emotive distance because there is uncertainty regarding “‘Who is speaking?’ ‘On whose behalf is one speaking?’ ‘And why does s/he need to hide his/her voice behind another’s voice?’” (Caffi 904).

As mentioned before, this is something very common in “real life,” but in this paper what we want to know is to what extent this is the same in a scenario in which there is a very high level of adversity and a constant dialectic battle. Specifically, we will focus on the parliament because in this context mitigation would acquire a special relevance. This is the reason why we selected this specific situation. But we wanted to try to discover if these mitigation strategies are similar or different depending on the cultural traits of the person who is using them. For this reason, the main goal of this study is to reveal what kind of displacement strategies (specifically in relation the role of the first person plural pronouns as mitigation strategies) each head of state prefers to use in their parliamentary speeches. This study will focus on possible differences and similarities.

## 2. MITIGATION

Mitigation could be defined as a pragmatic, cognitive and linguistic behaviour the main purpose of which is reduction of vulnerability (Martinovski). We can approach mitigation from a narrow or from a broad perspective. In the narrow sense, it is viewed as part of the wider concept of politeness. In this case, mitigation would refer to the set of politeness strategies speakers use to attenuate the impact of face threatening acts (FTAs), more specifically, illocutionary directive acts. According to Brown and Levinson, people use politeness strategies in order to help preserve each other’s face needs (avoid face threatening acts) and mitigation would be one of these strategies. But in the broad sense, mitigation is taken as “the result of the weakening of interactional parameters such as cognitive commitment, emotive involvement, topical salience, etc.” (Caffi 48). In other words, mitigation is approached as a type of strategic behaviour in a goal-oriented activity in which several interactional variables (e.g. commitment to proposition, degree of (in)directness of the illocution, endorsement of a social role, emotive involvement, topical salience, etc.) are taken into account (Caffi).

Mitigating operations may have two different abstract scopes. On the one hand, it is the proposition (producing vagueness) and, on the other hand, the illocution (producing indirectness). But a third type may be added: the deictic origin



of the utterance (Bühler). This one is related to the detachment of the utterance from its actual utterance source. This is very common in impersonal constructions when used as mitigating devices. According to Caffi (647) “Deleting the source of the utterance and assigning it to other sources is a very frequent strategy by which speakers avoid taking responsibility.” Taking into account these three types of scopes, Caffi extends Lakoff’s metaphor and talks about “bushes,” “hedges” and “shields.” With different labels, Caffi covered the same concepts as Prince, Fraser, and Bosk. Whereas “bushes” and “hedges” are linked to the proposition and the illocution of the utterance, “shields” are related to the “I-here-now.” For example, when somebody uses a “deictic shield,” s/he is negating the “I,” “to you” and “in this situation.” But when someone uses bushes or hedges, s/he is modifying the “am saying something” component. Fraser (20-21) explains Caffi’s classification in the following way:

**BUSHES**, which are lexical expressions that reduce the commitment to the propositional content of the utterance and may introduce vagueness in the interpretation of the utterance and affect the truth value of the proposition.

**HEDGES**, which are lexical expressions whose scope is the illocutionary force of the speech act and attenuates the strength of the force by reducing the speaker’s commitment.

**SHIELDS**, which are devices to avoid the self-ascription to the utterance and realize an overall shift of responsibility, for instance by introducing a different speaker or by deleting the deictic origin of the utterance.

In contrast to bushes and hedges, there are no explicit operators of mitigation in shields. As Caffi (889) explains, in the case of shields,

the weakening operation takes place at a deeper, more abstract level: for instance, it affects syntax, as in passive transformations, or morphology, as in the shift from first-person singular pronouns to other person pronouns.

In order to fully understand the deep sense of shields, we have to keep in mind words such as “dislocated,” “displaced,” “backgrounding,” “de-focalization” etc. of the source of the utterance. For this reason, we can also talk of a “de-responsabilisation” process of the action because the actor of the action is displaced and this is something that proves very advantageous in the case of political discourse. As Caffi (903) puts it “de-responsabilization is also at the core of mitigation” because all these strategies “seem to entail the benefit of avoiding the direct assumption of responsibility for the utterance” and so the ‘actant’ defines the relationship as one where the speaker is not in control. Additionally, linked to this “de-responsabilisation” there is an increase of the emotive distance because there is uncertainty regarding “Who is speaking?” “On whose behalf is one speaking?” or “And why does s/he need to hide his/her voice behind another’s voice?” (Caffi). In other words, when somebody uses a deictic shield s/he somehow “leaves the field” and disappears and so s/he weakens part of his/her responsibility. These displacement strategies are related to any of the



three basic components of the deictic expressions: the “actantial” (i.e. the source of the utterance act) and the spatio-temporal component. In the first case, we can find examples where the subject has been deleted, or impersonal sentences, or agentless passive sentences or inclusive “we.” For example, when a mother says to her son “we have to eat everything” the mother is including herself in the action and so she is reducing part of her son’s obligation because that obligation becomes a ‘shared’ obligation. In that way, a directive becomes a “mitigated directive.” Therefore, the directive is not something I (as an “actant”) am ordering you to do, it is something we both have to do. So, the mother, instead of saying something like “I’m ordering you to eat everything,” she says “we have to eat everything.” According to Haverkate (517) the use of this inclusive first-person plural pronoun “is a strategical device employed by speakers who aim to avoid making the impression of imposing their point of view upon their interlocutors [...] the hearer shares the responsibility for the statement effect.” Haverkate calls this type of first-person plural reference “pseudo-inclusive” and its perlocutionary effect is to de-emphasize the role of the speaker by involving the hearer in the action. Haverkate distinguishes between the “*pluralis modestiae*” and the “*pluralis sociativus*.” The difference is that the first type of pseudo-inclusive “we” takes place in assertive utterances and the second in directives. The first one serves to protect the speaker’s positive face (Brown and Levinson) and the second reflects the intention of the speaker to create a symbolic form of in-group solidarity. The “*pluralis sociativus*” is normally involved in asymmetrical relations such as those holding between parents and children, teachers and students or doctors and patients. Haverkate (519) explains that this pseudo-inclusive reference is associated with three types of mitigating strategies:

- I. It expresses modesty on the part of the speaker.
- II. It reflects a form of in-group solidarity by suggesting that the hearer shares the point of view put forward by the speaker.
- III. It implies the speaker’s symbolic solidarity with the hearer in directive types of interaction where the former has a superior position with respect to the latter.

In rhetoric, when we substitute the first person pronoun with other personal pronouns that is called “enallage of persons” (Caffi; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca). But in psychology, the closest category to shields are the so-called avoidance strategies (Lewin). Hamilton and Mineo (3) define equivocation as “the intentional use of imprecise language.” Bavelas, Black, Chovil and Mullett (28) observe that “equivocation is non-straightforward communication; it appears ambiguous, contradictory, tangential, obscure or even evasive.” These authors also claim that:

although an individual equivocates, he or she is not the cause of equivocation. Rather, equivocation is the result of the individual’s communicative situation. Equivocation is avoidance; it is the response chosen when all other communicative choices in the situation would lead to negative consequences. (Bavelas *et al.* 54)



In other words, people tend to equivocate because they find themselves immersed in what Bavelas *et al.* term an avoidance-avoidance conflict (referred to by Bull as a communicative conflict), in which they are confronted with a question to which all the possible replies may have negative consequences, but where, nevertheless, a reply is expected.

Bavelas *et al.* use Haley's model as a means of measuring equivocation. According to this principle, a message should contain four basic elements of interpersonal communication: I (sender) am saying this (content) to you (receiver) in this situation (context). Bavelas *et al.* (33) explained these elements as follows:

- (1) Sender: To what extent is the message the speaker's own opinion?
- (2) Content: How clear is the message in terms of what is being said?
- (3) Receiver: To what extent is the message addressed to the other person?
- (4) Context: To what extent is this a direct answer to the question?

Equivocation is assumed to occur when one or more of these elements is/are incongruent or their meaning is obscured.

### 3. PRONOMINAL SELECTION

According to Karapetjana (43) "the way politicians speak and present themselves is a part of their personality and a way to show themselves as individuals, and so are pronominal choices." The use of personal pronouns is a key topic in linguistics and psychology in general and in political discourse in particular. For this reason, many scholars have carried out very interesting studies on this topic (Bello; Bramley; Brown and Gilman; de Fina; Fetzer; Fetzer and Bull; Goddard; Íñigo-Mora; Moberg and Göran; Pennebaker; Petersoo; Proctor and Wen-Su; and Steffens and Haslam).

There are two main characteristics which define pronouns: (1) they are always political in the sense that they always imply relations of power; and (2) they are always involved in struggles over representation (Pennycook 175). This is the reason why they represent one of the main rhetorical tools used by politicians. As Wilson and Zupnick explain, pronouns are far from being categorical, their use depends on their context of production and, obviously, the speaker's intentions. The scope of reference of pronouns can vary depending on the speaker's purpose, and this turns out to be one of the major tools of persuasion used by politicians. Zupnick (340) declares that the fact that there are several potential referents for the indexicals: "works to the advantage of political speakers as hearers may choose to include themselves as members of the class of referents, potentially bringing about an adoption or at least cognizance of the speaker's perspective."

According to Wilson (76):

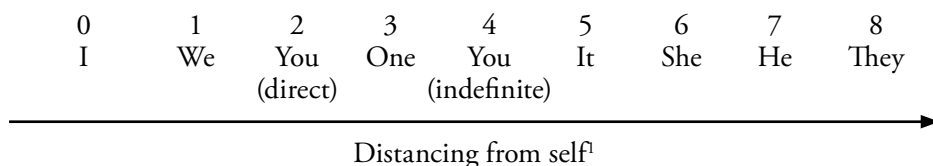
With such manipulative possibilities provided by the pronominal system as it operates in context, it is not surprising to find that politicians make use of pronouns



to good effect: to indicate, accept, deny or distance themselves from responsibility for political action; to reveal ideological bias; to encourage solidarity; to designate and identify those who are supporters (with us) as well as those who are enemies (against us); and to present specific idiosyncratic aspects of the individual politician's own personality.

For these reasons, we can affirm that there is a close connection between the use of personal pronouns and discursive strategies. Politicians use the pronoun system to indicate their solidarity-inclusion within and, at the same time, their opposition-exclusion from specific ideological groups or political parties. This idea has also been expressed by Maitland and Wilson (1987), they explain that “differing political parties make use of the same system to express not only their own ideological views, but also their opposition to the ideological views of those others they may disagree with.” (Maitland and Wilson 495).

