

TRAINING  
PUBLIC SERVICE  
INTERPRETERS  
AND TRANSLATORS:  
**A EUROPEAN  
PERSPECTIVE**

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(Eds.)



COMENIUS UNIVERSITY OF BRATISLAVA

# TRAINING PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

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## INTRODUCTION

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### INTRODUCTION

Public service interpreting and translation – henceforward abbreviated as PSIT – encompasses the provision of translation and/or interpreting in contexts of public service provision in different sectors (e.g. education, health care, law or administration). Research on PSIT has gained more traction in recent years due to a growing demand for translation and interpreting in support of public service communicative situations. Such situations are increasingly characterised by multilingual encounters between public service providers and ‘clients’. In the case of public service provision in the EU, for instance, these multilingual service encounters are on the one hand due to the ongoing waves of people migration (e.g. refugees and labour migrants) from outside the EU and, on the other hand, due to people migrations between EU countries caused by the free movement of the labour force within the EU’s internal market.

In the context of increasing globalisation and migration, it is crucial to look at professionalisation efforts related to PSIT in EU countries. Professionalisation refers to the set of initiatives that can be taken to improve and further develop a profession or professional sector. This book aims to address one crucial building block within an ongoing professionalisation process, i.e. the aspect of training.

The ways in which PSIT training is organised differ from one EU country to another. Some EU countries are already a few steps ahead in this respect

and can draw on years of experience when it comes to PSIT certification in an institutional framework or several forms of PSIT training. Such countries can serve as inspirational models for EU countries currently lagging behind, at least in terms of formal PSIT training.

This edited volume – realised within the European KA2 Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Professional and Accessible Community Interpreting (PACI) – aims to shed light on PSIT practices and training in the following EU countries: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Spain. The first chapter by Erik Hertog entitled ‘Like a rower: A brief history of Community Interpreting research’ provides readers with a historical overview of research related to the central topic. The author first describes how Community Interpreting has gradually become a more central research topic in Interpreting Studies. Next, he explains the change in focus from Community Interpreting into Public Service Interpreting and Translation from the 1970s. By presenting critical issues and key references related to PSIT research, the chapter also provides a useful didactic toolkit for developing teaching activities and integrating different learning materials in PSIT training.

The three chapters that follow the chapter by Erik Hertog describe PSIT practices and forms of training in three countries in which PSIT has already received considerable scholarly, institutional and educational attention: i.e. Austria, Belgium and Spain. Each country faces different challenges but can also benefit from different opportunities that will be addressed in each chapter separately, along with a country-specific overview of PSIT practices and training forms.

In the second chapter entitled ‘Does it all boil down to money? The Herculean task of Public Service Interpreter training – a quantitative analysis of training initiatives in Austria’, Sonja Pöllabauer addresses several factors influencing language service provision in Austria, such as the impact of lay interpreters, governmental structures or general attitudes towards immigration. The author gives an overview of PSI training initiatives in the country and points out some of the challenges in providing training opportunities, such as the lack of continuous funding or recognition. She suggests that networking, increased cooperation and joint raising of public awareness might play a role in improving PSI standards in Austria and beyond.

In the third chapter entitled ‘Institutionalisation and professionalisation of Public Service Interpreting and Translation in Belgium’, authors H el ene Stengers, Mathieu Van Obberghen and Koen Kerremans present an overview of PSIT practices and training in Belgium’s two major language areas. Because of the asymmetrical federal government structure, the development of PSIT in Belgium was highly influenced by institutional and political state reforms. As

a result, the Flemish and the Walloon regions have developed different approaches towards the professionalisation of PSIT in terms of training and certification, which will be outlined in this chapter.

In the fourth chapter entitled 'Public Service Interpreting and Translation in Spain', authors Raquel Lázaro Gutiérrez and Cristina Álvaro Aranda point out that Spanish universities have been the main drivers for the establishment and consolidation of PSIT in Spain, not only as an emergent profession and academic discipline but also as a means to grant people equal access to public services through communication. The authors also report on an increasing interest in PSIT research and reflect on training developments, in which the critical element for professionalisation should be the provision of formal training.

The following three chapters report on three countries (the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia) that are considered a separate cluster in this monograph, partly due to their close ties (geographically, politically and linguistically) and partly because the practice of PSIT in these countries is still in an early stage of professionalisation, or has not yet received much attention in research and education.

In the fifth chapter entitled 'Public Service Interpreting and Translation in the Czech Republic', authors Pavlína Knap-Dlouhá and Kateřina Křížová provide a mapping of the current state of PSIT practices and forms of training in the Czech Republic. They argue that in contrast to sworn translators and interpreters working in the legal domain, PSI as a profession has not yet received the same legal status in their country. Nevertheless, several professionalisation initiatives focussing on PSIT training and professional development have already been taken by non-governmental and non-profit organisations as well as the universities of Prague and Olomouc in the last ten years.

In the sixth chapter entitled 'Community interpreting and translation in Poland', authors Małgorzata Dowlaszewicz and Agata Kowalska-Szubert describe the position and practice of community interpreters and translators in Poland, which have not been officially recognised by Polish law. Before they do this, the chapter starts with a motivation to use the terms 'community interpreters' and 'community translators' instead of PSIT. Next, it provides an overview of relevant legislation, educational initiatives and professional associations related to community interpreters and translators. It also presents the status of the sworn legal interpreter in Poland as the most professionalised domain of PSIT. On the one hand, the chapter shows a lack of uniform legislation and regulations surrounding community interpreting and translating. On the other hand, it shows an increasing number of (mostly) master or postgraduate studies integrating PSIT-related aspects in their curricula to respond to the growing market needs of PSIT services in Poland.

In the seventh and final country-specific chapter entitled 'Public service translation and interpreting in Slovakia – unknown territory with many challenges', Marketa Štefková provides an overview of PSIT initiatives in the Slovak context. She focuses, amongst others, on the (legal) position and role of public service interpreters and translators in different public sectors and shares her vision on steps that need to be taken in the professionalisation of PSIT in Slovakia. These steps will be necessary to ensure that the rights of every foreign citizen or language minority in Slovakia are guaranteed and respected, including their chances of integration and full participation in society.

In the final chapter, Benjamin Bossaert presents the KA2 Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership PACI. This partnership project – involving a collaboration between the Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia), Palacký University Olomouc (the Czech Republic), the University of Wrocław (Poland) and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium) – can be considered as one of the first attempts to develop and implement a didactic model for PSIT – based on a combination of e-learning modules followed by onsite training – in the three Central European Countries involved in the project. The PACI didactic materials were initially aimed at the training of Dutch-speaking PSIT students enrolled in university programmes of the partner universities in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia but can serve as a basis for training students with other language combinations as well.

On the one hand, this edited volume serves as a didactic handbook for students enrolled in PACI's PSIT training who need to be familiar with the practical organisation of PSIT in one or several of the countries addressed in this book. On the other hand - due to its specific focus on didactic approaches and practices that have been implemented or are currently explored in the countries mentioned above – we hope that this book can also be an inspiration for those who help in shaping the training of future PSITs in Europe or beyond (i.e. practitioners, teachers, organisations).

# 1.

## LIKE A ROWER: A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY INTERPRETING RESEARCH

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A minute's reflection will make us realize that in any European city, say Antwerp in Belgium, at any moment more people are interpreting in hospitals, courts, schools, social housing or employment offices, prisons, asylum hearings, doctors' surgeries, etc. than in conferences. Community – or public services – interpreting is by far the most common, and many will argue, also the most demanding form of interpreting. It is the intra-social setting that defines it, not the discourse genre (dialogue), the mode (consecutive) or the positioning between the interlocutors ('liaison'). Community interpreting is a challenging task, which explains the early and constant focus of attention in this field on real and urgent issues such as training, professionalisation or quality assurances, whereas more theoretical and broader research is a relatively recent phenomenon. In our brief contribution, we attempt to highlight the main stages in this development, which will allow us to provide a backdrop to the valuable undertakings of the *PACI*-project.

### 1. BEGINNINGS

A relevant European point of departure is the *European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*. Drafted in 1950 it entered into force in September 1953. Of particular interest is Article 6 on the Right to a Fair Trial, including the right to the free assistance of an interpreter if one cannot understand or speak the language used in court. Similar concerns materialised in the 1970s in the U.S. with the 1978 *USA Court Interpreters Act*,

setting standards of interpreting in the U.S. federal courts, including testing and certification.<sup>1</sup>

A parallel international document, the 1951 *United Nations Geneva Refugee Convention* outlines the rights of refugees and displaced persons, as well as the legal obligations of states to protect them. This *Convention* made interpreters essential in registration and refugee status determination interviews as well as in resettlement or counseling sessions. With an eye to a broader remit and in the face of increasing immigration numbers too, Australia set up a *Telephone Interpreter Service* as early as 1973, an early example of technology in public service interpreting.<sup>2</sup> In the wake of these legal and immigration concerns, the *National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters* (NAATI) was established in 1977.<sup>3</sup> What also increased the awareness of citizens' rights roughly within the same time framework, were the U.S. Civil Rights movement and Acts, and general anti-discrimination legislation. In 1965, for example, they led to the establishment of the *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf*, advocating best practices, professional development and high service standards.<sup>4</sup> Federal legislation in 1975 securing access for deaf children to education further strengthened the need for the provision of interpreting in state schools.

In addition to the legal domain, the medical or healthcare field is the other early and prominent sphere of interest. In 1985, the *Canada Health Act* facilitated reasonable access to health services without language barriers.<sup>5</sup> Similarly in the U.S.A., the *National Council on Interpreting in Health Care* began, from 1994 on, to enhance language access and culturally competent healthcare interpreting, including standards for the provision of services and a code of ethics.<sup>6</sup>

This brief selection of institutional undertakings, together with early training opportunities provided the impetus for the start of scholarly reflection on community interpreting. Given the above dominance of English-speaking countries, the research, in this early phase, was also predominantly in English, a trend which later academic interest would only strengthen.

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<sup>1</sup> [<https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/federal-court-interpreters>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>2</sup> [<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>3</sup> [<https://www.naati.com.au/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>4</sup> [<https://rid.org/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>5</sup> [<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-care-system/canada-health-care-system-medicare/canada-health-act.html>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>6</sup> [<https://www.ncihc.org/>] (12.09.2019)

## 2. EARLY RESEARCH

The 1970s saw the emergence of dedicated community interpreting research. Not surprisingly, the approach was mostly observational, starting from naturalistic data, though already with an eye towards quality on the basis of modest quantitative sets. There was, as yet, little theoretical input.

Anderson (1976), for example, looked at the discrepancies in quality between interpreted and non-interpreted legal proceedings while paying attention at the same time to the institutional role and ethical positioning of the interpreters. Price (1975) presented a quantitative analysis of interpreting in doctor-Hindustani patient psychiatric visits, the errors and lapses, additions and interpretations and was struck by the uneven directionality of all this, i.e. more from patient to psychiatrist than vice versa. He too mentioned the fluid role of the interpreter and, importantly, the impact of cultural factors. Lang's observations of behavioural aspects of 'liaison' interpreters (1975, 1978) revealed similar quality issues such as additions, omissions and distortions. The study also revealed a blurred and ambivalent role conception of the orderlies as interpreters and a less than professional attitude to the requirements of the situation.

The issues which rose to the surface in these first articles – quality, source to target comparisons, institutional role, ethical awareness, interaction with parties – would continue to hold the researchers' attention throughout the 1970s and 80s. Fast-forwarding now to the end of this chronologically idiosyncratic first period, we see both a continuation but also a broadening of the research in the establishment of *Critical Link* in Canada in 1992.<sup>7</sup> From the start, this association played a crucial role, first, in the dissemination of research among trainers, practitioners and service providers and, secondly, in its focus on training, including certification and accreditation, on interpreters' competences and qualifications, on professional and ethical codes, professional organisations and working arrangements and remuneration, etc. The organisation quickly became an internationally recognised platform with its standard guides, newsletters, training, conferences, website, etc. It organised its 1<sup>st</sup> international conference in Ontario in 1995 and subsequently published a relevant selection of the contributions from each conference in the John Benjamins Translation Library. Its impact cannot be overestimated.

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<sup>7</sup> [<https://criticallink.org/>] (12.09.2019)

### 3. THE DDI OR DIALOGUE DISCOURSE INTERACTION PARADIGM

In the 1990s a coherent body of research emerged away from *literality*, the view and expectation of the verbatim transfer of meaning and away from the *conduit* view of an invisible interpreter operating on the basis of a narrow and tightly prescriptive code. The landmark study launching this new approach was Berk-Seligson's (1990) linguistic-ethnographic analysis of English/Spanish dialogues in several U.S. courts. The ethnographic fieldwork demonstrated that the interpreter is an active participant in the interaction, sometimes by going beyond 'mere' translation and sometimes by being unaware of the strategic use of attorneys' and judges' questions thus altering the pragmatic effect of questions and answers by the primary speakers. Interpreters were also occasionally found to add features of powerless speech to their renditions, thus affecting the impression of a witness's trustworthiness upon a jury. The interpreters' concept of their role and their complex behaviour clearly affected the exchanges of meaning and understanding.

Towards the end of the decade, Cecilia Wadensjö published her 1992 doctoral dissertation on medical, police and asylum interpreted hearings (1998). She too went beyond the view of the interpreter as a 'translator' and showed how the interpreter is actively involved in coordinating the participants' talk in the *triad*. Talk as activity rather than as text. Her views emanated from observations of the different roles, the positioning and footing, the distribution of responsibility among the participants and from the overall performance of the interpreter, continually choosing between representing or re-enacting others' talk. In her study interpreters are revealed as full-fledged agents on a par with the primary interlocutors with whom they co-construct the communicative event. They carry out explicit coordination moves, e.g. requests for clarifications, invitations to start or continue talking, they comment on their translations or opt for non-renditions and they interrupt overlapping turns which alter the turn-taking order. Depending on these decisions, Wadensjö showed, interlocutors are either empowered or disempowered.

Similar ground-breaking work was carried out in Sign Language research. Melanie Metzger's study (1999) with its programmatic title – *Sign Language Interpreting: Deconstructing the Myth of Neutrality* – emphasises the management role of the interpreter through interpreted-generated contributions aimed at interactional equivalence. Cynthia Roy (2000) concurs: based on a qualitative analysis of the dynamics of interaction, turn-taking exchanges and the interactive discourse in professor-deaf student meetings, she shows how interpreters do not merely translate utterances but continuously make interpreter-generated contributions to the interaction. Both authors approach these

interactions as veritable participation frameworks governed by a complex code of ethics.

Later, in a new decade, Sandra Hale (2004 and 2006) studied question-and-answer witness testimony in penal court cases in New South Wales. She observed how interpreters struggled to render the propositional content accurately because they did not always understand the purpose or form of the attorney's questions and how they often changed the pragmatic intent of a statement, which in turn affected either the legal professional's strategy or the convincingness of the witness. Because the interpreter did not understand the pragmatic force of question-types, the level of coerciveness was fundamentally altered. Claudia Angelelli (2004b) observed similar decisions in medical encounters, with interpreters making inappropriate changes to coherence, cohesion and register, and manipulating the information flow through omissions, clarifications or switches between direct and indirect style.

It is these authors' overall concern with interactional quality which sparked this emphasis on discourse-based interaction over 'simply' predominantly information processing approaches. Together with the primary speakers – the interpreter's clients – interpreters are now seen to play a crucial role as co-determiners of the communicative success or failure of the interaction. Finally, though bilingual communication remains largely dependent on the interpreter's verbal contributions to the exchange, increased emphasis is now also placed on other features, such as positioning, eye contact, facial expressions and gestures.

The paradigm undoubtedly had the positive collateral consequence of a significantly increased awareness of the importance of training. Its impact also led to a sharper delineation of community interpreting and so the time had come for the first surveys: Shackman (1984); Gentile et al. (1996); Roberts (1997 and 2002); Pöchhacker (1999); Mason (1999 and 2001) and Wadensjö (2001).

#### **4. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS PARADIGM**

When analysing interpreting in courts, hospitals or doctor-patient consultations, it is inevitable that at some point the focus will shift to the political, social and institutional structures and contexts in which the interpreting is provided and performed. Asylum hearings, for example, are an intrinsically adversarial configuration. The agenda is set by the interviewer, representing the political and institutional authorities and their ideology. The interaction follows a rigid pattern and must be conducted in the discursive practice of the legal institution. In Robert Barsky's field study of refugee hearings in Canadian immigration service encounters (1994), the author showed how interpreters acted as active

intermediaries in the asylum hearing rather than as mere translating ‘devices’. Further research confirmed that interpreters tend to align themselves with the institutions they are working for, inter alia by actively helping to produce a ‘valid’ account, i.e. an account that meets the expected formal genre characteristics – coherent, plausible, consistent – which is ultimately the decisive principle for the assessment of the speaker’s credibility and status. In their renditions, interpreters tend to co-construct what is, institutionally and ideologically speaking, a “productive other”, as Barsky’s title points out. They thus become agents of institutional efficiency, sometimes even acting as co-interviewers eliciting institutionally appropriate answers, or as co-producers of the written record. When interpreters become actively involved in the determination of the national origin of applicants, e.g. by assessing the characteristics of their speech, it goes without saying that the deontological requirement of neutrality is even further stretched (Maryns 2006; Pöllabauer 2005).

The focus of this research on pre-and extra-textual dispositions and on institutional assumptions and roles highlights issues such as power, class, gender and race. Institutional representatives are likely to manage and steer the interaction towards the institution’s goals and expectations and will conduct the exchange according to their norms and rules: what topics are selected and how, who is expected to talk at any one time and for how long, what discourse genre is conducive to their goals and how the interlocutor’s contributions are assessed. In other words, the whole activity is subject to ritualised conversational behaviours and expected institutional goals (Mason 2005a and 2005b). A medical practitioner will usually choose the discourse model which in her or his view is the most effective means for the successful provision of care. Most often in general healthcare, the approach is a doctor-centred one. It is the ‘voice of medicine’, with its prevailing scientific objectivity and occasionally lacking somewhat in emotional involvement. In cross-cultural communication of this type, the interpreter might be drawn into blocking out altogether the patient’s personal and cultural voice as medically irrelevant and a waste of precious time, through omissions, non-renditions or weaker reframed renditions. Conversely, they may affiliate with the patient’s cultural and discursive disempowerment and through additions, clarifications and appropriate register and body language make up for a physician’s lack of involvement.

## **5. TAKING STOCK IN 2006**

After some 30 years of gradually increasing interest and research activity in community interpreting the time seemed to have come to draw up a status

quaestionis (Hertog and van der Veer 2006). In a number of bird's eye view surveys, colleagues took stock of the research so far in the main sub-domains while, in the same breath, proposing further lines of research. The following are but a selection from the contributions.

- Franz Pöchhacker, *Research and Methodology in Healthcare Interpreting*, reviewed the research concerning different disciplinary perspectives, thematic orientations and methodological choices, including a focus on the interpreting product and performance, communicative practices and the provision of care.
- Hanneke Bot, *Community Interpreting in Mental Health: Research Issues*, concluded from her survey that the research findings indicated that the interpreter influences the content of the communication in several ways which all have an impact on the quality of care.
- Sandra Hale, *Themes and Methodological Issues in Court Interpreting Research*, surveyed the use of linguistic and non-linguistic methodologies in the considerable body of language in the courtroom and court interpreting research.
- Sonja Pöllabauer, “*During the interview, the interpreter will provide a faithful translation.*” *The Potentials and Pitfalls of Researching Interpreting in Immigration, Asylum, and Police Settings: Methodology and Research Paradigms*. A bibliometric survey of the extensive research corpus on interpreting in immigration, asylum and police settings and the different analytical approaches that have been used.
- Melanie Metzger, *Salient Studies of Signed Language Interpreting in the Context of Community Interpreting Scholarship*. An examination of salient studies in Sign Language research, covering a broad range of topics and methodologies, within the larger framework of community interpreting research.
- Tim Connell, *The application of new technologies to remote interpreting*. The application of technologies as a possible solution to problems and the provision of more efficient service, with a caveat on the practical and ethical aspects of the interpreter's work.

In its depth and breadth of synthesis, this publication remains a good – and efficient! – starting point for anyone researching community interpreting, particularly so for young(er) colleagues who want to embark on their own projects.

## 6. CONSOLIDATION

A different kind of proof that community interpreting had come of (mature) age is the notice taken by influential players, such as publishing houses or

international institutions. At some point, for example, the Directorate General Interpretation of the European Commission started to invite speakers on the topic to its annual university conferences (until then exclusively dedicated to conference interpreting) and supported working groups to draw up guidance documents to disseminate recommendations and best practices across the EU. Two examples are the *Reflection Forum on Multilingualism and Interpreter Training* and the report of the *Special Interest Group on Translation and Interpreting for Public Services*. A powerful instrument, of course, is EU Directive 2010/64 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings, along with similar Directives on the rights of victims or on legal aid. Two other influential documents are *ISO Standard 13611:2014(E): Interpreting – Guidelines for Community Interpreting* and *Standard 20228:2019 on Interpreting Services – Legal Interpreting* of the ISO International Organization for Standardization. These documents establish the various components of community and legal interpreting and specify the required competencies as well as the basic principles and practices of the settings providing the services. Though perhaps disappointingly vague, these standards may yet help to evaluate general policies and practices.

Textbooks specifically on community interpreting (Hale 2007; Corsellis 2008; de Pedro Ricoy et al. 2009; Tipton and Furmanek 2016) or the mode of dialogue interpreting (Cirillo and Niemants 2017) have now been published. Handbooks such as the John Benjamins *Handbook of Translation Studies 4 vols* include items on the domain: e.g. Discourse analysis (Christina Schäffner), Intercultural mediation (David Katan), Court/Legal interpreting (Debra Russell), Sign language interpreting and translation (Lorraine Leeson and Myriam Vermeerbergen) and Community interpreting (Erik Hertog 2010). The consolidation trend is perhaps most visibly entrenched when it finds its way into encyclopaediae, such as the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* with entries on culture, norms, ethics, quality, signed language, dialogue, court or community interpreting (Cecilia Wadensjö 2001). Even more specific is the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* with no fewer than 21 entries on interpreting research and additionally relevant contributions on, inter alia, Asylum settings (Katrijn Maryns), Community interpreting (Sandra B. Hale), Courtroom interpreting (Ruth Morris), Educational interpreting (Elizabeth A. Winston), Healthcare interpreting (Elaine Hsieh), Mental health settings (Rachel Tribe and Pauline Lane), Police settings (Isabelle Perez), Prison settings (Aída Martínez-Gómez), Psychotherapy interpreting (Hanneke Bot) and Legal interpreting (Erik Hertog 2015). A final reference work example with relevant materials for our survey is the *Wiley Online Library Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (2013) with Sonja Pöllabauer on Community Interpreting or Erik Hertog on Legal Interpreting.

Finally, two more indicators of consolidation. Community interpreting research flourishes in many journals: *Interpreting*, *Meta*, *Target*, *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, *Journal of Interpretation*, *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, *Translation and Interpreting Studies*, *Journal of Specialised Translation*, *Translation & Interpreting*, *The Translator* to name just a few. Quite regularly, they publish issues exclusively dedicated to research in this field (e.g. Rymael and Carroll 2015). Secondly, in addition to *Critical Link International*, several new national and international networks have strengthened cooperation in the field. EULITA, the *European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association* is committed to ensuring access to justice across languages and cultures, to promoting quality in legal interpreting and translation and ensuring best practices in working arrangements with legal services and professionals.<sup>8</sup> The *European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation* (ENPSIT) on the other hand, aims to map a European policy on quality standards for public service interpreting and translation as instruments within an integration policy with equal opportunities for all.<sup>9</sup>

## 7. RECENT RESEARCH TRENDS IN COMMUNITY INTERPRETING

What has remained constant throughout these decades of research is a focus on training and professionalisation, on quality and on the provision (or lack) of interpreting in public services, if only because the range and heterogeneity of community domains has kept on increasing. The almost exclusive interest in court and hospital interpreting of the earlier periods has today widened into settings such as welfare, housing, employment, mediation, education, asylum, religion, prisons, child care, mental health, probation and doctor's surgeries. However, in addition to constant concerns, some notable research trends seem prominent in the current research community. For brevity's sake, we will illustrate these trends with one or two references only.

### 7.1 Methodological diversity

Observational field studies today utilise far more sophisticated data-collection methods. Examples are participatory observation, interviews, audio or

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<sup>8</sup> [<https://eulita.eu/wp/european-projects/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>9</sup> [<http://www.enspit.org/>] (12.09.2019)

video recordings, questionnaires and focus group discussions. Such linguistic-ethnographic fieldwork (Snell, Shaw and Copland 2015) draws heavily on fields like discourse analysis, pragmatics, interaction and conversation analysis or cultural studies. The rationale is to add to our understanding of how communication as a linguistic but also social activity takes place in a particular setting or context. However, research has moved far beyond ‘linguistics’ properly speaking. Considerable gains have been made in our understanding of the theory and practice of community interpreting from sociological approaches (how identities are constructed in talk or the institutional positioning of interpreters) and other disciplines such as law and medicine, management and policy, economics and psychology (Inghilleri 2003; Greenhalgh et al. 2006; Verrept 2012).

## **7.2 Interdisciplinarity**

A concomitant feature of methodological diversity is the interdisciplinarity that characterises a lot of recent research. Many projects and publications are the collaborative work of mixed groups of researchers from various disciplines. Interpreting researchers together with legal scholars investigate the role and impact of interpreting in criminal proceedings. With police officers, they study ways of adjusting their interviewing techniques in videoconference interpreting or when interviewing minors. With medical researchers, they assess remote interpreting in doctor-patient communication. With nursing specialists, they measure patient satisfaction in mediated encounters involving ad-hoc volunteer vs professional healthcare interpreting. A few examples of research with a direct and potentially significant impact are, e.g. Bot (2005), Bischoff (2008), Rombouts (2012) and Hlavac et al. (2018).

## **7.3 Theory**

In the current research, there is a clear trend to ground experiential and observational findings in a more solid theoretical framework. Two related examples.

Community interpreting settings are characterised by a meta-relevance beyond the semantic-pragmatic discourse level of the interaction. Clients bring their backgrounds and cultural dispositions with them into a socially constructed situation, and so do the interpreters. Interpreters will therefore need to infer what speakers intend to communicate, from linguistic and nonverbal as well as institutional and contextual cues. Bourdieu’s (1990) concept of ‘habitus’

provides an interesting tool to analyse the way group or institutional cultures as well as personal history shape body and mind and how as a result these impact on the actions of an individual in a given situation. As people with similar backgrounds in a shared social world subscribe to common dispositions, it is evident that in mediated encounters possibly involving different personal, social and cultural histories, there is the inherent risk of attributing meanings and intentions to speakers which have not been said or intended. Sperber and Wilson (1986) have suggested that the interpreter as addressee will infer conclusions about what a primary speaker intends to convey. He/She bases the conclusions on the information and non-linguistic input contained in the utterance and his/her assessment of its contextual and situational relevance. The interpreter's choices in transferring the propositional content and illocutionary force of the statement may thus risk a clash between projected and interpreted re-projected identity of the primary speaker without this being known. In legal and medical contexts, for example, it can be problematic if the participants attribute ownership and intention of the meaning not so much to the interpreter as to the primary speaker. The interpreter's wording will be what a judge or physician base their decision on (Mason 2006; Gallez and Maryns 2014).

#### **7.4 Textualisation**

Many, if not all, public service fields have an administrative paper-work character and thus contain a constant transfer between the oral and written phases of the interaction. Whether in the police station or hospital ward, there is an 'entextualisation' process involved, a change from the oral to the written medium and back. A suspect will be confronted with the written version of an oral, interpreted statement. This statement is supposed to be written down as far as possible in the suspect's own (but interpreted) words but will be in fact the police officer's written version of what was said. Such a process brings about not only semantic but also pragmatic, meta-pragmatic and maybe ultimately judicial consequences. Moreover, the record of the interview will be shaped into a procedurally and institutionally relevant narrative and in the process entail interesting tensions between the oral and written phases.

One more example. Asylum hearings are essentially a bureaucratic conglomerate of documents, depositions, testimonies and expert reports surrounding an oral kernel. This written material is carried continuously over from one encounter to another and thus continually de- and re-contextualised in the interpreting. We have seen in Section 4 to what extent interpreters may align themselves with an institutionally expected role, e.g. in fashioning their oral rendition to the criteria

of the written record, in autonomously clarifying interventions or supplying written translations of the asylum seeker 's statements (Inghilleri 2005; Komter 2006; Pöchhacker and Kolb 2009; Marijns 2006 and 2013).

## **7.5 Body language**

Given the often delicate nature of encounters in public service settings, there is the apparent difficulty of obtaining permission to record. However, either with the consent of all partners or in more general situations, non-intrusive means of recording mediated interactions have produced interesting results, particularly regarding body language. After all, people draw on a range of resources in communicative interactions. A multimodal approach taking into account factors such as: the importance of gesture and facial expression, participants' posture and positioning in space, gaze and the interplay between gaze shifts, eye-contact, the strategies of attention-giving and attention-seeking, turn-taking coordination, conversational alignments, the establishment of reciprocal perceptions of status, power, role etc. will all collectively and significantly add to our understanding of mediated interaction (Angelelli 2004b; Mason 2005; Pöllabauer 2007).

