

# UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TRIESTE

## XXVIII CICLO DEL DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN SCIENZE DELL'INTERPRETAZIONE E DELLA TRADUZIONE

### THE INTERPRETER'S PROFESSIONAL STATUS: A SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE INTERPRETING PROFESSION

Settore scientifico-disciplinare: L-LIN/12 LINGUA E TRADUZIONE - LINGUA INGLESE

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*I have always shrunk from the act of beginning. From the first word, the first touch. The restlessness when the first sentence has to be formed, and after the first the second. The restlessness and the excitement, as if you are pulling away the cloth beneath which a body rests: sleeping or dead. There is also the desire, and the fantasy wish, to beat the pen into a ploughshare and plough a freshly written sheet clean again, across the lines, furrow after furrow.*

*Erwin Mortier, While the Gods Were Sleeping*





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# Abstract

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The professional status of interpreters is perhaps one of the most neglected topics in Interpreting Studies today. A review of the existing literature reveals that very few studies have investigated the status and the social prestige of the interpreting profession. One of the few attempts to study the status of conference interpreters empirically can be found in the study by Dam and Zethsen (2013), who compared EU staff interpreters' and translators' self-perception of status. The results of their survey showed that interpreters did not appear to have a high consideration of their profession, an outcome which needed to be investigated further. As far as public service interpreters are concerned, several scholars (Angelelli 2004; Ricoy *et al.* 2009; De Pedro Ricoy 2010; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011) have speculated that their status is generally low and that public service interpreting is still undergoing professionalisation, although these assumptions have never been empirically and extensively investigated.

This doctoral thesis aims to fill this knowledge gap by investigating the self-perceived professional status of conference and public service interpreters. The theoretical framework hinges on the theories of the Sociology of the Professions (Andersen, Taylor & Logio 2014), which contributed to framing the concepts of status, prestige and profession; one of the main objectives of the present work is to determine whether interpreting can be regarded as a fully-fledged profession and, if so, on the basis of which sociological parameters. Almost one century after the birth of interpreting seen as a profession, what is the state of the art of the professionalisation process? What role do technology, the mass media, economic and social changes play in the self-perception of the interpreter's professional status? What are the main challenges for the future generations of interpreters?

At methodological level, the study is based on quantitative and qualitative analysis of questionnaires. Quantitative data on the interpreters' self-perception of status were collected through the distribution of two surveys (one addressed to conference and one to public service interpreters), which gathered 1693 responses worldwide. The two questionnaires showed that a

growing feminisation, rapid technological changes, the increasing use of English as a lingua franca and a complex labour market have influenced the way in which interpreters perceive the profession. Hence, the self-perceived status of conference and public service interpreters appears to be fraught with contradictions. On a brighter note, an increasing awareness of the social function fulfilled by the interpreting profession appears to be the driving force which motivates interpreters to follow the path towards full professionalisation.

**Keywords:** conference interpreting, public service interpreting, professional status, sociology of the professions, questionnaires, quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis.

# Riassunto

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Lo status professionale dell'interprete è probabilmente uno degli aspetti meno esplorati nell'ambito degli studi di interpretazione. Un'analisi della letteratura sull'argomento ha confermato la quasi totale assenza di indagini sullo status e il prestigio sociale della professione. Uno dei pochi studi sullo status professionale degli interpreti di conferenza (Dam & Zethsen 2013) – incentrato sull'auto-percezione dello status di interpreti e traduttori presso le istituzioni europee – ha rivelato che gli interpreti non credono di avere uno status elevato, un risultato che meritava di essere ulteriormente approfondito. Nell'ambito dell'interpretazione per i servizi pubblici, diversi studiosi (Angelelli 2004; Ricoy *et al.* 2009; De Pedro Ricoy 2010; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011) hanno ipotizzato che gli interpreti impiegati presso ospedali, tribunali ecc. non godano di uno status elevato e che il loro processo di professionalizzazione sia ancora in corso; tuttavia, queste affermazioni non sono mai state verificate in maniera approfondita dal punto di vista empirico.

La presente tesi dottorale si pone l'obiettivo di colmare questa lacuna conoscitiva attraverso l'analisi dell'auto-percezione dello status degli interpreti di conferenza e degli interpreti impiegati presso i servizi pubblici. Il quadro teorico si inserisce nell'ambito della Sociologia delle Professioni (Andersen, Taylor & Logio 2014), le cui ipotesi hanno fornito delle solide basi per sviluppare l'analisi su concetti quali status, prestigio e professione; uno degli obiettivi del presente lavoro è quello di determinare se l'interpretazione sia una professione a pieno titolo e, nel caso fosse così, sulla base di quali parametri sociologici possa essere definita tale. A distanza di quasi un secolo dalla nascita della professione, qual è lo stato dell'arte del processo di professionalizzazione? In che modo la tecnologia, i mass media, i cambiamenti economici e sociali influenzano l'auto-percezione dello status dell'interprete? Quali sfide dovranno affrontare le prossime generazioni di interpreti?

A livello metodologico, lo studio propone l'analisi quantitativa e qualitativa di due questionari (il primo indirizzato agli interpreti di conferenza e il secondo agli interpreti per i servizi pubblici), che in totale hanno raccolto 1693 risposte a livello mondiale. I dati ottenuti indicano che una



crescente presenza di donne nella professione, i rapidi progressi della tecnologia, l'uso dell'inglese come lingua franca nella comunicazione e un mercato del lavoro sempre più complesso hanno avuto un impatto profondo sul modo in cui gli interpreti vedono la professione. Di conseguenza, la percezione dei due gruppi di interpreti circa il loro status si presenta complessa e ricca di contraddizioni. Ad ogni modo, una crescente consapevolezza del ruolo sociale dell'interpretazione sembra essere la motivazione principale che spinge gli interpreti a proseguire la strada che conduce verso una maggiore professionalizzazione.

**Parole-chiave:** interpretazione di conferenza, interpretazione per i servizi pubblici, status professionale, sociologia delle professioni, questionari, analisi quantitativa, analisi qualitativa.

# Acknowledgements

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This thesis owes its existence to the help and support of the many people who have guided me along my Ph.D. journey and contributed to making the adventure worth living.

First and foremost, I am greatly indebted to my supervisor and mentor, Professor Maurizio Viezzi, for supporting me enthusiastically, for being able to listen, for being always available to dispel my doubts, for having always believed in me and for allowing me to grow as a researcher and as a person. His invaluable guidance, his priceless advice on research and insights about life have always been a source of inspiration and have taught me more than I can possibly say.

I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to my coordinator, Professor Federica Scarpa, for setting up the doctoral school in Translation and Interpreting Studies, thus fulfilling my dream of becoming a Ph.D. student at the IUSLIT department. I will always admire her for her courage and her determination to pursue this objective and I thank her for her wholehearted support.

Professor David Snelling deserves a place of honour not only for having tirelessly proofread my “dreadfully long writings”, but also for having constantly provided me with invaluable insights into the nuances of a language I have always loved.