Unlike nouns, personal, possessive, and reflexive pronouns have distinctions of person. Taking into account the different meanings of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns, Rees developed a general scale of pronominal distancing which represented the relationship between distancing strategies and the pronoun system:



As Maitland and Wilson (504-5) argue, this scale has no normative value. They also argue that:

it is useful for representing idiosyncratic variation in pronominal variation. We would predict, for example, that individuals who construe the world in similar ways, that is, have the same ideology and belief system, would exhibit similar patterns of pronominal choice.

These authors analysed the speeches of three different political leaders (M. Thatcher<sup>2</sup>, Kinnock<sup>3</sup> and M. Foot<sup>4</sup>) and discovered important similarities between Kinnock and Foot and differences between Kinnock/Foot and Thatcher.

According to Fortanet (51), “In the negotiation of meaning that is always present between the person issuing a message and the person receiving the message one of the key elements is the reference of the personal pronouns.” And this

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<sup>1</sup> 0 and 8 represent any selectional choice closest and furthest from the self.  
<sup>2</sup> Conservative Party leader.  
<sup>3</sup> Labour Party leader.  
<sup>4</sup> Labour Party leader.



strategic use of the pronoun system is specially interesting in the case of the first and second person pronouns because of their implications for both participants in the speech event.

Two of the main uses of the personal pronoun “we” are the exclusive “we” and the inclusive “we.” Whereas the first one excludes the hearer (so “we” = “I” + my group), the second includes it (so “we” = “I” + “you”). Exclusive “we” represents a way of distancing, both from the hearer and from what the speaker is saying and it is normally associated with power. Because of this dichotomy, Pennycook (175) describes this pronoun as a pronoun of “solidarity and rejection” and “communality and authority” (ibid.: 176).

Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (350-1) distinguish up to eight different uses of “we.” These are:

- (a) Generic: it is an “enlarged” inclusive “we” which may include the whole human race.
- (b) Inclusive authorial: it is used in serious writing and seeks to involve the reader in a joint enterprise.
- (c) Editorial: it is used by a single individual in scientific writing in order to avoid an egoistical “I.”
- (d) Rhetorical: it is used in the collective sense of “the nation,” “the party.” It may be viewed as a special type of generic “we.”
- (e) To refer to the hearer (= you): it is normally used by doctors when talking to a patient and by teachers when giving instructions to students. It is an inclusive “we” used to sound condescending in the case of doctors and non-authoritative in the case of teachers.
- (f) To refer to a third person (= s/he): For example one secretary might say to another with reference to their boss: “We’re in a bad mood today.”
- (g) Royal: it is virtually obsolete and is used by a monarch.
- (h) Nonstandard: plural “us” used for the singular “me”: “lend us a fiver.”

But as Bello (85) explains:

Choices of pronouns, for instance, do not merely pertain to deictic or anaphoric grammatical reference but to references that may relate to identities, group solidarity and the like with the sole aim of indirectly promoting and sustaining power.

For this reason, a contrastive study will prove very interesting in determining possible differences and/or similarities in the way two head representatives of two different countries strategically use this personal pronoun.



## 4. METHOD

The texts selected for analysis comprise two different debates which took place at the House of Commons (British Parliament) and the *Congreso de los Diputados* (Spanish Parliament) respectively. Both of them are delivered by the highest representative of the government, in the first case the British Ex-Prime Minister David Cameron and in the second case the president of the Spanish government Mariano Rajoy. Both of them deal, among other subjects, with the European Council. Both of them took place in similar dates: 1<sup>st</sup> September (British Parliament) and 9<sup>th</sup> July (*Congreso de los Diputados*) 2014. And the length of both of them is very similar: 13'29" (2,237 words) and 18' (2,585 words) respectively.

In the case of the British corpus, the text is an oral statement delivered by Mr. Cameron in the House of Commons on the EU Council, security and the Middle East. At the meeting of EU leaders on 30 August, a new President of the European Council and a new EU High Representative were appointed. EU leaders also discussed the economy and the situation in Ukraine, Gaza and Iraq. On Friday 29 August, the Government announced that the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre has changed the UK's threat level from international terrorism from substantial to severe, in response to developments in Iraq and Syria.

Oral statements are made after Question Time (or at 11am on a Friday) and after any Urgent Questions. Statements normally relate to matters of policy or government actions. At the end of a statement, MPs can respond or question the government minister on its contents. In this case, Mr. Edward Miliband (Labour Leader), responded to the statement on behalf of the Opposition.

As regards the Spanish corpus, it is an initiative in which there is a plenary appearance of the Government in order to inform about the European Council that took place on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Members of the Cabinet, at their own request or by a resolution of the Bureau of Congress and the Board of Spokesmen, shall appear before the full House or any of the committees to report on a given matter, in this case the European Council. Following the oral explanation by the Government, the representatives of each parliamentary group may speak for ten minutes to make their positions known, put questions or make remarks, which shall be answered by the Government, without subsequent voting. In exceptional cases, the Speaker may, in agreement with the Bureau and after having consulted the Board of Spokesmen, allocate time for Members to put succinct questions or request clarifications on the information furnished. To this end, the Speaker shall fix a maximum number or duration of speeches.

As it was previously mentioned, the personal pronoun that will be analysed is the first personal plural pronoun "we." First of all, we looked for all the forms ("we," "our," "us" or "nosotros," "nuestro" or just the Spanish verbal inflection form for the second person plural pronoun) and distributed them according to the scope of reference of the pronoun; that is, if it was exclusive, inclusive or any other possibility. We arrived at the following classification:



TABLE 1. SCOPES OF REFERENCE OF FIRST PERSON PLURAL PRONOUN “WE”

| Scope of reference |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Inclusive          | The Head of the Government + the House      |
| Exclusive          | The Head of the Government + the Government |
|                    | The Head of the Government + the EU Council |
| Generic            | All British or Spanish citizens             |

We finally arrived at four different possibilities which were coded in the following way:

- The Head of the Government + the House (1)
- The Head of the Government + the Government (2)
- The Head of the Government + the EU Council (3)
- All British or Spanish citizens (4)

In this way, codes (2) and (3) were two different types of exclusive reference and codes (1) and (4) two different types of inclusive reference.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In tables 1 and 2 we can see all the results we obtained after having analysed both the English and the Spanish corpora:

TABLE 2. FIRST PERSON PLURAL PRONOUNS IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT

| First Person Plural Pronouns |                      |    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----|----------------------|
| Exclusives                   | Inclusive (1)        | 43 | 50.59% of 85         |
|                              | + the Government (2) | 20 | 23.53% of 85         |
|                              | + the EU Council (3) | 2  | 2.35% of 85          |
|                              | Generic (4)          | 20 | 23.53% of 85         |
| TOTAL                        |                      | 85 | 3.78% OF 2,237 WORDS |

TABLE 3. FIRST PERSON PLURAL PRONOUNS IN THE SPANISH PARLIAMENT

| First Person Plural Pronouns |                      |    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----|----------------------|
| Exclusives                   | Inclusive (1)        | 10 | 21.7% of 46          |
|                              | + the Government (2) | 4  | 8.7% of 46           |
|                              | + the EU Council (3) | 27 | 58.7% of 46          |
|                              | Generic (4)          | 5  | 10.9% of 46          |
| Total                        |                      | 46 | 1.78% of 2,585 words |





The results show completely different behaviours, that is, different scenarios, different performances. The first result that calls our attention is the number of first person plural pronouns. Whereas we found 85 (3.78% of 2,237 words) in the English corpus, we only found 46 (1.78% of 2,585 words) in the Spanish one.

Moreover, if we group together all first person plural pronouns with any type of inclusive reference (i.e. codes 1 and 4) we obtained a total of 15 (32.6% of 46) in the case of the Spanish data and 63 (74.1% of 85) in the case of the English one. In contrast, if we add codes (2) and (3) together (i.e. all exclusive references) we obtained a total of 31 (67.4% of 46) in the Spanish corpus and 22 (25.9% of 85) in the English one. This means that whereas Mr. Rajoy favours exclusiveness Mr. Cameron favours inclusiveness. For instance, when Mr. Cameron is talking about the growing threat of ISIL in Iraq and Syria (one of the topics dealt with in the EU Council) he says:

But I have said all along that there should not be a knee-jerk reaction or the introduction of sweeping new blanket powers that would ultimately be ineffective. That is not what those who work so hard to keep us safe actually want. They want a targeted approach that reflects a forensic focus on the threat we face and that protects their operational independence and decision making. To achieve this, there are two key areas where we need to strengthen our powers to fill specific gaps in our armoury: preventing suspects from travelling; and dealing decisively with those already here who pose a risk. I want to mention both briefly.

In this extract, Mr. Cameron uses five inclusive first person plural forms of “we” when talking about something so delicate as the safety and armoury of the UK. He does not say that he, as head of the government, is going to strengthen the powers of the UK. Instead of that, he shares that responsibility and says “we need to strengthen our powers.” He is avoiding the direct assumption of responsibility of the utterance. As it has been previously stated, the “actant,” in this case Mr. Cameron, defines the relationship as one where the speaker is not in control. He “leaves the field” weakening part of his responsibility. Additionally, he avoids making the impression of imposing his point of view upon his citizens.

In contrast, in the following extract Mr. Rajoy uses three exclusive forms of the pronoun “we” when talking about the EU Council’s decisions:

Aunque nuestros países están saliendo de la crisis económica más profunda en una generación y los esfuerzos y las reformas están dando resultados, seguimos afrontando importantes retos: crecimiento lento, alto desempleo, inversión insuficiente, desequilibrios económicos, un alto nivel de deuda pública y la necesidad de incrementar la competitividad global. Todas nuestras economías necesitan seguir aplicando reformas estructurales. Les anuncio que seguiremos haciéndolo, pero también quiero destacar la necesidad de aprovechar al máximo la flexibilidad contenida en las normas del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento para impulsar la actividad económica, aumentar la inversión y crear más empleo y de mejor calidad.