## **7.6 Role**

One of the most significant contributions of earlier research is the insight that meaning and intent are construed as a joint activity by all parties together in the communication situation. This insight has led to a recognition and re-appraisal of the complexity of the role of the public service interpreter.

While respecting basic principles such as impartiality and confidentiality, nevertheless a continuum has opened up depending on the setting, the purpose of the interaction and the needs of the interlocutors. At one end, in an adversarial situation where the purposes of the participants may be at odds and the interpreted rendition becomes the official record, the interpreter will need to opt for a restricted role abiding by the overriding demand for accuracy. This is a position that emphasises source-oriented interpreting, allowing the therapist and patient, lawyer and client, the police officer and suspect to perceive and solve any lacunae or misunderstandings themselves.

In a more 'constructive' encounter and in a more central position along the continuum and taking a more teleological view, the interpreter adopts a more target-oriented, outcome-oriented stance that takes into account the dynamic context of the situation and is grounded in professional responsibility for the

needs and objectives of all primary speakers. With a certain degree of pragmatic latitude, the interpreter as an independent but co-constructive persona in the encounter may clarify, rectify, support and suggest out of a responsible need to serve the needs of the interlocutors and the purpose of the encounter. Research has found that interpreters may strategically shift between various levels of visibility along this continuum during the same encounter. Such an approach to the interpreter's role is obviously conditional upon training and integrated awareness of professional and ethical codes.

Fully at the other end of the spectrum, interpreters may assume roles that are much more pro-active. For instance, they may act as cultural broker facilitating cultural differences and resolving misunderstandings and conflicts. In a possible role of advocate, the interpreter will work on behalf of his or her clients, ensuring that service providers or institutions provide quality of care and communication and they will take action when these rights are infringed upon.

Conflicting expectations further compound the complexity of the interpreter's role. Judges, nurses, police officers or other-language speakers, deaf clients or teachers, all may have different perceptions and expectations of the interpreter. Such conflicting expectations may play an additional role in the decision of the public service interpreters to act somewhere along this continuum, sometimes staying narrowly within a tightly normative context or else positioning themselves intelligently, cautiously and responsibly in a more constructive communication situation (Shlesinger 1991; Kadric 2001; Angelelli 2004a; Hale 2008; Martin and Ortega Herràez 2009; Dean and Pollard 2011; Bot and Verrept 2013).

## **7.7 Technology**

Interpreting over the telephone (very common in 'social' interpreting for public services in Flanders) or video interpreting (quite common in public hospitals in Belgium) will become increasingly important in the training and practice of community interpreting. Similarly, the need for simultaneous interpreting competence, presently confined to 'chuchotage' for the defendant in court or in the case of longer interventions for the other-language speaker in e.g. medical or social encounters, is likely to grow with the use of small, handy portable sets. Other factors such as interpreting between remote locations, the scarcity of specific language-combinations, urgency or security considerations and, indeed, cost-saving reasons will all contribute to the growth of remote or video interpreting. Dedicated research is being conducted to determine quality standards for the audio-visual environment, on the differences between audio-visually mediated and face-to-face events, on the potential disadvantages of

audio-visual mediation and the need for useful interdisciplinary guidelines. Within the legal domain, a particular set of skills – a combination of highly advanced oral and written language skills – needs to be mastered to meet the significantly increased use of telephone-tapping (Connell 2006; Ko 2006; Kelly 2008; Ozolins 2011; Braun and Taylor 2012; Fowler 2013).

## **8. REFLECTIONS ON THE *PACI* PROJECT: *PROFESSIONAL AND ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY INTERPRETING, A GATEWAY TO MIGRANTS' INTEGRATION***

The *PACI* project has not come out of the blue. It follows in the footsteps of earlier work. Besides an indebtedness to community interpreting scholarship in general, the project could also benefit directly and concretely from earlier related projects. We restrict ourselves here to European projects because of the EU as funding authority, which is the case for the *PACI* project as well. When we look at the constituent elements of *PACI*, at what they aim to achieve, then the following projects were no doubt inspirational.

### **8.1 Competences**

The competences and skills of interpreters need to be ensured. Drafting training course descriptions and learning strategies can be done based on the more general early project *Aequitas*<sup>10</sup> and the two *Building Mutual Trust* projects. The latter contain concrete course outlines, training resources and exercises, including video examples.<sup>11</sup>

### **8.2 Languages of Lesser Diffusion**

The project works with less common language combinations (Czech, Slovak and Polish in combination with Dutch), a challenge also addressed in the *TraiLLD* project (*Training in Languages of Lesser Diffusion*). This project

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<sup>10</sup> [[https://eulita.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/files/Aequitas\\_Acces%20to%20Justice%20across%20Language%20and%20Culture%20in%20the%20EU.pdf](https://eulita.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/files/Aequitas_Acces%20to%20Justice%20across%20Language%20and%20Culture%20in%20the%20EU.pdf)] (12.09.2019)

<sup>11</sup> [[http://www.buildingmutualtrust.com/the-bmt-\(1\)-project.html](http://www.buildingmutualtrust.com/the-bmt-(1)-project.html)] (12.09.2019)

offers reflections on the specific problems and recommendations for training and quality safeguards when confronted with this particular challenge.<sup>12</sup>

### 8.3 Contexts

Patients who are non-local language speakers or come from migrant populations or ethnic minority groups are often unable to communicate effectively with medical professionals. At the same time, clinical staff is often not able to understand the patients' needs or to elicit other relevant information from the patient. Language and communication are regarded as the most critical problem areas in dealing with migrant populations and ethnic minorities in medical consultations. Therefore, professional interpreting should be available whenever necessary to ensure proper communication between non-local language speakers and clinical staff.

Another example of a specific context is mediation, a fast-growing instrument in solving legal confrontations. Many contentious issues never come to court but are solved in carefully managed mediation sessions. Parental child abductions, neighbourhood quarrels or parent-school disputes, for instance. If one of the parties is an other-language speaker, the very specific interpreting skills that are needed here between parties and the mediator(s), certainly if one of them resides in a remote location, are discussed in the EU project *Understanding Justice*.

A final example is the EU (and UNHCR)-funded project *QUADA* (*Qualitätsvolles Dolmetschen im Asylverfahren*). This project has produced a curriculum with training manuals in German (*Trainingshandbuch für DolmetscherInnen im Asylverfahren*) and English.<sup>13</sup>

### 8.4 Specific target groups

*Co-Minor-IN/QUEST*, *Co-Minor-IN/QUESTII* and *ChiLLS: Children in Legal Language Settings* are projects that address the challenges of interpreting interviews or interrogations of minors, c.q. vulnerable children.<sup>14</sup> Training

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<sup>12</sup> [[https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg\\_interpreting\\_studies/research-projects/trailld](https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg_interpreting_studies/research-projects/trailld)] (12.09.2019)

<sup>13</sup> [[https://www.ciuti.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018\\_QUADA.pdf](https://www.ciuti.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018_QUADA.pdf)]

<sup>14</sup> [[https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg\\_interpreting\\_studies/research-projects/co\\_minor\\_in\\_quest/index](https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg_interpreting_studies/research-projects/co_minor_in_quest/index)] (12.09.2019)

modules for the professionals involved protocols and videos providing materials and recommendations.

*SOS-VICS: Speak Out for Support*<sup>15</sup> deals with interpreting in gender or domestic violence contexts while *JUSTISIGNS* addresses the often limited status afforded to sign languages which inhibits access to information and justice at all stages of the legal process for Deaf people.<sup>16</sup>

## 8.5 Quality

*QUALETRA: Quality in Legal Translation* can feed the *PACI* project with its research and information on multilingual terminology databases, translation memories and quality assessment methodologies of legal translations.<sup>17</sup> *Qualitas: Assessing Legal Interpreting Quality through Testing and Certification*, focuses on testing (and self-assessment) strategies – with examples of sample tests – of the required knowledge, competences and skills of the interpreter, including professional behaviour and ethical conduct and including the challenges in contexts of languages of lesser diffusion.<sup>18</sup>

## 8.6 Remote interpreting

The three *AVIDICUS (Assessment of Video-Mediated Interpreting in Criminal and Civil Justice)* projects provide scholarly information, observational and training modules, protocols, brochures and videos on video-interpreting in the legal domain.<sup>19</sup> However, this practical, useful information can be beneficial to any community interpreting project, given the growing use of remote video interpreting in community settings, whether e.g. in hospitals, education, asylum proceedings or, as we saw, parental child abduction mediation.

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<sup>15</sup> [<http://sosvicsweb.webs.uvigo.es/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>16</sup> [[http://justisigns.com/JUSTISIGNS\\_Project/About.html](http://justisigns.com/JUSTISIGNS_Project/About.html)] (12.09.2019)

<sup>17</sup> [<http://eulita.eu/wp/qualetra-0/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>18</sup> [<http://www.qualitas-project.eu/>] (12.09.2019)

<sup>19</sup> [<http://wp.videoconference-interpreting.net/>] (12.09.2019)

## 9. CONCLUSION

By now, the meaning of the somewhat enigmatic title of this contribution will undoubtedly have become clear. Professional interpreting and interpreting research means being aware of the insights that have been gained and taking them on board. Just like the rower who looks back while moving forward, any competent interpreter or interpreter researcher needs to incorporate the achievements of the past in order to be able to function professionally in the present and meet the challenges of the future.

Community Interpreting has established itself as *the* primary research domain in Interpreting Studies. As the *PACI* project testifies, there is still ample room for further growth and development. There can be no doubt that this project will also make a valuable, substantial contribution to the field.

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## 2.

# DOES IT ALL BOIL DOWN TO MONEY? THE HERCULEAN TASK OF PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETER TRAINING – A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRAINING INITIATIVES IN AUSTRIA

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Any training fulfils specific social needs (Kelly 2005: 3) by equipping representatives of a specific line of work with the skills necessary to deliver a particular service. Public service interpreting (PSI)<sup>20</sup> training serves to satisfy communication needs in a specific field and prepare interpreters to enable allochthonous speakers to communicate across linguistic and cultural barriers. This chapter will first outline the remit of PSI before sketching out service provision and market parameters with a focus on Austria. Section 5 will provide a quantitative analysis of training initiatives in Austria over almost two decades. It will also seek to outline some of the challenges associated with PSI training.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> One characteristic of PSI is the “terminological morass” (Ozolins 2010: 201) that seems to accompany this field. Different labels have been used, and criticised, for different reasons (e.g. community interpreting, dialogue interpreting, liaison interpreting, (inter)cultural mediation, public service interpreting). For a succinct outline of this discussion, see Ozolins (2010: 200-202).

<sup>21</sup> This article focuses on spoken language PSI exclusively; sign language interpreter training has been exposed to different dynamics in Austria (Grbić 2009).

## 2. PARAMETERS OF PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING

As put succinctly by Gentile in the “salted butter” metaphor, it may not always be necessary to differentiate between different kinds of interpreting: “In Australia, we do not use the term community interpreting but simply interpreting, just as we do not use the term ‘salted butter’ because all our butter is salted” (Gentile 1997: 117). Certain parameters pertain to all kinds of interpreting, irrespective of the field. As this publication, however, focuses on a field that is often defined in juxtaposition to conference interpreting (Pöchhacker 2000: 36) and differs to varying degrees from other areas of interpreting (Hale 2007: 31-33), it nonetheless seems helpful to define the field more clearly and outline some demarcation parameters.

Following Prunč (2011), one can distinguish several parameters that differentiate PSI from other fields, specifically conference interpreting as the “proto-typical” (Prunč 2011: 28) form of interpreting.<sup>22</sup> These parameters include “cognitive difference”, “cultural difference”, “power difference”, “accessibility of texts and predictability”, and “level of interaction and coordination of talk” (Prunč 2011: 28-30; translation S.P.). In PSI, communication needs do not arise between or within specific professional fields but rather from inner-societal communication needs between individuals and representatives of public institutions and other service institutions (e.g. medical, therapeutic, schools). Public service interpreters are thus often required to balance cognitive, linguistic, and cultural differences in expert-lay communication that is often characterised by asymmetries in power. To balance these differences, they may be granted or take greater leeway in managing and coordinating talk, depending on the role(s) they assume or that is (or are) imposed on them within the framework of institutional norms and constraints, professional ethics and individual moral values. In addition, dialogic situations, in which individual wants, needs or obligations are at stake, are less predictable as regards patterns of topical progression and degree of emotionality, and thus more challenging to prepare for, though PSI has, somewhat arrogantly, often been considered less difficult, if not inferior (Prunč 2017: 35). Professionals may sometimes feel that they are “overly qualified” (Kalina 2001:60; translation S.P.) for this field and also view

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<sup>22</sup> Though perhaps “prototypical” in terms of acceptance of particular standards on the part of practitioners and users, conference interpreting is not necessarily the field with the greatest demand: authors have constituted a decrease in demand over the years (e.g. Pöchhacker 2009: 139-140), while PSI continues to be perceived as a field where demand is “real” (Iannone 2017: 18).

the admission of “lay interpreters” into their ranks as a “de-professionalisation of their hard-earned status as fully-fledged service providers” (Kalina 2001:60; translation S.P.). Based upon these evident differences in status and prestige between PSI and other types of interpreting, Prunč (2017: 23) ascribes a “low or even negative symbolic capital” in the Bourdieuan sense to the field of PSI. In part, this is because one party of the encounter often belongs to a minority group (refugees, migrants, minority language speakers) or ranks among “other losers from globalisation” (2017: 25; translation S.P.) who do not dispose of economic, social (e.g. integration in social networks and prestige linked therewith) or cultural (e.g. education and titles linked therewith) capital. This “negative spiral” may be extended to interpreters who sometimes also have little or no social or cultural capital (*ibid.*), especially if they are lay interpreters with a minority background who are recruited upon the (naïve) assumption that language skills can automatically be equated with interpreting skills.

### 3. PARAMETERS OF SERVICE PROVISION

Following Ozolins (2010: 195), service provision in the field of PSI can be described as a spectrum of response extending from “neglect” to “full service”, with categories such as “ad-hoc” and “generic service provision” in-between, though service provision need not necessarily develop in such a linear fashion. Sometimes, for instance, legal changes may afford a chance to step up service provision. This fast-track route to improved service provision has been labelled the “legalistic detour” (Ozolins 2010: 195). The introduction of the US Federal Court Interpreters Act in 1975, which mandated changes in court interpreting in the US, may serve as an example of the potentially positive impacts of legal changes. On a European level, the EU Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings is another example of a more recent attempt to improve service provision that has influenced court interpreting (Hertog 2015).

To offset the linearity of the model, Ozolins adds four “constant” macro factors (2010: 196) that can be said to pertain to PSI in all countries and influence service provision policies: 1) linguistic diversity, 2) the dominance of institution-led (public service institutions) standards as opposed to profession-led (the interpreting profession) standards, 3) the need for cross-sectoral interpreting needs (clients have to communicate with many different institutions), and 4) the necessity of relying on public funding for service provision. In addition to these constant factors, “optional” factors may determine the shape of service provision and help to explain different national specifics and priorities despite similar macro factors. Ozolins outlines five such factors (2010: 196-204): 1) general

societal attitudes towards immigration, 2) governmental organisation (in terms of federalism vs unitarianism), 3) general views on public service provision, 4) the status of legal interpreting, and 5) general perceptions of interpreting. To reveal underlying market dimensions and provide a glimpse of the bigger picture that ultimately affects training provision, some macro-contextual factors of PSI provision in Austria will be outlined based on this model.

### 3.1 Macro-contextual parameters of PSI in Austria

Academic research on PSI in Austria only dates back to the mid-to-late-1990s, with Pöchhacker's study on service provision in Viennese hospitals being one of the first large-scale studies on PSI in Austria (1997). This does not mean, however, that there was no translation demand before. Translation historical studies such as Wolf (2015) have shown that in the multilingual Habsburg Empire, specific forms of institutional translation policies had already been institutionalised in the area of today's Austria. Recent studies have also investigated interpreting during both world wars (Wolf 2104; 2016 ed.). Less is known, however, about interpreter service provision in public institutions in the times following WWII. This is surprising as Austria intensively recruited so-called "guest workers" (Gastarbeiter) in times of economic boom during the 1960s and 70s and accepted a considerable number of refugees during the Cold War and following the break-up of the former Yugoslavia (Rupnow 2017); also, seven officially recognised minority languages (Austrian Sign Language, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, Romani, Slovenian, Slovak) may be used in certain institutional contexts (Dolezal 2012).

From what is known of interpreter-mediated institutional communication (e.g. Pöchhacker 2000; Pöllabauer 2005; Grbić/Pöllabauer 2008; Kadrić 2009; Kaelin/Kletečka-Pulker/Körtner 2013; Havelka 2018) and with regard to the parameters outlined by Ozolins, the PSI "market" can be described as follows: Increased linguistic diversity, as well as new migration trends, especially since 2015 following the crisis in Syria, have shaped the overall social fabric in many Western countries and have also had repercussions for Austria. Interpreters are needed for different languages, often Languages of Limited Diffusion (LLDs), with a sometimes-unpredictable flux in demand in specific languages subject to current geopolitical developments. Need for interpreting arises across different sectors, with service provision in these sectors being governed mainly by institutional needs and not the needs of the interpreting profession which largely remain ignored due to lack of awareness of the specifics of interpreting among institutional representatives.

General attitudes towards migration may also have an impact on service provision. Even though resentment among the population does not seem to be as strong (Kohler 2017) as might be expected in the wake of the crisis in the Near East, when surveys suggested a “tilt to the right” (ibid.: 259) in public opinion, recent coalitions of conservative and right-wing parties have found wide support and have established measures that can be assumed to also have repercussions for the provision and acceptance of interpreting services (e.g. a stricter focus on monolingualism and Eurocentric norms and increased pressure to learn the national language; Heinemann 2017).

Governmental organisation also impacts interpreter provision. As a federally organised country, interpreter provision is organised differently across the nine Austrian federal states, with no central form of interpreter provision and little inter-professional exchange. Two professional associations represent spoken language interpreters’ interests: Universitas, the Austrian Interpreters’ and Translators’ Association (Berufsverband für Dolmetschen und Übersetzen), and the Austrian Association of Certified Court Interpreters (Österreichischer Verband der allgemein beeideten und gerichtlich zertifizierten Dolmetscher).<sup>23</sup> The two associations, however, have only started to devote attention specifically to PSI relatively recently. A positive development in this respect was the establishment of a “Committee for PSI” (Ausschuss für Community Interpreting, AfC) by Universitas in 2013 that has also lobbied for the installation of COMMUNITAS, a platform offering semi-trained interpreters<sup>24</sup> a medium for exchange and access to information (Universitas 2019). Communication between “professional” and “non-professional” interpreters, however, still seems to be governed by a certain “professional snobbery” (Prunč 2017: 35) on the part of professionals towards outsiders to the profession.

With regard to public service policies, there is not much public commitment to comprehensive service provision. Services are often offered through voluntary or charity organisations which often regulate access through so-called “pools” or “lists” of interpreters (Wolfsgruber 2007: 28-34). Inclusion into such registers, however, does not always require proof of language and interpreting skills and is thus no guarantee of quality. Recently, remote interpreting services (video-link services, Apps) in particular have been offered by private providers (Hawelka

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<sup>23</sup> Sign language interpreters are represented by the Austrian Association of Sign Language Interpreters (*Österreichischer GebärdensprachdolmetscherInnen- und ÜbersetzerInnen-Verband*).

<sup>24</sup> Prerequisite for admission: training of at least 20 ECTS provided by official training institutions.

2018). Except for court interpreting, there are also no generally accepted standards that seek to monitor provision and quality.<sup>25</sup>

The legal sector also has a “privileged” (Ozolins 2010:199) status in Austria. National and international legal instruments require courts or other legal institutions to provide interpreters. To become a sworn interpreter and be allowed to be registered on the official court interpreters’ lists, an exam has to be taken before a commission that also includes members of the Court Interpreters’ Association. Training is not a prerequisite for taking the exam, and membership in the Court Interpreters’ Association is facultative. Legal interpreting is also the only sector in Austria where payment is legally regulated (Gebührenanspruchsgesetz), even though court interpreters’ fees have not been indexed recently and are deemed rather low by professionals.

Overall public perception of interpreting also influences the PSI market. There is generally little public awareness about the role and skills profile of interpreters. Ad-hoc routines or service provision are thus often not questioned and service users are often in no position to comprehensively judge interpreting quality (nor may they be interested in changing habituated practices). Generally, market access is mostly unregulated, and payment is low. Anyone (trained or not) may serve as an interpreter, based upon alleged language and interpreting skills. Even in legal interpreting, ad-hoc interpreters are quite often called upon for languages for which no sworn interpreters are available, which are often but not exclusively LLDs as there is an overall lack of sworn in interpreters in more traditional languages as well (Seeh 2019). Training is generally not considered a prerequisite for market access. Mostly, institutions use a mix of trained (university level), semi-trained (courses, in-house training) or non-trained interpreters (lay interpreters).

Full-scale, transparent language services would need funding and more training. Due to a lack of such funding, ad-hoc or, in the case of legal interpreting, generic forms of service provision seem to prevail.

#### **4. TRAINING PARAMETERS: “WHY SHOULD I BOTHER WITH TRAINING?”**

PSI training has been widely discussed. More than ten years ago, Hale (2007:162) described training as “one of the most complicated and problematic aspects of Community Interpreting”. More recent overviews (e.g. Hale/Ozolins

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<sup>25</sup> The ISO 13611:2014 standard (Guidelines for Community Interpreting) outlines recommendations for this field but does not seem to be widely used in an Austrian context.

2014; Bancroft 2015) still point to a wide variety of training designs with specific challenges linked to it (e.g. scope and organisation of training, curricular design, entrance and assessment modalities, selection or training of trainers, or both, group dynamics, adult learning processes, integration of e-learning). If all of these different factors are taken into consideration, training may be viewed as a Herculean and, some might say, frustrating project.

One of the significant challenges for training implementation is a general “lack of recognition for the need of training” (Hale 2007: 163), which still seems to be present both among service-users and (non-trained) practitioners. Often, training is not seen as necessary by practitioners because remuneration is often low and may not “justify spending much time and money on professional development” (Bancroft 2015: 228). Some also see no need for training as interpreting is not seen as a “real” job (Iannone/Redl 2017: 125) or because, due to lack of awareness among service institutions, they are still recruited regardless of training. If a specific language combination is currently in high demand, some may also lack time for training (“I would like to, but I just don’t have the time, because if I wanted, I could interpret day and night.”).<sup>26</sup>

Many of the factors that influence training organisation and implementation seem to boil down to money. Content, scope or availability of resources depend on the funds available, which can be accrued through course fees or funding (scholarships, public funding). Public funding, one of the constant factors outlined by Ozolins, is difficult to obtain, however, and often depends on political will and ideology as long as institutions are not legally required to provide comprehensive interpreting services (Iannone/Redl 2017: 138). This is ironic in itself, as public institutions themselves would benefit from full-scale quality language services and the onus should be on them to ensure that the services provided comply with basic quality standards at least, which would also involve training the professionals that deliver these services.

## 5. ANALYSIS OF TRAINING INITIATIVES

In the following sections, the results of a quantitative analysis of a selection of training measures that were implemented over almost two decades in Austria

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<sup>26</sup> Personal information communicated to the author by a lay interpreter potentially interested in training, but with no current plans to actually attend training due to time constraints (May 2017, during a career and training fair; UNI for LIFE, University of Graz).

are presented.<sup>27</sup> Similarly to Iannone/Redl (2017: 129), “public accessibility” was used as the selection criterion: the corpus of the analysis includes training measures with an established degree of formality, that is to say, publicly available information on the scope, content and organisational facets of the training courses. In-house or informal training courses, and workshops and seminars offered by providers that do not officially qualify as training institutions, were not included, nor were full-time university interpreter/translator training curricula.<sup>28</sup> The compilation of the corpus was informed by studies on PSI provision/training in Austria and follow-up web research. If online information was not precise enough, specific facts were also counterchecked with the training providers.

A survey by Evrensel/Höbart (2004) conducted by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights was one of the first studies to address interpreting demand and forms of interpreter provision (or rather the lack thereof) in a subsection. The findings of a more comprehensive survey were presented by Stofner (2006) and published as an EQUAL report (Wolfgruber 2007).<sup>29</sup> The only two more “formal” training options available then were a training course offered by the University of Graz and a pilot training course for medical interpreters (see below). Daneshmayeh (2008) presented the results of a survey of university-based PSI training in Austria and Germany conducted as part of an MA thesis in 2004, with a training course offered at the University of Graz being the only available one on offer at the time. Pöllabauer (2009) also presented an overview of training measures with a backdrop of a curriculum for medical interpreter training that was developed in a project funded under Grundtvig (MedInt Developing a Curriculum for Medical Interpreters) but not implemented due to lack of funding. More recent trends in training in Austria, Germany and Switzerland<sup>30</sup> are

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<sup>27</sup> The scope of this contribution does not allow for a qualitative analysis of aspects such as curricular design, teaching methods, or entrance and assessment modalities.

<sup>28</sup> At the beginning of the PSI research, university-level interpreter training continued to focus predominantly on conference interpreter training. Only in the late 2000s were options for a specialisation in dialogue interpreting included in university curricula. Currently, two of the three Austrian interpreter or translator training institutes (in alphabetical order: Graz, Innsbruck, Vienna) offer specialisations in dialogue interpreting (Graz, Vienna; see curricula on the homepages).

<sup>29</sup> This survey was prepared within a European EQUAL Initiative (no longer active; link: [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal\\_consolidated/](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal_consolidated/), accessed 29/05/2019) that was funded by the European Social Fund as part of a larger transnational project led by Diakonie Wuppertal (Wolfgruber 2007).

<sup>30</sup> A recent comprehensive survey of the training landscape in Austria, Germany and Switzerland was prepared within the AMIF-funded *ZwischenSprachen* project under the lead of the Research Group on Migration and Psychosocial Health (MiPH) at the Department of Medical

discussed by Iannone/Redl (2017) who point to an overall trend towards shorter, language-independent and modular training, with elements of blended learning or e-learning. One example of such a concise and modular course, offered by the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Innsbruck, is outlined in more detail by Iannone (2017). The challenges of implementing an asylum-specific training programme are outlined by Bergunde/Pöllabauer (2019).

Most of these surveys highlight general challenges of training provision, as outlined in Section 4, in a field that is characterised by a lack of recognition and funding. What is still lacking are a more thorough focus on trainees' or trainers' perspectives and a more comprehensive survey of training, teaching or assessment methods.

## 5.1 Training landscape

Twelve training courses comply with the selection criteria. One of these is a course for PSI trainers which was also included as it is the only such PSI-specific measure available in Austria so far. Table 1 provides an overview of all training courses that were included in the analysis as well as a list of the abbreviations used (see Appendix for a more detailed list).

**Table 1:**

**List of training courses**

No.	Name of training [Literal English translation]	Abbr.
1	Kommunaldolmetschen – Fortbildungsreihe für Dolmetscher*innen im Sozial- und Gesundheitsbereich [Community Interpreting – Training Series for Interpreters in Social Service and Healthcare Settings]	W-Diak
2	Lehrgang Dolmetschen im Kommunalbereich für Laiendolmetscherinnen und Laiendolmetscher [Training Course: Interpreting in Community Settings for Lay Interpreters]	R-BZ

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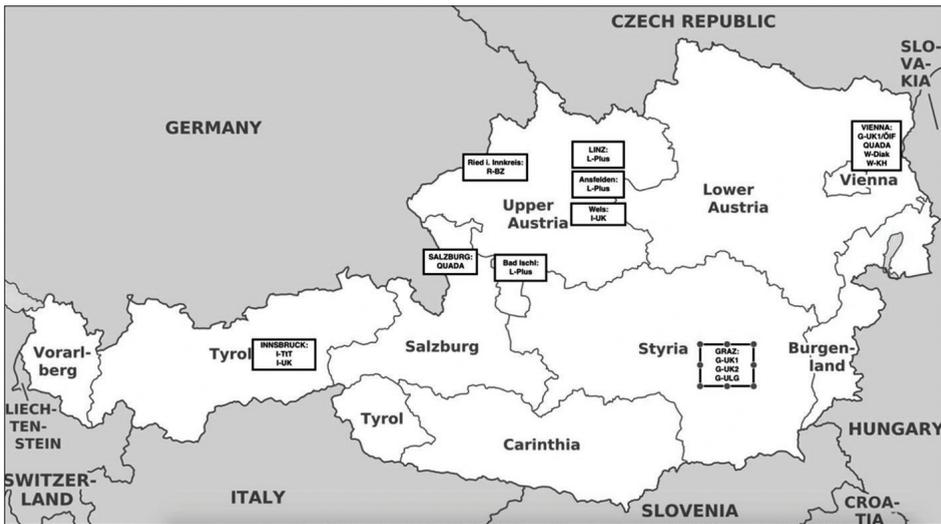
Psychology of the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf. Results were presented at an international symposium in 2018 but not yet published in a report (Zwischensprachen 2019).