Professor Mark Brady also deserves special mention for constantly showing me his extraordinary generosity and for always being there for me as a colleague and as a friend.

Special thanks also go to Professor Dolores Ross for allowing me to develop a great passion for the Dutch language and culture, to Professor José Francisco Medina Montero for being the first to recommend me a Ph.D. career, to Professor Giuseppe Palumbo for providing me with the opportunity to have exciting teaching experiences and to Professors Lorenza Rega, Alessandra Riccardi, Marco Rucci and Stefano Ondelli for showing me their genuine esteem and affection.

Thanks, too, are extended to the teaching staff of the University of Alcalá de Henares and, particularly, to Professor Carmen Valero-Garcés and Raquel Lázaro Gutiérrez for offering me

insightful perspectives into the fascinating world of public service interpreting. I am also thankful to the wonderful people I met in Spain – Leticia Arcos Álvarez, Anca Bodzer, Sara Cabrillo Chamán Ilenia Catapano, Carmen Cedillo Corrochano and Alberto de La O Huerta– for their warm friendship.

I would also like to thank Lucia Sollecito for introducing me to the professional world of conference interpreting and for offering me the unique opportunity to gain a breadth of professional experience while still a graduate student.

I am also grateful to the people who contributed to spreading my questionnaires and to the fellow colleagues who answered to them, thus making my study empirically valid.

My fellow Ph.D. colleagues have earned a special place on this page for providing me with the much-needed humour inside and outside my academic daily life. Thanks to my partner in (mis)fortune Daniele Orlando, with whom I have shared laughs and tears over the last three years, who has turned out to be not only a loyal colleague, but also a real and patient friend. Thanks to Carla, Cristina, David, Eugenia, Gianluca, Gregorio, Katia, Paola. I will never forget the amusing conversations during our countless *aperitivi* and the beautiful moments I shared with you all.

My heartfelt thanks go to my old friends Chiara, Ida and Tiziana for their long-lasting friendship and for always being there for me, to my present and past flatmates Camilla, Elisa Z., Elisa B., Eleonora and Yula, who have always loved me like a sister, to my friends Andrea, Annachiara, Anna, Caterina, Francesca, Giuseppe, Margherita, Maurizio and Matt, without whom I would have never enjoyed my days in Trieste. Thanks to my new friends Marilisa, Giovanni and Giulia for sharing my passions and my dreams for the future.

Finally, but not less important, I would like to thank my parents and my brother for their unconditional love, for respecting my choices and for encouraging me throughout my years of study. However far apart we are, you are and will always be the most important thing in my life because, as Oliver Wendell Holmes said: “Where we love is home, that our feet may leave, but not our hearts”.

# Introduction

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Few professions can be as fascinating as interpreting: interpreters have the immense opportunity to combine their passion for foreign languages and cultures with the privilege to witness historic moments (Gaiba 1998), to work in glamorous venues (Setton & Guo 2011), to meet the most important personalities of the political or the social sphere, to help people in need and to safeguard the respect of democratic values of social justice (Bancroft 2015). Interpreting is a constantly changing profession which is articulated in many ways and goes beyond spatial and temporal constraints. However, despite growing awareness of the need for professionalisation, especially in public service settings, the study of interpreters' professional status has been grievously neglected in interpreting research. Yet, investigating status may contribute to understanding issues concerning codes of ethics, new developments in the T&I market, the state of the interpreting profession and public opinions about the profession, not to mention the interpreter's roles and responsibilities. Research to date has focused mainly on the status of translators (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008; Katan 2011a; 2011b; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011; Pym 2012; Dam & Zethsen 2008; Dam & Zethsen 2013; Ruokonen 2013; 2016), although neither systematically nor extensively. The limited research on the topic indicates that, by and large, translators are attributed low status because they are often "invisible" and "rarely noticed" (Schäffner 2004: 1) and that translation is a "peripheral" activity (Hermans & Lambert 1998). On the other hand, the interpreting profession is characterised by a huge status gap between conference interpreting, which has always enjoyed high status – owing to the supposed glamour of interpreters' lifestyles and personalities – and public service interpreting,<sup>1</sup> whose status has often been associated with that of semi-professionals like

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the present work, the term "public service interpreting" will be preferred, since it includes interpreting in the legal settings and is "a reflection of the more usual practices in the United Kingdom and in parts of the European Union" (Corsellis 2005: 153).

social workers (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011). They are, however, assumptions related to the interpreting profession, whose validity has never been empirically demonstrated.

The first attempt to study conference interpreters' occupational status was carried out only a couple of years ago by Dam and Zethsen (2013) through an analysis comparing conference interpreters' and translators' professional statuses. Their main hypothesis was that interpreters would position themselves at the top of the status continuum, whereas translators would place themselves at a lower level. Data gathered from their on-line survey did not confirm their hypothesis: a surprising outcome which begged further research.

The aim of the present study is to analyse conference interpreters' and public service interpreters' self-perception of their occupational status, as well as the factors affecting the perception of interpreters' status. The rationale for carrying out the research project lies in the fact that no empirical study on status focusing exclusively on the interpreting profession has been carried out to date, which is why two questionnaires were designed and distributed to conference and public service interpreters respectively worldwide. This kind of analysis could contribute to shedding light on what is required to enhance interpreters' status, the main hypothesis being that interpreters' views of their own status are not consistent with public perception of the prestige and social value of the interpreting profession.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the evolution of the interpreting profession and of the interpreter's professional status through the lens of the sociological theories of Postmodernity. In an increasingly interconnected era, speed and flexibility are the pillars on which contemporary society is built; postmodernity is a time in which everything is "fluid and flexible, pluriform and contingent, fast and ephemeral" (Schweitzer 2004). The rise of the interpreting profession coincided with the technological, economic and social changes brought about by Postmodernity, characterised by great social and physical mobility. The four main parameters according to which interpreting can be regarded as a postmodern profession are: the detachment of the interpreting profession from a specific anthropological space (Augé 1995), which results in a lack of "sense of place"; the technological developments brought about by simultaneous interpreting (Baigorri-Jalón 2004; 2014); the mass media, which play a crucial role in shaping popular representations of a profession (Diriker 2004); and, lastly, the negotiation of interpreters' identities (Rudvin 2006), which results in major issues concerning status and role. Drawing on the theories on the construction of identity postulated by Giddens (1979), the impact of the above-mentioned sociological and ideological changes on the interpreting profession and the perception of status will be illustrated.