*Even though **our** countries are leaving behind the most serious economic crisis in one generation and the efforts and the reforms are bringing out results, we are still facing important challenges: slow growth, a high level of public debt and the need to increase the global competitiveness. All **our** economies need to carry out structural reforms. I tell you that **we** will go on doing it, but I also want to highlight the need to make the most of the flexibility included in the norms of the Deal for the Stability and the Growth in order to launch the economic activity, to increase the investment and to create more employment and of a better quality.*

When Mr. Rajoy says “our countries,” “our economies” and “we will go on,” he is talking about all the countries and/or all the representatives of the countries in the EU. In contrast to Cameron’s speech, Mr. Rajoy’s focuses on an exclusive “we” that excludes the listener from the scope of reference. The scope of this “we” embraces all the countries of the EU and what Mr. Rajoy wants to transmit is that Spain is not alone in taking decisions and that these decisions are not his own decision but rather the decisions of all the representatives of the EU. There is something even more important than this, what Mr. Rajoy really wants to do is to make us see that all these problems are not Spain’s problems but rather the EU’s problems. Therefore, in a way, we can also say that he is sharing the responsibility of the actions but in a different way. The shield that Mr. Rajoy is using is the shield of the EU rather than the shield of including the listener in the scope of reference of the personal pronoun. So, Mr. Rajoy prefers to mitigate the action going outwards (EU) and Mr. Cameron going inwards (The House of Commons and the British citizens). Both of them are trying to mitigate the action defocalizing the actor of the action, but they go in different directions.

Another interesting issue has to do with the number of generic first person plural pronouns. In the case of the Spanish corpus, we only found 5 (10.9% of 46) and in the case of the English corpus we found a total of 20 (23.53% of 85). But it is even more curious to note that in the case of Mr. Rajoy, even though he is using a generic first person plural pronoun, he is always relating it to the EU. For example:

- ... no **podemos** sino congratularnos por el hecho de que esta primera prioridad señalada por el Consejo coincide con la de España ... (*... **we** cannot but congratulate **ourselves** for the fact that this first priority pointed out by the Council coincides with Spain’s priority...*)
- ... una Unión Europea capaz de defender **nuestros** valores y **nuestros** intereses. (*... an European Union which is able to defend **our** values and **our** interests ...*)
- ... será bueno no sólo para **nuestro** país sino para el conjunto de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea. (*... it will be good not only for **our** country but also for the all the citizens of the European Union.*)

In contrast, whenever Mr. Cameron uses a generic first person plural pronoun, he is always highlighting British “freedom of action” and individualism, in other words he is “looking inwards”:



- ... on the measures we are taking to defeat extremism and keep **our** country safe.
- I am deeply concerned by growing reports of anti-Semitism on **our** streets in Britain. Let me be clear: we must not tolerate this in **our** country.
- Britain will continue to consider what further role is in **our** national interests...

In fact, it is really interesting the radical different ways in which Mr. Cameron and Mr. Rajoy conclude their speeches. Mr. Rajoy ends his elocution in the following way:

Señoras y señores diputados, Europa sigue avanzando aunque a veces lo haga con menos intensidad de la que muchos querríamos; en cualquier caso, debemos conseguir otro salto adelante en su proceso de integración y cohesión. Los acuerdos que adoptamos en la pasada Cumbre de los días 26 y 27 de junio fijan un rumbo y unas prioridades, tanto para las instituciones europeas como para cada uno de los Estados miembros. España ha participado de manera activa con sus propuestas, que se han visto reflejadas en el texto final de las conclusiones. Europa tiene ahora una hoja de ruta para los próximos cinco años y España seguirá muy de cerca su cumplimiento, porque estamos plenamente convencidos de que eso será bueno no solo para nuestro país sino para el conjunto de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea.

*Ladies and gentlemen, Europe goes on making progress although, sometimes, it does so with less intensity than many of **us** would wish; anyway, **we** should get another jump ahead in this process of integrity and cohesion. The agreements **we** reached in the last Summit June 26 and 27 fix one direction and some priorities, both for the European institutions and for each of the State members. Spain has participated in an active way with the proposals which have been included in the final text of the conclusions. Europe has now a roadmap for the next five years and Spain will follow closely its fulfilment, because **we** are absolutely convinced that it will be good not only for **our** country but also for all European citizens.*

As we can see here the final words of Mr. Rajoy's speech are for Europe and for Spain's role in Europe. In this text, Mr. Rajoy uses three inclusive "we": "than many of us would wish," "we should" and "our country." But then he uses two exclusive "we": "we reached" and "we absolutely." Additionally, he also uses an agentless passive in the sentence "which have been included." Furthermore, in four instances the subjects are not "I" or "we" but "Europe" (twice) and "Spain" (twice). All this indicates that there is a tendency to mitigate the actions described in this speech. As we can see, the actant is displaced and Europe and the EU council occupies his place in most of the time. Finally, the very last four words of his speech are: "for all European citizens."

In contrast, Mr. Cameron concludes his speech in the following way:

**We** are proud to be an open, free and tolerant nation, but that tolerance must never be confused with a passive acceptance of cultures living separate lives or of people behaving in ways that run completely counter to **our** values. Adhering to British values is not an option or a choice; it is a duty for all those who live in these islands. So **we** will stand up for **our** values; **we** will, in the end, defeat this



extremism; and **we** will secure **our** way of life for generations to come. I commend this statement to the House.

As we can see here, Mr. Cameron uses up to six different first person plural referential expressions and absolutely all of them are examples of inclusive generic “we.” In this extract, Mr. Cameron is appealing to British values and British culture. So, he is sharing the responsibility of his actions with the rest of British citizens and it is assumed that all he does is for the sake of his country’s well-being. Again, there is a defocalization of the source of the utterance but this time with an “inward” projection towards British citizens. Finally, in contrast to Mr. Rajoy’s speech, his very last three words are “to the House,” again, a projection towards British Parliament.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

In the case of the English corpus, we could see that the most common shield that Mr. Cameron is using in order to weaken the operations taking place is an inclusive “we” in which he shares the responsibility of the action with the listener. In contrast, in the case of the Spanish corpus, Mr. Rajoy prefers to use an exclusive “we” in which he also displaces the source of the utterance but instead of sharing this responsibility with the listener he chooses to split this responsibility with the EU.

We could say that in both cases there is a dislocation of the action but they go in different directions depending on the nationality of the head of the government. In the case of the British Ex-Prime Minister the dislocation is going inwards (House of Commons and British citizens) and in the case of the Spanish President is going outwards (EU). The reasons for these two different behaviours could be due to either personal differences (different people, different rhetorical strategies) or cultural differences (different cultures, different styles or different topics). The corpus analysed in this study is very reduced and we cannot arrive at absolute conclusions but perhaps the “inland” character of the British culture and the Spanish permanent wish for being “part of Europe” can be key factors which could explain the differences encountered in this study. Nevertheless, this is something that should be better proved in further research.

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## APPENDIX

### BRITISH CORPUS

The Prime Minister (Mr. David Cameron): With permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement on this weekend's European Council, and on the measures we are taking to defeat extremism and keep our country safe.

First, on the Council, we agreed that Poland's Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, should serve as the next Council President, and Italian Foreign Minister, Federica Mogherini, should become the next High Representative for foreign and security policy. Donald Tusk made clear in his acceptance speech that he places a high priority on addressing Britain's concerns over the EU, and I look forward to working with him in his new role.

The Council spent most of its time focusing on the big international issues that have concerned us all this summer—the situations in Ukraine, Gaza, and the growing threat of ISIL in Iraq and Syria. I want to discuss each.

The presence of Russian soldiers on Ukrainian soil is completely unjustified and unacceptable. I met President Poroshenko before the Council on Saturday, and with our support he was invited to address the Council. The real cause of this conflict is Russia's refusal to recognise Ukraine's independence and sovereignty. Decisions on Ukraine's political and economic relationships should be for the people of Ukraine and no one else, but Russia appears to be trying to force Ukraine to abandon its democratic choices at the barrel of a gun. In the last two weeks we have seen a dramatic stepping up of Russian military support to the separatists in eastern Ukraine, including Russian troops fighting on the ground. We know from European history the grave danger of a nation state being threatened and undermined in that way, so the European Council agreed that the economic costs it has already imposed on Russia must be stepped up if Moscow persists with those indefensible actions.

The Council was clear that new sanctions measures will be drawn up within a week. I do not accept the suggestion that sanctions are not having an impact. Capital has flown out of Russia, banks are short of finance, and the Russian stock market and rouble have fallen significantly. We have to show real resilience and resolve. Russia needs to understand that if it continues on the current path, its relationship with the rest of the world will be radically different in the future.

On Israel and Gaza, we have all been deeply saddened by the violence there and the dreadful civilian suffering it has caused, particularly to innocent children. The Government have worked hard with our international partners to help bring about a sustainable ceasefire, and we warmly welcome the agreement reached in Cairo. The loss of life this summer has been truly appalling and the number of civilian casualties completely unacceptable—the life of a Palestinian child is worth the same as that of a child of any one of our nations—but support for a lasting settlement that includes a Palestinian state does not mean we should ever support the terrorist tactics of Hamas, which has rained down rockets on Israel and continually refused to accept ceasefires.

We will continue to support Israel and Israel's right to defend itself, but that does not mean we support every decision the Israeli Government take. Most recently, the appropriation of nearly 1,000 acres of land in the west bank near Bethlehem is utterly deplor-



able. Settlements are illegal under international law and will do nothing to create the kind of peace process we all want, and we urge the Israeli Government to reverse this decision.

While I understand the many strong emotions around this tragic conflict, I am deeply concerned by growing reports of anti-Semitism on our streets in Britain. Let me be clear: we must not tolerate this in our country. There can never be any excuse for anti-Semitism, and no disagreements on politics or policy should ever be allowed to justify racism, prejudice or extremism in any form.

On the terrorist threat that we face in the UK, we have all been shocked and sickened by the barbarism that has been witnessed in Iraq this summer: the widespread slaughter of Muslims by fellow Muslims; the vicious persecution of religious minorities, such as Christians and Yazidis; the enslavement and raping of women; and, of course, the beheading of American journalist James Foley, with the voice of what seems to be a British terrorist recorded on that video.

The European Council conclusions could not be clearer:

“The European Council believes that the creation of an Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria and the Islamist-extremist export of terrorism on which it is based, is a direct threat to”

every European country. On Friday, the independent joint terrorism analysis centre increased the threat level in the UK from substantial to severe, and we now believe that at least 500 people have travelled from Britain to fight in the region, in addition to 700 from France, 400 from Germany and hundreds more from countries including America, Canada, Austria, Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands and Australia.