3	Pilotkurs Krankenhausdolmetschen [Pilot Course for Healthcare Interpreting]	W-KH
4	Plus.Mehrsprachigkeit LaiendolmetscherInnen-Kurs [Plus.Multilingualism Course for Lay Interpreters]	L-Plus
5	Qualitätsvolles Dolmetschen im Asylverfahren (QUADA) [Quality Interpreting at Asylum Procedures]	Quada
6	Train the Trainer. Für die Methode Dolmetschinszenierung [Train the Trainer. Interpreting Enactment Method]	I-TtT
7	Universitätskurs Community Interpreting – Professionalisierung von Laiendolmetscherinnen und Laiendolmetscher im sozialen, medizinischen, psychotherapeutischen und kommunalen Bereich [University Course in Community Interpreting – Professionalising Lay Interpreters in Social Service, Medical, Psychotherapeutic, and Community Settings]	I-UK
8	Universitätskurs Kommunaldolmetschen Aufbaukurs [University Course in Community Interpreting. Advanced Course]	G-UK2
9	Universitätskurs Kommunaldolmetschen Basiskurs [University Course in Community Interpreting. Basic Course]	G-UK1
10	Universitätslehrgang Kommunaldolmetschen [University Training in Community Interpreting]	G-ULG
11	Universitätslehrgang Dolmetschen für Gerichte und Behörden [University Training Course in Interpreting for Courts and Public Service Institutions]	W-ULG
12	MA-Lehrgang Dolmetschen für Gerichte und Behörden [Masters Course in Interpreting for Courts and Public Service Institutions]	W-ULG(MA)

These training courses have been offered in five of the nine Austrian states (Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol, Upper Austria, Vienna). These are also the states with the biggest cities in order of the number of inhabitants and percentages of non-Austrian citizenship (federal/capital cities are capitalised): Vienna/VIENNA (1.9 million inhabitants; 30.2 % having non-Austrian citizenship); Styria/Graz

(288,800; 23.1%); Upper Austria/LINZ (206,800; 23.7%); Salzburg/SALZBURG (155,200; 17.2%); Tyrol/INNSBRUCK (133,200; 26.6%) (Statistik Austria 2019a; 2019b).<sup>31</sup> It seems obvious that the demand for training is highest in cities with a high proportion of non-native and thus potentially non-German-speaking inhabitants. Some training courses, however, have also been offered in smaller cities, though with a rather high percentage of non-native inhabitants compared to other cities of that size (Ansfelden (16,600 inhabitants; 23.5%), Wels (61,700; 26.5%), Ried im Innkreis (12,000; 11.1%), Bad Ischl (14,100; 13.2%) (Statistik Austria 2019a; 2019b). The reasons for a higher demand for interpreters in some smaller cities may be: a higher rate of in-migration of specific communities, the presence of larger refugee centres, increased awareness and comprehensive language policies on a municipal level, or simply an extraordinary commitment by specific individuals or organisations as for instance in the case of I-UK (see Iannone/Redl 2016).

No training options have so far been offered in the far east (Burgenland) or the far west (Vorarlberg), the south (Carynthia) or Lower Austria. Graph 1 maps training courses onto the political map of Austria.



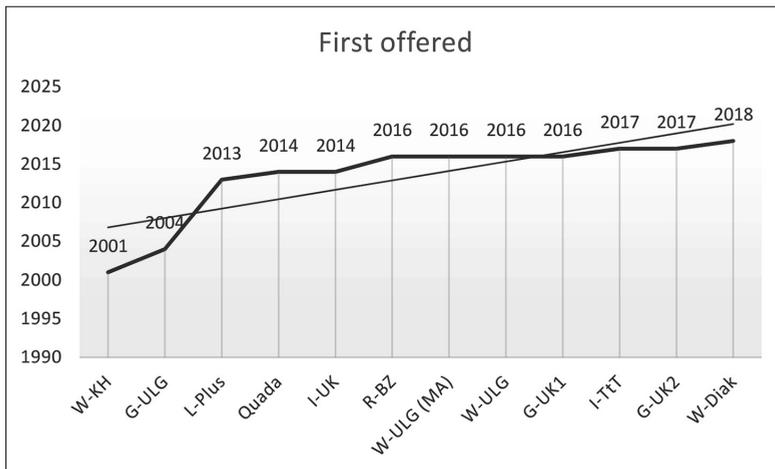
*Graph 1: Training landscape*

<sup>31</sup> Citizenship on its own is, of course, not a valid indicator of an individual's language proficiency; it is, however, the only statistical parameter available to gauge potential need for interpreting. Currently, German nationals, for which no interpretation will be needed, are the largest group of non-native inhabitants, followed by nationals from Serbia, Turkey, Romania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Hungary, Croatia, Poland, Syria, and Afghanistan (Statistik Austria 2019c).

## 5.2 Timeline(s) and frequency of training

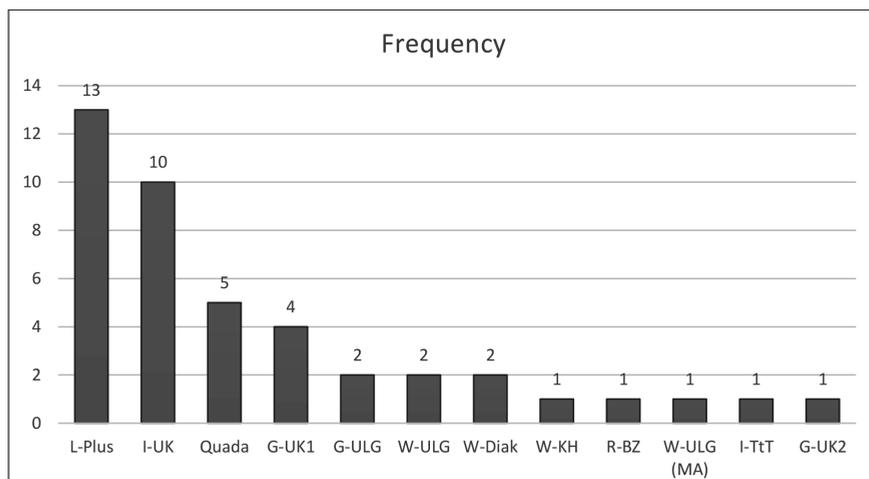
The first PSI training in Austria, offered in 2001, was a training course for healthcare interpreters (W-KH) (also see Pöchhacker 2002). The first more comprehensive training (four semesters) was implemented by Graz University (G-ULG) between 2004-2005 and 2008-2009 (also see Pöllabauer 2011). Both of these courses, however, had to be discontinued due to lack of funding. These pioneering courses were offered in a period when PSI first started to receive more considerable attention, first in research and later also in university interpreter training.

No courses were offered during 2010 and 2013. The reasons for this are unclear but may have to do with lack of funding or support and the slow consolidation of PSI in research and training. As of 2013, the number of available training courses has increased considerably, which can partially, but not exclusively, be explained through the increased demand in the wake of the crisis in Syria, as some curricula had been developed before and their implementation coincided unexpectedly with the sudden increase of demand (e.g. Quada, I-UK) (Iannone/Redl 2017: 133).



*Graph 2: Timeline*

Seven of these training courses were offered more than once, and five were one-time initiatives (see Graph 3). Two are no longer offered (G-ULG; W-KH) (no more official information available online). For the remainder of the one-time courses, it remains to be seen whether they will be offered again, which probably depends upon funding, a sufficient number of registrations by prospective trainees or both.



*Graph 3: Frequency of training*

Even though several courses with a similar focus started over a four years period (2014-2017), and curricular development took place (almost) simultaneously, there seems to have been little communication and coordination between training providers (cf. Iannone/Redl 2017: 135<sup>32</sup>). Graph 1 shows the frequency of training availability.

Interestingly, one of the less well-known courses has been offered most frequently (L-Plus), followed by I-UK, which is documented more comprehensively both online (homepage, press coverage) and in print (Iannone/Redl 2017; Iannone 2017).<sup>33</sup>

Of the non-university-affiliated courses, QUADA has been offered most often (five times). Of the more comprehensive university courses (20 ECTS or more), G-UK1 ranks first as regards frequency. Financial motives (lack of funding, high costs) may explain why courses that rank first as regards scope (20 ECTS or more, see below) generally rank low as regards frequency. That the more comprehensive course G-ULG, has been replaced by two shorter courses (G-UK1 and G-UK2), also supports Iannone's/Redl's (2017) observation of a trend towards shorter, modular training offers.

<sup>32</sup> The author of this contribution has been personally involved in several of these training courses; her personal experience also supports this suggestion.

<sup>33</sup> The assumption that this course is "less well-known" is supported by an overall lack of more comprehensive information on the course, lack of inclusion in surveys, and personal impression based on exchanges with practitioners/trainers.

### 5.3 Target groups and providers

As can be deduced from the names of the training courses and the course descriptions (also see Appendix), the target group of the majority of the training courses are lay interpreters. Half of the training courses focus on specific fields of interpreting (asylum, court, healthcare, training). The other half have a more general focus on the broad range of PSI settings.

Seven of the training courses have been offered by universities or university-affiliated continuing education centres or companies, in the case of G-UK1 once in cooperation with Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, a fund of the Republic of Austria and partner of the Austrian Ministry of the Exterior.<sup>34</sup> Two have been offered by adult education centres (L-Plus; QUADA), two by church welfare organisations or educational centres (W-Diak; R-BZ) and one by a public hospital provider (W-KH). That fact that training courses are generally initiated not by state organisations, but by academic/educational and also private or church organisations can, in line with Ozolins (2014: 196), also be viewed as a sign of a lack of state commitment and failure to install comprehensive and inclusive language policies.

What is also noticeable is that academic providers offer the most comprehensive information. Due to university regulations for continuing education courses, they generally need to make available comprehensive course curricula. In the case of non-university-affiliated providers, specifically in the case of the church-affiliated providers and L-Plus, general information regarding content is scarce.

### 5.4 Organisational parameters: format, scope and costs

A closer look at some organisational parameters of the different courses also proves that there is a great variety in length or scope of training and the required entrance levels.

All of the training courses under review are offered in an extra-occupational format (partially e-learning as well, e.g. G-UK1; G-UK2; Quada) with course times that cater to the needs of trainees who work full-time.

Only four of the training courses are offered in a language-specific format in combination with German (W-KH: Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and Turkish;

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<sup>34</sup> Austrian universities are allowed to offer continuing education courses through university-affiliated subsidiaries or postgraduate centres. So-called *Universitätskurse* (shorter duration, fewer ECTS, usually 20-30) or *Universitätslehrgänge* (broader scope, more ECTS, usually 60-70) have to comply with specific requirements as regards curricular design and organisation.

G-ULG: Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Russian, Turkish; W-ULG and W-ULG(MA): Albanian, Arabic, Dari/Farsi and Turkish), offering practical interpreting exercises in specific language combinations. The university-based providers only offer language-specific training for “longer” course formats, involving a higher study workload (see below). The remainder of the courses are language-independent and cater for trainees with a broad range of different languages. While they provide general information on interpreting techniques and challenges, they do not include comprehensive language-specific interpreting exercises. The advantage of such an approach is its cost-effectiveness. In the case of language-specific course units, trainers need to be provided (and thus factored in the overall budget) for each specific language combination. Also, it may prove difficult to find suitable trainers, especially for LLDs (Hale/Ozolins 2014).

Training scope ranges between 3-4 semesters (G-ULG; W-ULG(MA)) and a few days (W-Diak; R-BZ; L-Plus) or weekend seminars (I-UK; QUADA). Funding and time, as mentioned above, are prime factors that influence the length of training. Longer training courses are cost-intensive and time-intensive, both of which are scarce resources for some trainees. From an organisational stance, longer training courses are also more complex as regards training organisation, support for trainees and trainers, examination/certification procedures, and evaluation.

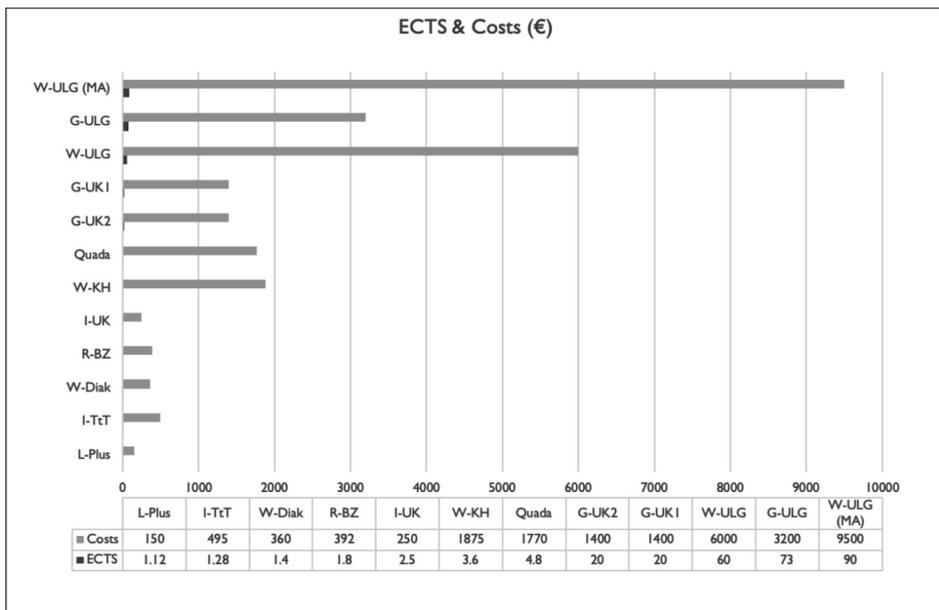
It is generally difficult to compare the length of the training courses offered, as publicly available information on the training scope is highly divergent and described in terms of “days” (7-8 hours), “half-days” (5 hours), “course units” (45’ or 50’ per unit) or “ECTS” (the European Credit Transfer System, where one ECTS corresponds to approx. 25 hours (60’) of student workload).<sup>35</sup> University-based training courses are usually required to specify the number of ECTS and are thus more easily comparable.

With 90 ECTS, the W-ULG (MA), the only Masters course of the corpus, offered at the University of Vienna since 2018, has the highest number of ECTS, followed by G-ULG (60 ECTS or, after evaluation and a revision of the curriculum, 73 ECTS) and W-ULG (60 ECTS). I-UK, which is also offered

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<sup>35</sup> The ECTS system was introduced to facilitate planning, implementation, and evaluation of training programs and is mostly used in an academic framework. ECTS credits are an indicator of the workload students have to complete for a training (based on predefined learning objectives) and includes any kind of learning activity necessary for a specific course (i.e. also individual study). 60 ECTS, for instance, in many countries correspond to the full workload of one academic year, which means that one ECTS equals 25 to 30 hours of work. (European Commission 2015)

within a university framework, expects 2.5 ECTS spread over one semester. Of the non-university-based courses, only the QUADA training specifies training length with 4.8 ECTS. The other courses, as mentioned above, provide divergent and not easily comparable information on the scope of the training. To be able to compare the different training offers, the information provided in the course descriptions was converted to ECTS, as indicated in the table below. This kind of conversion may admittedly not provide a sufficiently accurate assessment of the full workload, which would require a comparison of the kinds of learning activities students have to complete. However, it nonetheless provides a rough basis for comparing the scope of the different training courses.



Graph 4: ECTS & Costs

The graph<sup>36</sup> shows that the most comprehensive training courses as regards scope are the university-based courses (between 20 and 90 ECTS), with I-UK as an exception with only 2.5 ECTS. The QUADA training course for asylum

<sup>36</sup> For the sake of comparison, in the case of G-ULG, where the number of ECTS changed after a revision of the curriculum, the higher ECTS score was included in the graph; for the W-KH course the total costs of €30,000 were broken down to the 16 participants that completed the course, even though the course costs were covered by the hospital provider.

interpreting that is still being offered ranks first (4.8 ECTS) in the list of non-university-based courses. It is followed by the pilot course on healthcare interpreting (3.6 ECTS), which no longer exists. The remainder of the non-university courses that are offered by church or educational organisations spans a range between 1.12 and 1.8 ECTS.

The most cost-intensive course is, rather logically, W-ULG (MA) which is also the broadest in scope (ECTS), followed by W-ULG (€6,000 for 60 ECTS) and G-ULG (which is no longer offered) at €3,200 for 73 ECTS. Overall, the ECTS-cost-ratio seems reasonably balanced. It still has to be pointed out, however, that without additional funding or scholarships<sup>37</sup> much of the training offered, specifically the more comprehensive courses, may not be affordable to particular prospective trainees. If trainees' decisions to undergo training were based on the cost-benefit ratio, none of the available training courses would be recommendable, as the potential income for PSI based on the overall pay rates in Austria is too low to recommend training from the point of view of cost-efficiency<sup>38</sup>. The fact that a considerable number of trainees nonetheless attend training courses voluntarily, can be interpreted as a sign of their high commitment and desire to improve their interpreting performance.

In some cases, external push factors such as employers' stress on the necessity of training may also be a motive. Trainees' reasons to start training, however, have not been comprehensively studied so far. To achieve a better cost-benefit ratio, more state commitment in the form of funding would be needed. For training providers, viability is fundamental. For training to be viable, either the number of participants must be high (more trainees, lower fees per trainee), which conversely would affect course design, or course fees have to be high enough (fewer trainees, higher fees per trainee). However, higher course fees will affect trainees' acceptance of the training and will also have an impact on the overall profile of trainees because the training may not be affordable to some target groups (also see Iannone 2017:18 regarding this "dilemma of course costs vs scope").

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<sup>37</sup> No official information is available on the amount of funding or the availability of scholarships, so this parameter cannot be included in the review.

<sup>38</sup> The author has no information available on any current review of PSI interpreting fees. Smaller-scale studies indicate that fees range between non-existent to about €50/hour (Pöllabauer 2009: 113); this is also supported by recent personal information.

## 5.5 Organisational parameters: entrance/assessment modalities and trainers

The entrance level of trainees and ways of testing their qualifications are also a prominent topic in PSI research. The required entrance qualifications of prospective trainees are specified explicitly in the case of the university-based training courses in our corpus. The starting level is B2, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe 2019) (I-UK; G-UK1+2). W-ULG and W-ULG (MA), however, require C1 as a starting-level. Of the non-university courses, B2 is required by W-Diak and QUADA whereas W-KH (discontinued) required “proof of bilingual and bi-cultural competence”. No information on the required entrance level is available for L-Plus and R-BZ where a simple “registration” (and the submission of a CV and a “face-to-face talk” and in the case of L-Plus, personal information) seems to be sufficient. Most of the university-courses also admit students only after they have passed an entrance exam (G-ULG; G-UK1; G-UK2; W-ULG; W-ULG (MA)).

Course completion is based on the completion of a final exam in the case of the university courses. W-KH also included a final exam. L-Plus requires trainees to complete an “individual one-on-one conversation”. In the case of QUADA, an additional voluntary certification exam was developed that is also accepted by the Austrian asylum authorities and has already been taken by a dozen trainees (also see Bergunde/Pöllabauer 2019: 14). Most non-university providers are only allowed to award “(attendance) certificates”. G-ULG, W-ULG and W-ULG (MA) are the only courses where a form of “professional title” is awarded that is also specified in the official course curriculum: “Academic public service interpreter” (Akademische Behördendolmetscherin) (W-ULG) or Master of Arts (MA) (W-ULG (MA)), and “Academic expert for interpreting in community, social, and healthcare settings” (Akademisch geprüfte/r Fachfrau/Fachmann für Dolmetschen im kommunalen, sozialen und medizinischen Bereich) (G-ULG). The highest form of degree (MA) is awarded in the case of the W-ULG (MA).

Finding and training suitable trainers for this field is also one of the challenges of PSI training (Lai/Mulayim 2010). Most of the training courses rely on a pool of different trainers for different topics. There is also quite a degree of overlap in the pool(s) of recruited trainers, as is probably logical for a small country such as Austria with a relatively small community of potential trainers.<sup>39</sup> In these cases,

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<sup>39</sup> Personal information.

pools of trainers include both experts in translation or interpreting (practitioners and researchers) and experts from the field (institutional representatives, psychotherapists). In some cases, no information is available on the trainers (R-BZ) or the course is offered by one single trainer with a background in psychotherapy but not translation or interpreting (L-Plus).

Generally, train-the-trainer measures seem to be scarce.<sup>40</sup> For the Austrian context, the only train-the-trainer measure available to date was I-TtT. Small-scale workshops to promote cooperation between trainers were also offered within the frame QUADA (Bergunde/Pöllabauer 2019: 11).

## 6. CONCLUSION

This review of the Austrian PSI training landscape shows that different kinds of training have been offered for almost two decades. On the grounds of both data protection and the scope of this contribution, it is not possible to compare the overall numbers of trainees who started and completed the different training courses. It can, however, be projected on the basis of an estimated average group size of 20 and the total number of training courses offered (43; see Graph 3), that some 800 individuals will have completed one of the training courses reviewed here over the years in question. Even if one includes interpreters with traditional university training, who also work in PSI settings, the overall number of available trained and semi-trained public service interpreters still seems low for a country with a 16.2% share of non-native inhabitants (Statistik Austria 2019b). It would, therefore, seem essential to continue offering such training courses and even step up attempts to reinvigorate some of the training courses that have only been offered once or twice.

The training measures themselves are very diverse as regards scope, format, costs, and entrance requirements. Training courses range from short seminars to one full-scale MA programme and are offered in both language-specific and language-independent formats. The majority of the training courses cover the full range of PSI sectors. Some focus on specific fields (e.g. asylum, medical) and training providers are either university-affiliated training providers or educational, welfare or church organisations. Longer forms of training and

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<sup>40</sup> Train-the-user training courses are seen as equally important. Very often, these are provided in the form of in-house training courses with no publicly available information. One more official form of user training was offered by the Center for Weiterbildung of the University of Innsbruck for institutional representatives in 2019 (Universität Innsbruck 2019).

language-specific formats are offered only by university-affiliated providers. Information on entrance and assessment modalities, if available at all, is scarce, especially on the non-university providers. In general, too, the different kinds of training courses seem to have developed autonomously, with little exchange among the providers, though some training courses seem to share a pool of trainers. In this respect, it would seem valuable to step up networking among service providers. The joint raising of awareness among institutional service-users might contribute to convincing institutions to pay closer attention to the quality of interpreting they receive and the need to use trained interpreters. The current array of training initiatives may seem confusing and opaque to prospective trainees and institutions who seek to compel “their” interpreters to undergo training but have no more in-depth knowledge on the specifics of PSI. For these target groups, it will probably be difficult to assess what they gain from the different kinds of training and how they might most benefit.

Ultimately, full-scale service provision, including the routine and full-scale use of adequately trained interpreters, would surely require legal changes and the pressure that would come with them, obliging public institutions to uphold specific standards in interpreter service provision. Both interpreters’ associations and training providers would need to play a role in this process and help to define and shape these standards. This is also an area where greater cooperation and networking would seem vital: interpreters’ associations would need to continue paying attention to the needs of public services interpreters, including the needs of lay interpreters which still seems to be a provocative concept to some members. More cooperation between interpreters themselves, interpreters’ associations and training providers, and training providers themselves might also help to inform users of interpreting services of the needs of the profession, so that institutional needs do not exclusively govern interpreting.

Among training providers, more coordination of information about content, entrance and assessment modalities might also prove fruitful and help raise the quality of training. Here, research should also play a role. It might prove interesting to investigate such aspects in more detail and compare different national modalities with regard to their efficacy. Generally, findings of empirical studies on different fields of PSI can and should be used as an argument for raising awareness among service users as to why they would also benefit from stepping up the quality of interpreting provision.

So, to answer the question raised in the title: Does it all boil down to money? In some ways, this seems to be true as, like in many fields, the success of any such measures also hinges on funding or lack thereof. The overall PSI and training landscape, however, also suggests that networking, increased cooperation and joint raising of awareness might play a role in improving PSI standards.

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## APPENDIX

No.	Name of training <i>[Literal English translation]</i>	Abbr.	Place of training	Focus	Target group as specified in course description	Provider
1	Kommunaldolmetschen – Fortbildungsreihe für Dolmetscher*innen im Sozial- und Gesundheitsbereich  <i>[Community Interpreting – Training Series for Interpreters in Social Service and Healthcare Settings]</i>	W-Diak	Wien	Social and healthcare	Lay interpreters with experience	Diakonie Eine Welt – Akademie gem. GmbH der Evangelischen Kirche A.B u. H.B. in Österreich
2	Lehrgang Dolmetschen im Kommunalbereich für Laiendolmetscherinnen und Laiendolmetscher  <i>[Training Course: Interpreting in Community Settings for Lay Interpreters]</i>	R-BZ	Ried	General	Lay interpreters, with or without experience („potentially serving as...“)	Bildungszentrum St. Franziskus der Katholischen Kirche in Oberösterreich
3	Pilotkurs Krankenhausdolmetschen  <i>[Pilot Course for Healthcare Interpreting]</i>	W-KH	Wien	Healthcare	Healthcare interpreters (in-house jobs in hospitals)	Wiener Krankenanstaltenverbund (KAV)
4	Plus.Mehrsprachigkeit LaiendolmetscherInnen-Kurs  <i>[Plus.Multilingualism Course for Lay Interpreters]</i>	L-Plus	Linz Bad Ischl Ansfelden	General	Lay interpreters	Institut Interkulturelle Pädagogik (IIP) der VHS OÖ

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5	<p>Qualitätsvolles Dolmetschen im Asylverfahren (QUADA)</p> <p><i>[Quality Interpreting at Asylum Procedures]</i></p>	Quada	Wien Salzburg	Asylum	Interpreters working or planning to work in an asylum context	Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschulen (VÖV) and Volkshochschule Wien Alsergrund
6	<p>Train the Trainer. Für die Methode Dolmetschinszenierung</p> <p><i>[Train the Trainer. Interpreting Enactment Method]</i></p>	I-TtT	Innsbruck	Training	PSI trainers	Koordinationsstelle für universitäre Weiterbildung der Universität Innsbruck
7	<p>Universitätskurs Community Interpreting – Professionalisierung von Laiendolmetscherinnen und Laiendolmetscher im sozialen, medizinischen, psychotherapeutischen und kommunalen Bereich</p> <p><i>[University Course in Community Interpreting – Professionalising Lay Interpreters in Social Service, Medical, Psychotherapeutic, and Community Settings]</i></p>	I-UK	Innsbruck Wels	General	Lay interpreters (social, medical, therapeutic, and public service settings)	Koordinationsstelle für universitäre Weiterbildung der Universität Innsbruck
8	<p>Universitätskurs Kommunaldolmetschen Aufbaukurs</p> <p><i>[University Course in Community Interpreting. Advanced Course]</i></p>	G-UK2	Graz	General	Lay interpreters (completion of basic training course required)	UNI for LIFE Weiterbildungs GmbH der Universität Graz

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9	<p>Universitätskurs Kommunaldolmet- schen Basiskurs</p> <p><i>[University Course in Community In- terpreting. Basic Course]</i></p>	G-UK1	Graz Wien	General	Lay inter- preters; profession- als seeking additional qualification	<p>Graz: UNI for LIFE Weiterbildungs GmbH der Universität Graz</p> <p>Vienna: in cooperation with Österre- ichischer Inte- grationsfonds (ÖIF)</p>
10	<p>Universitätslehr- gang Kommunal- dolmetschen</p> <p><i>[University Training in Community In- terpreting]</i></p>	G-ULG	Graz	General	Lay inter- preters; profession- als seeking additional qualification	<p>Institut für Translations- wissenschaft der Universität Graz UNI for LIFE Weiterbildungs GmbH der Universität Graz</p>
11	<p>Universitätslehr- gang Dolmetschen für Gerichte und Behörden</p> <p><i>[University Training in Interpreting for Courts and Public Service Institutions]</i></p>	W-ULG	Wien	Court and public service institutions	Lay inter- preters	Postgraduate Center der Universität Wien
12	<p>MA-Lehrgang Dol- metschen für Ge- richte und Behörden</p> <p><i>[Masters Course in Interpreting for Courts and Public Service Institutions]</i></p>	W-ULG (MA)	Wien	Court and public service institutions	Lay inter- preters	Postgraduate Center der Universität Wien

### 3. INSTITUTIONALISATION AND PROFESSIONALISATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION IN BELGIUM

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This article attempts to provide an overview of the PSIT (Public Service Interpreting and Translation) models developed in Belgium's two major language areas. Belgium has had a complex federal state structure since 1993 consisting of language areas, communities and regions which do not always overlap. For instance, the four language areas (the northern Dutch-speaking and southern French-speaking language areas, bilingual Brussels and the smaller German-speaking language area in the east of the country and situated in the Walloon territory), fall under the jurisdiction of only three linguistic communities (the Flemish, French- and German-speaking communities) and three regions (the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels Capital Regions). The competence for the integration of immigrants, which regulates PSIT, became a competence of the three linguistic communities (Flemish, French- and German-speaking) in 1980. As a result, different integration policies have been implemented, resulting in different infrastructures and language services (Ozolins 2010). Moreover, the competence was transferred by the French-speaking community to the Walloon Region and the French Community Commission (COCOF) in the Brussels Capital Region in 1993, whereas the Flemish Community is still in charge of the Dutch-speaking community in Brussels (Xhardez 2016).