Chapter 2 draws on sociological theories to gain insight into the economic, social and cultural features constituting a profession and distinguish it from a mere occupation. A twofold approach combining the trait theory (Parsons 1968) and symbolic-interactionist perspectives (Becker 1970; 1972) will be used to gain further insights into the sociological concepts of profession, occupational status, prestige and social role. According to Sela-Sheffy (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011: 3), interpreting falls within the "failed professionalizing" occupations, because it does not possess all the characteristics which sociologists of the professions deem relevant for it to be regarded as fully-

fledged profession. In the light of this assumption, a thorough analysis of these features in correlation with the interpreting profession will be carried out to identify the weak links that still prevent interpreting from achieving full professionalisation. The main aspects which will be scrutinised in the chapter are: the functional and the post-structuralist parameters defining a profession, the major elements which make up professional identity and how these criteria relate to the perception of professional status. In the study of these features, equal attention will be paid to conference and public service interpreting.

Chapter 3 illustrates the methodology, the objectives and the scope of the study. The structure of the two questionnaires – which obtained 1693 responses at global level – how the pilot study was carried out, the variables object of the study and the statistical tests chosen to analyse the correlation between the variables will be illustrated in detail.

Chapter 4 and 5 will deal respectively with the analysis of the responses given to the questionnaires by conference and public service interpreters worldwide. Special attention will be paid to the correlation of variables such as gender, age, country of residence, working conditions and education, with the aim to assess if and to what extent the responses change according to the different parameters. Qualitative data will also be used to clarify certain response patterns.

Chapter 6 presents a comparison of the two surveys, with an emphasis on the most significant differences between the two groups. In addition, an overview of the general response patterns emerging from the questionnaires will be provided, together with an outline of the major sociological changes in the profession, which will be compared and contrasted with the main hypotheses of the study.

In the light of the most noteworthy response patterns emerged from the data analysis, chapter 7 will provide insights for further research, with a view to broadening the existing knowledge of the facets related to the interpreter's status and professionalisation.



# 1. Interpreting as a Postmodern Profession. A Socio-Historical Approach

---

## 1. Postmodern Perspectives in The Interpreting Profession

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;/Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.* These verses, drawn from the poem *The Second Coming* written by W. B. Yeats in 1919, are often used by sociologists to indicate the sense of bewilderment and fragmentation which permeate the postmodern era. Indeed, David Harvey refers to the poem to specify that modern life is “soffused with the sense of the fleeting, the ephemeral, the fragmentary and the contingent” (1992: 11) and that the postmodern world is the apotheosis of the absence of coherence and unity. The definition of Postmodernity has been long discussed, and several attempts have been made by sociologists (Lyotard 1984; Lash 1990; Bauman 1997; Marsh 2014) to draw a line between the cultural paradigms which constitute Modernity and Postmodernity. According to Marsh (2014), Modernity is the triumph of the ideas of the Enlightenment, because it expressed faith in the future and in social order, in a sense of growth and progress of the world. The *grand narratives* (Marxism, Functionalism and Weberian social theories) of the era see society as one that “stays together” as a whole. To elucidate his theories, Marsh maintains that: “the narratives of Modernity can be seen as driven in a sense by a moral logic ‘betterment’, of the need to act as a force for change, whether that change be directed towards a more equal society [...] or towards a truly consensual, structurally functional society [...]” (2014: 224).



On the other hand, according to Jameson (2003), Postmodernity coincides with the final phase of capitalist development, characterised by a more rapid circulation of capital, spatial reorganisation, intensification of consumption and a gradual commodification of culture (cf. Turner 2009). More than just a technological and economic change of society, Postmodernity is a transformation of the experience of the social and cultural life, described by Habermas as a new way to conceive the human experience, in which “the new value is placed on the transitory, the elusive and the ephemeral, the very celebration of dynamism, disclosed a longing for an undefiled, immaculate and stable present” (2000: 169). Arentsen *et al.* also maintain that Postmodernity “emphasises the unclearness, the fragmented, the multiformity [...]. There is not one universal truth, but there are multiple views, bound to place and time. Meanings are related to the given context” (2010: 4). This vision of a fragmented and undefined reality is underlined by Bauman (1997), who shows a more pessimistic view of the postmodern and globalised society: individuals are lost in a society which lacks its social and ethical principles and in which the dominant sentiment is the permanent feeling of uncertainty. A feeling of vagueness and ambiguity imbues the individual’s identity, an aspect which renders the postmodern individual as a hybrid. Instead of having a single, permanent self, contemporary individuals have many selves, or many facets of the same self, since their personal and social identities are not fixed, but constantly *in fieri*. The postmodern era has been buttressed by the phenomenon of globalisation, which appears to have largely pervaded all aspects concerning political, economic and popular thought. As Paluski states, contemporary society is characterised by a “global division of labor, intense consumption (especially of images), a proliferation of the mass media, and an increasing saturation of society with information technology” (2009: 259). These social changes have encouraged a new reorganisation of the labour market, creating in turn the need for new professional figures: conference interpreting is a profession born in this new world order.

One of the first elements that helps explain the connection between Postmodernity and the interpreting profession can be found in the preface to Baigorri-Jalón's book, entitled *From Paris to Nuremberg. The Birth of Conference Interpreting* (2014).<sup>2</sup> The opening words of Delisle’s preamble (*ibid.*: I) are: “globalization, a defining phenomenon of the twentieth century, is characterized by shrinking time and space and vanishing borders”. Interestingly, the first remarks of a book about interpreting refer neither to the interpreting profession nor to interpreters, but to a sociological phenomenon brought about by the sweeping changes taking place during the “shortest century” of the history of mankind. With this concise statement, Delisle highlighted two fundamental questions. The first is that the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the birth of interpreting conceived as a profession and the second is that the passage of interpretation from an activity that any bilingual could perform to a highly-specialised occupation took place against the background of a changing historical and sociological landscape. With these premises, he invites the adoption of a more comprehensive approach in the discussion regarding an occupation that, more than others, has been susceptible to

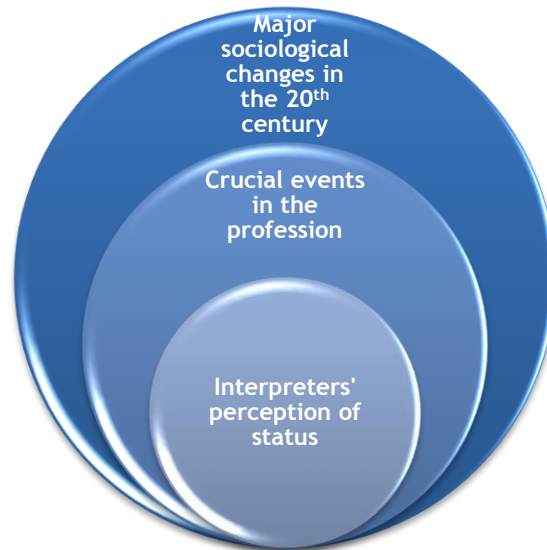
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<sup>2</sup> The original book (*La Interpretación de Conferencias: El Nacimiento de una Profesión. De París A Nuremberg*), published in 2000 in Spanish, was translated in 2004 into French by Clara Foz and in 2014 into English by Holly Mikkelsen and Barry Slaughter Olsen. The present work will refer to the English translation.