The Council agreed to co-ordinate action in cracking down on those travelling to fight in Syria and Iraq and ensuring that all European countries are taking the necessary steps to tackle this problem of radicalisation. We should be clear about the root cause of this threat: a poisonous ideology of Islamist extremism that believes in using the most brutal forms of terrorism to force people to accept a warped world view and to live in a mediaeval state. And we should be clear that this has nothing to do with Islam, which is a religion observed peacefully and devoutly by more than a billion people and one that inspires countless acts of kindness every day.

To confront the threat of Islamist extremism, we need a tough, intelligent, patient and comprehensive approach to defeat the terrorist threat at source. We must use all the resources at our disposal —our aid, diplomacy and military— and we need a firm security response, whether that means military action to go after the terrorists, international co-operation on intelligence or uncompromising action against terrorists at home. Britain is already providing equipment directly to the Kurdish forces. We support US military air strikes against ISIL in Iraq, and we have secured a United Nations Security Council resolution to disrupt the flows of finance to ISIL, to sanction those seeking to recruit to ISIL and to encourage countries to do all they can to prevent foreign fighters from joining the extremist cause.

Alongside a tough security response, however, there must also be the right political response. We know that terrorist organisations thrive where there is political instability and weak or dysfunctional institutions, so we must support the building blocks of free and





open societies. In Syria, that means a political transition and an end to Assad's brutality, which has allowed ISIL to flourish. In Iraq, that must begin with a new and genuinely inclusive Government capable of uniting all Iraqis —Sunni, Shi'a, Kurd, Christian and others— against the shared threat.

The NATO summit in Wales this week will provide an opportunity for us to review the effectiveness of the international response so far and to discuss what more we should do to help the region overcome the ISIL threat. Britain will continue to consider what further role is in our national interests, including any further diplomatic, humanitarian or, indeed, military measures we might take.

Let me turn to how we address the terrorist threat at home. We have already taken a wide range of measures, including stopping suspects from travelling to the region by seizing passports, barring foreign nationals from re-entering the United Kingdom, legislating so that we can prosecute people for all terrorist activity, even where that activity takes place overseas, and bringing forward emergency legislation, for instance to safeguard our use of communications data. We have also stepped up our operational response, with a fivefold increase in Syria —related arrests and the removal of 28,000 pieces of extremist material from the internet this year alone, including 46 ISIL— related videos.

But I have said all along that there should not be a knee-jerk reaction or the introduction of sweeping new blanket powers that would ultimately be ineffective. That is not what those who work so hard to keep us safe actually want. They want a targeted approach that reflects a forensic focus on the threat we face and that protects their operational independence and decision making. To achieve this, there are two key areas where we need to strengthen our powers to fill specific gaps in our armoury: preventing suspects from travelling; and dealing decisively with those already here who pose a risk. I want to mention both briefly.

First, on stopping people travelling in the first place, passports are not an automatic right. The Home Secretary already has the discretion to issue, revoke and refuse passports under the royal prerogative if there is reason to believe that people are planning to take part in terrorist-related activity. When police suspect a traveller at the border, however, they are not currently able to apply for the royal prerogative and so have only limited stop-and-search powers. To fill that gap, we will introduce specific and targeted legislation providing the police with a temporary power to seize a passport at the border, during which time they will be able to investigate the individual concerned. This power will include appropriate safeguards and, of course, oversight arrangements.

The House should also be aware that our current royal prerogative powers are being challenged in the courts. I want to be clear: if there is any judgment that threatens the operation of our existing powers, we will introduce primary legislation immediately so that Parliament, not the courts, can determine whether it is right that we have this power. I can announce today that we will start preparing the primary legislation and consult Parliament on the draft clauses.

As well as stopping people going, we must also keep out foreign fighters who would pose a threat to the UK. We already have important powers to block return: we can deprive dual nationals of their citizenship to stop them returning; we can bar foreign nationals on the basis of the threat they pose; and we legislated, in the Immigration Act 2014, to allow stronger powers to strip citizenship from naturalised Britons. But, of course, these powers



do not apply to those who are solely British nationals, who could be rendered stateless if deprived of citizenship.

Some have said that we should deal with this gap by criminalising travel to certain individual countries or fundamentally changing our criminal burden of proof. The Government are clear that it would be wrong to deal with the gap by fundamentally changing core principles of our criminal justice system. But it is abhorrent that people who declare their allegiance elsewhere can return to the United Kingdom and pose a threat to our national security. We are clear in principle that what we need is a targeted, discretionary power to allow us to exclude British nationals from the UK. We will work up proposals on this basis with our agencies, in line with our international obligations, and discuss the details on a cross-party basis. We are also putting our long-standing arrangements on aviation security around the world on a statutory footing. Airlines will have to comply with our no-fly list arrangements, give us information on passenger lists and comply with our security screening requirements. If they do not do so, their flights will not be able to land in Britain.

Secondly, we need stronger powers to manage the risk posed by suspected extremists who are already in the United Kingdom. The Home Secretary can already impose terrorism prevention and investigation measures on security grounds, including overnight residence requirements and internet restrictions, but the intelligence agencies and the police believe they need stronger powers to impose further restrictions, and the independent reviewer of counter-terrorism legislation, David Anderson, agrees. So we will introduce new powers to add to our existing terrorism prevention and investigation measures, including stronger locational constraints on suspects under TPIMs, either through enhanced use of exclusion zones or through relocation powers.

Dealing with the terrorist threat is about not just new powers but how we combat extremism in all its forms. That is why we have a new approach to tackling radicalisation, focusing on all types of extremism, not just violent extremism. This has included stopping the funding of organisations that promote extremism, banning hate preachers and ensuring that every part of government, from schools and universities to prisons, is focused on beating the scourge of extremism. As part of this, we are now putting our de-radicalisation programme, Channel, on a statutory footing. Anyone subject to our strengthened terrorism prevention and investigation measures will be required to engage with the Prevent programme.

We are proud to be an open, free and tolerant nation, but that tolerance must never be confused with a passive acceptance of cultures living separate lives or of people behaving in ways that run completely counter to our values. Adhering to British values is not an option or a choice; it is a duty for all those who live in these islands. So we will stand up for our values; we will, in the end, defeat this extremism; and we will secure our way of life for generations to come. I commend this statement to the House.

## SPANISH CORPUS

Comparecencia del presidente del Gobierno ante el Pleno del Congreso de los Diputados para informar sobre el Consejo Europeo celebrado los días 26 y 27 de junio de 2014. Tiene la palabra el señor presidente del Gobierno.



El señor PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO (Rajoy Brey): Señor presidente, señoras y señores diputados, comparezco ante la Cámara para informar sobre la Cumbre de jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de la Unión Europea celebrada en Bruselas los pasados días 26 y 27 de junio. Uno de los asuntos allí tratados ha merecido especial atención, la decisión de proponer al Parlamento Europeo a Jean-Claude Juncker como candidato a la Presidencia de la Comisión Europea. Se trata de una decisión que compete al Consejo y que reviste un gran calado político. Los tratados por los que nos regimos en la Unión Europea atribuyen a la Comisión competencias muy importantes, especialmente el derecho de iniciativa legislativa o la ejecución de los acuerdos de las distintas instituciones; pero la trascendencia política de esta decisión no solo se circunscribe a la importancia de los asuntos que llevará adelante el presidente de la Comisión, ya que por primera vez se ha sometido al debate y la aprobación del Consejo un nuevo método de elección de la persona que ha de presidir la Comisión durante los próximos cinco años. En su origen los tratados preveían que tal designación debía llevarse a cabo por unanimidad. Piensen, señorías, las dificultades que eso acarrearía hoy en una Unión con veintiocho Estados miembros. Posteriormente, en 2011, el Tratado de Niza eliminó la unanimidad e introdujo la aprobación por mayoría cualificada. Por último, el Tratado de Lisboa, que entró en vigor el 1 de diciembre de 2009, incorporó en su artículo 17.7 dos requisitos más: por un lado, tener en cuenta el resultado de las elecciones europeas a la hora de dicha designación y, por otro, mantener las consultas apropiadas entre las distintas instituciones.

Durante la campaña para las pasadas elecciones europeas cada uno de los cinco principales partidos políticos europeos presentó un candidato propio a presidir la Comisión Europea. A la vista del resultado de las elecciones y dado que el Partido Popular Europeo fue la fuerza más votada y la que obtuvo más diputados en la Cámara de Estrasburgo, la Conferencia de Presidentes de los grupos políticos del Parlamento Europeo, celebrada el pasado 27 de mayo, acordó que el candidato del grupo más votado sería el primero en intentar formar la mayoría requerida. Este hecho fue recalcado durante el pasado Consejo Europeo por el presidente en ejercicio del Parlamento, el señor Pittella, cuando afirmó —cito textualmente—: Los presidentes de los cinco grupos políticos que representan más de quinientos diputados invitan al Consejo Europeo a respetar la letra y el espíritu de los tratados y, visto el resultado de las elecciones europeas, dar a Jean-Claude Juncker, cabeza de lista del partido más votado, el mandato para constituir una mayoría en el Parlamento Europeo. El pasado 27 de mayo, dos días después de las elecciones, los jefes de Estado y de Gobierno celebramos una cena informal en Bruselas y mandamos al presidente Van Rompuy para que iniciara las consultas oportunas. Tras haberse dirigido al Parlamento Europeo y haber consultado a los veintiocho miembros del Consejo, el presidente Van Rompuy constató que una gran mayoría respaldaba al mismo candidato que apoyaban la mayoría de los grupos políticos del Parlamento Europeo, es decir, a Jean-Claude Juncker. Este hecho quedó de manifiesto en la reunión del Consejo Europeo, de la que hoy estoy informando, cuando solo dos Estados miembros no votaron a favor de Jean-Claude Juncker. Se cumple así una demanda ampliamente extendida entre la ciudadanía europea, que quería una relación más directa entre sus representantes en el Parlamento Europeo y la figura que presidiera la Comisión. Con esta decisión el Consejo ha cumplido con el espíritu y la letra del tratado y además ha introducido un nuevo elemento que, en mi opinión, tiene también una importante carga política junto con la designación del señor Juncker. Aprobó un documento, la



llamada agenda estratégica para la Unión en tiempos de cambio, donde se establecen cinco ejes prioritarios que deberán guiar durante la legislatura que ahora comienza la acción de la Comisión Europea y del resto de las instituciones de la Unión. Esta agenda guiará a dichas instituciones en su programación, tanto anual como plurianual, y en su planificación legislativa. El Consejo Europeo se encargará de supervisar regularmente la aplicación de estas prioridades estratégicas.