We will first provide an overview of the emergence and the structural development of PSIT and delineate the areas of PSIT services in the Belgian context, more specifically in the country's two main language areas, i.e. Dutch-speaking Flanders and French-speaking Wallonia. Brussels combines these two (different) PSIT regulations of both language areas, as immigrants in Brussels can choose between French and Dutch and thus fall under the respective integration policy. Secondly, we will discuss the role of the PSIT professional and the language services provided by the current PSIT organisations. In the last section, we focus on the professionalization of PSIT in terms of certification and training. As will be illustrated in the following sections, Flanders and Wallonia have developed different approaches in terms of policy planning, structural organisation, standards of conduct, certification systems and training programmes.

## 2. EMERGENCE AND STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF PSIT

PSIT organisations started to surface in Flanders in the '80s and '90s in Flemish cities and provinces as a result of increasing linguistic diversity and the necessity to meet multilingual communication needs for equal access to social and public services (Roels et al. 2015). In order to increase the professionalisation of PSIT and to provide a harmonised support service for these organisations, the Central Support Cell for Social Interpreting and Translation<sup>41</sup> was established as a unit of the Flemish organisation Junction Migration-Integration<sup>42</sup> in 2004. The European Social Fund accredited the Central Support Cell as the only Flemish certification centre for community interpreters (Roels et al. 2015). In 2006, a Flemish telephone interpreting service, *Ba-bel Vlaamse Tolkenlefoon*, was set up. Public service language services in Flanders are provided by 'social interpreters' (*social tolken*) and 'social translators' (*social vertalers*).

In 2004, the non-profit organisation *COFETIS / FOSOVET*<sup>43</sup> was established at the federal level, bringing together 20 Belgian, Flemish, Walloon and Brussels PSIT organisations. The *COFETIS / FOSOVET* aimed to represent the PSIT sector before the federal authorities, to enhance harmonization of the sector at a national level, to formulate policy proposals, to promote professionalisation

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<sup>41</sup> COC - Centrale OndersteuningsCel Sociaal Tolken en Vertalen

<sup>42</sup> Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie

<sup>43</sup> Coördination Fédérale de la Traduction et l'Interprétariat Social / Federaal Overleg voor het Sociaal Vertalen en Tolken, which translates as Federal Consultation on Social Translation and Interpreting

and to obtain legal status and structural funding. *COFETIS / FOSOVET* stopped its activities in 2009 when the PSIT organisations decided to continue their projects in their respective region or community (Delizée 2015).

In 2015, as a consequence of the 2013 Flemish Integration Decree, most Flemish PSIT organisations became part of the new Flemish Agency of (Civic) Integration.<sup>44</sup> The former Central Support Cell for Social Interpreting and Translation is now part of this recently established Agency.

In the French-speaking part of the country, the Walloon Region has been in charge of the integration of migrants in its territory since the state reform of 1993. The first PSIT services were organised in 1992 when a Social and Medical Interpreting network<sup>45</sup> of ‘mediator-interpreters’ was established. This network was integrated into the non-profit organisation Coordination and Initiatives for Refugees and Foreigners<sup>46</sup> in 2000, which mainly covered the needs in the Brussels Capital Region and to some extent also some demands in Wallonia. PSIT services emerged in Wallonia in 2000 due to the rising number of asylum applications. Five Regional Integration Centres<sup>47</sup> organised these services provided by ‘intercultural counsellors’ (*accompagnateurs interculturels*). In this period, the professional profile and the role of the PSIT provider were poorly defined and the (nature and the scope of the) services provided differed across organisations, which led to conflicts of roles and distrust on the part of the end-user institutions (Delizée 2015).

The creation of the *COFETIS / FOSOVET* contributed to the reduction of this heterogeneity by clearly defining and delimiting the mandate of the public service interpreter in a Professional Profile (*COFETIS / FOSOVET* 2007), which served as the basis for the standards of conduct developed both in French-speaking Belgium and in Flanders (see also Section 4).

The dissolution of the *COFETIS / FOSOVET* gave way to the creation of two new PSIT organisations which have taken on the provision of PSIT services to non-French-speaking immigrants in Brussels and Wallonia: the non-profit organisations *Service de Traduction et d’Interprétariat en Milieu Social Bruxelles* (*SeTISBxl*, which integrated the interpreting department of CIRÉ),<sup>48</sup> and the *Ser-vice de Traduction et d’Interprétariat en Milieu Social Wallon* (*SeTIS Wallon*, a merger of the 5 Regional Integration Centres) in Wallonia.<sup>49</sup> The public service

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<sup>44</sup> Agenschap voor Integratie en Inburgering([www.agii.be](http://www.agii.be))

<sup>45</sup> ISM – Interprétariat Social et Médical

<sup>46</sup> CIRÉ – Coordination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Étrangers

<sup>47</sup> Centres Régionaux d’Intégration

<sup>48</sup> More information:[www.setisbxl.be](http://www.setisbxl.be) (last checked December 2019)

<sup>49</sup> More information: [www.setisw.com](http://www.setisw.com) (last checked December 2019)

interpreters working for these organisations are referred to as ‘interpreters in a social context’ (*Interprètes en Milieu Social*).

In Brussels, the twin organisations *Brussel Onthaal – Open Deur* and *Bruxelles Accueil – Porte Ouverte*, were established in 1980 with the mission to welcome and inform foreigners arriving in Brussels. These organisations faced an ever-increasing demand for interpreting and translation services following the massive influx of asylum seekers in the ‘80s. They set up their network of translator and interpreter volunteers, which was formalised in 1997 with the establishment of two new PSIT organisations, the *Sociaal Vertaalbureau van Brussel Onthaal*, and the *Service d’Interprétariat Social de Bruxelles Accueil*, respectively. These organisations have developed a specific PSIT provision due to the particularity of their context, although strictly speaking the PSIT office of *Brussel Onthaal* is nowadays structurally dependent on the Flemish PSIT sector, whereas the PSIT office of *Bruxelles Accueil* is an independent organisation working in a complementary way with *SeTIS Bxl* and *SeTIS Wallon* (Delizée 2015).

### 3. SCOPE OF PSIT IN THE BELGIAN CONTEXT

The foundation for Public Service Interpreting, or Community Interpreting, was laid in the 1990s by the Canadian *Critical Link Conferences* (see also Section 1). Community Interpreting was defined as the provision of oral or signed interpreting services in contexts of law, health care and social services (Štefková and Bossaert 2019). In 2014, ISO released the first international standard *ISO 13611:2014*, establishing the basic principles and practices necessary to ensure quality community interpreting services for clients, requesters and service providers. At the European level, the *European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation (ENPSIT)* was established in 2013 on the initiative of the Flemish organisation Junction Migration-Integration to promote further professionalisation of the PSIT field including in legal settings, and to establish international standards of practice and training.

On an international level, however, no consensus has been reached regarding the inclusion or exclusion of legal interpreting and translation (LIT) from PSIT (Valero Garcés 2016). In some countries, such as Australia, the UK and the Netherlands, legal interpreting is indeed regulated like the other PSIT practices, whereas in other countries, e.g. USA and Germany, this practice is not included in PSIT as it achieved its regulation and professionalisation way before the other PSIT domains (Ozolins 2010). The *European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (EULITA)* is a Belgium-based non-profit organisation which has been promoting the recognition of LIT as specialisations different from PSIT

since 2009. *EULITA* contributed to the release of an international ISO standard for legal interpreting services in 2019.

In Belgium, PSIT is limited to contexts that fall within the scope of the Flemish community or the Walloon region government, whereas interpreting and translation in legal and court settings is a competence of the Belgian Federal Government. Therefore, LIT and PSIT are two separately regulated domains in both Flanders and Wallonia. In the Belgian context, PSIT domains are thus restricted to services such as public services, employment, health care, education, welfare, social housing, the sociocultural sector, (civic) integration and the reception of asylum seekers.

While most practitioners involved in PSIT in Belgium are either certified interpreters and translators or volunteers without training or certification, the practitioners working in legal interpreting and translation are registered sworn interpreters and translators who have passed a specific training programme in order to be included in the national register of sworn interpreters and translators. Legal interpreters are freelancers who provide interpreting services for the police, for investigating judges, in court or for asylum services. They comply with a different code of ethics than public service interpreters in Flanders and Wallonia. Legal translators can be contracted by private individuals who need to present a certified translation to official authorities or public officers.

The Belgian Federal Government has also been supporting a nationwide intercultural mediation programme in healthcare, more specifically in hospitals, since 1999. Hospital doctors and paramedical staff, as well as some local health centres and medical services from *FEDASIL* (Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers) can rely on a pool of intercultural mediators. The tasks and duties of an intercultural mediator are different than those of a PSIT professional, as they include a broader set of activities than translation and interpreting services, e.g. resolving misunderstandings, cultural brokerage and advocacy. These aim to facilitate both communication and care provision in hospitals, by removing not only the language barrier but also sociocultural barriers and inter-ethnic inequities (Verrept and Coune 2016). They are expected to adhere to a specific intercultural mediator's code of ethics. Therefore, their training programme is different from a PSIT training programme.

#### **4. PROVISION OF PSIT SERVICES AND ROLE OF THE PSIT PROFESSIONAL**

Due to variations in policy towards language services, Flanders and Wallonia have developed different infrastructures for the provision of PSIT services (Ozolins 2010).

Over the last decades, Flanders has developed a model of PSIT referred to as *Social Interpreting and Translation*, which is an institutionalised system of interpreting and translation services for non-Dutch-speaking citizens. Social translation and interpreting in Flanders covers translation and interpreting in public services, with the exception of legal contexts (police, court and asylum procedures). The social interpreting services include both face-to-face interpreting and telephone interpreting services (Roels et al. 2015).

Since 2015, the Flemish Agency of (Civic) Integration, which incorporated the former Central Support Cell for Social Interpreting and Translation, has been centrally coordinating PSIT services for Flanders, except in the three major cities – Ghent, Antwerp and Brussels – due to their specific PSIT needs (Xhardez 2016). The Agency sends out certified on-site interpreters and telephone interpreters in Flanders and the bilingual Brussels Capital Region. The telephone interpreters are provided by the central telephone interpreting service *Ba-bel Vlaamse Telefoontolken*. The Agency also provides certified social translators, who translate informative or official documents for public institutions to non-Dutch-speaking clients and have endorsed a specific code of ethics.

On-site interpreters and social translators in the city of Antwerp are made available by the autonomous PSIT agency *Atlas*. In Ghent, the non-profit organisation *IN-Gent* organizes the provision of PSIT services, including on-site and webcam interpreting services.

In Brussels, *Brussel Onthaal*'s PSIT office provides a supplementary range of interpreters and translators in Flanders and the Brussels Capital Region. This non-profit organisation works mainly with voluntary translators and interpreters who provide both on-site and telephone interpreting services.

The Agency of (Civic) Integration is in charge of the professionalisation of PSIT, the training and testing of PSIT professionals. Social interpreters and translators who work for an official interpreting agency of the Flemish community have received training and have passed a certification exam organised by the Agency's *Social Interpretation and Translation Certification* service. After passing the certification exam, they are included in the Flemish Register of Social Interpreters and Translators.

For social interpreters in Flanders, bidirectional liaison or dialogue interpreting is the usual interpreting mode. It is the social interpreter's task to interpret (usually short) dialogues consisting of questions and answers between the public service provider and a foreign-language client from a source language into Dutch.

Social interpreters adhere to the code of ethics of the social interpreter (Agentschap voor Integratie en Inburgering 2017). The code stipulates that the social interpreter's task is to facilitate communication between the care provider

and the client. He/she should fully and faithfully transfer the message, i.e. without any additions, omissions or modifications, to interpret in a triad setting and using the first person. The social interpreter is impartial, transparent and neutral, and is bound by an obligation of discretion and professional attitude. The same requirements of impartiality, transparency, neutrality, discretion and professional attitude are also included in the deontological code of social translators.

According to the 2013 Integration Decree, it is the professional or institutional end-user (i.e. a Flemish facility or government, a social worker or a civil servant) that should decide on whether to call in the support of a social interpreter or translator, not the client. If there is no certified interpreter or translator available, they are allowed to engage a non-certified interpreter or translator (Vlaamse regering 2013).

Roels et al. (2015) found that the use of social interpreters by institutions is very arbitrary. Considerable differences in frequency of use were recorded between institutional domains, between organisations of the same institutional domain, between professionals of the same organisational unit, and even at the level of the individual professional. The use of ad-hoc interpreters remains a common and frequent practice.

Moreover, the increasing diversity of languages that must be catered for leads to an interpreter shortage for some minority languages, and current PSIT services provision does not adequately meet those needs. In 2018, the Flemish Agency of (Civic) Integration was unable to cover the telephone interpreting demand in 15% of cases, and in 29% of the on-site interpreting requests (Agentschap voor Integratie en Inburgering 2019).

Devlieger et al. (2015) found that quality assurance is difficult to obtain, as there are insufficient valid and reliable satisfaction measurements. The job of a PSIT professional still requires a great deal of availability and flexibility, as the number of assignments is hard to predict. Therefore, PSIT professionals have no job security. In order to enhance the institutional awareness of the need to provide PSIT services, institutions in different sectors need a clear framework for effective multilingual communication, as well as the development of a monitoring system to measure the effectiveness of the existing bridging instruments to facilitate multilingual communication. Institutions and their employees need more awareness-raising on the importance of relying on quality PSIT services (Devlieger et al. 2015).

On the other side of the language border, i.e. in the French-speaking part of Belgium consisting of both Wallonia and bilingual Brussels, PSIT services (referred to as *Interprétariat et Traduction en Milieu Social*, see also Section 2) are provided by the *SeTIS Wallon* in Wallonia, and by the *SeTISBxl* in Brussels. The PSI services include face-to-face and telephone interpreting and recently

also video interpreting. In addition, interpreters can be required to provide regular standby interpreting services for particular client institutions and organisations (SeTIS Bruxelles 2019). PST is also provided, although it remains a marginal practice (Delizée 2015).

The interpreters are employed and remunerated by the *SeTIS*. Clients include public institutions and non-profit organisations concerned with domains such as healthcare, maternity, medical prevention, mental health, infancy, migrant reception and integration, lodging, employment, education, youth assistance and protection or social services.

The two *SeTIS* rely on harmonised tariff rates and a joint code of ethics for their interpreters (Delizée 2015). This code of ethics (SeTISBxl 2016) is different from the Flemish code in how it defines the degree to which the public service interpreter may become involved in the communication process (Cox 2015). As is the case in Flanders, the interpreter's task is to facilitate verbal comprehension between two parties who do not share a common language. They are neutral and are not allowed to provide direct help to the beneficiary nor to intervene in conflicts between the client institution and the beneficiary. Their core task is to faithfully translate everything that is said without omitting utterances from either party involved. However, contrary to the Flemish code, the interpreter is encouraged to solve misunderstandings that originate from cultural or contextual differences. As soon as the interpreter resorts to mediation, they have to inform both parties that they are doing so (Cox 2015). That is why the *SeTIS* favour interpreters with a migrant background who have completed an integration trajectory since they are better equipped to grasp possible extralinguistic problems the beneficiaries may find themselves confronted with (Delizée 2015).

Whereas the demand for PSIT services has doubled since the emergence of the *SeTIS*, public funding has decreased considerably since 2012, which has contributed to job terminations, an increase in the number of short-term contracts and an inability to cover the demand since 2012. *SeTISBxl* has been unable to provide one in four PSIT demands since 2013 (Delizée 2015).

The PSIT office of *Bruxelles Accueil, Brussel Onthaal*'s francophone twin organisation, provides a supplementary range of on-site or telephone interpreters and/or translators in Wallonia and Brussels. Both organisations manage a pool of (volunteer) translators and/or interpreters who can in principle be sent out throughout Belgium. The network is very diverse and includes Dutch speakers, French speakers and English speakers, as well as volunteers and freelancers; the network includes both certified and non-certified interpreters and more than half of them work as volunteers.

## 5. CURRENT TRAINING PROVISION AND CERTIFICATION

As mentioned in the introduction, the Flemish and the Walloon have developed different approaches to the professionalisation of PSIT in terms of training and certification. In both language areas, basic training is provided for PSI comprising three objectives. The first is to identify the role of the interpreter and help him/her assimilate the code of ethics. Secondly, the candidate interpreters are introduced to the principles of intercultural communication as well as to domain-specific knowledge and terminology. Finally, the training focuses on the training of liaison interpreting and translation skills (Bruwier et al. 2019). A test is sat at the end of the training, after which the successful candidates obtain a certificate. The interpreters/translators are also required to take part in a continuous training process comprising more in-depth modules on domain-specific knowledge, public speaking, non-verbal and non-violent (intercultural) communication and mastery of interpreting/translation skills, etc. (Bruwier et al. 2019).

In Flanders and Dutch-speaking Brussels, the Flemish Agency of (Civic) Integration's Social Interpretation and Translation Certification Service<sup>50</sup> is the sole centre in charge of providing basic PSIT training and certification. However, in recent years, the Agency has focused mainly on the development of a new training and certification programme for social interpreters.

Even though a curriculum for social translator training was developed by the Central Support Cell in collaboration with the higher education colleges offering translator training programmes in Flanders, that examinations for social translators were held since 2008, and that a Professional Competence Profile and Standard for the Social Translator was developed in 2012 (Idzikowska 2015), social translator training has not been available since 2016. Reasons for this (perhaps temporary) decision relate to the insecure position of social translation on the PSIT scene and possibly the PST examination challenges mentioned by Idzikowska (2015), such as the limited number of candidates passing the certification exam, and problems in finding competent assessors as well as candidates for languages of lesser diffusion.

The social interpreting training process is described in detail on the Agency's website. First, candidates attend an information session about the profession and the training programme, which is followed by an entry test, i.e. a pre-selection test of Dutch for applicant interpreters who cannot certify that they have a B2 proficiency level of the Common European Reference Framework of Languages. This test can be retaken up to three times. Subsequently, the candidates may opt

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<sup>50</sup> *Dienst Certificering Sociaal Tolken en Vertalen*

for an interview in order to assess their knowledge about the social sector, the deontology of social interpreters as well as their interpreting skills. Based on this interview, they are either recommended to take the certification test immediately or to first undertake the training programme. Candidates may also opt to take the basic training as a self-study programme. The interview is not compulsory, but the result is binding.

The basic training programme consists of two modules and is taught in Dutch. The first module consists of 46 hours of tuition and deals with the acquisition of interpretation skills and PSI deontology. The candidates are tested after having taken the first module and are only allowed onto the second module if they pass this first test. The successful candidates then receive 93 hours of tuition in the field of social interpreting and perform practical exercises in their other working language with language partners. Candidates can take the certification test after completing the second module.

The certification exam consists of two role-plays, each lasting 15 minutes. In order to succeed and obtain the certificate of social interpreter, the candidate must pass both role-plays. A jury of three experts assesses whether the candidate is capable of processing and reproducing spoken messages, adhering to the deontology and dealing with deontological conflicts. After passing the exam, they can then be registered in the Flemish Register of social interpreters. Unsuccessful candidates will be invited to a feedback interview. The candidate can then re-take the exam up to a maximum of three times.

In Dutch-speaking Belgium, five interpreting training programmes are offered at the university level (Master of Arts, M.A.). Whereas they have for a long time focused on the 'traditional' interpreting modes of consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting, most of these Master programmes no longer rely on this dichotomous model and have been including a social interpreting module for several years now. This allows students to get acquainted with different public sectors and their specific terminology, introduces them to the social interpreter's deontology, and facilitates practice of their short consecutive note-taking and interpreting skills through role-plays in their working languages. These students are often given immediate access to the certification exam upon completion of their studies. Conversely, the parallel translator training programmes at the same universities do not include any explicit focus on social translation.

To this day, public authorities in French-speaking Belgium do not organise or recognise any official training courses for prospective public service interpreters (Delizée 2015). Whereas the basic training, which comprises 66 hours in total, used to be provided by the *SeTIS*, it has been organised by a Walloon university offering an interpreting programme since 2015 (Bruwier et al. 2019). After completion of the basic training, interpreters are awarded a certificate.

At regular intervals, the *SeTIS* also organise interventions aimed at improving the collaboration between professionals and interpreters. In parallel, regular supervisory sessions are held allowing interpreters to participate in a support group led by a psychologist. These sessions foster the exchange of opinions, experiences and best practices, which is beneficial both in terms of professional development and (emotional) stress management (Bruwier et al. 2019). Since PST is a marginal PSIT activity in French-speaking Belgium (see also Section 4), no specific PST training for candidate translators has been developed so far.

Four interpreting training programmes are offered at the university level in French-speaking Belgium. A quick look into their training programmes reveals a strong focus on conference interpreting and only limited attention to PSI training in the form of optional modules in only two training programmes.

Finally, on a more informal level, both *Brussel Onthaal* and *Bruxelles Accueil* periodically offer informal training opportunities for their PSIT volunteers.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have attempted to outline the institutionalisation and professionalisation of PSIT in Belgium. We have shown that there are significant variations among Belgian local authorities' policies towards public language services resulting in different structural developments in the country's two main language areas. We have seen that in both language areas, the practice of PST is less prevalent than PSI.

In Flanders and Dutch-speaking Brussels, the Agency of (Civic) Integration, an official organisation funded by the Flemish government, centralises the organisation of PSI(T) services and is the only certification centre for social interpreters and translators. It remains at all times concerned with the employment, remuneration and professional support of freelance interpreters/translators. PSIT provision in this part of the country relies on harmonised PSIT practices and rates, a clear definition of the interpreter's role, and a basic training and certification programme. In this sense, Flanders has developed a comprehensive professionalisation model of the field.

In contrast, no single official institution organises the PSIT services offered in the French-speaking part of the country. PSI(T) services are provided by two non-profit organisations, *SeTISWallon* and *SeTISBxl*, which have worked tirelessly to professionalise the field. Both *SeTIS* rely on precarious funding. Whereas the *SeTISWallon* can count on semi-structural funding from the Walloon region, this is not the case for the *SeTISBxl* (Delizée 2015). The *SeTIS* have been able to harmonise both practices and rates, to define the interpreter's role clearly, and to develop

a basic training and certification scheme. Unlike in Flanders, the PSIT professionals are employed directly by the *SeTIS* based on mostly temporary contracts.

The pioneering PSIT organisations *Brussel Onthaal* and *Bruxelles Accueil*, which operate in their specific contexts and have their own organisational structures, are in charge of providing a supplementary range of PSIT services to non-Dutch- and non-French-speaking beneficiaries, respectively.

Despite the many efforts undertaken in Belgium's two main language areas, a full institutionalisation of PSIT provision in the country is still a long way off. The development of any sound PSIT policy faces many challenges and threats, particularly in a constantly changing environment which relies on local-government funding and both political and societal attitudes towards integration (Ozolins 2010). Ultimately, these factors are decisive when it comes to the effective organisation, validation and delivery of quality language services.

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## 4. PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION IN SPAIN

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Public service interpreting in Spain remains an under-professionalised activity. One method of understanding professionalisation is through Bourdieusian theories and the sociology of professions, which consider profession or occupation as a defining characteristic of an individual or group of individuals who share it (Bourdieu 1980, 1985, 1986). The sociology of professions emphasises the formal, institutional and economic factors of professions, such as career patterns, education, jurisdiction, professional norms, high status, altruism, credentials, ethical codes and salaried work (Larson 1977, Abbott 1988, Torstendahl and Burrage 1990, Macdonald 1995, Freidson 2001).

For example, in order to describe the professional plight of sworn translators in Spain within the legal field, Monzó (2009) uses two interesting concepts borrowed from the sociology of professions (Abbott 1988): society as a market for problems and the concept of jurisdiction. Certain groups try to provide solutions to particular problems. If the set of problems is well delimited and the solutions prove beneficial, a group may be granted exclusivity for the provision of solutions to a particular problem area within the market. For this to happen, the solutions must be the most satisfactory and convincing in the opinion of society. This does not mean that alternative solutions do not exist (other individuals may produce alternative solutions based on alternative knowledge). However, society will have a preference for this occupational group as they struggle to provide the best possible solution. Following Monzó (2009), once the occupational group is defined and delimited (this means that both the problems they solve and the

solutions they apply are set and defined), a range of mechanisms are established to allow new members to become part of the group. Most importantly, those who do not fulfil the required characteristics are excluded. The main requirement to become a member of an occupational group is usually to have completed specialised training through which they have acquired the knowledge needed to solve a problem applying the existing set of solutions.

Training has been defined as one of the main pillars of professionalisation. For example, Goode (1957) considers professions as communities with shared identity, values and roles, and identifies up to twelve characteristics of an ideal profession. These include extensive and specialised training, and the establishment of training standards. According to Panaia (2007), each profession is shaped by a particular theoretical knowledge which translates into practical skills. This specialised knowledge is acquired after a long training period, usually at university (Wilensky 1964, Evetts 2003, Nolin 2008).

Wilensky (1964) positions the creation of specialised training schools as the second stage in the professionalisation process, following the emergence of a work activity as a full-time occupation (first stage), and preceding the emergence of professional associations (third stage), the legal protection of the professional activity (fourth stage) and the elaboration of a formal code of ethics (fifth stage). In contrast, Harries-Jenkins (1979) establishes six main professionalisation elements: educational, structural, contextual, activity-related, ideological, and conductual. Finally, Burrage et al. (1990) focus on the agents who interrelate in the professionalisation process: i.e. universities and other specialised training organisations together with practitioners, countries and clients or users. The role of universities and training organisations is to develop the knowledge that builds up the profession and to provide graduates with a professional status.

In turn, Paradeise (1984) states that training shapes the structure of the market, and drives access to professional employment in that it implies the acquisition of a title as a *sine qua non* condition for this access. Training is also related to career development and remuneration, as life-long training or informal training inside or outside universities also imply the acquisition of knowledge expertise (at different training levels). This generates internal promotion, the accumulation of work experience and expertise and, thus, internal stratification and increased salaries.

## **2. PSIT IN SPAIN**

Spain underwent a process of industrial development alongside a strong emergence of the tertiary sector in the 1960s, which created an increased internal consumption capacity. With the restoration of democracy in the late 1970s and its

inclusion in the EU in 1986, Spain consolidated its position as one of the preferred European destinations. One of the most significant characteristics of immigration into Spain is that, contrary to what happens in other European countries (Greece, Italy and Portugal in the last decades and France, Germany, Switzerland and United Kingdom some years ago), immigrants come to Spain for a variety of reasons. Its climate, tourist and leisure facilities and its international policies (with relations and agreements with other European, Latin America and Arab countries), make Spain very attractive to both tourists and immigrants (López de Lera 1995). The percentage of immigrants in Spain gradually increased (mainly from the year 2000) until it reached its peak in 2011, as can be seen in the following table:

**Table 1.**

***Number of foreigners in Spain and percentage according to the total population  
(Source: own elaboration from INE data)***

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Total %</b>
1981	198,042	0.5 %
1986	241,971	0.6 %
1991	360,655	0.9 %
1996	542,314	1.4 %
1998	637,085	1,6 %
2000	923,879	2.3 %
2001	1,370,657	3.3 %
2002	1,977,947	4.7 %
2003	2,664,168	6.2 %
2004	3,034,326	7.0 %
2005	3,730,610	8.5 %
2006	4,144,166	9.3 %
2007	4,519,554	10.0 %
2008	5,268,762	11.4 %
2009	5,648,671	12.1 %
2010	5,747,734	12.2 %
2011	5,751,487	12.2 %
2012	5,736,258	12.1 %

2013	5,546,238	11.8 %
2014	5,023,487	10.7 %
2015	4,729,644	10.1 %
2016	4,618,581	9.9 %
2017	4,572,807	9.8 %
2018	4,562,962	9.8 %
2019	5,025,264	10.7 %

The main countries of origin of foreign populations in Spain are Morocco, Romania, United Kingdom, Italy, Colombia, Germany, Ecuador, Bulgaria, Venezuela, France, Portugal, Ukraine, Argentina and Russia. Ten of these fourteen countries have official languages other than Spanish, which makes us reflect on the communication difficulties immigrants might have and the consequent need for translation and interpretation in public service provision.

Although public service interpreting and translation is under-professionalised in Spain (Lázaro Gutiérrez 2014a), there has been an important evolution in both the availability of resources and services, and the availability of training programmes. It is worth mentioning that Spanish universities have been the main driver for the establishment and consolidation of public service interpreting and translation not only as an emergent profession and academic discipline but also as a means to grant communication rights. At this point, it is necessary to mention the COMUNICA Network, a group of universities which have joined efforts to act as a permanent observatory on public service interpreting and translation.

COMUNICA was founded in 2005 by a group of researchers from Spanish universities across the country. It aimed to study and analyse how linguistic mediation (public service interpreting) was provided and to publicly report on malpractice, which unfortunately is frequent in this domain. COMUNICA rests on three fundamental pillars: training, professionalisation and research, and it has published two cartographies of public service interpreting in Spain: Valero Garcés and Raga Gimeno (2006) and Foulquié-Rubio, Vargas Urpi and Fernández Pérez (2018).