the vagaries of the globalised world. A profession born with globalisation has also been shaped by the changes that the phenomenon has brought about: technological developments, spatial-temporal dislocation, cultural fragmentation which, added to the ephemeral nature of orality which characterises the interpreter's work, are all aspects that render interpreting a postmodern profession. The main features which demonstrate the inextricable bond between interpreting and postmodernity are:

- ↳ The profession is detached from a specific anthropological space (Augé 2009), which results in a lack of sense of place caused by the rise of new technologies, prompting a continuous construction of spaces and social relations (Turner 2005);
- ↳ Interpreting has been changed by technology. The advent of the simultaneous mode, together with the more recent developments brought about by telephone, remote and videoconference interpreting have been fundamental in shaping the profession as it is known today;
- ↳ The mass media have contributed to the creation of the myth of interpreting. The sense of amazement raised by interpreters was mostly created by the press, especially at a time when knowledge of more than two languages was considered rather unusual. As Gaiba writes, “its profound impact on both journalists of the time and, later, historians is shown by the following quotation: it was a wonder” (1998: 60). Hence, the role played by the media in the enhancement of the popular representations of the profession is worth investigating;
- ↳ The profession was born by chance. Although interpreting as an interlinguistic and intercultural activity has existed from time immemorial, the first consecutive and simultaneous interpreters were “thrown” into the profession and few of them really thought that interpreting would become their lifetime career. In the early days of the profession, the first generations of interpreters were employed to respond to the urgent need of the newly-born international organisations for interpreting personnel. Similarly, increasing migration flows have prompted (and are prompting) public services to look for interpreters able to work in community settings. As Parker (1994: 107) points out, one of the main consequences of the global economy is the expansion of the “contingent workforce”, which is a group of professionals who work for an organisation on a non-permanent basis. It is no accident that contingency as a metaphysical concept is widely associated with the ontological condition of the postmodern world (Dalay 2009);
- ↳ A blurred sense of professional identity. Throughout history, the interpreters' status has always been susceptible to several factors: the interpreters' social and cultural background, the type of education they had received, the interpretation mode (consecutive or simultaneous) and the social prestige enjoyed by the speaker for whom they interpreted. The negotiation of the interpreter's identity, which results in ethics and role concerns (Rudvin 2006; 2015; Martín Ruano 2015), is also a typical phenomenon stemming from the postmodern condition of contemporary society (cf. Elliott 2012).

The postmodern and globalised era – characterised by the speeding up of global interconnectedness and by the unpredictable character of social life – is the background against which the interpreting profession developed, which is why it could be assumed that the consequences of globalisation have caused irreversible changes in the way the profession is performed and perceived by others and by interpreters themselves. In his theorisation on the influence that contemporary society has on self-identity, Anthony Giddens argues that the world we live in “radically alters the nature of day-to-day social life and affects the most personal aspects of our experience” (1991: 2). There is therefore a connection between what happens in the world and how individuals perceive their experiences, which leads to the assumption that the interpreter’s status cannot be analysed without taking into consideration the broader picture of the consequences of globalisation and postmodernity. A graphical representation of how these theories will be applied to the sociological analysis of the interpreting profession is illustrated below (figure 1):



**Figure 1:** graph representing the methodology adopted for the analysis of the profession’s evolution.

A series of external factors influence the current perception that interpreters have of themselves and of their own profession: the macro-level (the globalised world) has an impact on the intermediate level of the circumstances and the places in which interpreting has grown as a profession that, in turn, have determined the way in which the professional category perceives its social identity. In his analysis of the translation profession in a globalised world, Cronin (2010: 304) writes that the last two centuries “might be termed an era of *macro-modernity*, where the emphasis has been on assembling the overarching infrastructures which allow time-space compression to become a reality”. In the light of this view, translation is said to have developed in an era characterised by increased mobility, digital worlds and urbanisation (*ibid.*: 305). The link between the time-space compression, greater mobility and the increased exchanges which have taken place in the twentieth century is also established by Delisle (2014: 1) when he writes that the deeper integration of markets

and economies has fostered the need of world leaders to communicate with each other, which would have not been possible without interpreters. In the light of which, a detailed analysis of the constantly-changing nature of the interpreting profession will be carried out within this sociological framework.

## 2. Interpreting as a Postmodern Profession: Integrating Sociology with History

The importance of the study of history for a better understanding of the present has been underlined by countless scholars and philosophers over the centuries. In his work *Discourses on Livy* (book 3 chapter 43), Machiavelli wrote: “Whoever wishes to foresee the future must consult the past” ([1513] 2012), a statement which invites reflection not only on how history has progressed over the centuries (although Marx would not agree), but also how it has become a fundamental part of those who have witnessed and experienced it, which is the reason why interpreting scholars who decide to embark on a study of the state of the interpreting profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should follow the *Ariadne's thread* leading back to the early days of interpreting and try to make their way through the dense tangle of events which have contributed to shaping the past and the present of “the oldest and the youngest profession in the world” (Longley 1968: V).

The evolution of interpreting is a complex phenomenon which has been scrutinised so far almost exclusively with an historical approach. The historical analyses carried out by Bowen (1985), Baigorri-Jalón (2004; 2014), Gaiba (1998), Roland (1999), Delisle and Woodsworth (2012) were fundamental to determine the most momentous events in the history of conference interpreting: from the “battle of the languages” (Baigorri-Jalón 2014: 20), which marked the end of the predominance of French as a *lingua franca*, to the struggle between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting at the UN, from the first experiments with simultaneous interpreting in 1926 (Baigorri-Jalón 2014), to the Nuremberg Trials, when simultaneous interpreting reached the height of its fame, from the “strike” of the UN interpreters in 1974 for better working conditions (Baigorri-Jalón 2004)<sup>3</sup> to the dawn of remote interpreting. On the other hand, there is hardly any complete and detailed account of the historical evolution of public service interpreting, also because the shift from interpreting as an activity performed by relatives, friends and volunteers to a fully-fledged profession is still ongoing and there is still work to be done to achieve full professionalisation.

All these events did not occur without consequences on the sociological developments of the profession, whose legacy is still visible today. The “battle of the languages” ushered in an era in which English began to be used as a *lingua franca*, the struggle between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting represented the watershed from the mythical perception of interpreting as a “marvel” to a more ordinary and unexceptional “profession”, the 1974 “strike” showed to the world that simultaneous interpreters were “human beings like everybody else, however ‘uncanny’

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<sup>3</sup> The United Nations will be often mentioned in this chapter because the historical description of Baigorri-Jalón (2004; 2014) will be used as a reference. Nevertheless, the role played by other international organizations and NGOs was perhaps just as important for the development of the profession.

they were considered to be” (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 171). Furthermore, the marginal consideration attributed to public service interpreting, which has always been regarded as a minor activity, is the primary cause of the low status that public service interpreters still have today.