Quiero destacar que es la primera vez que un candidato propuesto por el Consejo Europeo para presidir la Comisión recibe un plan de actuación de estas características. Los cinco ejes prioritarios de esta agenda son los siguientes. El primero está dedicado a conseguir una Unión que favorezca el empleo, el crecimiento económico y la competitividad. Como españoles, no podemos sino congratularnos por el hecho de que esta primera prioridad señalada por el Consejo coincida con la de España, el crecimiento económico y la creación de empleo. Aunque nuestros países están saliendo de la crisis económica más profunda en una generación y los esfuerzos y las reformas están dando resultados, seguimos afrontando importantes retos: crecimiento lento, alto desempleo, inversión insuficiente, desequilibrios económicos, un alto nivel de deuda pública y la necesidad de incrementar la competitividad global. Todas nuestras economías necesitan seguir aplicando reformas estructurales. Les anuncio que seguiremos haciéndolo, pero también quiero destacar la necesidad de aprovechar al máximo la flexibilidad contenida en las normas del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento para impulsar la actividad económica, aumentar la inversión y crear más empleo y de mejor calidad. Esta flexibilidad ya le fue aplicada a España a partir de 2012, lo que nos ha permitido compatibilizar el cumplimiento de nuestros compromisos de consolidación fiscal con el mantenimiento de servicios esenciales como la educación, la sanidad, las prestaciones por desempleo, etcétera. La agenda estratégica reconoce también que es fundamental contar con una unión económica y monetaria más sólida y resistente que constituya por sí misma un factor de estabilidad y de crecimiento. Por ello, hemos acordado reforzar la coordinación de las políticas económicas, la convergencia de nuestras economías y la solidaridad. En el documento de conclusiones el Consejo Europeo ha reconocido que, gracias a los esfuerzos de los Estados miembros, la corrección de los desequilibrios macroeconómicos ha progresado y que la situación de las cuentas públicas continúa mejorando.

En este contexto, este semestre europeo finaliza para España ostensiblemente mejor que el anterior. España está en la senda de la recuperación, como reconocen las recomendaciones específicas que para nuestro país ha emitido la Comisión. Esta ya no califica como excesivos los desequilibrios de nuestra economía; constata los progresos realizados por España en el cumplimiento de las recomendaciones del pasado año. Además, las recomendaciones específicas para España están plenamente en línea con nuestro programa nacional de reformas y nuestro programa de estabilidad que, como la propia Comisión reconoce, constituyen una agenda de reformas estructurales que mejoran la competitividad, apoyan la creación de empleo e impulsan el crecimiento. Para terminar con este primer eje de actuaciones, señorías, las prioridades que hemos establecido para los próximos cinco años son: aprovechar el potencial del mercado único en todas sus dimensiones; promover un clima de emprendimiento y abordar las necesidades de inversión; reforzar el atractivo de la Unión como lugar de producción e inversión; hacer de la unión económica y monetaria un factor de estabilidad y crecimiento, con una gobernanza más sólida de la zona euro. Permítanme afirmar en este punto que hoy ya nadie duda de la solidez e irreversibilidad del euro; aquellos



que lo hicieron no valoraron adecuadamente la firme voluntad política que existe detrás de la moneda única, que constituye una parte esencial del proyecto de integración europeo.

El segundo eje de la agenda estratégica está centrado en las personas, en conseguir una Unión capaz de crear las condiciones para la formación adecuada de todos los ciudadanos y en mantener unos sistemas de protección social justos y eficientes. Queremos que Europa sea un espacio de oportunidades, protegiendo la libertad de los trabajadores para moverse libremente, residir y trabajar en cualquier país de la Unión Europea, así como garantizar la equidad, combatiendo la evasión y el fraude fiscales.

El tercer eje de la agenda recoge una Unión de la energía que asegure una energía asequible, segura y sostenible, tanto para los ciudadanos como para las empresas europeas. Los acontecimientos geopolíticos y el impacto del cambio climático nos obligan a replantearnos nuestra estrategia en este terreno. La dependencia energética de Europa es excesiva, por ello España ha insistido en la necesidad de desarrollar aún más las interconexiones. Hemos hecho, junto con Portugal y Polonia, una contribución a este Consejo Europeo; me refiero a los asuntos relacionados con el clima y la energía. Hemos reconocido que nuestras políticas deben centrarse en completar el mercado interior de la energía y que esto exige el desarrollo de las interconexiones. Esta cuestión, la de las interconexiones, ha quedado recogida no solo en la agenda estratégica sino también en las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo. Hemos reafirmado nuestro compromiso para poner fin al aislamiento de cualquier Estado miembro de las redes del gas y electricidad mediante el aumento de la interconexión, y hemos fijado para el próximo Consejo Europeo de octubre la decisión sobre un nuevo objetivo de interconexión para 2030. Como ustedes saben, la Comisión ha propuesto que este objetivo sea del 15%, lo que representa un avance del 50 % sobre el objetivo vigente. Como se puede ver, avanzamos en esta materia, tal y como llevamos defendiendo desde hace mucho tiempo. Señorías, por razones medioambientales, estratégicas, de seguridad y de competitividad económica esta cuestión de la energía es una de las prioridades de nuestro país, y estoy convencido de que cada vez más socios europeos van a compartir con nosotros este planteamiento.

La cuarta prioridad de la agenda estratégica lleva por título Una Unión de libertad, seguridad y justicia. Estas cuestiones también están recogidas ampliamente en el documento de conclusiones. Se trata, como saben, de asuntos en los que nuestro país ha sido desde su incorporación a las Comunidades Europeas en el ya lejano 1986 uno de los más activos en el seno de la Unión. Por ello, en este momento en el que la Unión Europea tiene que preparar las grandes orientaciones del programa post-Estocolmo hemos querido contribuir con unas propuestas que remití en su día a los presidentes del Consejo Europeo y de la Comisión y que se encuentran ampliamente recogidas en el documento que aprobamos en la cumbre que hoy nos ocupa. Permítanme destacar algunas de estas propuestas. En primer lugar, la necesidad de contar en la Unión Europea con una política de inmigración, asilo y fronteras eficiente y bien gestionada; una política que esté guiada por los principios de solidaridad y distribución equitativa de la responsabilidad. En lo que respecta al espacio Schengen hemos reconocido la necesidad de contar con una gestión eficiente de las fronteras exteriores comunes de la Unión. Abogamos para ello por el refuerzo de la existencia operativa de Frontex y asimismo hemos acordado estudiar la creación de un sistema europeo de guardias de frontera. Permítanme destacar de manera muy especial la incorporación a las conclusiones por iniciativa española de la necesidad de reforzar la protección de las víctimas. Con este



reconocimiento europeo quiero poner de relieve una vez más nuestro compromiso con todas aquellas personas que han sufrido las consecuencias del terrorismo o la violencia de género.

Por último, como quinta prioridad en lo referido al ámbito exterior, la agenda propugna una Unión Europea fuerte en el mundo que sea referente de democracia, bienestar y prosperidad; una Unión Europea capaz de defender nuestros valores y nuestros intereses. En este orden de cosas el Gobierno español observa con inquietud una inestabilidad geopolítica creciente, en particular en las fronteras orientales y meridionales de la Unión. Por lo tanto, creemos que es crucial un enérgico compromiso de la Unión Europea en los términos desarrollados en la agenda.

En resumen, señorías, el próximo 15 de julio el Parlamento Europeo someterá a votación la propuesta del Consejo Europeo. Si obtiene una mayoría absoluta de sus miembros, Jean-Claude Juncker se convertirá en el próximo presidente de la Comisión Europea. De ser así, sería una buena noticia porque, como tuve ocasión de afirmar en la rueda de prensa posterior al Consejo Jean-Claude Juncker es una persona de gran experiencia, un europeísta convencido y un gran amigo de España.

Señorías, España tiene que recuperar la confianza de los ciudadanos. Para ello son necesarios certeza y estabilidad institucional capaces de resolver adecuadamente nuestros problemas. Abogo para que el próximo 15 de julio el apoyo a Juncker no se traduzca únicamente en un voto de investidura, sino que las fuerzas políticas que buscan el progreso de Europa sean capaces de acordar también una agenda de legislatura en línea con lo aprobado por el Consejo Europeo. De este modo lanzaríamos un mensaje de seguridad y de confianza a todos nuestros conciudadanos y mostraríamos de forma clara y rotunda que los cambios introducidos en el Tratado de Lisboa han representado un sustancial avance en el acercamiento entre las instituciones y las personas a las que sirven.

Señoras y señores diputados, en otro orden de cosas, en este Consejo Europeo se han firmado los acuerdos de asociación y libre comercio de la Unión Europea con Georgia, Moldavia y Ucrania, que supone un gran paso adelante en el acercamiento de dichos países a la Unión. En relación con la situación de Ucrania, permítanme recordar una vez más la posición de España basada desde el inicio de esta crisis en los siguientes puntos: la necesidad del respeto de la integridad territorial y de la soberanía de Ucrania, el apoyo político y económico a su Gobierno que se ha reiterado en este Consejo Europeo, la solidaridad con nuestros socios y aliados y el diálogo entre las partes como clave para la solución de la crisis. El Consejo Europeo ha expresado claramente su apoyo al Plan de paz anunciado por el presidente Poroshenko. Asimismo, se han reconocido otros pasos en la buena dirección, como son: la aceptación de dicho plan por el presidente Putin y la decisión del Consejo de la Federación Rusa de revocar la autorización para intervenir militarmente en Ucrania. El Consejo Europeo ha subrayado una serie de pasos concretos que deben darse en un futuro próximo. En función de su cumplimiento la Unión Europea reexaminará su posición y tomará las medidas oportunas. También entre los acuerdos adoptados en el Consejo quiero destacar tanto la concesión a Albania del estatus de país candidato a la Unión Europea como la constatación de que Lituania cumple con las condiciones exigidas por los tratados para convertirse en el decimonoveno miembro de la eurozona; un muestra clara de que la crisis del euro forma parte del pasado y de que, como he repetido tantas veces, el euro está aquí para quedarse.