The latter cartography offers a comparison of the current situation of PSIT with that of 10 years ago. The main trends in the national territory are an increase in the outsourcing of services (which has led to a corresponding deterioration in the working conditions of both interpreters and translators), the proliferation of telephone interpreting and the prevalence of volunteer and *ad-hoc* interpreters and translators. Although the results might be pessimistic, it is worth mentioning

the rising amount of research and the increasing number of reports that denounce the lack of professional interpreters and translators in public service provision. On the other hand, training in PSIT is more varied and frequent than ever, not only at the university level but in a range of formats. These will be discussed in the following sections.

### **3. TRAINING MODELS**

This chapter aims to present how public service interpreting and translation training is conducted in Spain. As previously mentioned, this training occurs at a range of levels and in a variety of guises which have been classified into seven modalities: formal university training at undergraduate level; formal university training at postgraduate level; other university training courses; training provided by NGO and public institutions; training provided by private companies; training of volunteer interpreters and new formats, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). Each modality will be presented in its own section and illustrated with one example. Far from being exhaustive, this piece of writing aims to provide the reader with a general overview of PSIT training in Spain and with some suggestions for training development.

#### **3.1 Formal university training at the undergraduate level**

Unlike in many European countries, in Spain, undergraduate programmes take four years, which allows for a moderate degree of specialisation in particular translation and interpretation domains. It is also common to find double programmes, which combine two degrees over five years or the possibility to study a major in a particular specialisation.

According to Sales Salvador (2008: 80), the adaptation of Spanish studies to the Bologna scheme created an excellent opportunity to refocus on current social challenges in order to properly train and prepare students to cater for the need of professionals in new fields such as public service interpreting and translation. From 2005, we have witnessed the appearance of a variety of university courses specialised in different domains of translation, such as audio-visual translation, literary translation or localisation (Valero-Garcés and Pena 2008: 1). The provision and content of specialised courses in interpretation have not been standardised, and PSIT hold a prominent position.

In 2018, Camacho Sánchez (published in 2019) conducted a study on the presence of intercultural mediation and public service interpreting and translation

in Spanish undergraduate programmes. To do so, she used the tool QEDU (standing for *Qué estudiar y dónde en la universidad*, meaning “what to study and where at university level”) developed by the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. Camacho Sánchez established that 27 undergraduate programmes and 12 double undergraduate programmes related to translation and interpretation were available in Spain. She then examined the curricula of all these programmes in search of courses that could be related to intercultural mediation and public service interpreting and translation. To verify that relationship, she also checked the courses’ study guides. She found 11 courses and two majors specialising in public service interpreting and translation:

**Table 2.**  
***PSIT courses at the undergraduate level in Spain***

DEGREE	COURSE	UNIVERSITY
BA in Translation and Interpretation	Business and Public Service Interpretation B-A, A-B (English)	University of Murcia [Universidad de Murcia]
	Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting B1 [En]-A in Social and Institutional Domains	Complutense University of Madrid [Universidad Complutense de Madrid]
	Simultaneous Interpretation and Sight Translation B1 [En]-A in Social and Institutional Domains	Complutense de Madrid]
	Intercultural Mediation and Interpretation A1 (Spanish) – B (English) / B (English) – A1 (Spanish) in Public Service Domains	Jaume I University [Universidad Jaume I]
	Introduction to Public Service Interpretation B/C-A English	University of Granada [Universidad de Granada]
	Major in Social and Institutional Translation: – Legal and Financial Translation A-A (Castilian-Catalan/Catalan-Castilian) and Legal and Financial Translation B-A (English-Castilian) – Social Mediation for Translators and Interpreters – Introduction to National and International Institutions for Translators and Interpreters – Techniques to Prepare for Bilateral Interpretation B-A-B – Specialised Reverse Translation – Oral Expression A for Interpreters – Oral Expression B for Interpreters	Autonomous University of Barcelona [Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona]

	Major in Interpretation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Techniques to Prepare for Bilateral Interpretation B-A-B</li> <li>– Practice with Bilateral Interpretation A-B-A</li> <li>– Oral Expression A for Interpreters</li> <li>– Oral Expression B for Interpreters</li> <li>– Social Mediation for Translators and Interpreters</li> <li>– Introduction to National and International for Translators and Interpreters</li> <li>– Specialised Reverse Translation</li> <li>– Language for Specific Purposes (A) for Translators and Interpreters</li> <li>– Language for Specific Purposes (B) for Translators and Interpreters</li> </ul>	
	Social Interpretation (English)	University of Valladolid [Universidad de Valladolid]
	Social Geography	
	Intercultural Mediation and Social Assistance	Pompeu Fabra University [Universidad Pompeu Fabra]
	Community Translation and Interpreting B-C/A/B-C	University Alphonso X The Wise [Universidad Alfonso X el Sabio]
BA in Translation and Intercultural Communication	Public Administration and Institutional Relations Foundations	Saint George University [Universidad San Jorge]
	Public Service Interpreting	

Because of space constraints, only the Public Service Interpreting course of the BA in Translation and Intercultural Communication at Saint George University [Universidad San Jorge] will be briefly mentioned. It is a 6 ECTS non-compulsory course offered to 4<sup>th</sup>-year students in the second semester, which implies that students following this course are about to finish their degree and already possess general and specialised knowledge about both translation and interpretation.

Its study guide states that the course's primary aim is to present the role and functions of public service interpreters, as well as the norms and principles that guide their performance. Students study how public services work focusing

in particular on healthcare and legal domains. They acquire basic specialised terminology and learn to act as a linguistic bridge between public service providers and users. Bilateral liaison interpreting and consecutive interpreting are taught together with sight translation in English and Spanish. An in-depth linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge of both English and Spanish is required and students are recommended to have previously completed the Interpretation Techniques course. The course follows an innovative approach that includes a wide variety of activities: theoretical lessons, debates, presentations by students, role-plays, problem-solving activities, screening of films and documentaries, conferences, talks, visits, and individual sessions.

### 3.2 Formal university training at postgraduate level

At postgraduate level, the availability of programmes varies quite frequently because it depends on the number of recruited students. In Spain, master programmes only take one year (a 4+1 scheme) and are very specialised and demanding. The following table presents the master's degrees that include training in public service interpreting and translation:

**Table 3.**

***MA's which include training in PSIT***

MASTER	UNIVERSITY
MA in Translation and Intercultural Studies	Autonomous University of Barcelona [Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona]
MA in Intercultural Communication, Interpreting and Translation in Public Services	University of Alcalá [Universidad de Alcalá]
MA in Institutional Translation	University of Alicante [Universidad de Alicante]
MA in Professional Translation	University of Granada [Universidad de Granada]
MA in Professional Translation and Intercultural Mediation	University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria [Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria]
MA in Translation and Intercultural Mediation	University of Salamanca [Universidad de Salamanca]
MA in Translation and Interculturality	University of Seville [Universidad de Sevilla]

MA in Professional and Institutional Translation	University of Valladolid [Universidad de Valladolid]
MA in Legal and Court Translation and Interpretation	King Juan Carlos University [Universidad Rey Juan Carlos]
MA in Translation and Interpretation Research	Jaume I University [Universidad Jaume I]
MA in Medical and Healthcare Translation	Jaume I University [Universidad Jaume I]
MA in International Communication, Translation and Interpretation	Pablo de Olavide University [Universidad Pablo de Olavide]

The only programme which is fully specialised in PSIT is the MA in Intercultural Communication, Interpreting and Translation in Public Services at the University of Alcalá. It has been offered since 2006 and belongs to the EU EMT (European Master's in Translation) project. It contains five modules: 1) Intercultural communication, 2) Healthcare interpreting and translation, 3) Legal interpreting and translation, 3) Internships, 5) Master's dissertation. In total, there are ten individual courses:

**Table 4.**

***European MA in Intercultural Communication, Interpreting and Translation in Public Services***

MODULE	Intercultural communication
Courses	Intercultural communication
	Institutional communication in public services
	Techniques and resources for public service interpreting and translation
MODULE	Healthcare interpreting and translation
Courses	Specialised translation: healthcare domain
	Healthcare interpreting
MODULE	Legal interpreting and translation
Courses	Specialised translation: administrative domain
	Specialised translation: legal domain
	Legal interpreting
MODULE	Internships
Course	Internships
MODULE	Master's dissertation
Course	Master's dissertation

Each year approximately 120 students register for the MA and can follow one of its itineraries: Arabic-Spanish, Chinese-Spanish, English-Spanish, French-Spanish, or Russian-Spanish. The programme takes one year, starting in October and finishing in June. In October, the students complete the Intercultural Communication module online. On site sessions start in November with the Healthcare interpreting and translation module, which lasts until the end of December. The Legal Interpreting and translation module follows until the beginning of March. Onsite sessions are intensive and students spend 16 hours a week in class. When they finish, students complete their internships and their master's dissertations (Lázaro Gutiérrez 2014b).

### **3.3 Other university training courses**

In addition to the official undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, Spanish universities offer other training activities related to PSIT which can take the shape of seminars, short courses, long-life training courses, or even postgraduate expert or master programmes. One of the oldest and most important courses is the postgraduate Specialisation Programme in Community Interpreting and Translation, offered by the University of La Laguna from the year 2005.

Students can choose to follow the Specialisation Programme in Community Interpreting and Translation in Spanish plus one or two additional languages. Bilateral, remote and whisper interpreting are emphasised as well as translation, with the main aim of training future public service interpreters and translators. The programme is structured in two thematic modules: legal and administrative, which covers the police, migration, administration, legal and court domains; and health and social, which covers the education, social welfare, healthcare and asylum domains. Each of these modules consists of the following courses:

- Language for specific purposes, in order to enhance knowledge and command of legal, administrative, social and healthcare language.
- Interpretation techniques applied to public services, where consecutive, liaison, whisper and telephone interpreting are covered, as well as sight translation.
- Direct and reverse translation of legal, administrative, social and healthcare texts.
- Institutional frameworks and contexts of intercultural communication, which consist of seminars and theoretical lessons about public institutions and cultural realities related to public service interpreting.
- Interpreting practice, which is aimed at developing competencies and skills necessary to confront real interpretation assignments in a variety of environments and communicative contexts related to public service interpreting.

### 3.4 Training provided by NGO and public institutions

Public institutions need interpreters and translators to communicate with their allophone users. Conversely, it is NGOs that provide public service interpreters and translators. Although none of these organisations are official training bodies, both develop programmes which reach a high number of students in a wide range of languages.

One of the most prominent programmes of this kind in the central area of Spain has been developed by Salud Entre Culturas (Health Amongst Cultures, SEC). The initial steps of this programme date back to the late 1990s, when a group of doctors from the Unit of Tropical Diseases at the University Hospital Ramón y Cajal in Madrid, dealt with the communicative difficulties they had to confront daily by hiring language professionals in order to bridge the communication gap between healthcare staff and patients. This group of professionals came from a range of different fields: health, psychology, interpretation, intercultural mediation and management. In 2006, they became an association (Asociación para el Estudio de las Enfermedades Infecciosas / Association for the Study of Infectious Diseases, AEEI). It included Salud Entre Culturas, whose principal aim is the provision of public service interpreting and translation and intercultural mediation in healthcare settings.

In addition to their interpretation and mediation services in Arabic (classical and dialectal), Armenian, Bambara, Bangladeshi, Baule, Bulgarian, Chinese, Dioula, English, Farsi, French, Portuguese, Pular, Romanian, Russian, Susu and Wolof, they also develop health promotion and social integration campaigns addressed to foreign and migrant populations. Their training activities represent a significant part of their workload and include patient training about prevention and health promotion, healthcare staff training in interculturality, intercultural communication and intercultural medicine, and interpreter and mediator training.

It is specifically the interpreter and mediator training that we are going to address in this chapter. Since 2008, Salud Entre Culturas has offered a cost-free programme centred on intercultural mediation in social and healthcare domains. It is taught in Spanish and takes 225 hours. As Álvaro Aranda (2015) states, it is addressed to students from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds who have a C1 level of Spanish and do not have previous training in interpretation. The programme is structured into three modules:

- Healthcare education. This module covers key aspects of diseases (e.g. TB and AIDS) and general healthcare aspects such as hygiene or sexual and reproductive health.
- Social and healthcare mediation. This module is related to legal and institutional aspects, (such as the dynamics of the Spanish healthcare system,

and the rights and duties of migrant patients) and refers to health, culture and communicative models of cultures originating from the most common countries of immigration to Spain (e.g. Africa or Eastern Europe).

- Intercultural mediation. This module covers healthcare interpreting and translation skills, intercultural mediation techniques and cultural aspects related to health, gender and religion, amongst others.

Lessons tackle both theoretical aspects, reinforced by specialised readings about, for example, common diseases or documentation techniques. There are also practical sessions, in which real cases are presented in the form of role-plays. Emphasis is focused on note-taking techniques, memory exercises, cultural aspects and ethics.

In addition to the teachers who are part of the *Salud Entre Culturas* staff, experts in medicine, translation and interpretation and intercultural mediation are also hired as members of the training team. They evaluate students through a theoretical exam and their performance in practical sessions. After in-class training, students complete 20 hours of supervised internships which are graded according to different levels of difficulty to cater for the irregular acquisition of knowledge on the part of the students. In cases where the students have only been able to achieve a basic level of performance, they are only allowed to mirror professional interpreters. However, if the students have acquired a high level, they can act as interpreters in their own right. Once training has been completed, students receive a certificate and some of them are hired by *Salud Entre Culturas* to work as interpreters and are invited to complementary training sessions.

### **3.5 Training provided by private companies**

As mentioned above, public service interpreting and translation services in Spain are usually outsourced. This means that private companies are in charge of providing the service and, in many cases, provide training for their translators and interpreters. This is particularly relevant in the case of telephone interpreters, as training provided by higher education institutions is still scarce in this particular domain. In Spain, there are three leading companies providing telephone interpreting services as their primary activity: *Dualia*, *Interpret Solutions* and *Migralingua*. All of them offer both initial training for prospective interpreters and also life-long training for their employees. *Migralingua*'s training programme will serve as an example of training provided by private companies.

*Migralingua*'s main activities are (sworn) translation, language teaching and, especially interpretation in all its modalities (conference, liaison, court, public

service and over the phone). As a telephone interpreting provider, Migralingua's approach is very innovative in that they offer a mobile app called Voze, which allows both service providers and end-users fast access to telephone interpreting services. Although telephone interpreters do not work exclusively in public service domains, such work does constitute the most common scenarios.

Migralingua's initial training programme for telephone interpretation takes 12 hours and is offered for free through blended-learning methodologies. Approximately 10 – 12 students follow the programme, mainly women in their late twenties having Spanish as their mother tongue. C1 is required for all their working languages, and previous experience and training in translation and interpretation are desirable.

Standard theoretical contents are presented in Spanish and practical exercises (real case analysis and role-plays) are conducted in the students' other language. The initial programme is mainly aimed at the consolidation of previous knowledge as it is focused on the acquisition of basic skills. The main emphasis is put on consecutive and bilateral interpretation skills, note-taking, communication management, documentation skills, and ethics. After training, interpreters receive a certificate and some of them are hired by the company (Álvaro Aranda 2015).

### **3.6 Training volunteer interpreters**

In public service settings, it is still common to find volunteer interpreters and translators. This has to do with the scarce provision of free interpreting services by public authorities and with the low incomes of some of the end-users, which make it difficult for them to hire their interpreters. Volunteers are usually sent to the different public services by NGOs and their training and professional backgrounds are very diverse: i.e. from recent graduates in translation and interpretation who want to acquire professional expertise to migrants speaking minority languages who do not have any training at all in interpretation or translation.

In 2015, the University of Alcalá launched a 50-hour training programme in collaboration with the Regional Healthcare Service of Castilla-La Mancha (SESCAM) to train a total number of 12 volunteer interpreters who were recruited by the NGO Guada Acoge. Lessons were taught onsite by three university teachers and one member of SESCAM staff. Theoretical contents were presented through a flipped learning methodology using readings and audio-visual materials on a virtual platform; these were complemented by lectures, debates and discussions in class. Practice in class was organised by means of role-plays and students had to complete their training with an internship period at the local hospital.

The programme was specialised in healthcare interpreting and translation and the main topics developed in class included bilateral interpretation (e.g. voice modulation, note-taking, memory exercises, communication management), intercultural mediation (different perceptions about health and illness, stereotypes, non-verbal language), and institutional aspects (healthcare system, organisation of the interpretation and mediation service). After training, students receive a certificate.

### 3.7 New formats: the first MOOC on PSIT

Recently, a number of new training formats, such as the Massive Open Online Courses, have emerged. These have a dissemination aim and usually offer short introductory training courses for people wishing to discover a new field of knowledge or even new career opportunities. In 2016, the University of Alcalá launched the first MOOC on PSIT, with the title *Get Your Start in Public Service Interpreting and Translation!* It was first developed in Spanish and now, after a process of transcreation, it is also available in English and Chinese on the e-learning platform Open Education.

*Get Your Start in Public Service Interpreting and Translation!* is an introductory course addressed to a broad general public. Its main aims are: to provide basic knowledge about PSIT for people who do not have any training in interpreting or translation to encourage them to pursue further and more complete training; to introduce a specialised field of interpreting and translation to interpreters and translators working or specialised in other fields; to disseminate PSIT as an emergent profession; to make their main characteristics known to the general public and prospective users, and to raise awareness about the need for professional public service interpreters and translators.

The distribution of contents is as follows:

- Module 1: Bilingualism and PSIT (2 weeks)
  - 1.1. Bilingualism, translation and interpretation
  - 1.2. PSIT as a profession and as a discipline
  - 1.3. Professionalisation of PSIT
- Module 2: Intercultural communication and mediation (3 weeks)
  - 2.1. Interlingual and intercultural communication
  - 2.2. Intercultural mediation
  - 2.3. Codes of ethics and psychological impact
- Module 3: PSIT: tools and resources (5 weeks)
  - 3.1. PST
  - 3.2. PSI
  - 3.3. Tools and resources

Each section presents the same internal structure. It starts with a theoretical video about the essential concepts of the module. Next, the students complete a set of activities and a self-evaluation test, and exchange opinions and reflections in the debate forum of the module (Vitalaru, Valero Garcés and Lázaro Gutiérrez 2018)

#### 4. FINAL WORDS

Public service interpreting and translation is still not fully professionalised. One of the key elements for professionalisation is the existence of formal training. However, training for PSIT is currently provided in a wide range of formats in Spain, from MA programmes to short training courses delivered by public institutions and companies. In this chapter, some details of those training programmes have been presented. However, this is by no means an exhaustive list of the total number of courses offered in Spain. PSIT training programmes are diverse and changing and we will foreseeably witness the emergence of new approaches and formats in due course.

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# 5.

## PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we will be taking stock of the situation regarding community interpreting and translation (PSIT – *public service interpreting and translating*) in the Czech Republic. First, the focus will be on the definition of PSIT in the context of the Czech Republic. Next, we will look at the development of this field and outline the differences compared with other countries. We then focus on languages and target groups that are relevant to the context of PSIT in the Czech Republic. We will also look at the legal framework and organisational structure of the interpreting and translation services community. The role of community interpreters and translators will also be examined, as well as how this is maintained in relation to ethical principles (*Code of Ethics*) that apply to community interpreters/translators. An essential element is also the perspective of the professionalisation and institutionalisation of the community interpreting profession and the view of the current status of existing training programmes for community interpreters/translators in the Czech Republic.

### 2. DEFINITION AND CONTEXT

The concept of community interpreting is mainly relates to interpreters in an institutionalised environment of a given society, where the interpreter communicates between representatives of public or private services and the client who does not speak the language of that given society. The most common contexts

in which community interpreting takes place are social services, the medical sector, education, ecclesiastical organisations and other public institutions.

The primary function of community interpreters is to mediate access to public services for all, regardless of the language the individual speaks. This concerns a broad spectrum of services provided, in which the community interpreter plays a vital role. The Czech version of the international ISO-standard 13611: 2014 defines community interpreters as:

Komunitní tlumočení/tlumočení ve veřejných službách: dvousměrné tlumočení realizované v komunikačních prostředích (2.2.3.) mezi různojazyčnými mluvčími s cílem umožnění přístupu ke službám v dané komunitě. (ČSN ISO 2015: 9).

[Community interpreters in public services: bi-directional interpreters realised in communication environments (2.2.3) between speakers of different languages intending to create access to service provision in the given community.] (Own translation).

Communication environments refer to physical and virtual domains where interpreted communicative interactions take place. (ČSN ISO 2015: 11).

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY INTERPRETING

While the countries of Western Europe, due to the influx of labour migrants, have gained experience in the field of community interpreting, especially since the 1970s, the field of community interpreting in Central Europe is still not concretely anchored in the public consciousness, let alone in legislation or education. Pöchhacker (1999: 134) described the situation of community interpreters in the countries of Central Europe twenty years ago as follows:

[...] the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are concerned mainly, if quite appropriately, with (international) multilingualism in a growing European Union, and interest in community interpreting has been focused on professional(izing) court interpreting.

Due to the political situation before 1989, the Czech Republic (at that time part of Czechoslovakia) only received migrants from certain countries. Until that time, on the basis of international agreements with other socialist countries, Czechoslovakia received large numbers of migrant foreign workers mainly from Poland, Vietnam, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Mongolia and Hungary (Fiala, Kunc and Toušek 1999). It was only after the opening of the labour market that the situation slowly began to change, and in recent years regular efforts have been made to simplify and improve access to communication with foreigners.

These initiatives usually come from non-profit organisations<sup>51</sup> that do not have community interpreting as their primary task but do try to create better conditions for foreigners in the labour market. In this way, they contribute to the dissemination of information about the usefulness of community interpreters. Up till now, however, there has not been a professional organisation that could unite community interpreters and translators and defend their interests, nor has there been a government organisation that could specifically focus on the certification of community interpreters and the monitoring of their training level.

#### 4. LEGAL CONTEXT AND ORGANISATION OF SERVICES

In the Czech Republic, the functioning of community interpreters has not (yet) been legally established. Some non-profit organisations, such as Klub Hanoi, META o.p.s., INBáze and others, do try to promote the use of community interpreters in domains where there is a high demand for them, such as healthcare, social services provision or education. However, since community interpreting is not a recognised profession in the Czech Republic, legal interpreters are sometimes used in working areas more suited to community interpreters.

The status of court interpreters in the Czech Republic is governed by Act No 36/1967 on Experts and Court Interpreters (later amended by Act No 322/2006) and Regulation No 36/1967 implementing the Act on Experts and Court Interpreters, later amended. This law was due to be improved in 2011, but the updating process has not yet been completed.

Law No 444/2011 Code<sup>52</sup> provides for the specialised training for court interpreters. At the same time, the Act states that this requirement concerns only the appointment of interpreters for languages for which such training exists. The Act also takes into account that not every interpreter requires professional training. The need to update the law on experts and court interpreters has been discussed at length. After many years, the new law will come into force in 2021. The amendments to this law<sup>53</sup> concern, amongst others, the following: the appointment of the translator/interpreter; the creation of a central register of all interpreters instead of nine local registers; how the profession is conducted and the liability of

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<sup>51</sup> META o. p. s. is currently the most active in the Czech Republic, see <https://www.meta-ops.cz/>.

<sup>52</sup> See <http://www.zakonycr.cz/seznamy/444-2011-Sb-zakon-kterym-se-meni-zakon-c-361967-sb-o-znalcich-a-tlumocnicich-ve-zneni-pozdejsich-predpisu.html>.

<sup>53</sup> This is a proposal drawn up by a working party of the Ministry of Justice (*Ministerstvo spravedlnosti*) in 2008. The law on experts has already been adopted.

the interpreter in the event of material or non-material damage; remuneration and, the obligation of lifelong learning. Perhaps the most critical change will be that, for the first time, this law explicitly defines legal interpreters and court translators separately and imposes stricter requirements on the examinations that candidates have to pass in order to be appointed as legal interpreters or court translators.

## 5. ROLE OF COMMUNITY INTERPRETERS

### 5.1 Extent of the role of a community interpreter

Although most authors dealing with community interpreters already agree that community interpreters play an active role in their work, their detailed views often differ as to the exact scope of their role and how far it extends. Individual theories often differ in their dependence on a range of institutional and social conditions, in which the interpreter interaction is realised (see e.g. Wadensjö 1998 and Angelelli 2003).

In the context of the Czech Republic, where community interpreting has up until now not been defined as an independent institutionalised discipline, little research has been done on the role of the community interpreter. A complete study was carried out by Holcupová (2010) who studied the role of the community interpreter in the Czech Republic based on a survey in which representatives of governmental institutions participated, as well as non-profit organisations and interpreters believed to be active in the field of community interpreting in the Czech Republic. The author included the following institutions and organisations in her research: Czech Police (*Policie ČR*), Aliens Police (*Cizinecká policie*), Ministry of the Interior – Administration of refugee centres (*Ministerstvo vnitra - Správa uprchlických zařízení*), Czech Social Insurance Agency (*Česká správa sociálního zabezpečení*), local government bodies, health insurance companies and health care centres. The author's quantitative research focused on genuine, detailed expressions of the interpreter's roles that were considered desirable or undesirable by the respondents. The results of the study show that both interpreters and staff members of the institutions perceive the role of the community interpreter as active and give him a great deal of space in mediating communicative goals. Although the study was based on respondents' subjective perceptions and experiences and not on a comparison of stringent standards with the practical implementation of the profession in question, it does show clear tendencies with regard to the perception of the role played by the community interpreter in the Czech context. In addition, the findings and conclusions of the

study are in line with prevailing views of modern professional world literature<sup>54</sup>. The role of the community interpreter lies mainly in the coordination of the communicative situation in the interpreted discourse in the social context, where the aim is the identification and bridging of possible intercultural differences and then the implementation of the entire communication approach. Most striking is the fact that a majority of the respondents from both the basic categories of the survey<sup>55</sup> expressed themselves with regard to the role of the interpreter in the function of a defender or specialist when the interpreter takes up a position that is no longer related to the interpretation itself. It is also interesting to note that views concerning the role of the community interpreter seemed to converge between the interpreters and staff of the institutions, which is a good basis for successful future cooperation between these groups in the field of institutionalisation and professionalisation of community interpreters in the Czech Republic.

## 5.2 Code of Ethics for community interpreters and translators

In general, interpreting services began to develop more strongly in the Czech Republic in the 1990s as a result of political, economic and social changes linked to the fall of the communist regime. During this period, the market increased both the range of and the demand for interpretation services. In addition, the proportional representation of languages for which interpretation services were requested, changed.<sup>56</sup> The growing professionalisation and commercialisation of this area has been accompanied by the design of new academic training programmes and the creation of professional associations for interpreters. However, this development has not taken much account of community interpreting as an equal discipline of conference interpretation. This also explains the relatively low social status of community interpreters, especially when compared to conference interpreters. There is no legally binding Code of Ethics for community interpreters in the Czech Republic. On the one hand, this is understandable, when we realise that there are still relatively few clients who use the services of community interpreters. On the other hand, we could expect community interpreters to be able to consult a Code of Ethics that would generally apply to all professional interpreters, but there is no such code either.

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<sup>54</sup> Kaufert and Putsch (1997), Bot (2003), Roy (2000), Wadensjö (1998).

<sup>55</sup> These are interpreters and staff members of the institutions.

<sup>56</sup> The importance of English as a commercial and international language increased, and so did the number of orders of various types (Vilímek 2013: 199).

Court interpreters are bound by law to maintain confidentiality and are prohibited from interpreting in the event of a conflict of interest or bias on the part of the interpreter (§ 10a and § 11 Act no. 36/1967 Code).<sup>57</sup>

The most comprehensive code is provided by the Chamber of Legal Interpreters of the Czech Republic (*Komora soudních tlumočnicků ČR*, KST ČR),<sup>58</sup> which has strict requirements which would also be suitable for the field of community interpreting and social services. KST ČR has a disciplinary committee that deals with complaints about members of the organisation. In contrast, the Codes of Ethics issued by the Unit of Interpreters and Translators (*Jednota tlumočnicků a překladatelů*, JTP)<sup>59</sup> and Association of conference interpreters (*Asociace konferenčních tlumočnicků*, ASKOT)<sup>60</sup> are less extensive and do not include, for example, the principle of impartiality or sustainable professional development.

The most progressive driver in the field of Code of Ethics for community interpreters in the Czech Republic is the non-profit organisation META o.p.s., which was the first to develop a complete and detailed Code of Ethics for community interpreters.<sup>61</sup> This code was primarily intended for interpreters trained by META or by other non-profit organisations. In the Czech Republic, this is the first and probably only document that lays down ethical rules in the social sector. It is not a generally binding and enforceable set of rules, but rather a set of recommendations (Outratová 2015: 25). If (community) interpreters are not registered in the database of legal interpreters and they are not members of a professional association, they are in principle not obliged to comply with a Code of Ethics. The complaints procedure related to certain principles of the Code of Ethics only applies to members of the KST ČR or interpreters registered in the Register of the Ministry of Justice, about whom complaints can also be submitted to the relevant court of justice. Similarly, there are no control mechanisms or subordinate bodies that could continuously monitor the quality of interpretation services provided.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Interpreters entered in the Register of Experts and Interpreters, see: <https://www.kstcr.cz/cz/jak-se-stat-soudnim-tlumocnikem>.