Despite their relevance to the evolution of the profession, these changes have hardly been investigated in a sociological perspective, a method which would prove fruitful to determine the extent to which historical events have contributed to changing the face of the profession for ever. Just like the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the interpreting profession has evolved in many unforeseeable ways and is destined to change again in the future. In the light of these premises, the link between the interpreting profession and the sociological theories of Postmodernity – already used by Koskinen (2009) in her analysis of the translator’s ethics – will be illustrated with a special focus on the evolution of the interpreter’s sociological profile, the spatial-temporal dimension in which interpreting was born and has progressed over the years and the role played by technological developments (such as the spread of the mass media) in shaping the popular representations of the profession. The method of analysis will be employed for the evolution of conference and public service interpreting alike. Nevertheless, unless otherwise specified, any reference made to “interpreting” will be devoid of the spatial coordinates associated with the main interpreting settings and will simply refer to any interlinguistic exchange mediated by an interpreter.

### 2.1 Interpreting and the Spaces of Globalisation

As some of the most eminent sociologists of Postmodernity have demonstrated, the sweeping technological changes have brought about not only a transformation of the labour market and the way industrial production was organised in the West (Turner 2005), but also a social and cultural transformation in how Western civilization understood and perceived reality. One of the most prominent features of the change in the “structure of feeling” (Harvey 1992: 39) is the common-sense concept of space and time, which can be better explained by quoting Foucault, who noted that the twentieth century is an epoch of space:

We are in an epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein (2002: 329).

Sociologists of Modernity (Ballantine & Roberts 2010) tended to consider space a fixed, rooted, permanent and inflexible condition of being, whereas the concept of time has always been attributed a more dynamic and flexible nature. With the advent of Postmodernity, the reorganisation of space was reasserted: space was no longer seen as a univocal concept, but it became twisted and illogical, flexible, limitless, co-constructed and devoid of historical memory. The time-space compression characterising the postmodern era generated individuals who had lost their sense of place and were spatially disoriented. Moreover, postmodern theoreticians paid great attention to the peculiarities distinguishing *space* and *place*. The first theorisations of the difference between spaces and places

as they are apprehended by contemporary individuals are made by Marc Augé (1995), who argued that postmodernity (or supermodernity, as he defines it) creates *non-places*, which “cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity” (*ibid.*: 77). The places of supermodernity Augé refers to are characterised by a sense of mobility; they are created to satisfy certain ends (motorways, supermarkets, airport lounges etc.) and prevent the individual from creating real social relations. As places are bound to people’s experiences and are “directly experienced phenomena of the real world” (Convery 2014), non-places are the exact opposite, in that they are characterised by a “projection forward, in the individual’s relationship with this moving on, in a mobility which suppresses the differences in which anthropological spaces are established” (Kaye 2013: 9).

The international fora in which conference interpreting developed could be defined as places of globalisation, devoid of historical memory and collective identity. They were established to satisfy the need for establishing multilateral dialogue and creating *ad-hoc* meeting places in which crucial political decisions were (and still are) made, but they are not real anthropological spaces, which are “irreducible to physicality and encompass human activity as constituent of the identity of the space itself” (Turner & Davenport 2006: 222) and are meaningful for the people who live in it. As Iriye (2002: 8) points out, transnational networks “are based upon a global consciousness, the idea that there is a wider world over and above separate states and national societies”, which explains that international organizations physically represent a new social awareness brought about by globalisation. Although they are physical places, international organisations cannot be defined as real anthropological spaces, because they represent the identity of the nation-states without embodying it. Unsurprisingly, the headquarters of the United Nations is located in an international territory, which officially does not belong to the United States. The area, like many other international political fora, is one of the many spaces of globalisation, where the modern concept of global governance is represented and characterised by a “shift from markets and hierarchies towards networks and partnerships and modes of coordination” (Kennett 2008: 6), where decisions are made by global actors and have far-reaching scope.

It is the space in which the first interpreters worked, the place in which the profession as it is known today was shaped by the most crucial events (i.e. the battle of the languages, the struggle between consecutivists and simultaneists) that determined the evolution of conference interpreting. Much attention is paid to this detail because, as Thompson (2006) argues, the relationship between place and professional development is co-construed: lawyers construct their sense of identity in courtrooms, doctors in hospitals and teachers in schools, which places have a specific and immediate social function; they have existed since the beginning of civilization and possess their own internal hierarchies and rules. On the contrary, interpreters do not have a *sense of place* because the profession as such was born in a non-anthropological place, and, consequently, the interpreting activity has never been performed in (or associated with) a structured social place. From hospitals to courtrooms, from refugee camps to the UN Security Council, the professional identity of interpreters has never been gradually built, but has just happened to exist, just like the accidents of



time and the main historical events. To paraphrase Gadamer, the interpreter's self was only "a flickering in the closed circuit of historical life" (2013: 289): owing to the evanescent and wavering nature of their profession, interpreters still have to build a long-lasting shared narrative with a common purpose. The absence of a specific place for interpreters to be associated with has greatly contributed to the fragmentation of occupational self. As Schopohl argues, interpreters "embody the postmodern, flexible individual, which on the one hand is characterised by a maximum of spatial, social and physical mobility, but on the other suffers from an enormous pressure to perform and from being threatened by a loss of security, personal relationships and anything to hold on to" (2008: 3).

The compression of time and space has had an enormous impact on the way public service interpreting has developed; globalisation has brought about new waves of migration, which have reached an unprecedented level in recent decades. The sociological condition has created the need to have language professionals for communication between these people and the public services of the host countries (hospitals, clinics, courtrooms, police stations, schools, refugee camps etc.). As Bancroft (2015: 221) maintains, "community interpreting has evolved largely in response to two often co-existing needs: the need for interpreters for native-born and indigenous populations [...], and the need for interpreters for migrant or immigrant populations, including refugees and asylees. Globalization and migration are strong driving forces as well". It is no coincidence that public service interpreting has developed in a more structured way in countries which have a longer tradition of immigration (such as Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) and whose governments promptly implemented legal provisions<sup>4</sup> facilitating the inception of a national accreditation system for interpreters.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, while on the one hand the positive changes of globalisation allowed interpreting (namely, conference interpreting) to gain prestige and recognition in the international arena, the other side of globalisation – that creates yawning gaps between the rich and the poor – is the background against which public service interpreting developed. The two professions have grown in a different way with different objectives: conference interpreting rose and developed to satisfy the demand for networking in post-industrial societies, which is why it has always been "on the winning side of globalisation" (Prunč 2012: 4), whereas public service interpreting "has been left to deal with the *wasted lives* and the *outcasts of modernity*" (*ibid.*: 4), defined by Bauman (1998) as the collateral damage of globalisation. Similarly, Gentile A., Ozolins and Vasilakakos argue that "just as international conference interpreters gain their status from the reflected status of the clients they serve, so do liaison interpreters in their varied work settings" (1996: 11), an assumption suggesting that the status of public service interpreters has always been associated with that of minoritarian groups in society. Over the years, postmodern societies – marked by growing individualism – have

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<sup>4</sup> In this respect, Australia was a pioneering country. In 1973, the Telephone Interpreting Service (TIS) was established, together with other important initiatives for the creation of national standards and accreditation for spoken and sign-language interpreters (Pöchhacker 1999).