Señoras y señores diputados, Europa sigue avanzando aunque a veces lo haga con menos intensidad de la que muchos querríamos; en cualquier caso, debemos conseguir otro salto adelante en su proceso de integración y cohesión. Los acuerdos que adoptamos en la pasada Cumbre de los días 26 y 27 de junio fijan un rumbo y unas prioridades, tanto para las instituciones europeas como para cada uno de los Estados miembros. España ha participado de manera activa con sus propuestas, que se han visto reflejadas en el texto final de las conclusiones. Europa tiene ahora una hoja de ruta para los próximos cinco años y España seguirá muy de cerca su cumplimiento, porque estamos plenamente convencidos de que eso será bueno no solo para nuestro país sino para el conjunto de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea.

Muchas gracias. (Aplausos).



## INTERVIEW





## A GIBRALTAR IN THE MAKING: INTERVIEW WITH DR. JENNIFER BALLANTINE PERERA

Elena Seoane  
University of Vigo

Dr. Jennifer Ballantine Perera is the director of the Gibraltar Garrison Library and of the Institute for Gibraltar and Mediterranean Studies (University of Gibraltar). She is the current editor of the *Gibraltar Heritage Journal*, a specialised journal on Gibraltar history and anthropology, and the founder director of Calpe Press, a publishing house dedicated to promoting Gibraltar writings.

Dr. Ballantine holds a PhD in Postcolonial Studies from the University of Kent, and from 2003-2006 was the Research Associate on the project *Gibraltar Community and Identity*, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. With Professor Andrew Canessa, from the University of Essex, she is the recipient of a major award from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), for their project *Bordering on Britishness: An Oral History of Gibraltar in the 20th Century*, which started in September 2013.

On 14-16 November 2016 Dr. Ballantine visited the University of Vigo to collaborate on our research project (FFI2014-53930-P) *Variation in English Worldwide* (ViEW; view0.webs.uvigo.es), particularly on the compilation of the Gibraltarian component of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE; ice-corpora.net/ice), which we have been appointed to compile. Through our work we have come to realize that it is not until you know Gibraltar from the inside that you start to understand and appreciate the complexity and richness and the Gibraltarian people and their identity. To know more about the history, culture, identity and language of Gibraltar, we asked Dr. Ballantine to answer a few questions for us, which she kindly accepted.

E.S.: *Dr Ballantine, thank you for coming to the University of Vigo and for your seminar on the sociolinguistic and cultural aspects of Gibraltar in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. You are the director of the Gibraltar Garrison Library, one of the oldest cultural institutions in Gibraltar. What is its history?*

J.B.: In 2011 I took over the running of the Garrison Library. It is one of the oldest cultural institution in some respects, but in others it was a private library and club for officers of the garrison only. So culturally it has its own, I'd say, historical backdrop, a very specific one at that. The Garrison Library was established in 1793 for the officers of the garrison of Gibraltar on the back



of the Great Siege of Gibraltar, which took place between 1779 and 1783, and during that time one of the young officers, then Captain Drinkwater, lamented the fact that his officers had no reading materials to hand. They read all the books, and since nothing was getting in under siege conditions they had no fresh material to read. After the Siege heset about establishing a library through private subscription amongst the officer class. At the end of every month all these officers would pay a certain amount of money towards the Garrison Library for the acquisition of books and so the library was set up; not as an MOD [Ministry of Defense] establishment, not as a Gibraltar cultural establishment, but as a private library, a private concern for an officer class. I think this is very interesting because the fact that the library was sustained as a private concern, as a private subscription library, between 1793 and 2011 is just in itself... the mind boggles. How did they do it? How did they manage to keep the library? You've seen the huge magnificent library, how did they manage to keep that going? The library had restricted access, only men, only officers were permitted to be members, so women were not allowed in, but neither were any other soldiers, non-commissioned officers nor squaddies, you know, soldiers with no rank were not permitted. So it was a very elitist institution.

E.S.: *From 2011 onwards, it changed radically. Is it now a public library?*

J.B.: It's not a public library, we're a reference library. We are working our way towards recognition as Gibraltar's National Library. In that respect the aim is to institutionally turn the library around so that we can enjoy and make use of the wonderful collection, and make it a library that everybody can enjoy rather than an institution that the community will continually perceive of as elitist and restricted. So is about access for us at the moment, making sure the access is there.

E.S.: *The Gibraltar Garrison Library today is much more than a collection of books. I understand you organize cultural events and exhibitions on various aspects of Gibraltarian culture.*

J.B.: Yes, the organisation of cultural events and exhibitions are part of our Outreach Program and part of dispelling this impression that we are a place where access is restricted. So, since 2011 I've been actively trying to bring people into the library. Exhibitions and cultural events are a good way to do that. Since we opened we've had a number of exhibitions. I'll just mention two. The first was in 2012, just months after I took over. We have an archive of a fox hunt. The British in Gibraltar established the fox hunt which you know is very traditionally a British endeavour, a British sport, a blood sport at that. This was a fox hunt that in 1906 had royal patronage, in that the King of England, Edward VII, became a royal patron of the Calpe Hunt, and Alfonso XIII, the king of Spain, became joint royal patron of the hunt. This tells you something about how Gibraltar is very good at setting up networks of reciprocity to some extent. So, one of the first exhibitions that I curated



was on the archive that we hold on the Royal Calpe Hunt, the fox hunt. It was really good; I brought together members of Larios family in Gibraltar: Pablo Larios, Marqués de Marzales, a Gibraltarian, born in Gibraltar from a Spanish father but who then was naturalized and also became Gibraltarian. Pablo Larios was the Master of the hunt for over forty years. I contacted some of the Larios family and they came over to Gibraltar for the exhibition, and I thought that was really quite amazing. We had a saddle, a coat, a hunting coat of Lady Harrington, who was a joint Master with Pablo Larios in 1935, and we had the minute books and beautiful photographs of the hunt going back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. That was an important exhibition for us. I think it just opened our doors up to a lot of people.

Last year we had two exhibitions; the most important one was an exhibition on the First World War. Every year we're commemorating a year of the First World War and in March 2015 we exhibited our collection of newsprint and journals. Some were produced especially during the First World War and they offered a blow-by-blow account of the events as they unfolded. One thing I hadn't realised when looking at these was that they're very graphic. These were photographs of men and soldiers that had been blown up, horses blown to bits and you sort of think that this sort of graphic reportage only takes place now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and that we somehow are desensitised, but it was happening at the time as well. We went back a hundred years to March 1915, the second year of the war, and through all the newsprint and the journals that we have we just focused on that month [March] with the battles that were taking place, with the lists of the dead, of those that had fallen. The library also holds the Army Lists for the Officers of British Army; we placed on display all the Army Lists for that period, with hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of officers and hundreds of hundreds who just died senselessly during the war. So the Army Lists, I feel, were the most significant items of exhibitions.

In terms of cultural events we have poetry recitals; we are also part of the organising team of the Gibraltar Literary Festival, which is an international festival. It is a wonderful cultural event in our calendar. With more of an academic backdrop, we hold a symposium every year, an international conference looking at some very pertinent issues and topical ones that reflect the times that we are experiencing now, that impact on Gibraltar, and we look at both local and global contexts for all these issues. So outreach I think is quite wide in that respect. I must add, that the Garrison Library has in recent years been used for a House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee sitting in 2014 and for meetings of Overseas Territories representatives.

E.S.: *As linguists we are interested in the digitalization of the newspaper Gibraltar Chronicle, since it will provide us with valuable diachronic linguistic data. Can you tell us about the newspaper itself and the digitalization project?*

J.B.: *The Gibraltar Chronicle was established in 1801 and it is linked to the Garrison Library. The Garrison Library moved to its new premises, which is*



a wonderful Georgian building, in 1800. In 1801 the printing press came to Gibraltar and it came to Gibraltar through the Garrison Library, and it [the Library Committee] set up the *Gibraltar Chronicle*. Initially it was set up to provide news for its readership, a military readership who would have spoken English, read English, and understood English, whereas the local population wouldn't have necessarily spoken English. So the circulation of the *Gibraltar Chronicle* from its inception is for a very close set initially. Therefore the *Gibraltar Chronicle* first came out in May 1801 and was born from the Garrison Library and continued to be managed by the Garrison Library up until the 1980s; then the Garrison Library and the *Gibraltar Chronicle* became two separate entities, although still very connected. The *Gibraltar Chronicle* became more of a commercial entity, and at that stage, less of a garrison organ and more of a local newspaper. The interesting thing about this is that the *Gibraltar Chronicle* is the second oldest newspaper in English to have been continuously in print, therefore is an important newspaper in terms of the history of print culture.

E.S.: *And its digitalization will make it available for everyone.*

J.B.: Yes. We're looking at the model along the same lines as *The London Times*. They have a really excellent digitized product that they offer online, also to academic institutions. We've been working for the last few years with the National Archives at Kew, so we are following the same procedure as in the British Library and as in the National Archives at Kew, and we are hoping to use the same machinery, the same scanners. We have funding for this; for example, the Kusuma Trust in Gibraltar has funded our consultation process.

E.S.: *Jennifer, you are also the editor of the Gibraltar Heritage Journal. What kind of publications does it include?*

J.B.: The *Gibraltar Heritage Journal* is very eclectic in some ways in that you'll have historical essays, or you'll have reminiscences, or even just some notes and queries of some historical curiosity. As a publication it is a mixed bag with an assortment of articles. At the same time, they all point towards Gibraltar's historical past and Gibraltar's heritage.

E.S.: *In September 2015 the University of Gibraltar was opened. Is it a private institution? What are the requirements for entrance? Is it interested in having international students? Maybe from Spain as well?*

J.B.: It's a public institution. As universities are public in the United Kingdom, and in Spain as well, except that you also have private universities. As a public institution and as a European institution, of course European students, students from other parts of the EU, are able to attend the University of Gibraltar. That would include Spain as it would Portugal as it would the United Kingdom.