<sup>58</sup> See <https://www.kstcr.cz/cz/kst-cr-eticky-kodex>.

<sup>59</sup> See <http://www.jtpunion.org/O-JTP/O-Jednote-tlumocniku-a%C2%A0prekladatelu/STANOVY-JEDNOTY-TLUMOCNIKU-A-PREKLADATELU>.

<sup>60</sup> See <http://askot.cz/o-tlumoceni/eticky-kodex/>.

<sup>61</sup> [https://www.meta-ops.cz/sites/default/files/eticky\\_kodex\\_aktualni.pdf](https://www.meta-ops.cz/sites/default/files/eticky_kodex_aktualni.pdf).

<sup>62</sup> In practice, this means that interpreters registered with the Ministry of Justice (*Ministerstvo spravedlnosti*) can carry on this activity until the end of their lives if they do not commit an offence or an offence, do not lose the power to carry out a legal act or have themselves removed from the register.

In addition to the under-developed structures, Vilímek (2013: 204) identifies another risk factor that threatens the ethical level of interpreting services in the Czech Republic, a lack of professionalism due to a lack of training. If we turn our attention to the possibilities for training specifically designed for community interpreters, we must take this factor into account twice as much. Ignorance of ethical rules and lack of awareness of how vital these rules are, can be even more problematic in practice. For this reason too, it is necessary to take steps that improve the quality of the supply and demand for interpretation services in general. On the one hand, it is necessary to clearly define the conditions for exercising the profession, with support for the new legislation and the dissemination and deepening of training opportunities with Codes of Ethics. On the other hand, there is also a need to raise the awareness of customers concerning standards that the level of (community) interpreting services should have.

## 6. EDUCATION FOR COMMUNITY INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

Adequate specialised training for community interpreters serves as an essential means of professionalisation. Proper training of community interpreters helps to ensure that the interpretation services are professional and obtain a higher status and recognition (Figarová 2012: 31). Another function of this training is to support the implementation of the existing Code of Ethics (Bancroft 2015: 28).

Compared to the situation in Belgium or Austria for example, the training of community interpreters in the Czech Republic is lagging behind. However, a significant positive development both on the practical and theoretical level has been taking place over the last decade. Several interesting projects, courses and other learning opportunities have already been realised. They reflect the changes in society, the need for better and more effective communication with the national minorities and the related demand for community interpreters.

The first practical courses for community interpreters in the Czech Republic were organised by the Institute of Translation Studies (UTRL) at the Charles University in Prague (*Ústav translatologie, Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy*). Since the 2010/2011 academic year, this institute has been delivering the Retraining Course for the Professional Public – Community Interpreting in Dealing with Foreigners and Minorities (*Rekvalifikační kurz pro odbornou veřejnost – Komunitní tlumočení ve styku s cizinci a menšinami*) (JTP 2014: 20). This course was designed in the context of the development project Nr. 2008/CSM 45 of the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Physical Education (*Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy České republiky*). It is intended for both interpreters and people working for the administrative authorities, the

police, in health care, social services or non-profit humanitarian organisations that come into contact with foreigners or with national minorities in the Czech Republic for which interpretation is required. It is an accredited course consisting of seven general modules aimed at the introduction to interpreting and a range of socio-psychological, legal and cultural aspects of community interpreting. Additionally, the participants have to choose from three to seven optional thematic modules dealing amongst others with the fields of education, healthcare, asylum and labour law. The course also includes a series of e-learning lessons and it ends with a final exam. The successful participants receive a certificate that accredits them to operate as active community interpreters. The disadvantage of this course is that it is not run every year. However, the course can be adapted accordingly to the changing needs of and interests in different (and in the future possibly also less common) languages. It is also possible to follow an abridged version of this course only in the A language (thus in Czech) – in this case, the trainees focus on interpreting strategies and interpreting skills without binding themselves to a specific foreign language.<sup>63</sup>

Further important steps were taken in the years 2011–2012 due to the Community Interpreting in Dealing with Foreigners project (*Sociální tlumočení ve styku s cizinci*) supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (*Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí České republiky*). This project was inspired by the example of the Belgian Interpreting and Translation Service (*Dienst Tolken en Vertalen*) which focuses on the field of community interpreting. The project aims to contribute to solving the problems related to the lack of language knowledge and information among newcomers by training high-quality and reliable interpreters for the most requested languages, namely: Vietnamese, Mongolian, Russian, Bulgarian and Romanian. The non-profit organisation META – the Association for Opportunities of Young Migrants (*META, o.p.s. – Sdružení pro příležitosti mladých migrantů*),<sup>64</sup> coordinated the project in the first year. In the second year, the project was run by the language institute, OLDSCHOOL. The target group of the project were those with a good command of one of the languages mentioned above and Czech. For the initial run of the learning trajectory, META selected fourteen participants with the following

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<sup>63</sup> For more information and current prices see the webpage of this course at <http://www.lingua.ff.cuni.cz/>.

<sup>64</sup> META has been active in the field of foreigners' integration since 2004. An integral part of the association's activities is the provision of professional social and employment counselling to foreigners, as well as comprehensive assistance to pedagogical staff working with foreign pupils, which in many cases cannot be realized without a need for interpreting in a variety of language combinations, see: <https://www.meta-ops.cz/>

linguistic and cultural backgrounds: five candidates from Vietnam, four from Mongolia and five from Russia. The future community interpreters were trained (free of charge) in interpreting, were given an insight into a variety of areas within the social sphere and also received a paid internship. The project results also included the development of a methodology for community interpreting and training modules for community interpreters from the Vietnamese, Mongolian, Russian, Bulgarian and Romanian communities. The training modules for each language were divided into general modules (ethics, communication skills, intercultural communication, introduction to interpreting and interpreting techniques) and specialised modules (focusing on a range of sectors such as education, healthcare, daily activities, crime, labour market, residence permits). This project served subsequently as a source of inspiration for further META projects and similar projects run by non-profit organisations such as Klub Hanoi,<sup>65</sup> InBáze (Vávrová 2015:27)<sup>66</sup> and Slovo 21 (Tran 2015:22).<sup>67</sup> In this way, community interpreters have been trained in Vietnamese, Russian, Mongolian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Spanish, Arabic or Ukrainian.<sup>68</sup>

META's follow-up projects on community interpreting included primarily the Foreigners as Community Interpreters project (*Cizinci jako komunitní tlumočníci*; 2012–2013) and Community Interpreters in the Whirlpool of Integration project (*Komunitní tlumočníci ve víru integrace*, 2014).<sup>69</sup> In these projects, people could complete the Retraining Course for the Professional Public – Community Interpreting in Dealing with Foreigners and Minorities

<sup>65</sup> Current EA-I, previously Klub Hanoi – is a group of people focused on Southeast Asia and especially on Vietnam. They concentrate on the culture, history, traditions and life of the Vietnamese community in the Czech Republic (see: <http://sea-l.cz/en/our-services/training-of-community-interpreters/>)

<sup>66</sup> [www.inbaze.cz](http://www.inbaze.cz)

<sup>67</sup> In spite of the fact that Slovo 21 primarily focuses on the Romani in the Czech Republic, their target group is nowadays extended with foreigners, too. This organisation offers in cooperation with other non-governmental organizations and the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (*Ministerstvo vnitra ČR*) adaptation/integration courses project called “Welcome to the Czech Republic (*Vítejte v České republice*; [www.vitejtevcr.cz](http://www.vitejtevcr.cz))” aimed at new-coming immigrants. The organization trained lecturers of these courses specialized in social areas and interpreters which were trained in areas covered in the adaptation courses. (Tran 2015: 22) – see <https://www.slovo21.cz/english>

<sup>68</sup> The list of 49 trained community interpreters for the aforementioned languages and also the contacts concerning the organizations offering community interpreting services can be found on the META webpage – see <https://www.meta-ops.cz/kontakty-na-komunitni-tlumocniky>.

<sup>69</sup> The aim of the project was, among other things, to raise the awareness of professional and general public with regard to community interpreters and their role in the process of integrating foreigners.

(*Rekvalifikační kurz pro odbornou veřejnost – Komunitní tlumočení ve styku s cizinci a menšinami*) organised by the Institute of Translation Studies (UTRL) at the Charles University in Prague (*Ústav translatologie, Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy*). The output of the first of these projects was also the creation of the first Code of Ethics for community interpreters in the Czech Republic. The output of the second project has been, among others, the popularisation publication *Community Interpreters in the Whirlpool of Integration (Komunitní tlumočníci ve víru integrace)* published in the Czech language, which includes both theoretically focused texts on community interpreting and insights of the community interpreters from their practice. Additionally, short videos of expert debates and six profiles of community interpreters are available on the META website. The cooperation with the UTRL also resulted in the *Community Interpreting I seminar (Komunitní tlumočení I)*, aimed at students of all languages in the first and the second year of study. During the seminar, students produced short articles mapping the situation of community interpreting around the world, focusing on community interpreting in the areas of health, foreign affairs and social services, training for community interpreters, professional organisations and telephone interpreting.<sup>70</sup>

The UTRL staff also cooperated with the non-profit organisation InBáze on the *Shaping the Profession of the Socio-Cultural Mediator – Inspiration by the Portuguese Model project (Formování profese sociokulturní mediátor – inspirace portugalským modelem; OP LZZ CZ.1.04 / 5.1.01 / 77.00416)*. They also participated on both the creation of the *Community Interpreting for Future Intercultural Workers* module, as well as on the preparation of dictionaries and the handbook entitled *Shaping the Profession of the Intercultural Worker: Foreign Experience, Practice and Education in the Czech Republic (Formování profese interkulturní pracovník/pracovnice: zahraniční zkušenosti, praxe a vzdělávání v ČR)*. In addition, they were active in the examination committees at the final examinations.<sup>71</sup>

Community interpreting can currently be studied at two Czech universities. According to Mandysová (2015: 109), the Institute of Translation Studies (UTRL) at the Charles University in Prague (*Ústav translatologie, Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy*) has, since 2011, been offering the following five courses related to community interpreting within the group of optional subjects: *Community Interpreting I (Komunitní tlumočení I)*, *Community Interpreting II*

<sup>70</sup> See <https://www.meta-ops.cz/komunitni-tlumoceni>

<sup>71</sup> See the presentation about the community interpreting in 2014 in the Czech Republic from Čeňková (Čeňková 2014).

(*Komunitní tlumočení II*), Professional Internship in Interpreting (*Odborná tlumočnická praxe*), Simultaneous Interpreting for Public and State Administration (*Simultánní tlumočení pro veřejnou a státní správu*) and an e-learning course focusing on community interpreting.<sup>72</sup> At the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc, the Department of English and American Studies (*Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky, Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci*) has been offering a Bachelor's degree programme called English with the Focus on Community Interpreting and Translation (*Angličtina se zaměřením na komunitní tlumočení a překlad*) since the academic year 2007/2008.<sup>73</sup> However, Mandysová (2015: 109) points out,

I přes svůj název není obor na komunitní tlumočení výhradně zaměřen, teorii a praxi komunitního tlumočení jsou zde určeny celkem tři kurzy a komunitní tlumočení je tak koncipováno spíše jako jedna z možností uplatnění tohoto obecného tlumočnického a překladatelského oboru.

[Despite its name, this study programme is not exclusively focused on the field of community interpreting. There is a total of three courses devoted to the theory and practice of community interpreting which is rather perceived as one of the opportunities for making practical use of this general study programme focusing on the field of interpreting and translation.] (Own translation).

Since the academic year 2019/2020, community interpreting has also been offered as an optional subject in the courses offered by the Department of Dutch Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc (*Katedra nederlandistiky, Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci*), as part of the PACI project.<sup>74</sup> The interest of university students in community interpreting is evident from several bachelor and master theses at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University Prague (see Čeňková et al. 2019), as well as at the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc.<sup>75</sup>

The issue of evaluating the quality of community interpreting is addressed in Čeňková (2012). Diabová et al. (2014) provide a brief introduction to the situation concerning community interpreting in the Czech Republic. This

<sup>72</sup> See also the publication *Shaping the Profession of the Intercultural Worker: Foreign Experience, Practice and Education in the Czech Republic (Formování profese interkulturní pracovník/pracovnice: zahraniční zkušenosti, praxe a vzdělávání v ČR)* (InBáze 2014: 88).

<sup>73</sup> See <https://anglistika.upol.cz/uchazeci-o-studium/studijni-obory/>

<sup>74</sup> See <https://niz.upol.cz/uchazecum/studijni-obory/>

<sup>75</sup> Additionally, one of the results of IGA student projects at the Dutch Department of the Palacký University Olomouc is the monograph dealing with community interpreting in the Dutch speaking countries and the Czech Republic (Knap-Dlouhá et al. 2020).

information brochure was published by the Union of Interpreters and Translators (*Jednota tlumočnicků a překladatelů*).

## 7. PROFESSIONALISATION AND INSTITUTIONALISATION

Despite the increasing demand for professional community interpreting and the need for enhanced status for community interpreters, matters concerning the professionalisation and institutionalisation of community interpreting are proceeding in the Czech Republic at a slower pace when compared to conference and court interpreting. Mandysová (2015: 108) points out that community interpreting in the Czech Republic does not have such a long tradition as in the traditional immigrant destination countries. It also lacks general awareness and there are no uniform requirements or certificates for performance across the profession.

The main initiator and promoter of the profession of community interpreter is the non-profit organisation META (cf. supra). Apart from initiating several training courses on community interpreting in cooperation with the UTRL (see Section 6), this organisation contributed to the general anchoring of community interpreting by, amongst others, developing a Code of Ethics for community interpreters.<sup>76</sup> Community interpreting is present on the META website as part of the services provided for foreigners. This specific section of the regularly updated website provides basic information on community interpreting, as well as the Code of Ethics for the community interpreter and the contact details of relevant community interpreters and organisations. There is also information concerning a range of projects relevant to community interpreting and examples of good practice to be found on the META website. It also provides links to interesting articles and presentations about community interpreting. Promotional publications and leaflets for medical staff or parents of foreign pupils providing information about community interpreting are offered for free download in Czech, English, Russian, Arabic, Mongolian and Vietnamese.

Contact details of the organisations that can assist foreigners with community interpreting in (local) government organisations are also available on the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (*Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí České republiky*) focusing on the integration of foreigners.

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<sup>76</sup> See: Integration of Foreigners in the Czech Republic from the Perspective of Non-Governmental Organisations (*Integrace cizinců v Česku z pohledu nevládních organizací*, 2018)

This website also provides a variety of recommendations for officials.<sup>77</sup> There are several various organisations offering free interpretation services to clients from non-EU countries: the Centers for Support of Integration of Foreigners (*Centra pro podporu integrace cizinců*; CPIC),<sup>78</sup> MOST PRO o.p.s.<sup>79</sup> and the Diocesan Charity (*Diecézní charita*). It is also possible to make use of the telephone interpreting service offered by the Charityvia information helplines for citizens of Mongolia, Vietnam and Ukraine.<sup>80</sup>

A range of other organisations help foreigners with their integration in the Czech Republic, among others by offering interpretation during their visits to local authorities, doctors, schools, etc. Examples of these organisations include the Association for Integration and Migration (*Sdružení pro integraci a migraci*, SIMI),<sup>81</sup> InBáze o.s., the Contact Center for Foreigners (*Kontaktní centrum pro cizince, o.s.*, KCC), Caritas Czech Republic (*Charita Česká republika*), and the Integration Center Prague (*Integrační centrum Praha, o.p.s.*, ICP).

Another sign of the ongoing process of professionalisation is the establishment of a section of community interpreters within the Union of Interpreters and Translators (*Jednota tlumočnicků a překladatelů*) in November 2014 (Mandysová 2015). Community interpreting has also officially become an integral part of the requirements for the profession of ‘intercultural worker’, which was included in the National Profession System (*Národní soustava povolání*, NSP) run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (*Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí České republiky*) in 2018.<sup>82</sup> However, the profession of

<sup>77</sup> The text of the information leaflet available in Czech is to be found via: <https://www.cizinci.cz/documents/551336/568653/Tlumo%C4%8Den%C3%AD+pro+cizince+na+%C3%BA%C5%99adech.pdf/9757125a-88fe-adaa-0abe-2a2f3bce213a>.

<sup>78</sup> Centers for Support of Integration of Foreigners (CPIC) serve as an instrument for the integration of the third countries’ nationals (coming from outside of the EU) and staying legally in the Czech Republic. The CPIC centers are to be found in all the Czech provinces – see <http://www.integracnicentra.cz/>.

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.mostlp.eu/basic-informations-in-english/>

<sup>80</sup> This project helps the citizens of Mongolia (since 2008), Vietnam (since 2012) and Ukraine (since 2018) with their integration in the Czech Republic. It also assists all other people who work or come in contact these foreign nationalities with. The Vietnamese and the Ukrainian lines are available three times a week, the Mongolian line is available two times a week. The services are free of charge – see <https://www.charita.cz/en/foreigners-in-the-czech-republic/>.

<sup>81</sup> SIMI is a human rights non-profit organization defending rights of foreigners in the Czech Republic, see <https://www.migrace.com/en/>.

<sup>82</sup> The intercultural worker provides assistance, including interpreting, in dealing between migrants and public institutions, supports the coexistence of the majority and migrants, and helps the integration of migrants and migrant communities into the majority society – see <https://www.nsp.cz/jednotka-prace/interkulturni-pracovnik>

community interpreter – unlike the profession of court interpreter, consecutive interpreter or simultaneous interpreter listed in the NSP – still awaits this important achievement in the Czech Republic.<sup>83</sup> The very fact that community interpreting is not yet an officially recognised profession in the Czech Republic means that it is impossible to become a certified community interpreter. However, it is possible to obtain a community interpretation course certificate or to take a State Interpreting Exam in one of the university programmes offering community interpreting in elective courses (cf. Section 6).

Traditionally, the areas with the greatest need for community interpreting in the Czech Republic include healthcare, institutions, (local) government and education.

Czech legislation does not mention the patient's right to make use of an interpreter in the field of health care. It only mentions the duty of the healthcare provider to inform the patient in a comprehensible way about his/her health and proposed treatment and to enable him/her to ask additional questions.<sup>84</sup> Due to the absence of state support for community interpreters, healthcare providers often have to provide their own solutions to the problem. For instance, they often rely on members of their health care staff who happen to have a command of the specific language but who typically lack an interpreting or translation background (Kotašová 2008, Elbertová 2010). If such a person is not available, some hospitals turn to the embassy of the patient's country as a last resort. Another possibility is that the health care provider cooperates with an external language agency or with a non-profit organisation providing interpreting services (Janáčková 2012),<sup>85</sup> in some cases also making use of telephone interpreting services. In emergency care, the services of the interpreter are paid either by the healthcare provider or charged to the patient along with other services. In other cases, the costs are always paid by the patient. Given the financial costs and in many cases the unclear policy concerning the provision of interpretation services within the health care system, patients often have to arrange their interpreter on their own. Probably also for this reason, the most frequently chosen option in the Czech Republic remains the use of a person accompanying the patient, frequently members of the family or acquaintances (Elbertová 2010, Figarová 2012, Štýbnar 2014).

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<sup>83</sup> In the National Profession System of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs are represented as officially recognised professions: Interpreter, Translator (general), Court Interpreter and Translator, Consecutive Interpreter, Simultaneous Interpreter, Sign Language Interpreter. Intercultural Worker is a newly recognised profession. See <https://www.nsp.cz>

<sup>84</sup> As stated in Section 31, (1) (a) of Act No. 372/2011 Coll. – see <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2011-372>

<sup>85</sup> The interpreters are then not present in the facility permanently, but only if needed on request.

The language of proceedings with administrative authorities should be Czech or alternatively Slovak, as stipulated in § 16 of the Administrative Code (*Správní řád*).<sup>86</sup> Foreigners who do not speak any of these languages are entitled to make use of an interpreter registered on the list of court interpreters, but they have to procure it themselves and at their own expense (except for national minorities). In proceedings initiated by administrative authorities, or in a situation where the person speaking another language is the victim of a crime, the administrative authority shall bear the costs of the court interpreter.<sup>87</sup>

With regard to contacts with the Foreign Police, the law does not prescribe any requirements for an interpreter. This means, for example, that a Czech-speaking acquaintance of the client (Kotášová 2008) or employees of a given administrative authority (e.g. a receptionist who speaks one of the foreign languages) can interpret at the meeting. During the asylum procedure, each applicant has the right to an interpreter who will be provided at the expense of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí*). As Holkupová (2010: 37) points out, for the part of the proceeding taking place at the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy (*Odbor azylové a migrační politiky*, OAMP) either a court interpreter registered in the Register of Experts and Interpreters (*Evidence znalců a tlumočnicků*), or the services of external language agencies such as the non-profit organisation MOST PRO<sup>88</sup> can be requested. Moreover, asylum seekers in the Czech Republic can make free use of interpreting services (including remotely offered services) during their stay in detention and integration centres run by the Refugee Facilities Administration (*Správa uprchlických zařízení*, SUZ). In these situations, in addition to language agencies and court interpreters, interpreters who do not appear in any register are allowed to provide their services if they can prove their language competence and have a trade license (Holkupová 2010).

Interpreting for foreign language pupils in Czech educational institutions is not mandatory by law, but it is recommended for children of applicants for international protection in asylum facilities (Vávrová 2015). The responsibility for the funding of such interpreting services rests with the schools or families of foreign pupils. Due to the absence of a structural approach, different ways of addressing the situation can, therefore, be encountered in the Czech Republic. Ad-hoc interpreters (such as family members, school staff or personal assistants –

<sup>86</sup> See <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2004-500>.

<sup>87</sup> Interpreters for the most frequently requested languages are permanently present only at one particular police stations in Prague, see <http://www.policie.cz/clanek/sprava-hl-m-prahy-aktuality-prazska-policie-vstrie-turistum.aspx>.

<sup>88</sup> See <http://www.mostlp.eu/poradna-pro-cizince/odbor-azylove-a-migrační-politiky-mv-cr/>.

typically without interpreting education), are most often used for communication in schools. The foreign language pupils' schooling and the promotion of their integration into educational institutions is largely delivered by the organisation META, which issues methodological recommendations and produces educational materials.<sup>89</sup>

Since the school year 2018/2019, the National Institute of Further Education (*Národní institut dalšího vzdělávání*), an organisation managed directly by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (*Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy*), has offered primary schools in the Czech Republic free provision of services of adaptation coordinators, interpreters and translators. Gradually, it is also creating a network of contacts with providers of these services, teaching materials, methodologies and translations of the most important documents used in kindergartens and primary schools.<sup>90</sup>

## 8. CONCLUSION

Although we have found that community interpreting is not yet legally established in the Czech Republic and that the profession of community interpreter is not a recognised one, we have seen a great deal of progress and improvement in the last fifteen years. This comes from several sides, especially from the non-profit organisations who have been very active (and continue to be so) in setting up short training courses and other projects that have benefited the development of community interpreting. In doing so, they worked with both Czech government organisations, and with the Institute of Translation Studies (UTRL) at the Charles University in Prague. We are also seeing more and more attempts to include community interpreters in accredited study programmes or to create new, independent studies aimed at community interpreters (Charles University Prague, Palacký University Olomouc). The European project *PACI-Professional and Accessible Community Interpreting, a Gateway to Migrant's Integration*, designed within the framework of a strategic partnership (Erasmus+), is a significant step towards international cooperation, in which several Central

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<sup>89</sup> The informative web portal Inclusive School (*Inkluzivní škola – www.inkluzivniskola.cz*) was created by META, o.p.s. Association for the Opportunities for Young Migrants on Czech teachers requests „for an informative and methodological source, which would focus on work with this diverse group of pupils“ - <https://www.inkluzivniskola.cz/introduction-or-who-are-migrants-coming-czech-republic-and-where-do-they-come>

<sup>90</sup> See <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/nova-podpora-zaku-cizincu-po-nastupu-do-zakladni-skoly?highlightWords=tlumo%C4%8Dn%C3%ADk> a <http://cizinci.nidv.cz>

European countries are cooperating with Belgium, one of the world leaders in the field of community interpreting, as indicated above. We hope that this type of initiative will be increasingly fruitful and that interest in the field of community interpreting will continue to grow, so that in the foreseeable future we will be able to speak of a field that works well in practice, i.e. that foreigners will be able to use a reliable network of interpreting services when they need it, and that competent community interpreters will also be able to offer their services in the right working conditions. The latter also includes the possibility of training even for languages with less diffusion, legal provisions and a detailed binding Code of Ethics.

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## 6. PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION IN POLAND

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For many westerners, the countries of Central Europe form a uniform part of the continent with similar languages (do Czech people not communicate easily without any translation with Polish?), food (are pierogi not a traditional dish in Hungary as well?) and culture (is ‘polka’ a Polish national dance?). However, this conviction is unjustified as there are many differences between these countries in terms of population, cultural, social and economic aspects among many others. The position of translators and interpreters in each of the Central-European countries has its own peculiarities which are difficult to compare with each other. The differences are partly due to differences between the judicial systems, which determine in which situations interpreting or translation is required. For instance, should a certified interpreter be present when two people with different mother tongues get married? Should the target languages, in this case, correspond to the fiancées’ native languages? What does the law say about this and what is the practice? Are there any regional differences in the application of the law, especially when it comes to the decision as to which documents (if any) have to be translated when you buy a car in another country?

This chapter aims to discuss the position and practice of community interpreters and community translators in Poland, which are not official positions set by any Polish law. Section 1 first deals with the Polish terminology referring to “community interpreting” and “community translation”. Section 2 discusses how translators and interpreters – and especially their activities “that take place [...] for the purpose of accessing community services” (Norm ISO 13611:2014) – are treated under Polish law. Section 3 deals with the topic of education or training of community interpreters and translators in Poland, while Section 4

looks at professional associations. Section 5 deals with the code of ethics for professional translators and interpreters in Poland and, finally, a conclusion is drawn in Section 6.

## 1. POLISH TERMINOLOGY SURROUNDING COMMUNITY INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION

Based on the English term ‘community interpreting’<sup>91</sup>, Tryuk (2006, also 2012) introduced the Polish equivalent ‘przekład ustny środowiskowy’ that has been adopted by scholars (see e.g. Kościałkowska-Okońska 2008, Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, B. 2010 and all other mentioned articles). Its (in)accuracy has been widely discussed both in scientific papers and on many (online) forums for translators. The most severe criticism concerns the use of the adjective ‘środowiskowy’. The most straightforward meaning of it is ‘environment’ or ‘milieu’, a meaning that does not cover the social services dimension as reflected through the term ‘community’. The first word used in the Polish term – ‘przekład’ – is a synonym of ‘tłumaczenie’ which both can mean either translation or interpretation. However, a slight meaning differentiation exists between the two words. The word ‘tłumaczenie’ refers strictly to the translation activity itself, whereas ‘przekład’ refers to a higher level of translation, including localisation and stylistic and cultural adaptation in some cases. The latter word is primarily used in contexts of literary translation. The additional word ‘ustny’ refers to the oral aspects of interpreting. As such, the Polish term ‘przekład ustny środowiskowy’ is not only imprecise and inconsistent with the English term ‘community interpreting’ but also confusing. There have been few attempts to change the term, but the need for a different term has already been emphasised by some scholars’ publications regarding the subject. “It is therefore advisable to consider a redefinition of this term in the nearest future”, is the advice of Krysztofowicz and Krupienicz (2016, p. 84). Several recent publications go back to an earlier publication by Tryuk (2003) which uses the term ‘tłumaczenie środowiskowe’. This alternative term does specify more

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<sup>91</sup> The English terminology is very often used as the source for the localisation in many languages although it is not very precise itself. The term ‘community translation’ for example is also being used as a synonym of translation via crowdsourcing, thus translations by the user(s), and is as such not connected with the context of the translation but the way the translation came to live – a text translated by the community and not by a professional and paid translator. The English term ‘public services’ is being used more often in recent publications, but it was not adapted by all scholars so far.

accurately the first part of it ('tłumaczenie'), but still leaves the misleading word 'środowiskowe'.

Based on changes in English nomenclature where "community interpreting" made place for "public service", an idea arose among Polish legislators to introduce the name 'public translator' into the Polish Sworn Translators and Interpreters Act, whose role could also include non-legal translations and cover the tasks of community translation and interpretation. However, the idea was found to be too controversial and associated instead with an 'insult to public morals' and was therefore rejected (Kierzkowska, 2005, p. 133).

## 2. POLISH LEGISLATION

As community interpreting and translation is not officially recognised as such, in this section we shall discuss legislation that relates to the act of translating or interpreting in the context of social services. Experience has shown that these services are carried out either by sworn translators and interpreters (Section 2.1) or by ad-hoc non-professional interpreters (Section 2.2).<sup>92</sup>

### 2.1 Sworn translators and interpreters

According to Polish Law, the sworn translator and interpreter ('tłumacz przysięgły') is the only profession that deals with the activity of bilingual communication. He/she is responsible for both written and oral tasks and his/her main task is to provide translation for the judiciary system (police, prosecution, and courts) as well as for public administration bodies. In addition to the services provided to this sector, a sworn translator is entitled to provide certified translations for other clients in the country and abroad.