<sup>5</sup> An outstanding example of the legal provisions could be found in the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), set up in Australia in 1977 (see paragraph 3.2 in this chapter).

tended to welcome the free movement of economic capital and to overlook (if not reject altogether) the free movement of people, an aspect which has been detrimental not only at political and international level, but also to the way in which public service interpreting has progressed. Consequently, the identification of this kind of interpreting with social work has considerably hampered the construction of self-identity, status and role of the professionals, and the consequences of these sociological aspects have long been object of inquiry in research on public service interpreting.

In these contexts, the interpreters' role is often found to be ambiguous and incongruent, which phenomenon is determined by the way interpreters – who are not part of the structured organisation of institutions – are perceived by those who work in those institutions. This structural constraint influences and, in some cases, thwarts the role the interpreter is supposed to perform in settings such as hospitals, courtrooms and police stations, which present one or more sources of authority. Interpreters find themselves considered strangers in a Simmelian way, which means that they not only “intrude into the communication situation” (Bahadır 2001: 2), but they also obtrude in the organisation (hospital, court, etc.) they work in. They are physically present in an anthropological space, but they are not seen as an integral part of it, as they are external consultants, recruited when the need arises, mostly on an *ad-hoc* basis or through language service providers. While leaving a more detailed discussion on interpreters' self-perception of status and role to a later stage in the present work, the interpreters' detachment from a specific spatial location may very well be one of the reasons why the profession is still struggling to define its identity, a condition which seems to be the common denominator of an occupation that, more than others, whether it developed in a space of globalisation or in a socially-constructed one, whether it has sided with the winning or the losing side of globalisation, is still trying to define itself, stretching freely across space and time.

## 2.2 The Role of Technology in the Development of the Profession

Postmodernity was crafted by technological breakthroughs, which have had a lasting impact on the development of the interpreting profession. The widespread use of technology has involved all aspects of modern life, especially the workplace, since no profession could be said to have been immune to the astonishing progress brought about by an increasingly interconnected and digital world. In the interpreting profession, however, technology has not only shaped the way in which interpretation has been (and still is) performed, but also the way in which interpreters began to perceive their occupational status and, in turn, the way others consider the profession. There is no need further to stress that the most crucial turning point in the history of interpreting is the advent of the simultaneous mode: from the first experiments carried out at the League of Nations in 1926 by Filene and Finlay to the “coming of age” of simultaneous interpreting during the Nuremberg Trials, the technological turn in the history of the profession “can be seen as a metaphor of ‘modern times’, with microphones and headsets as forerunners of future sophisticated technologies, and as a sign of democratization by giving voice to trade unions representing their own language”



(Baigorri-Jalón 2015: 20). The coming of age of simultaneous interpreting took place with the Nuremberg Trials (Bowen & Bowen 1990; Gaiba 1998; Baigorri-Jalón 2014), where simultaneous interpreting asserted itself as an innovative interpretation method and gained international recognition. The introduction of simultaneous interpreting led to several advantages at international organisations for several reasons: 1) much time was saved; 2) the attention of the public was kept by preventing delegates from paying attention to other matters when they did not understand the language being spoken; 3) everybody had the opportunity to make comments right after the speech, instead of waiting for the other interpretations; 4) the speech would be delivered more fluently and without interruptions (Baigorri-Jalón 2014: 134). Apart from the practical advantages, the birth of simultaneous interpreting represented a huge step forward in the professionalisation of conference interpreting for one main reason: the need for specific training.

At the beginning, there was no proper training for simultaneous interpreters: most of them were trained on-the-spot, some of them not at all.<sup>6</sup> Interpreters trained at interpreting schools which began to grow in number from the 1950s onwards, as the first training centres were only set up in the 1940s: the first was founded in Geneva (1941), the second in Vienna (1943), then in Mainz/Germersheim (1946), Saarland (1948), Georgetown (1949), Heidelberg (1950) and Trieste (1953) (Falbo, Russo & Straniero Sergio 1999: 21). With the establishment of the first schools in the post-war period, there was a sharp increase in the demand for trained interpreters, which rapidly changed the profile of the profession at many international organisations; while the first generation was made up mostly of natural talents who entered the profession by chance, the new generations who came after the 1960s were monolinguals who learnt foreign languages at school.

Despite the indisputably positive changes, simultaneous interpreting raised quite a few concerns about the image that others (and interpreters themselves) had of the profession, since the interpreter's voice was delivered through mechanical equipment, which could give rise to the impression that the interpreter was only a part of a machine. As Baigorri-Jalón points out, the 1974 "strike" was a sharp reaction against the idea that others had of them: since they were regarded as *rare birds* who possessed extraordinary skills, they were considered to be able to work for more than six hours without a break. Working conditions were no longer sustainable, as was shown by medical studies carried out at the United Nations in the 1960s which revealed that interpreters had psychological problems, a lack of job satisfaction and low morale, caused by the anonymity of their work:

The feeling of "anonymity" associated with simultaneous interpreting, which according to some interpreters was the cause of their stress, may be related to the change of image of the profession. They felt that the automatism of the translations would deteriorate – this was what they perceived, and compared to the "brilliance" of consecutive interpreting – until interpreting became no more than a "manual" task, which psychologically for them was degrading, a loss of prestige associated with the feeling of "blue-collarisation" of their work (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 110-111).

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<sup>6</sup> In this respect, the words pronounced by Gregory Meiskins are worth mentioning: "I was told to go into the booth and no one asked me whether I could do it. And I myself didn't know" (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 75).

The link between technological developments and the depersonalisation of professional work has been underlined by several sociologists over the years (Clark, Chandler & Barry 1994; Gattiker 1994). As Marx (in Berberoglu 2002: 71) maintains, the sense of alienation experienced by a professional is determined by a combination of objective and subjective factors. The objective causes include the separation of workers from the result of their work (i.e. the final product) and their non-participation in the whole production process as the most prominent. Furthermore, sociologist Zastrow (2009) draws a distinction between the concepts of powerlessness and meaninglessness at work: the former is defined as lack of control over working conditions and policy decision-making, whereas the latter refers to a lack of creativity and self-initiative. Similarly, simultaneous interpreters experienced a sense of powerlessness and self-estrangement, caused by the physical detachment from the decision-making centre and by a lack of feedback on the added value provided by their work. In an interview with *The New York Times* in April 1974, one interpreter who was giving reasons for the strike said “We have become completely anonymous, non-beings and just voices” (in Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 115). The sense of alienation and estrangement appears to have characterised the profession up to very recently; in their study on the status of conference interpreters, Dam and Zethsen (2013) showed empirically that, although 78% of interpreters declared that they work close to the centre of decision and policy-making – indicating that their *physical* visibility rate is rather high – they perceive themselves as *professionally* invisible, a result which reveals that there is a lack of feedback on their job. Hence, it could be hypothesised that the spatial disconnection brought about by technology, which transferred the interpreter from the centre to the periphery of the communicative event, has undermined the interpreters’ self-confidence and sense of agency.