E.S.: *We were wondering as linguists whether it is possible that in the future having a University in Gibraltar will change the linguistic landscape, since some Gibralt-*



*tarians won't have to leave Gibraltar to go to the UK to study their university degrees. What's your view on this?*

J.B.: Not in the immediate future, for two reasons. Maybe I'm just speculating about these questions, but it is very culturally ingrained, I have to say, on the one hand, and it is expected, that Gibraltar students will, if they have a place in a university in the UK, study abroad. This is seen as part of their education, part of their seeing a world outside of Gibraltar which in itself is also part of an education. Almost like a rite of passage, though perhaps I'm romanticizing this a bit. This is why I don't think that students will necessarily attend the Gibraltar University. I think students will continue to go to the United Kingdom. The second reason why I believe this is the case is because the University of Gibraltar is set up to reflect a very specific Gibraltar orientated perspective or at least to deliver on subjects that are quite specific to Gibraltar's geographical and historical backdrop. Therefore, we are not going to be offering courses necessarily on American Literature, or medicine, etc. because there is no specificity and there is no reason why Gibraltar would be offering these courses where we have no specialism at the moment. The courses that are being designed and developed, certainly in the post graduate institutes, the Institute for Gibraltar and Mediterranean Studies and the Institute for Life and Earth Sciences, are focusing on the very things that Gibraltar has expertise in. Therefore, the course content that will be developed will have that specificity and expertise behind it; it will be looking at Gibraltar, its location, the Strait of Gibraltar, the question of migrations, the question of language, which is of great interest to you, the question of how the crossroads of cultures and of languages that we find ourselves in impacts on questions of identity and linguistic nuances. These are the sort of subjects. The same with archeology, with natural history, with Gorham's Cave: we have now a UNESCO World Heritage Site that looks at Neanderthals. And Gibraltar is, I'm sure I'll get this wrong and Clive [Professor Clive Finlayson, Director of the Gibraltar Museum, of the new World Heritage Site and also Director of the Institute for Life and Earth Sciences at the University of Gibraltar] will then be annoyed at me if I do, but I think that Gibraltar has now been recognised, as being the last stronghold for Neanderthals in Europe. So again there's a lot going-on in very important key subjects and those are the subjects that our university will focus on. Therefore, there'll be many students in Gibraltar who will be studying something else [some other subject] and will in any case have to go to the United Kingdom to seek those subjects.

E.S.: *You've just mentioned the Research Institute for Gibraltar and Mediterranean Studies, which you're director of. What are the activities in this and in the other research institute at the University of Gibraltar?*

J.B.: The Institute for Gibraltar and Mediterranean Studies is a post-graduate institute and therefore we do not run any courses, but we do have a post-graduate community and PhDs that come under this institute. We are a humanities-



based institute looking at questions of literature, history, archeology, ethnographic studies, social anthropology, language. Language in Gibraltar is very important because of all the nuances and because of this thing called Yanito that almost becomes a national language without even being a language in its own right. So as a post-graduate institute it is important in that we do focus on a lot of the subjects that refer to Gibraltar, modern-day Gibraltar.

E.S.: *Ten years ago Prime Minister Peter Caruana said that “our identity is distinct separate and unique. As a community the only way in which we can be accurately described is therefore as Gibraltarians.” And my question is, is Gibraltarianness an issue that people discuss at home or among friends?*

J.B.: I don't know. I don't know if people discuss this at home or with friends, but I do know that there has been a concentrated emphasis on discussing identity. I was away from Gibraltar for a period of years, and from when I left in 1994 to when I came back in 2007, in that period of time this question of identity had somehow erupted in a way that I hadn't heard before, certainly not when I left initially. I suspect that the tercentenary commemoration of the taking of Gibraltar in 2004 would have focused everybody's minds towards the fact that it was three hundred years since Gibraltar was taken from Spain, and this must mean something; at that time a number of publications were produced which aimed to look at the question of Gibraltar. I think that also the question of identity is also important politically, which is why Sir Peter Caruana mentioned this. He mentioned this as well because in the 1960s when the Franco government sought to have Gibraltar decolonised in Spain's favor through the United Nations, the foreign secretary of the time for the Spanish government produced something called the *Red Book* in which all the efforts were to disqualify the Gibraltar people as a people in their own right with an identity. This attempt to suggest that Gibraltar had no people with any unique identity, any sense of identity, hit very hard, because it somehow disqualified a whole people to have a right to a homeland, saying that Gibraltarians were a made up people of migrants -which I have to say, yes, but not made up. People come and go and that's the ebb and flow of life. So identity has been a very strong question because Gibraltarians have had to prove it all the time, to be able to say “but we *are* a people, but we *are* Gibraltarians.” Gibraltar is our homeland and this where Sir Peter Caruana is coming from. In 2004, the tercentenary of the taking of Gibraltar really concentrated all efforts towards thinking about this very carefully and try to understand and to digest identity a bit further.

E.S.: *In 1967 you had a referendum and 99% of the Gibraltarian people chose to remain under British sovereignty. There is a commemoration next year, is that so?*

J.B.: Yes, next year 2017 we commemorate 50 years from the 1967 referendum. There was another referendum in 2002 in Gibraltar. This was at the time when you had a PP government here with Aznar, and Tony Blair suggested a resolution. This is an ongoing issue, the question of Gibraltar and Spain,



and the territorial integrity question, and the contested sovereignty. So that's ongoing. I think it needs to be parked in some way and understood, but I know that in 2002 the suggestion of joined sovereignty came to rise and there was another referendum at the time. And again 99.9% of the population said that they could not go down the road of joint sovereignty. Then Spain rejected it anyway because they did not want joint sovereignty, because it was a question of 100% sovereignty or joint sovereignty as an interim position before full sovereignty. So it wasn't a situation that could really happen.

E.S.: *Focusing now on linguistic issues, according to the sociolinguistic literature there are several generations of speakers in Gibraltar. The second generation, which is our age, from 40 to 59, is supposed to use mainly Yanito and Spanish but also English depending on the situation and the context. Do you think we can generalise this fact according to age or are there other factors that also contribute to the use of one language or another?*

J.B.: I am a second generation speaker according to them. I think that social class and educational background has a certain amount of influence in this question. I know that I never spoke Spanish. I spoke it very, very badly when I was a teenager, and I didn't really speak it well until well into my twenties and even thirties. So I'd only speak English. Then, when I went to secondary school, I realised that there was a whole group of other girls who could speak English and Spanish, and could also speak English and Spanish at the same time, and I couldn't. But I wasn't the only one who couldn't: all those who were in my class at the convent had that same problematic. So, you can't generalise to say that the second generation would have Spanish and English and Yanito. I think that there are more variables over here.

E.S.: *Galicia, like other linguistic communities in Spain, is bilingual. In the past the situation was diglossic, Spanish being the language of prestige, Galician being the language of rural areas to be used only at home. Younger generations now don't feel that way because Galician is empowered from the regional government. Does this diglossic situation exist in Gibraltar today? Are there different perceptions of English and Spanish in terms of prestige?*

J.B.: Maybe not so much today but the theory goes that Gibraltarians learnt Spanish from a working class, Spanish, say, laborers who come across the border to work every day in Gibraltar, working in households perhaps as cleaning ladies. So, the suggestion is that Gibraltarians learnt Spanish from a class that was already a very working class, perhaps a semiliterate class, and therefore the language in itself was of a certain type and not as sophisticated had Gibraltarians been in contact with a more professional class. That is the theory, that Gibraltarians learnt Spanish in this way, and that accounts for, to a great extent, the almost incompleteness of the Spanish that we have learnt. There is also another reality that education in Gibraltar was, up until the Second World War, in Spanish mostly and in the hands of the church to ensure that catechism was being taught. There were newspapers other than





the *Gibraltar Chronicle*, for example, *El Calpense*, *El Anunciador*, all Gibraltarian papers written in Spanish produced for a local readership, which gives you some idea how widespread Spanish was. In terms of any writings produced in Gibraltar before and maybe just after the Second World War, they were all in Spanish. Two fully fledged novels which are the earliest as far as I can tell. Both were published in the mid to late 1920s, both in Spanish and good Spanish at that. A number of poetry collections as well in Spanish, a play in Spanish. So [spoken and written] Spanish couldn't have been that bad. I've read them, they are good, the Spanish is very correct. So I don't know how these theories stand except that I know the Spanish was good post Second World War.

Then, after the Second World War, everything changes. The civilian population gets evacuated to the United Kingdom so that Gibraltar can function as a fully fledged fortress just in case of an attack. The British authorities in charge of the whole evacuation process suddenly realise that they have hundreds of children who they can't educate because they can't speak English. They have classrooms full of children who they can't educate because they mostly only speak Spanish and some English, but not sufficient, and they feel like they've let these children down. Because of a colonial mission to educate, to transfer this language, to be able to make, you know, transform them into good colonial subjects and they failed in their mission. That's when they set about figuring out how to resolve this problem, and that's when a formalised state education system in Gibraltar is established. On the back of the Second World War and when this children return, there is already the start of a formalised state education in place in Gibraltar, in English. And many other things in place starting Gibraltar down the route of the killer English phenomenon [laughs], English as a killer language.

E.S.: *Is Spanish disappearing? Why?*

J.B.: Yes, it is, with generation Y, in terms of the global generational terminology - in sociolinguistic terms it would be a third and fourth generation. I think a fourth generation is mostly monolingual, even though they may suggest they are bilingual because they do have some code switching and may speak a form of Yanito, which in itself is not a stable form of communication. It changes depending on the occasion, on the subject, on who you are talking to really. The suggestion that this generation Y, the fourth generation, is bilingual may be true in a very limited way, but I doubt it very much. I think that English is becoming the main language for this generation, and code switching is probably very difficult; only certain terms enter their register but not every term that perhaps an older generation would be able to use.

E.S.: *You mentioned that there were some debates or small-scale attempts to keep Spanish, to give some support to it.*

J.B.: Yes, I think that. I'm not so sure how established this is yet in the education system, but there is some discussion about Spanish being given within the



national curriculum a more prominent position. This is just a debate that I've heard, but I can't speak on any official capacity because I don't really know. This is really about equipping our students with languages, languages which would be of use to them within a professional capacity, as students, etc. So it could be Spanish and it could equally be French, it could equally be German. I'm not sure how far this initiative has gone but I know that there has been some discussion in this area.

E.S.: *Thank you, Jennifer, for your time and your insights on Gibraltar. We would not be able to carry out the compilation of the corpus without your invaluable help, and without your cooperation we would not be able to appreciate the identitarian, social, historical and cultural dimensions of Gibraltar English.*

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## REVIEW

INTERPRETING EXPERIENCE FROM THE PAST *Interpreting Through History*. Ildikó HORVÁTH, Małgorzata TRYUK, Alina PELEA eds. International Review of Studies in Applied Modern Languages. Special Issue 2017. Cluj-Napoca: A publication of the Department of Applied Modern Languages and the Centre for Language Industries, 2017.