According to the current Polish Sworn Translators and Interpreters Act of 25 November 2004, a sworn translator may be:

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<sup>92</sup> Ad-hoc interpreters are very often called upon in non-profit organisations helping refugees and immigrants in Poland. For example NOMADA Stowarzyszenie Na Rzecz Integracji Społeczeństwa Wielokulturowego / Association for Multicultural Society Integration offers free of charge counselling service. On their website (<http://nomada.info.pl/>) they state: "Counseling is carried out both at the office and in the field – NOMADA experts assist migrants during visits to the offices, at the doctors, at the police or in court. We also act as language and cultural translators." However, the team does not consist of translators or interpreters and they are mainly using their own language knowledge without any specific preparation for community interpreting.

“a natural person who has Polish citizenship or citizenship of one of the Member States of the European Union, Member States of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) – parties to the Agreement on the European Economic Area, citizenship of the Swiss Confederation or citizenship of another state, if based on and principles specified in the provisions of the European Union law it has the right to take up employment or self-employment on the territory of the Republic of Poland, or, based on reciprocity, citizenship of another state.” (Ustawa z dnia 25 listopada 2004 r. o zawodzie tłumacza przysięgłego, own translation, MD)

According to the Act, a sworn translator in Poland does not have to be Polish. It is sufficient that during the written and oral examinations for a sworn translator, he or she shows fluency in both Polish and a given foreign language. A candidate to become a sworn translator must have a university degree and must be free from prosecution for an intentional or fiscal offence or an unintentional offence against the security of economic transactions.

In exceptional circumstances, where the demand for interpreters for a given language is higher than the number of sworn translators, the Minister of Justice may exempt the candidate from the obligation to have a higher education degree.

In the so-called Second Polish Republic (1918-1939), the institution of a sworn translator was established in 1928 (Journal of Laws of 1928, item 943) by the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 24 December 1928, which states that „a sworn translator may be a person who is a Polish citizen, enjoys full civil and citizen rights, is impeccable in character and proves his knowledge of the languages for which he is to be appointed a translator”. What is striking is the fact that it is not explicitly stated how foreign language skills should be demonstrated. During communist Poland, the regulation of 9 December 1953<sup>93</sup> came into force first, then the regulation of 19 August 1968<sup>94</sup> and lastly the regulation of 8 June 1987<sup>95</sup>, which equalled the position of a sworn translator and a court expert.

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<sup>93</sup> Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dnia 9 grudnia 1953 r. w sprawie tłumaczy przysięgłych. [Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 9 December 1953 on sworn translators and interpreters], *Dziennik Ustaw* [Journal of Laws] 1953 No. 51 pos. 256.

<sup>94</sup> Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dnia 19 sierpnia 1968 r. w sprawie tłumaczy przysięgłych [Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 19 August 1968 on sworn translators and interpreters], *Dziennik Ustaw* [Journal of Laws] 1968 No. 35 pos. 244.

<sup>95</sup> Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dnia 8 czerwca 1987 r. w sprawie biegłych sądowych I tłumaczy przysięgłych [Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 8 June 1987 on court experts and sworn translators and interpreters], *Dziennik Ustaw* [Journal of Laws] 1987 No. 18 pos. 112.

The 1968 Regulation introduced two significant changes to the criteria for the selection of translators: first, the lower age limit for translators (a minimum of 25 years of age) and, second, the requirement to guarantee proper performance of the translator's duties. Additionally, it laid down how the knowledge of a foreign language must be proven. Paragraph 2 states:

„2.1. Knowledge of a foreign language should be demonstrated by:

- 1) a university degree in linguistic studies relevant to that language, or a higher education degree in foreign language studies, or
- 2) a university degree or a certificate of completion of a general secondary school if the language in question was the language of instruction in such schools.

In the cases referred to in section 1, subsection 2, the candidate for a translator must also pass an examination on the ability to translate from Polish into a foreign language and from a foreign language into Polish, with particular emphasis on legal texts.

- 3) proof of knowledge of a foreign language may also be provided by successfully passing an examination on the knowledge of that language, including the ability to translate referred to in section 2.” (Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dnia 19 sierpnia 1968 r. w sprawie tłumaczy przysięgłych, 1968, p. 406, own translation MD)

According to the Act which has been in force since 2004, a person receives the sworn translator's certificate after a positive assessment during an examination with strictly regulated rules. Sworn translators appointed under the previous regulations have also retained their rights if they have submitted an appropriate declaration of intent within the transitional period provided for in the Act.

A sworn translator certifies his or her work with a round metal seal bearing his or her name and surname, the 'sworn translator of language X' formula and the number of entry in the register of sworn translators. If the translator qualifies for more than one foreign language, (s)he shall use separate stamps for each of those languages.

The standardised billing page of a certified translation has 1125 characters with spaces. This page counting originates from times when translations were still typed. A page of a certified translation then had 25 verses of 45 characters each. Each started page of the translation is counted as a complete page, so a 1301-character translation is classed as two pages.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Uncertified translations are calculated either by the number of characters or by the number of words in the source or target text. As a rule, a page started counts as a fraction of the entire page. A page is rounded up to either half a page or tenth of a page. This means that for a standard

A sworn translator is obliged to apply statutory translation rates to the aforementioned judicial and administrative authorities. These rates, which have not been revalued since the Act entered into force, are meagre compared to market rates (for comparison: an hour of interpreting in court for a Polish-Dutch language pair is currently PLN 45.99; the rate for interpreting on the free market is PLN 500 for every commenced 4-hour block and more). Nevertheless, the position of a sworn translator is valued because it enables the translator to provide services for individuals and companies from outside the sector mentioned above, for whom the official rate is not binding for the translator, unlike the regulations from 1987.

## 2.2 Other legislation

Although the only legal Act regarding the profession of translators and interpreters does not mention public services as a separated occupation, there are some other legal documents where this is specified. One of them is the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland (with the Act of 18 May 2008 amending the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland). The procedures for granting political asylum and refugee status specified there require that the interrogation is conducted in a language that is understandable to the foreigner-applicant. Every office dealing with asylum applications and refugee requests is obliged to provide the foreigner with free assistance of an interpreter who speaks his or her language (or – if a translator who speaks his/her mother tongue is not available or there is no translator of such language in Poland – a language which he/she understands). The obligation laid down in the Act is also sanctioned by the relevant provisions of the 1951 Geneva Convention on the protection of refugees. As a member state of the European Union, Poland is also obliged to meet minimum quality requirements concerning refugee procedures applied in the EU within a Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

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page of 1800 characters with spaces, the 1985 character length document will be counted as 1.1 or 1.5 pages respectively. Other pages considered normative are 1600 characters or 1500 characters. Please note that this should be clarified before the customer decides to place an order, so as not to be surprised by the unpleasant surprise afterwards.

### 3 EDUCATION

Although many surveys have revealed that interpreting during emergencies is often performed by non-professionals (in Polish sometimes referred to as ‘natural interpreters’) – often colleagues of the office staff that assist by interpreting – professionalization is the key to assuring quality concerning language knowledge and knowledge of the deontology of the profession. As the idea of community interpreting and translation is rather new in Poland and the legislation does not set any regulations, the fact that the specialisation in a not officially recognised field is problematic as well. For many years, language study was one of the requirements to qualify as a sworn translator and interpreter. Although the rules have been changed, many still see this as the most reliable path to obtain the necessary certifications. Many universities in Poland still offer a rather classical philology study when choosing a foreign language course. In the European Bachelor – Master structure, many translation courses take place in the Masters’ programmes. In some bigger departments (English, German or French), students can often choose a translation specialisation where aspects of all kinds of translations are covered. Unfortunately, it is rarely the case for the “smaller” languages where departments do not allow groups to be split according to different specialisations.

Several English programmes have already introduced community interpreting as a study subject, although it is usually only part of a broader course on different types of interpreting. However, it is only in recent years that some noticeable changes in the curricula have allowed the introduction of community interpreting into the translating and interpreting studies of several universities in Poland. The Institute of Applied Linguistics (Instytut Lingwistyki Stosowanej) at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań was the first one to introduce community translation and interpreting as an obligatory subject in 2013. Other universities followed shortly after and the Institute of Applied Linguistics at the University of Warsaw opened a similar course in 2015. Both of them are not language-specific and form a model course of 30 hours of classes for which 4 ECTS are awarded. These courses cover issues related to translation and interpreting in a range of environments: police, court, medical, and other, but also the codes of conduct and role of the translator and interpreter in the communication act. Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań was not only a pioneer in the courses of community interpreting for regular students but also the only university that introduced English postgraduate studies devoted exclusively to the subject as early as in 2009. In the academic year 2019/2020, many universities introduced community interpreting to their curricula, but the way it is done differs significantly.

Most courses dedicated to community interpreting are offered in Poland within the curriculum of postgraduate studies. The Jagiellonian University in Kraków, for instance, offers ‘Postgraduate studies for translators and interpreters – certified and community translations and interpreting’ (Studia podyplomowe dla tłumaczy – tłumacze niauwierzytelnione i środowiskowe) in the following languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Italian, Ukrainian, and Spanish. The programme of studies covers subjects such as the psychological and ethical aspects of community interpreting, translation of medical texts, interpreting in pre-trial proceedings (interpreting at the police, prosecutor’s office, in custody), and interpreting in the administrative environment and social institutions. The University of Gdańsk offers community interpreting within the curriculum of ‘Postgraduate studies in translation studies – medical translation and interpreting’ (Studia podyplomowe Translatoryka – przekład medyczny). This programme is available only for the language pair Polish-English. The programme of ‘Postgraduate Studies in German and Scandinavian Translation Studies’ (Podyplomowe Studia Kształcenia Tłumaczy Języka Niemieckiego i Języków Skandynawskich) at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań offers a course of community interpreting (6 ECTS) with subjects such as the principles of community interpreting, code of professional ethics, medical interpreting, and interpreting for public services such as refugee centres. The ‘Postgraduate studies in specialised translation and interpreting’ (Podyplomowe Studia Tłumaczeń Specjalistycznych) at the University of Łódź specify that their graduates may provide community translation services, but there is no separate course dealing only with this issue. The University of Wrocław offers postgraduate studies at the Institute of English Philology (for the Polish-English language pair), including legal and medical translation and interpreting.

Some Masters’ programmes also include courses in this matter in their curricula. The Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin offers a course in community interpreting within the Faculty of Humanities (based on the available teachers this is limited to the language pair Polish-English), and the Institute of Slavic Philology at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń includes community interpreting in their general course of theories of translations and interpreting. It is worth mentioning that it is not only public universities that are interested in community interpreting and include courses in their educational programme. There are thus more and more opportunities to specialise in community interpreting, but most of the programmes are postgraduate studies and also many of them are focused only on one language pair (Polish-English).

Community interpreting in Poland is not professionalised yet, which is also partly due to the lack of recognition for this profession. The issue of the social prestige of the translator’s profession is and remains a severe problem.

Translation skills are taken for granted as a result of the fact that a person has mastered a foreign language at a communicative level. Commonly, clients are not aware of the intellectual effort and the long educational path that should be followed in order to become “a good translator” rather than “a translator”. The Polish (and most probably not only Polish) paradox is that without protest, people are willing to pay a high price for a plumber, but with the translator, we try to bargain for every zloty because not everyone knows how to turn off the tap to prevent a flood, but many believe that they do know foreign languages.

#### 4. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

As a country of more than 38 million inhabitants, Poland has many professional associations for translators and interpreters. These associations cover a wide range of different types of translation and interpretation domains. Literary translation is covered by the Polish Literary Translators Association (Stowarzyszenie Tłumaczy Literatury, STL), established in 2010 in Warsaw, which aims to integrate translators of fiction, and non-fiction. Audio-visual translation is covered by the Polish Association of Audio-visual Translators and Interpreters, (Stowarzyszenie Tłumaczy Audiowizualnych, STAW), founded in 2007, which brings together professionals involved in translating and developing dialogues for films in the form of voice-over, subtitling, dubbing and audio description). Most of them have similar goals and thus focus on similar activities – they issue a range of publications for translators, introduce professional codes of ethics, share best practices, organise seminars and trainings, and establish and keep up to date a database of professionals.

Several professional bodies are addressing the problems of community interpreting and translation, but none of these organisations is dedicated explicitly to these areas. They are more general associations with some focus on public service assignments. One of these organisations is the Association of Polish Economic and Legal Translators and Interpreters (Polskie Towarzystwo Tłumaczy Przysięgłych i Specjalistycznych TEPIS). TEPIS was established in 1990 and currently has around 1000 members, most of them sworn translators and interpreters. The Association is a member of the International Federation of Translators. In 2005, TEPIS prepared an additional document setting out the ethical principles and rules of practice and procedure for legal translation and interpretation, the so-called Sworn translator’s code (Kodeks tłumacza przysięgłego z komentarzem) (Kierzkowska, 2005). Although it does not have the status of an official document, it is appreciated by both beginners and experienced sworn translators, because it sets the rules that should be followed

by a sworn translator and interpreter. We will come back to that publication later.

TEPIS and the Association of Polish Translators and Interpreters (Stowarzyszenie Tłumaczy Polskich, STP) are the two oldest professional associations of sworn and other translators and interpreters in Poland. To become a member of TEPIS, a person only has to declare that they are a translator. Joining the STP requires proof that one has already produced a sufficient number of translations and/or has already worked a certain number of days as an interpreter. Also, recommendations of persons who are already members of the association are requested. Membership of these associations gives access to vocational training (sometimes reserved only for members). The associations also monitor the legal situation of translators and provide mediation assistance, if necessary.

For several years now, the Polish translation market has had a Trade Union of Sworn Translators and Interpreters. It aims to fight for decent pay for its members, which is all the more critical as the Polish Sworn Translators and Interpreters Act of 2004 sets the rates for translations for judicial authorities and public administration offices at a fixed level, declaring at the same time that the rates shall be revalued yearly. However, during the last 15 years, there has been no revaluation. So what in 2005 might have been considered an acceptable rate is now *de facto* woefully inadequate. Languages are divided into four groups according to the Act:

- I. English, German, French and Russian
- II. other European languages and Latin
- III. non-European languages in Latin alphabet
- IV. non-European language in non-Latin alphabet or ideograms.

Dutch is included in the second group. Since 2005, the regulated price per page for translation from Dutch into Polish is 24.77 PLN (approx. €5.80); from Polish into Dutch 35.38 PLN (approx. €8.30) and an hour of interpretation is valued at 45.99 PLN (approx. €10.70) gross. In mid-October 2019, the Minister of Justice issued a regulation amending the official rates for certified translations, as of 1 November 2019. Starting from that date, the rate from Dutch into Polish is 37.16 PLN (approx. €8.70); from Polish into Dutch 53,07 PLN (approx. €12.43) and an hour of interpretation is valued at 68.99 PLN (approx. €16.16) gross.

Compared with the previous rates, there is an apparent increase, but these rates do not reflect the real value of translation or interpretation and do not contribute to the recognition of the social prestige of the professions. The Trade Union of Sworn Translators and Interpreters is, therefore, negotiating with the Ministry of Justice to make the rates for certified translations realistic for judicial authorities and public administration. In addition, the trade union aims

to introduce official regulations on payment deadlines (for example, a sworn translator who has translated for a court may only be paid after several years, and this without any interest). The trade union also aims to standardise labour norms and to regulate the issue of remuneration for travelling time if one of the judicial authorities calls for an interpreter living in another city. For example, an interpreter from Wrocław is called to Białystok. The road distance between the two cities is about 600 km, i.e. about 7 hours by car. A similar time should be counted for travelling by train. If the interpreter is called on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m., (s)he must leave on Monday and spend the night in Białystok, returning on Tuesday night at the earliest, thus spending two days travelling. If the court hearing lasts only 1 hour, the interpreter may, according to the law, only invoice the court for 1 hour of work. In other words, for the two days of travelling (and not being available for other assignments), the interpreter will have only earned €16,16. If the person for whom the interpreter was requested fails to appear at the court session, the interpreter is entitled to half an hour's pay. In this case, the interpreter will have earned €8,08 for the two days of travelling. The trade union of sworn translators and interpreters aims to improve these conditions, and it also monitors disciplinary proceedings against translators and interpreters – its members. Trade union membership is voluntary and the trade union itself is not yet known nationally.

Conference interpreters and booth interpreters<sup>97</sup> may join the Polish Association of Conference Interpreters (PSTK, often referred to as PESTKA), which has been in existence since 2017. This is essential, among other things, because there is no national standard for working conditions for interpreters, such as whether interpretation should be accounted for based on 4-hour blocks or the next hour of work started, and whether the interpreting should be done by one or a group of interpreters. PESTKA has taken on the thankless task of educating clients about the work of an interpreter, how comprehensive it is, and what is necessary to ensure the quality of conference interpretation.

There are also local associations that bring together, for example, technical translators and interpreters in a given region or province. Some of these associations are spreading their activity across their original area of activity, like Bałtyckie Stowarzyszenie Tłumaczy (Baltic Translation Association (BST)), an organisation that integrates translators from northern Poland but also cooperates with translators operating throughout the country.

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<sup>97</sup> This differentiation is made not only by the Association but is also common in Poland as not all conference interpreters use booths (there are many consecutive interpreters who specialise in conferences) and not all booth interpreters are working on conferences.

## 5. SWORN TRANSLATOR'S CODE (KODEKS ZAWODOWY TŁUMACZA PRZYSIĘGŁEGO)

The first code for Polish translators and interpreters was laid down in 1991 and was called *Kodeks tłumacza sądowego* (Court translator's code). As the name states, it was focused only on legal translations and interpreting. The first code for sworn translators was published in 2005 and has since been updated several times. The latest publication of the code dates from 2018 and was prepared respecting many international principles, such as: the UNESCO Recommendation on the Legal Protection of Translators and Translations, and the Practical Means to improve the Status of Translators; the Code of Professional Ethics by the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) and the Code of Ethics by the European Association for Legal Interpreters and Translators (EULITA). It also takes into consideration the provisions of Polish law concerning sworn translators and interpreters, and the experience of both translators and interpreters on the one hand and public administration bodies and institutions on the other.

The text consists of two parts. Part one is dedicated to the professional ethics and part two to the practice of sworn translation and interpreting in Poland.<sup>98</sup> It means that it combines ethical principles with formal rules. Although the code is not mainly dedicated to community translation and interpreting, it needs to be considered, as sworn translators and interpreters are performing most public service tasks.

Paragraph 5 of the code discusses impartiality in translation and interpretation. According to this chapter, the tasks assigned should be performed with impartiality, without expressing the views of the translator or interpreter and without taking account of unjustified suggestions of the client or any other party. Where there is any relationship of kinship, affinity or other close relationship with the client, the

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<sup>98</sup> It is worth mentioning, for example, that there are no legal regulations concerning the layout of issued documents or the formula for certification of translation. Each translator has his own individual manner of formatting documents (font type, letter size, etc.), marking the end of the paragraph and his own version of the certificate of conformity with the content of the submitted document, translated into the target language. In addition, the Polish system, unlike, for example, the Slovak or Dutch system, does not provide for a photocopy/original of the original document to be attached to the translation. Therefore, a client who has used the services of a Polish sworn translator is obliged to submit two independent documents to the office: the original and its certified translation.

translator or interpreter has to inform the authorities concerned and should not be involved in such cases in any way.<sup>99</sup>

Paragraph 6 of the code deals with confidentiality. A translator or interpreter is obliged to keep secret all facts and circumstances and the information that he or she learns in connection with the task, which includes the contents of the proceedings, correspondence, personal data and other. Both above-mentioned paragraphs also apply to community services and are in line with many other codes of conduct for this profession.

Most other provisions do not apply (directly) to public services, and some may even seem to contradict the general ethical rules, such as paragraphs 72 and 73. Paragraph 72 deals with the spatial arrangement of the interpreting task. According to this paragraph, a sworn translator should be near the client in order to ensure adequate audibility and visual contact with that person. This rule is in stark contrast with the rule of triadic arrangement where the client, the interpreter and the authority are placed at three corners of a triangle. This is to ensure a neutral and impartial spatial setting where the interpreter maintains the same distance from both other parties – the client and the representative of the authorities. Paragraph 73 discusses the possibility of communicating with the client before the actual task. It reads:

“Before commencing the performance of his/her duties, a sworn translator/interpreter should make sure that he/she understands the foreigner whose statements he/she is supposed to translate and that the foreigner understands him/her.” (Kodeks zawodowy tłumacza przysięgłego, p. 16, own translation MD)

The goal of this provision is to ensure mutual understanding between the interpreter and the client, especially if he/she uses a dialect or has any speech impediment. In some codices, this is considered to be contrary to the principle of impartiality because the translator establishes a relationship with the client before the proper task is performed.

The paragraphs dedicated to the interpreters seem to be the most problematic. Although interpreting is considered more complex than translation, this chapter is much shorter than the chapter about translation (13 versus 46 paragraphs). It lacks information on many essential aspects, such as how to deal with body

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<sup>99</sup> Let us emphasize once again: The professional code of conduct of a sworn translator is a collection of good practices, but not a binding legal norm. Although, according to good practice, a sworn translator should not certify documents that he or she wishes to use in translation, the legal regulations in Poland do not prohibit him or her from doing so.

language (including a culturally conditioned one), emotions, tone or intention. For a detailed analysis, see Moczulski (2018, especially p. 37-39 where he discusses the interpreters).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Interpreting and translating for public services in Poland is an occupation still shrouded in a mist of uncertainties, but the developments of the latest years give hope that the situation will slowly change to ultimately crystallise under a set of clear and transparent rules. Although the regulations are not keeping pace with market needs, the institutions of higher education have incorporated the growing need for community translators and interpreters in their curricula, offering increasing numbers of courses and programmes which prepare candidates for this profession. In addition, recent research is increasingly focusing on community translation and interpreting, and on the position of community translators and interpreters in Poland. Several aspects are being analysed, such as the differences between working for private sectors and public services (Krajewska 2018), the stylistic adjustments to be made by the interpreter in public services (Kruk-Junger 2012, 2013, 2015), the need for and role of the interpreters and translators in refugee procedures (Ndiaye 2014) and the role of community interpreters as intercultural mediators (Nawacka 2015). It is to be hoped therefore, that the European Union, as a body superior to individual states, will soon decide to normalise the professions of translator and interpreter in all their aspects. This would make it possible to create a uniform system, transparent to the citizens of all European Union member states, regardless of the country in which they would need translation or interpreting. At the same time it would define the limits for particular types of translation and the scope of competences and/or duties for all kinds of translators and interpreters (i.e. sworn and community interpreters).

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# 7.

## PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING IN SLOVAKIA

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Public service interpreting and translation (PSIT) is a critical service in providing access to information and communication with public and state authorities or self-government on matters in the area of law, social security, health care, and education. The rights, scope and modalities pertaining to PSIT are determined by the state's language policy, as well as several European or international regulations and conventions. In this context, we refer to Koskinen's observation of translation and interpreting as governing functions in a multilingual society.

The core function of institutions as regulatory organizational systems is to govern, and in a multilingual environment, they can and often do employ translation in performing their governing function. In that case, they govern by the translation. (Koskinen 2014: p. 479)

Ensuring that linguistic rights are respected is the subject of interdisciplinary research as it intersects with several scientific disciplines such as law, linguistics, translatology and ethnology. Such research involves examining citizens' linguistic rights in public service encounters by focussing on the scope, methods, and quality of the provided translation and interpreting services in various public sectors, and ethical aspects. It also includes the analysis of specific translation and interpreting activities, thereby focusing on issues such as power asymmetry, the professional profile of public service interpreters and translators (PSITs), the training of PSIT competencies through lifelong learning, the exploration of possibilities offered by language technologies, etc.

In tandem with academia, international, regional, and local organizations also consider and analyze PSIT issues of inclusion and integration, and social services provision, particularly for asylum-seekers, refugees and immigrants. These organizations have practical experience based on which they can foreground issues on the coverage, quality, and professionalism of interpreting services in these sectors. Some of these organizations are trying to solve the most challenging problems, publishing analyses concerning the most pressing issues and actively training ad-hoc interpreters.

This chapter on public service interpreting and translation (PSIT) in Slovakia deals with the social and political demarcation of the profession, the target groups, the legal entrenchment of the profession, the domains, and sectors in which PSIT services are provided. Attention is also paid to the possibilities of training, professionalization, and activities of public service institutions. The state of research in PSIT is briefly summarized, thereby focusing on projects and initiatives taken by the state, universities, and non-governmental organizations that are aimed at improving services in this field. Finally, based on the analysis of the current strengths and weaknesses of the PSIT sector in Slovakia, the chapter outlines the author's vision on possible further steps for the professionalization and institutionalization of PSIT in Slovakia, which could ensure the rights of every foreign citizen or linguistic minority in Slovakia and their chances of integration and full participation in society.

Interpreting and translation in the public sector in Slovakia has a long tradition, both in the country's existence as an independent state and as part of larger states. The multicultural character of Austria-Hungary's dual monarchy – of which Slovakia was part until the end of World War I – forced the state to appoint interpreters to communicate with ordinary citizens who did not master the state's official language, i.e. Hungarian.

The status, education and professional profile of these interpreters and translators were very different from today's, given the non-official status of Slovak. Nevertheless, with this introductory remark, we would like to point out that the interpreter and translator's status in the public sector was already very much dependent on the country's language policy, particularly the status of communication- and minority languages. Language policy continues to influence the provision of interpretation and translation services in the public sector in Slovakia today. At this point, we refer to the concept of translation policy as defined by Meylaerts (2011):

By means of its translation policy, a government thus regulates people's access to or exclusion from public life and services [...]. Translation policies are instrumental in furthering (or hindering) the right to communicate with the

authorities[...]. They are an integral part of languages policies, which regulate language use in the public domain.

(Meylaerts 2011: p. 165)

Although translation policy is an unknown concept in the Slovak public domain, the individual steps, decisions, and rules related to interpreting and translation services directly influence these services' scope and quality and, implicitly, the integration of non-native speakers in the country. In this respect, we state that a systematic and integrated translation policy in the public domain is an important sustainable instrument for addressing the partial problems of communication with non-native speakers in various domains, which is becoming an increasing problem due to migration waves and the opening up of the labor market to foreign workers.

## 2. TARGET GROUPS

To date, there is a false belief in the Slovak society that community or public service interpreting only relates to interpreting for migrants. This limited understanding of the profession has led to the idea that there is no need for specialized PSIT training or education in Slovakia as migration is not believed to be a major problem. According to the information on IMO's website<sup>100</sup>, foreigners make up 2.2 % of the population in Slovakia today, and their number is slowly, yet continuously increasing with 16% each year. The target groups and clients of PSIT service provision in Slovakia can be divided into national minorities, migrant workers, and asylum applicants. The position of these groups in society and the difference in power relations between these groups and the government are considerable. To illustrate this point more clearly, we will now briefly outline the evolution of language rights and language services for non-native-speaking populations in Slovakia.

Because of its geographical location and history, Slovakia has always been a multilingual country with nine officially recognized national minorities. The Act on state language of the Slovak Republic<sup>101</sup> regulates the use of the state language and the national minorities' languages. Another Act on the use of languages

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<sup>100</sup> <https://iom.sk/en/migration/migration-in-slovakia.html> (last visited in December 2020)

<sup>101</sup> ActNo.270/1995Coll.,unofficialenglishtranslation:<https://www.scribd.com/document/19267068/Act-of-the-National-Council-of-the-Slovak-Republic-No-270-1995-Coll-on-the-state-language-of-the-Slovak-Republic>

of national minorities<sup>102</sup> regulates the use of languages of the Slovak Republic citizens belonging to national minorities in official contacts, designations, and information provided in their languages. It also sets the rules for the use of the minority language in official contacts and in other fields in those municipalities in which the share of citizens belonging to a national minority reaches 20%. Based on this Act, there are nine languages of national minorities in Slovakia: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Romani, Ruthenian and Ukrainian.<sup>103</sup>

Since the national minorities are guaranteed the right to disseminate and receive information in their native languages, the right to education in their languages, and the right to use their languages in official contacts, the state institutions are also obliged to provide translation and interpreting for these citizens.

The Slovak Republic fulfils its obligations arising from internationally accepted documents – in particular, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages<sup>104</sup> and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities<sup>105</sup> – and has recently published translations of relevant laws into Ukrainian, Ruthenian, German, and Romani.<sup>106</sup>

The head of the government office's report on the use of languages of national minorities of 2014 states that there are significant differences between the use of minority languages in communication with the government. The report mentions, that for example in 56% of municipalities with a Hungarian national minority citizens lodge applications in a national minorities' language. In municipalities with other national minorities, such applications are limited or do not appear at all. In other words, other national minorities use their language in contact with the government only in exceptional cases (Štefková & Bossaert 2019).<sup>107</sup>

Similar discrepancies in the use of minority languages were also noted in research conducted as part of the TRANSIUS project – From conventions to

<sup>102</sup> Act No. 184/1999 Coll., slovak version: <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1999/184/20121001>

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/pouzivanie-jazykov-narodnostnych-mensin/> (last visited in December 2020)

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages/text-of-the-charter>

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168007cdac>

<sup>106</sup> The full text of the translated legislation can be found at [www.slov-lex.sk](http://www.slov-lex.sk)

<sup>107</sup> The English version of the report, that includes results of a survey on the situation of the use of languages of national minorities on the level of territorial self-government authorities: [https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/5422\\_sprava\\_en.pdf](https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/5422_sprava_en.pdf) (last visited in December 2020)

norms in the legal discourse (2014-2017). The research involved a thorough, practice-oriented analysis of PSIT.<sup>108</sup> It focused on topics such as the scope of translation and interpreting assignments for the individual languages, the number of translators per language, clients, use of interpreting techniques, CAT tools, life long learning of translators and interpreters and the degree of standardization and conventionalization of the translation and interpreting process.<sup>109</sup>

The study pointed out that Hungarian interpreting assignments in institutional contexts were many times higher than the number of interpreting assignments in other languages, including English. The Czech language situation is quite different as far as the number of official translations and interpreting assignments is concerned. The reason is the affinity between the Czech and Slovak languages, the traditionally friendly or fraternal relations between these linguistic communities, and the fact that translations of official documents from Czech to Slovak are not required.