In more recent times, the development of telephone, remote and video-conference interpreting – which has cut across all interpreting settings from conference to court, police and healthcare interpreting – demonstrates that the pervasiveness of technology is destined to change the face of interpreting once again. Technology is used particularly in public service interpreting for several reasons, such as “the shortage of qualified interpreters for many of the languages that are required in these settings and the short notice at which many interpreting assignments need to be scheduled” (Braun 2015: 355). Several studies (Braun 2007; 2013) showed that remote interpreting poses challenges and may be a major source of stress for the interpreter. Nevertheless, the first two AVIDICUS projects (AVIDICUS 2008-2011; AVIDICUS 2 2011-2013) issued practical guidelines for video-conference interpreting in legal settings, and the studies carried out in the field of healthcare (Verrept 2008; Cox 2015) underline the importance of training and role-awareness. In this case, too, despite the practical advantages offered by the cutting-edge technologies (such as an enhanced fairness in justice and healthcare), a few questions should be posed about their impact on the interpreting profession and the interpreter’s status. As Braun (2015: 364) argues, an industrialisation of interpreters who could be expected to be available ‘at the push of a button’ should be avoided at all costs, because of the impact on their working conditions and job satisfaction.

Since the development of technology makes rapid strides forward and cannot be halted, what should be investigated is the way in which practitioners welcome and adapt to changes. Although further research is needed in this respect, the data provided by existing literature suggests that conference and public service interpreters have a slightly different attitude towards new modes of interpreting. While public service interpreters are more concerned with the impact of stress of video interpreting and with the lack of personal contact with interlocutors – an aspect which can be detrimental to communication – conference interpreters worry more about the impact of video-conference interpreting on their professional status. Even though video-conference interpreting was regarded as an option at the European Institutions (Braun 2015), the idea has encountered considerable opposition from AIIC, which warned against the use of remote interpreting by stating that “the temptation to divert certain technologies from their primary purpose e.g. by putting interpreters in front of monitors or screens to interpret at a distance a meeting attended by participants assembled in one place [...] is unacceptable” (Tradulex 2015). The two different approaches suggest that conference interpreting is still willing to protect its aura of prestige, hence its hostility to any change. The fear that its status could be tarnished by the use of video-conference interpreting demonstrates that conference interpreting still wants to keep its *status quo*, which leads to the belief that the profession is built on a myth, on a fictitious and hyperbolic interpretation of reality. This myth of interpreting as an extraordinary feat, of interpreters as legendary characters, of interpreting as a “miraculous” profession, which provides the opportunity of working with important personalities, which the first interpreters did nothing to debunk, was created and, above all, fostered by the mass media, the most powerful instrument shaping the public opinion of contemporary society. The evolution of the mass media, which took place at a cracking pace and became possible with the astounding technological advances of the postmodern era, has played such a fundamental role in the development of the profession that an analysis of its implications on the way interpreting is perceived is particularly useful at this point in time.

### 2.3 The Representation of Interpreting in the Mass Media

The cultural environment of the postmodern era is characterised by an absence of the boundaries between high and popular culture, which has led to the development of mass culture. There is widespread agreement among postmodern theorists (Evans 2007) that the mass media have a prominent role in shaping values and beliefs, because they transform real events into symbols. As Massoni points out, “contemporary Western citizens are surrounded by media, immersed in media, dependent on media...we have become, quite literally, a media culture [...]. Media, with their images of utopian lifestyles and bodily perfection, are a key site for the construction of identity in contemporary Western society” (2012: 17). The mass media are agents of globalisation, and as such wield a great deal of power in creating (and, sometimes, distorting) the individual’s perception of reality. They create narratives which attempt to make sense of the world, they create a new semiological system of myths that – far from interpreting reality as such – are made up of sensational

contents. The myths created by the media are often positive in their nature, and their storytelling technique generates *ordinary* heroes, whose moral qualities are exalted and constitute a part of the metanarratives of our time. An example of how the media create heroes is the events of September 11, 2001; in those circumstances, whomever helped to rescue the victims (firefighters, policemen, doctors, passers-by) was praised like a hero and the actions they performed to save as many lives as possible were captured in pictures subsequently disseminated worldwide.

However, the media do not produce these popular representations only in the wake of extraordinary events: being an omnipresent element of society's ordinary lives, they manage to mythicise other figures constituting an element of collective experience. For example, the heroism associated with the medical and the legal professions may be regarded as a case in point; the magical powers and the sympathetic attitudes attributed to the medical profession are portrayed in the media and the myths of the lawyer-statesman are often depicted in soap operas, TV series, films producing a professional mythology the public is often unaware of. As Seale (2003: 30) reveals, "helper-heroes may take the form of, say, doctors or research scientists bearing magical cures, nurses behaving like angels [...]. We can then begin to see that all of the elements that occur in narratives generally occur from time to time in the big story told by media health representations". In the big narrative built up by the media, doctors are often seen as bridges linking ordinary people to science and having access to medicines – a major instrument of power – a sociological aspect which explains why their status and prestige are greatly upheld by the media representations. The lasting impact of TV dramas have created the following myth of the doctor-hero:

The physician was not to be seen simply as an educated individual who had learned a valuable trade. Instead, he was to be seen as a member of a modern elect: a contemporary knight whose painful movement through the lists of training had shown that he had the heroic stature necessary to link a compassionate nature to the wonders of healing technology (Seale 2003: 29).

Similarly, the ideal of the lawyer-statesman, who embodies the model of the good lawyer pursued by Thomas Jefferson, is a "virtuous person who sets limits upon how far he would push a client's interest when he deemed that interest harmful to public welfare" (Bennett 2010: 30). The archetypal image of the lawyer, seen as a highly educated member of a certain elite whose main goal is to safeguard the greater good of society, has been propagated by the mass media, whose stories produce quite a contrasting effect on the public and on the professional perceptions of their work. On the one hand, surveys carried out by Thompson (2014: 827) show that "viewers' perceptions of doctors have largely mirrored their depiction of entertainment television, [...] heavy viewers of television were likely to report having high confidence in their doctors". On the other, doctors (Starr 2008) and lawyers (Rhode 2015) do not (or, to put it better, no longer) believe they possess this heroic aura. As far as the interpreting profession (and, in particular, conference interpreting) is concerned, a great deal of attention from the media has been paid to the magical tricks performed by interpreters.