*Interpreting Through History* is a special issue of the International Review of Studies in Applied Modern Languages (RIELMA), within the framework of the European Masters in Conference Interpreting Consortium, edited by Ildikó Horvath, Małgorzata Tryuk and Alina Pelea. It takes readers on a journey through the broadly-constructed history of interpreting, encompassing manifold, intriguing and singular, local histories of interpreting and interpreters in different times and territories. The starting point for this journey is a question posed by the editors of this special issue of RIELMA: “Why spend time contemplating the past when we are constantly dealing with the problems of the present and busy preparing for the not-too-distant future?” (8). In the collected papers, distinguished scholars and practicing interpreters offer insightful analyses of the origins and developments of interpreting, its social perception and also many personal experiences and views on the profession; the issue also includes a reprint of a review of the history of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC). Overall, the role of interpreter, interpreting and the history of the profession are examined from the constructive approach of learning from the study of past developments and personal experiences, in order to better face the current and future challenges in this constantly developing profession.

The history of interpreting is marked a particular event, of great significance for the pro-

fession and for the world: the Nuremberg trials, where simultaneous interpreting was used for the first time. This is the History, with a capital “h”, which is widely known to scholars, professionals and even young students of interpretation. However, the first part of the RIELMA special issue, entitled *Histories*, reveals the intricate and unknown past stories of Hungarian, Polish, Japanese, Turkish and Romanian interpreting and its pedagogy. The development of interpreting is here presented as an inherent element of world development, depicted through different times and in different geographical regions.

András Fáber’s article (11) opens the doors to the history of Hungarian interpreting, which have often remained closed to many due to the scarcity of sources and inaccessibility of the Hungarian language. The chapter touches on an interesting topic: how interpreters’ ego influences the development of the profession. The author argues that the naturally timid character of the first Hungarian conference interpreters and a difficult political situation gave the profession a touch of mystery and made the studies even more fascinating. Apart from providing a new point of view on the social status of interpreter, the chapter offers intricate and often enigmatic stories of individual Hungarian interpreters, such as János Elbert, who were victims of *politikai gyilkosság*, political murder. The dangers and the consequences of handling information that interpreters had access to during the Soviet era are clear.

The burning need for interpretation in connection with a particular country’s dramatic history is also reflected in Małgorzata Tryuk’s study of the origin of conference interpreting in Poland (27). The simultaneous interpreting technique and the attendant equipment were both developed through an urgent experiment, when Nazi criminal trials took place before



the National Supreme Tribunal and during the International Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Peace, both events that took place in Poland. The chapter documents parallel efforts conducted by the National Radiophone Enterprise, which was commissioned to build a simultaneous interpreting system for five languages with 5.000 receiver points. It also describes the remarkable job done by lawyers, language teachers, journalists and university professors who suddenly found themselves in a booth. As a result of these events the profession of conference interpreting and further training developed in Poland.

The presentation of interpreter training in East Germany and Hungary is introduced in the following chapter by Izabella Nyári (39). Here, historical, political and social contexts are again shown to have played an important role, influencing interpreter training between 1949 and 1989. The political transition and the influence of its participants were crucial to the development of both systems of interpreter training under socialism, which are intriguing especially from the ideological point of view.

Ideology and the conflict between the world powers in the aftermath of World War II led to the establishment of the interpreting profession in Japan, as Deborah Giustini explores in her chapter (50). She reveals how the interpreter training model actually developed in the country of the B language of first Japanese interpreters, namely in the United States. This first generation of Japanese-English interpreters were trained to assist Japanese business groups travelling to the US, seeking to benefit from the productivity program launched by the US as a means of supporting Japan after the second World War. The description of this pedagogical model together with its implications will no doubt be inspirational for future pedagogical reflection that involves training of bi-active interpreters or B language training.

The following chapter, written by Lale Arslan Özcan (61), is also based to a large extent on the experiences of the pioneers of the interpreting profession, this time in Turkey. This very detailed historical perspective on the origin and development of interpreting includes

the emergence of the first schools, such as the Business Administration Institute, the first conference with simultaneous interpreting and the emergence of the first university Department of Translation and Interpreting in Turkey, at Hacettepe University. Finally, it dwells on how what was initially “improvisation” and a “side job” turned into a fully-fledged profession. Elvin Abbasbeyli (77) next offers a chapter that reaches even further back into the history of interpreting in Turkey, examining the times when the Ottoman Empire reached the gates of Europe and its sultans felt the need to use the services of *drogmans*, polyglots who enabled fluent communication.

The final *history* focuses on the interpreting profession in a nearly territory with many rulers: Transylvania. Renata Georgescu and Călin Felezeu (88) study the intricate communication made possible by sixteenth-century interpreters at the crossroads of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, Russia and Poland. This historical approach provides some crucial insight, allowing readers to learn and benefit from the rich heritage of the profession. The urgent, political need of communication is here again portrayed as central to the development of interpreting.

The second part of the RIELMA special issue, entitled *Interpretations*, presents interpreting in modern circumstances through little-known aspects related to the role of the interpreter. War interpreting and sign language interpreting have become modern institutionalized professions. The main characteristics of interpreting in conflict zones are presented by Irene Villalba Güemes, Susana Álvarez Álvarez and Margarita Caballero Domínguez (99). Their chapter studies the differences between military interpreters, local interpreters and “fixers” which are crucial to understanding the constraints of and possible political influence on the profession, but also inspiring to provide training for local interpreters in conflict zones. The story of Yaroub Ali, an Iraqi interpreter and refugee, completes the analysis.

Sign language interpreting is presented by Carolyn Ball in the following chapter (115), which focuses on the history of the profession in the United States. Research on sign language has



led to the establishment of innovative policies and groundbreaking programs. Deaf education and regulatory aspects of the development of the profession complete previous articles, where the political circumstances were generating the need for interpreting. Here, the reader can see how the interpreting profession can influence different policies. It is inspiring for professionals in countries where such legal regulations are scarce but needed.

Robert M. Ingram continues by describing significant changes in the field of sign language (125). His text is a personal and professional memoir of a pioneer and the father of the Interlingual / Intercultural Model of Signed Language Interpreting. The development of cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics, in general, and discursive analysis, communication models and general translation theory, in particular, provided for a Great Paradigm Shift from medical / rehabilitation into the Interlingual / Intercultural model.

Intercultural and multilingual communication is entrenched in the everyday practice of an interpreter. The third part of the book, entitled *The Interpreter*, allows the reader to take a look at interpreting from the very personal point of view of an individual. The analysis of a fictional interpreter, in this case, the main character of *A Heart So White* by Javier Marías, proposed by María Dolores Rodríguez Melchor (135) focuses on the interpreter as observer. The interpreter described in Marías' book, who intervenes in a conversation between high level politicians, violates the Code of Ethics, thus there is no doubt that the character is fictional. However, the analyzed scene pinpoints an essential element of the interpreter's participative observation.

Being an active observer who decodes mental models in order to find correspondences in a target language is achieved through training. Tímea Ferencz describes the interpreter as learner, proposing Kato Lomb's Theory of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as applied to interpreting (144). The author underlines that although Lomb's SLA theory does not relate directly to interpreter training it could be used to improve various elements crucial in interpreting, such as working on a differences between

registers, taking advantage of opportunities found in everyday circumstances that will cater for better recognition of differences and similarities between interpreted languages and finally developing one's own transfer strategies in the case of idiomatic expressions.

An important and distinctive element conveyed through training is the debate on interpreters' visibility. Iulia Bobăilă and Alina Pelea take part in this discussion in the last chapter of the third part of the RIELMA special issue (159). The authors analyze various parameters of the interpreter's work, such as physical presence, distinct voice, influence and status recognition. Probably, this last element leads to the most ardent discussions. Ranging from the South American *Malinche*, through the Ottoman *Drogmans* to modern interpreters, the authors describe the status of the interpreter and perception of the interpreter's role. Interpreters have recently become more audible, thanks to the development of new technologies, but less visible while working in the booth or in remote interpreting. Even if the interpreter must be as invisible as "a piece of furniture" (as recommended by Strudza, quoted by the authors on p. 171), the profession as a whole should strive for the visibility to be able provide a high quality service and attract younger generations.

The fourth part of the special issue is a reprint from *Birth of a Profession* produced by the International Association of Conference Interpreters, focusing on the evolution of conference interpreting (177). The book then ends with a number of reviews of publications on the recent history of interpreting (195).

This special issue of the International Review of Studies in Applied Modern Languages —*Interpreting Through History* is a valuable contribution to the history and pedagogy of interpretation. Not only does it offer valuable historical analysis of different geographical zones and times of development of the profession, it also touches upon very specific problems, such as interpreting in war zones, the situation of local interpreters in conflicts, the pedagogy of sign language interpreting, its intrinsic relation with modern linguistics, and the perception of the profession, to name just a few. The issue



thus comprises a relevant collection of different perspectives and analysis of interpreting and can serve as a worthy starting point for further pedagogical, linguistic or social research. In sum, in four languages (English, French, German and Spanish), it describes various developments and

challenges of the field and asks questions about the future of a profession that was born as a result of an urgent (often political) need to communicate, a basic necessity of human societies.

Alicja M. OKONIEWSKA



### ANNUAL REPORT: *RCEI* EDITORIAL PROCESS

The average time that the *RCEI* editorial staff takes to publish an essay submitted to this journal is 9 months of straight work, from reading to accepting, editing, proofreading, and finally to print. Our reviewers are senior faculty, including members of *RCEI* Editorial Board, and those who have successfully been published in our journal or elsewhere.

#### STATISTICS:

No. of essays submitted to *RCEI* 2017 issues: 19.

No. of essays accepted for publication in *RCEI* during 2017: 13.

Average number of reviewers per essay: 2, 4.

Average time between submission and acceptance: 4 months.

Average time between acceptance and publication: 2 months.

68.42% of manuscripts submitted to *RCEI* 2017 issues have been accepted for publication.



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Listed below are the referees who reviewed manuscripts for *RCEI* 75 (November 2017). We express gratitude to their work and generosity.

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## RCEI 74 (APRIL 2017) – ERRATUM

Our due thanks are given to María Luz González Rodríguez (ULL) for her work as former Secretary of RCEI up to the year 2016. Since April 2017 Margarita Mele Marrero is occupying this position and should appear as such in volume 74.





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