The most notable target groups of PSIT after the Second World War are the now mostly integrated Vietnamese and Chinese communities, which were invited and settled in the era of socialism. The provision of translation services for these two language groups of migrants is still underdeveloped, which is highlighted by the fact that only five certified interpreters are registered for these languages at the Ministry of Justice.

Since Slovakia acceded to the EU, the number of labor migrants from the EU Member States has grown exponentially. The strong development of the automobile industry has led to intensive labor migration of workers from outside the EU's borders, mainly from Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, Serbia and even South Korea, who need to be integrated into society. According to the data of IOM, since 2004, the number of foreigners living legally in Slovakia has increased more than six times. This tendency may not be reflected in the number of qualified translators and interpreters. It is important to stress that the right to use their languages only relates to these communities for communication in criminal proceedings and cases of refugees in the asylum procedure.

### **3. EDUCATION OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS IN SLOVAKIA**

Slovakia is a country with a long tradition of training interpreters and translators. In a country of 5.4 million inhabitants, there are five universities

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<sup>108</sup> see Rakšányiová, J. et. al 2015, and 2017

<sup>109</sup> Project number: APVV-0226-12, <https://fphil.uniba.sk/Transius>

offering interpreter training, in a wide range of languages combined with Slovak.<sup>110</sup> The curricula combine in equal share both translation and interpreting skills, prescribing a broad range of courses ranging from literary and professional translations to consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. PSIT in Slovakia has not yet undergone the same process as conference interpreting, which enjoys accredited education at universities, scientific research, and professional organizations that have defined examples of good practice, specified quality standards, and set ethical principles.

Students are minimally trained in PSIT, although field research shows that the number of conference interpreting assignments has decreased significantly in the last ten years (Djovčoš & Šveda 2017: p. 147). One of the reasons for the missing PSIT component in the curriculum is the limited possibility of specialization. Another reason is that, due to a complicated accreditation procedure, the training does not have sufficient freedom to respond flexibly to developments in society.

The resulting gap between PSIT training and practice, also noted in the study by Šveda and Poláček (2017), can lead to an oversaturation of the translation and interpreting (T&I) market in which there are too many T&I graduates who hardly received any specialized PSIT training and have language combinations that are less relevant for PSIT settings. This scenario can ultimately lead to a loss of prestige of degrees in T&I studies or a downturn in the quality of T&I graduates.

Such scenarios could at least be partially avoided if T&I programs offer possibilities for specialization into PSIT. Preparing future experts in PSIT may increase their chances of succeeding on the market and contribute to a higher quality of translation products. It may also increase the prestige and attractiveness of the T&I profession (Šveda & Poláček, 2017: p. 325).

#### **4. LEGAL DELINEATION OF SWORN TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS IN SLOVAKIA**

This section describes how language services are provided in the institutional sector in Slovakia by defining the legal framework for institutional translation and interpreting. The concepts of institutional/public service and community translation and interpreting are relatively unknown. There is no unified term for the provision of interpretation and translation services for public institutions.

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<sup>110</sup> Four universities offer a full T&I program at bachelor and master level and two universities included a partly T&I training in other curricula, see more information in Šveda, Poláček, 2017.

The commonly used term is *úradný prekladateľ a tlmočník* (sworn translator/interpreter).

The activities performed by sworn interpreters and translators in Slovakia are regulated by Act No. 308/2007 Z.z. and its implementation regulations amended by Act No. 65/2018, Decree No. 490/2004 Z.z. regulating the performance of Act. No. 382/2004 Z.z. on expert witnesses, interpreters, and translators and on amending certain laws, and Decree No. 491/2004 Z.z., on the remuneration, compensation of the expenses, and compensation for the lost time of expert witnesses, interpreters and translators.

The current legislation has entrusted the registration and administration of court translators and interpreters to the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic. In the practical provision of translation and interpreting services by the state, authorities exclusively use translators and interpreters whose names appear in the Ministry of Justice register. Registered translators and interpreters provide translation and interpreting services in the Slovak context mostly on behalf of the police, the public prosecutor's office, and the courts. Thus, they cover only a part of all public sector assignments. These translators and interpreters are registered after passing the examination organized by the interpreting institutes of three universities and the ministry.

To become registered as a sworn translator and interpreter, candidates must have a full legal capacity and show integrity. They must also have received education in a field within the scope of the registration and have followed specialized training aimed at the activities of an interpreter or translator. They must have at least five years of practical experience in translation or interpreting and must pass the official examination organized by interpreter institutes at universities that have been authorized by the Ministry of Justice.

The minimum requirements for the training and other profile criteria of the interpreters and translators, the method of certification and the sanctions in case of breach of obligations and also the level of compensation are laid down in the above mentioned Act No. 382/2004 Col. and the Decree No. 490/2004 Coll.

The minimum professional qualification, approved by the Ministry, requires at least 30 hours of study and consists of the basics of legislation governing the activity of the interpreter and translator. It also focuses on keeping a personal register of translation and interpreting assignments, and the form and content of the act of an interpreter or translator. The qualification – concluded with a written and oral examination – is language independent and does not include practical interpreting or translation sessions. Certification is granted after successful completion of the examination during which candidates should demonstrate the ability to professionally communicate in both languages of their language combination, the ability to provide consecutive interpreting from the

first language into the second and vice versa. The examination also consists of a written part with ten questions concerning knowledge of generally binding regulations governing the performance of the interpreter.<sup>111</sup>

Candidates taking the exam for sworn interpreter/translator are not required to have followed an interpreter training. As our experience as examiner shows, many of them come to the exam with zero knowledge of interpreting or note-taking techniques and have no idea what to expect in practice. Based on these limited courses, the qualification cannot prepare the candidates for real-life problems. The certification only focuses on language proficiency and consecutive interpreting. However, in real life, PSIs are confronted with a wide range of tasks from the different governmental bodies – covering different aspects of PSIT. For instance, they must apply different interpreting techniques and be aware of the ethical aspects related to their role as interpreters during PSI assignments. Currently, interpreters working in PSI settings only acquire such specialized competences based on a learning-by-doing approach. The existing legislation states that the interpreters are obliged to undertake lifelong learning and improve their qualification to the extent determined by the Ministry of Justice. However, the Ministry has not issued any guidelines on how interpreters should fulfill this requirement, nor has it implemented any monitoring instruments to check whether interpreters comply with the legislation.

At present, according to the Ministry of Justice's website<sup>112</sup>, the register comprises a total of around 265 interpreters and around 965 translators. The first Act regulating translation and interpreting services dates from 1949 (Act No. 167/1949 Coll.). Initially, interpreting and translating were not separated from each other. Those who wanted to certify themselves as translators also had to provide interpreting services and vice versa. After a major revision of the law in 1996, the translation and interpreting services were separated. The translator/interpreter has to pass two exams to register for both translation and interpreting. In practice, the profession of sworn interpreter and translator is often complementary. Depending on the procedural circumstances, the interpreter is asked to provide, in addition to interpreting or translation, a written or oral summary of the source communication or to prepare an assessment report on a colleague's performance.

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<sup>111</sup> see more Štefková 2013, <http://www.minv.sk/?expert-interpreter-translator> (last visited in December 2020)

<sup>112</sup> <https://obcan.justice.sk/infosud-registre/-/isu-registre/zoznam/tlmocnik?f.453=31.07.2020&f.453=&f.23785=23786> (last visited in December 2020)

At the time of the revision of the law, many sworn translators decided not to provide interpreting services as the remuneration was much lower than the usual market price for interpreting for other than government bodies. It roughly corresponded to the amount they received for a one-page translation comprised of 1800 characters. As a result, sworn interpreting was no longer of economic interest to professional interpreters listed in the register. According to the legislation currently in force, it is possible to be registered as a sworn translator for 53 languages listed by the Ministry. This list does not include many languages relevant to asylum procedures, which means that interpreting and translation in these languages can only be done by persons who have not received any formal PSIT training.

## 5. RESEARCH RESULTS OF PSIT IN SLOVAKIA

PSIT refers to any form of communication mediation between two languages aimed at helping individuals with their integration in society, to demand justice and recognition, and to secure social and healthcare services, and/or services for state/public administration. Therefore, one can expect a remarkable diversity of sectors, also known as the domains of PSIT. Recent research results from Slovakia, as summarized below, confirm this variety of contexts. Given this variety, it is not easy to determine a generally applicable definition of PSIT (D'Hayer 2012: p. 237).

The provision of translation and interpreting services by sworn translators and interpreters was investigated with public funding under the framework of the above mentioned TRANSIUS project. The project highlighted a lack of sworn translators and interpreters in languages of limited diffusion and little interest in certification, although there is an accredited university master's degree for a series of LLDs, such as Finnish, Swedish, Dutch, Turkish, Arabic, etc. In a survey presented by Štefková (2015: p. 23), Dutch appears on the 5th place in Slovakia in the volume of legal translation, while there are only four interpreters for a language combination Dutch-Slovak registered in the list of legal interpreters of the Ministry of Justice. The graduates of these courses have an excellent knowledge of the language and culture, often including basic training in interpreting and translation, but have almost no understanding of PSIT or the domains and the practical execution of assignments within PSIT.

A better understanding of interpreting in asylum procedures is provided by the anthropological research of Tužinská (2010-2019) and observation reports from HRL, UNHCR, and some other NGOs working on the integration of migrants in Slovakia (see more by Tužinská, 2020). Field research by Številová

(2011) and Tužinská (2011, 2020) points to severe shortcomings in PSIT quality and availability in the asylum sector. According to these reports, there is a significant lack of interpreters in languages needed in this sector, and the quality of interpreting provided by the non-professional ad-hoc interpreters is very poor. Številová (2011) notes in her report:

The lack of qualified interpreters from languages considered to be rare (such as Somalis, Kurds, Tibetans, etc.) is a problem which affects the whole territory of Slovakia. The reasons are that 1. the number of foreigners residing in Slovakia is low (less than 1% of the population); and therefore, there are only a few or zero interpreters from certain languages; and 2. because of the limited possibilities, the authorities use the services on unqualified interpreters.

(Številová 2011: p. 4).

In her research report of legal consequences in interpreting for foreigners, Tužinská (2011) identifies areas which radically influence interpreting quality. She focuses on the communication circumstances and the context, time and place, and participants: the represented institutions, interpreter, foreigner. She observes the presence/absence of a qualified interpreter, use of the interpreting standards in the given institution, the interpreter's language competence in legal terminology, the interpreter's communication and intercultural skills. An important aspect of the research is the institutional influence and the interpreter's independence, the legal consequences of inaccurate interpreting for the interpreter/foreigner, and the impact of how the interview is conducted.

Tužinská (2011) also recognizes the causes of problems in interpreting and lists the benefits of high-quality interpreting for everyone involved. She formulates the involved parties' key competencies as ten appeals, which, if applied, can significantly improve PSIT quality in the studied context (Tužinská 2011: 5–14). Particularly thought-provoking is Tužinská's (2020)'s discoveries stemming from observations of interpreting in asylum court proceedings and the reaction of the involved parties on the findings.

As the UNHCR rightly observes in the brief instruction for interpreters in asylum procedures<sup>113</sup>, the crucial point for successfully integrating migrants into society is the qualified interpreter's involvement. The interpreter sometimes does not know and does not adhere to the fundamental standards of interpretation.

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<sup>113</sup> this code is available with some more recommendations at <https://www.minv.sk/?azyil-migracia>, Dokumenty na stiahnutie (Documents to download), Publikácia: „Osobitosti tlmočenia v azylovom konaní.“ (Publication: „Peculiarities of Interpreting in the Asylum Procedure.“)

To avoid malpractice, the UNHCR office in Slovakia, in cooperation with the Migration office, prepared the Codex of Ethics for Interpreters in the Asylum Procedure<sup>114</sup> and organized and occasionally continues to organize thematic lectures for ad-hoc interpreters. These lectures focus on interpreting techniques, relevant knowledge of legislation and procedures, and, anthropological and ethical aspects of interpretation performance. In practice, there is, unfortunately, no established mechanism for assessing and maintaining the level of interpretation of the ad-hoc interpreters, which inhibits disciplinary action in cases of breaches of the code of ethics.

The partial results of an ongoing PSIT study in healthcare, administration, and education conducted by Homola (2016-2021) and Bossaert (2018, 2020) demonstrate that service providers in these sectors are not aware of the need for effective, professional communication via an interpreter and that they also lack the means of providing this type of translation and interpreting service. The situation could change if the provision of translation and interpreting services for foreigners who are unable to understand the official language (Slovak) were included in the Social Services Act.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

The above-mentioned research results show that the first impetus for a systematic approach to PSIT comes from NGOs, which point to the poor quality of interpreting services in asylum procedures and further cooperate with interpreter training institutes to more or less systematic small-scale schooling of interpreters. Most of these initiatives are ad hoc and, due to a lack of interest on the part of state institutions, cannot guarantee sustainability.

This chapter has demonstrated that public institutions' interest in the provision of PSIT, is closely linked to the position of PSIT's target groups in society. The quality of training and the degree of institutionalization also depend on this interest. Based on the analysis presented, we have summarised the main problems and some recommendations for the professionalization of PSIT in Slovakia.

A significant obstacle to the development of systematic and sustainable training in PSIT is the little or complete lack of awareness of the need for training by state institutions and many interpreters. Slovakia lacks an accredited specialized institutional training for institutional translators and interpreters, particularly in

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<sup>114</sup> intern document of the Migration office

combinations of LLD's, especially for languages not sufficiently represented in our region. Slovakia also lacks an institutional framework distinguishing court interpreters and translators from language professionals in the medical, social and educational domains and in the asylum procedures.

We see another important opportunity to elaborate standards of professional ethics of translators and interpreters and define their rights and position concerning the government agencies and other parties ordering translations or interpreting. The area of PSIT requires management of quality control of the performance of translators and interpreters active in the different domains.

Our report on the situation in Slovakia shows that the provision of language services to non-native speakers and the degree of institutionalization are closely linked to the position of the target groups of institutional translation and interpreting in society. The certification and training of translators and interpreters, as well as the interest and systematic translation and interpreting policy of public institutions in the quality of these language services can make a major contribution to all countries concerned.

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## 8.

# ERASMUS+ PACI – KA2 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP – PROFESSIONAL AND ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY INTERPRETING: A GATEWAY TO MIGRANT’S INTEGRATION

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

This final chapter aims to present the Erasmus+ Key Action Strategic Partnership Programme *PACI – Professional and Accessible Community Interpreting: A Gateway to Migrant’s Integration*. The project involves a unique pioneering approach to providing sustainable training in Public service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT) for Languages of Lesser Diffusion (LLD’s). The project’s primary goal is to develop a didactic model for PSIT training. Based on the concept of blended learning, PACI’s didactic model requires students to combine (independent) online learning with onsite training. The learning objectives and materials in PACI’s PSIT module are in line with market needs related to the provision of PSIT services in the partner countries.

Given the great demand for professional training of PSITs in languages of limited diffusion (LLD’s), the three Central European university partners – i.e. the Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia), Palacký University Olomouc (the Czech Republic) and the University of Wrocław (Poland) – decided to join forces with the Department of Linguistics & Literary Studies at Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium). VUB has many years of experience in training translation and interpreting students, on the one hand, and in offering courses on terminology and translation/interpreting technologies, on the other hand.

Since each partner individually cannot address all aspects and competencies considered necessary for PSIT training in the respective language combinations

(Polish – Dutch; Czech – Dutch and Slovak – Dutch), the project benefited from a supranational partnership within the Erasmus+ framework. Each project partner contributes its own expertise to the development of PACI's didactic model. The Comenius University of Bratislava initiated the PACI partnership. The university has a long tradition in providing translation training to students enrolled in its Dutch studies curriculum.

The PACI didactic model – available in Dutch and English – can serve as a template model in PSIT professional training for other language combinations. It is currently offered as a separate PSIT training module within the existing university curricula of the Philology Departments in the two Central European universities in Poland and the Czech Republic, and a professionalisation track within the translation studies curriculum of the Comenius University in Bratislava.

Section 2 summarises previous studies addressing the need for a professionalised didactic model of PSIT training and providing a theoretical basis for PACI's didactic model. As already mentioned before, this model is comprised of two parts: i.e. a set of e-learning courses (presented in Section 3) followed by onsite training and assessment (presented in Section 4). Finally, a conclusion is drawn in Section 5.

## **2. TOWARDS A DIDACTIC MODEL FOR PSIT TRAINING**

Gentile (2016: 36-37) confronts in her dissertation the professionalisation models of Wilensky and Tseng (1992) with the development of conference interpreting versus public service interpreting (PSI). The most important factors of these models include the establishment of the first training and university schools, the first local and national professional associations, the first state licensure law and the first formal code of ethics. The author points out that the development of conference interpreting has successfully undergone all of these consecutive steps. In contrast, PSI is very often – although differences between countries occur – only situated in the first phase of the professionalisation process, pertaining to the establishment of adequate training for its aspiring practitioners. In this case, higher status of public service professionals can only be achieved by claiming an area of specialised expertise. This is because a high educational level has always been an element for distinguishing professionals from non-professionals.

Prunč (2012: 7-9) launches an illustrative model (Figure 1) inspired by categorising the cultural, symbolic and institutional capital in the terminology according to the French philosopher and literary sociologist Pierre Bourdieu.



*Figure 1:  
Prunč' model of professionalising interpreting studies*

The scholar shows the tension between conference interpreting and public service interpreting, on the one hand, and shares his vision on how the entire interpreting field can move towards professionalisation, on the other hand. Prunč points out that implementing PSI training within university curricula will be a must in the coming decades. This is because PSIs must acquire the skills to make well-considered decisions on ethical issues, among other things. The scholar also believes that implementing PSIT training in a (university) curriculum is needed to give the profession of PSIT the necessary societal recognition and status it deserves. In the same line, the scholar calls for more research into community/public service interpreting within Interpreting Studies. Finally, Prunč also underlines the importance of certification and the necessity of evaluating the profession.

Ways of incorporating a specialised, didactic PSI model into a broader university course have been widely discussed. Several studies have served as a basis for developing the PACI didactic model presented in this chapter. For instance, in a study by De Pedro Ricoy (2010: 101), it is mentioned that entry requirements for students in interpreting include specifications as to the candidates' linguistic competence. University courses could and should bypass the need to provide tuition or elemental support in communication skills in the relevant languages of study. De Pedro Ricoy also foresees that if training in translation

and interpreting techniques and strategies (e.g. note-taking, shadowing exercises, turn-taking, situation management, semiotic transfer) is provided in accordance with the learning objectives for other generic modules or course components, it could be also be applied to specific PSIT settings. Moreover, the scholar suggests that other (more general) course units in translation and interpreting training could also be adapted to the specific requirements of PSIT. Examples are methodological approaches to reflexive learning, courses on translation or interpreting theory or course units dealing with professionally-oriented aspects (e.g. written translation, liaison interpreting, language project management, telephone/video-interpreting). Finally, the scholar emphasises the importance of establishing links between universities and the professional community by working closely with public organisations. This idea is for instance also present in the study of Hale (2007) in which the author advocates “a united commitment to improve interpreting research, training and practice on the part of all parties involved: service providers, education institutions, policy-makers and interpreters themselves” (2007: 194). Moreover, Hale stresses the need to motivate students of translation and interpreting studies programmes and foreign languages to become interested in PSIT and gain insight into the issue, which will open the way for further professionalisation or specialisation (Hale 2007: 168-170).

The study by D’hayer (2012), highlights the importance of technological competencies in PSIT training. The author claimed that “[n]ew technologies such as virtual conference tools and shared repositories are the essential “missing link” towards the progress of PSIT education” and that “PSIT stakeholders need to join forces and pool efforts towards a constructive and innovative dialogue that would enhance the profession” (D’hayer 2012: 235).

### **3. PACI’S DIDACTIC MODEL: BUILDING BLOCKS**

The PACI consortium identified several building blocks (or intellectual outputs) to create a didactic model for PSIT to be implemented in the existing master programmes of the partner universities.

#### **3.1 PSIT e-learning module**

The PACI e-learning module is comprised of:

- a) four e-learning courses
- b) a set of PSIT-related multilingual glossaries
- c) a monograph on PSIT training and practices in several EU countries

## a) E-learning courses

The four e-learning courses are designed for students to acquire PSIT-related key competencies through independent learning. The learning objectives and materials in each course were identified and developed after consultations with educational institutions in the field of PSIT in Belgium, as well as practitioners and professional organisations.

The e-learning courses were developed in Moodle, an easy-to-use Learning Management System. See also Tymczyńska (2009) and Ibrahim-Gonzalez (2011) for more info about best practices in using Moodle (and e-learning platforms in general) in interpreter and translator training, including reflections on advantages and disadvantages. One advantage of Moodle courses is that they are typically comprised of a wide variety of learning materials (written texts, videos, images and sound fragments) to meet better the learning needs of different types of learners: visual learners, auditive learners and agile learners (using tests and self-evaluation). Another advantage is that the learner can choose his or her learning moment due to the non-time-related aspect. The fact that the teacher can update the course more quickly is also considered an advantage. Moreover, Ibrahim-González (2011: 238) observed a positive attitude from learners towards online learning. Learners also tend to appreciate that specific competencies associated with online learning – such as flexibility in time management and autonomous learning – are inherent to professional practice. The level of learner's autonomy and the instructor's role obviously depend on how the e-learning course has been designed.

Ibrahim-González (2011) also highlighted concerns for successfully implementing e-learning courses, such as technical requirements for infrastructure, links in the courses to external sources that should regularly be checked or updated, etc. The author also pointed out that the possibilities for teamwork and peer feedback can have motivating but sometimes also adverse effects. Moreover, the ratio between the amount of work required to set up the courses or carry out the tasks online must be carefully checked to ensure that the learner's motivation to use e-learning remains high enough (Ibrahim-González 2011: 238).

The PACI e-learning module consists of four e-learning courses, each course developed by one project partner. Vrije Universiteit Brussel developed the course on *language technologies in community interpreting and translation* (O1). Knowledge and skills related to terminology (management) and digital tools supporting translators and interpreters are considered essential competencies for PSITs to acquire. This requirement can, amongst others, be inferred from the PSI competence profile of the European Network for Public Service Interpreting

and Translation.<sup>115</sup> This competence profile explicitly refers to the importance of having „thorough subject-area knowledge relevant to the assignment“. It also emphasises the importance of having „excellent command of relevant terminology and its functional equivalents in the working languages“ and having „excellent knowledge of the existence and availability of research and terminology management tools“ (p. 2).<sup>116</sup>

The second course on *Community/institutional translation: context and techniques* (O2) is developed by the Comenius University Bratislava. The course gives students insight into the translation process step by step, starting from the field's definition and elaborating on translation techniques and essential skills the students need to develop to achieve translation competence. Students acquire both theoretical knowledge about translations, as well as practical translation skills in a selection of PST domains.

The third course on *Praxeological, institutional and ethical aspects of community interpreting and translation* (O3) is developed by Wrocław University. The course focuses on the practical side of the PSIT profession, such as the working conditions and rules that apply before, during and after PSIT assignments. These practical elements tend to be illustrated by regularly referring to PSIT in the Flemish region of Belgium. This is because, in Flanders, legislation, regulations and PSIT practices, are well-regulated and can serve as an example to be implemented elsewhere.

The fourth course about *Community Interpreting: Context and Techniques* (O5) is developed by the Palacký University Olomouc. The course provides an overview of the relevant procedural steps required to perform an interpreting assignment in the context of public service, administration and government communication with the foreign-speaking citizens. This course provides an insight into PSI, focusing on the unclear demarcation of this concept in Interpreting Studies. Apart from theoretical reflections, the course also focuses on acquiring practical skills for PSI (particularly educational, medical and police settings), such as specific interpreting techniques or note-taking techniques.

The four e-learning courses have been created in the Moodle platform and are available free of charge after registration. In the PACI project, these courses are offered as part of a specialised PSIT module within the broader philological master's curricula of the project partners in Olomouc, Poland and Wrocław. The courses can be implemented as part of translation and interpreting seminars,

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<sup>115</sup> <http://www.enpsit.org/>

<sup>116</sup> The entire document can be viewed here: <http://www.enpsit.org/training--accreditation.html> (last visited december 2020).

ideally during one academic year. For instance, students could follow the PST and language technologies courses during the first semester and the courses on PSI and ethical and institutional aspects during the second semester.

### **b) Multilingual glossaries for PSIT**

Apart from the e-learning courses, the PACI partners also created multilingual glossaries for PSIT, currently available in four languages: Czech, Dutch, Polish and Slovak. These glossaries primarily serve as didactic tools in the PACI e-learning module (cf. previous section). They are comprised of a selection of specific words and terms used in health, educational and police settings and help students enrolled in the PACI module to acquire the necessary domain and linguistic knowledge to provide interpreting and translation services in these domains. Additional didactic use of the glossaries is that students are given assignments to enrich or further extend these glossaries, thereby applying the technical knowledge and skills they acquired in the e-learning module.

The thematic glossaries are made available via the online terminology management system *Terminologie*.<sup>117</sup> This cloud-based platform's advantage is that it allows multiple users with different roles to be involved in shared terminology projects, thereby offering opportunities for collaborative learning.

### **c) Monograph on PSIT training and practices**

In addition to the four e-learning courses and the set of multilingual glossaries mentioned in the previous two sections, the current monograph is also offered as one of the course materials for students enrolled in the PACI e-learning module. The monograph gives students an overview of PSIT practices and training in several EU countries, specifically in those of the PACI project partners (the Czech Republic, Belgium, Poland, Slovakia), Austria and Spain. It serves as reading material for students in the selected countries and as an inspirational model for those who help in shaping the training of future PSITs in Europe or beyond.

## **4. ONSITE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT**

An essential part of the PACI didactic model involves intensive, onsite training of participants during workshops on PSIT exercises, terminology

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<sup>117</sup> <https://www.terminologie.org>

management and the use of translation/interpreting technologies. Based on didactic principles of blended learning, students prepare themselves for these workshops by completing the e-learning courses (including the assignments they need to submit in each course). In other words, the e-learning module and the training week are inextricably linked. As part of the PACI onsite training week in Brussels, students also pay visits to PSIT agencies to gain additional insights into the professional field and job opportunities for their specific language combinations.

The onsite interpreting workshops involve role-playing exercises in which students take up the roles of interpreters or clients. During these sessions, they learn to deal with several issues, such as stress management or ethical dilemmas in PSI settings, and they also practice their interpreting skills (incl. note-taking and memorising skills) in different interpreting modes: dialogue interpreting, whispering interpreting and remote interpreting (i.e. telephone and video conferencing interpreting). Through these simulated PSI-encounters, students also acquire insight into the sometimes imbalanced positions and roles of communicative participants in the so-called triad (Mason 2001). The exercises focus on PSI encounters in educational, medical and police settings (cf. *supra*) and require students first to become familiar with the lexicon (words, and terms) used in these settings.

PACI's onsite translation workshops focus on translation exercises for each language combination, supported by translation technologies during the translation process. Students have small group discussions on their translation results. They justify and evaluate the deployed translation strategies and translation procedures during these discussions, based on the theoretical translation concepts that they acquired through the online PST course. Moreover, they evaluate the translation products using CAT technologies, corpus tools, and terminological management tools to become aware of the need to introduce these technologies into the translation practice.

## 5. CONCLUSION

To conclude this chapter, we would like to stress once more the fact that the PACI didactic model is implemented as a blended learning concept. It requires students to go through an online learning module, followed by an onsite training week at the end of the learning trajectory. During the individual self-study, students develop theoretical knowledge and practical skills pertaining to the PSIT profession. Students need to acquire these competencies to be able to participate during the onsite training and assessment week.

To implement PACI's didactic model in a university curriculum, one must first map the conditions that need to be fulfilled to start such a PSIT module. This is why a handbook has been developed in the PACI project, useful as a *vademecum* for anyone interested in organising similar PSIT training in other language combinations. This handbook is also an additional learning source for students enrolled in the PACI learning module<sup>118</sup>.

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<sup>118</sup> This handbook (including other info, such as the project outline) can be found on the project's website: <https://www.kgns.info/paci>

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TRAINING PUBLIC SERVICE  
INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS:  
A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

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