After the First World War and during the golden age of consecutive interpretation, interpreters were considered a fundamental part of the diplomatic networks of the time, and the fact that "they

were often lauded as ‘phenomena’ in the press and public opinion of the day” (Baigorri-Jalón 2014: 130) further demonstrates that the press enhanced their image of extraordinary individuals. The most momentous occasion on which conference interpreting was presented to the world through the media was the Nuremberg Trials:

The heavy media coverage, which was comparable, *mutatis mutandis*, to CNN’s coverage of the O.J. Simpson trial, also provided excellent publicity for the profession. Radio broadcasts and newsreels featured [...] the voices of the corresponding interpreters, and the press reported on the interpreters’ prowess. This publicity was undoubtedly an important incentive for future interpreter candidates and for the establishment of new schools (Baigorri-Jalón 2014: 245).

The considerable impact achieved by such an intense media exposure was that many young people were more motivated to attend interpreting schools, because they saw that the technique could be learnt by anyone who mastered foreign languages and had the ambition to become an interpreter. As Gaiba also underlines, “the media were impressed by its results and did not know about its shortcomings. Interpreters knew they were getting good results *despite* its shortcomings” (1998: 112). This comment gives insights into the double perception which has always existed between the *internal* world of interpreters and the *external* world of people outside the profession. The former knew that the new simultaneous interpreting system was a turning point in the history of the profession, although they were aware that it was still too flawed and that interpreters needed a longer training period. The media were captivated by the fact that a historic event such as the trial of the Nazi criminals was taking place thanks to a prodigious mechanism which rendered the unfolding of the proceedings possible, and glorified the most sensational aspect of the occurrence, thus creating the myth of the interpreter-hero.

As Baigorri-Jalón (2004: 80) underlines, “natural talents – or, at most, talents acquired when they were growing up – was what allowed these brilliant individuals to carry out the ‘feat’ of interpreting. This feat reaches epic proportions if it is carried out in the UN [...]”. Gaiba also stresses how the media created a heroic picture of the interpreter: “Many journalists and authors present at the sessions commented on the high quality and the extraordinary proficiency of interpreters. They considered it ‘a miracle like Pentecost’” (1998: 112). Paraphrasing the words by Roland Barthes (1975: 109) – “everything can be a myth provided that it is conveyed by a discourse” – Diriker (2009) argues that two different media discourses revolve around the notion of the ideal interpreter. The first is promoted by interpreters themselves, who tend to emphasise that their role is to convey *ideas* and not mere *words*, whereas the second shows that the media stress that interpreters have an extraordinary ability to convey *words*. In the light of which, Diriker maintains that the great attention paid by the media to the spoken word leads to an increased emphasis on the mistakes interpreters make: “looking at the discourse on SI (*simultaneous interpreting, A/N*) in the Turkish printed and electronic media from 1988 until today [...], SI seems to hit the news in Turkey for three main reasons: big events, big money and big mistakes” (2004: 42). Choi and Lim (2002: 633) argue that “in the same way as the Nuremberg trials first introduced simultaneous interpretation in the West, the Gulf War introduced simultaneous interpretation to ordinary citizens in Korea”. After the

Olympic Games in 1988 and the 1990s, more and more conferences were organised in Korea and the demand for interpreters rose sharply. Apart from “big events”, which is regarded as the main discourse generator for events such as world summits, bilateral meetings of world leaders, state visits, international conflicts and natural disasters, the second most common occasion on which conference interpreters are mentioned is the considerable amount of money they supposedly earn. This aspect was already underlined by Jean Herbert when he spoke about the freelance profession: “it is an interesting and well-paid job, you travel a lot and you have periods when you are completely free” (Thorgevsky 1992: 25), but is being still highly reinforced today in blogs and the social media: “top-rank UN interpreters can earn up to \$ 210,000” (Krastev 2010).

The image of interpreters has also been enhanced by literature (Kurz 1987) and movies (Cronin 2009; Apostolou 2009). For example, Kurz (1987) describes how the legendary description of the interpreter is also present in literary works: she argues that the book by Doris Lessing *The Summer Before the Dark* ([1973] 2010) provides “a rather vague and inaccurate picture of what interpretation is all about” (1987: 315). She argues that Lessing – just like other literary authors who described interpreters as novel characters – seems generally unaware of the fact that interpreters have learnt the tricks of the trade through hard work and sacrifices. The myths fostered by Lessing that Kurz attempts to debunk are: 1) *you have spent one year abroad, you are bound to be a perfect conference interpreter*; 2) *interpreters are like machines, they translate ‘automatically’*. These notions tie in nicely with the hypothesis postulated by Diriker concerning the discourse of the mass media, whereby “outsiders tend to share an image of professional conference interpreters as experts who ensure a word-for-word rendition between languages” (2009: 80). Hence, both Kurz and Diriker hypothesise that these misconceptions – which stem from the way the profession is represented in the mass media – are still likely to be deeply rooted in public perception today.

As far as public service interpreting is concerned, the influence of the media on its public perception has barely been investigated. The paucity of research in the field (Cedillo Corrochano, *forthcoming*) suggests that there is an urgent need to harness the power of the media (and, particularly, the social media) to raise awareness on the social value of the interpreters working in these settings. As Dam and Zethsen (2013) underline, the professional self is also co-constructed through the social networks, as more and more translators and interpreters use blogs as a way to empower the profession.

Although it could be a topic of another study, a general overview of the newspaper articles and blog posts which can be found online suggest two lines of thought: the one refers once again to the “big mistakes” made by the interpreter and the other could be defined as the discourse of the “missing interpreter”. Several cases of unqualified interpreters who fail to show up in court and whose wrong interpretations result in severe miscarriages of justice, deaths or near-deaths are increasingly hitting the news thanks to the tireless efforts of professionals, academics and decision-makers who support this cause and believe in the importance of having qualified interpreters performing these tasks. In the last couple of years, certain steps forward have been taken in this respect, with the flourishing of blogs (*Linguistlounge.com*, *Najit Blog*, *Wijzjinsprakeloos.com*,



*Blogcomunica.com*), networks (Critical link International, ENPSIT, Red Comunica, etc.) and academic institutions which organise conferences with representatives of public institutions, publish academic and non-academic works as well as articles on newspapers and make videos which are broadcast on the web.<sup>7</sup> Certain aspects which are worth investigating are the *frequency* with which interpreters appear in the media and the *way* the profession is represented. Such kind of analysis would not only contribute to raising the interpreters' visibility, but it would also provide insights into how interpreters construct their professional identity and how the general public sees the profession.

### 3. The Evolution of the Interpreter's Sociological Profile

In the lore of the literature on Postmodernity, one of the most recurrent words is *fragmentation*, embedded in the economic, technological and social developments of the twentieth century. As previously pointed out, mass culture has witnessed a process of fragmentation and oversimplification of aesthetic phenomena, with a proliferation of symbols and a growing mythicization of events or individuals, as in the case of the glamour attributed to conference interpreting. Together with cultural and social incongruities, the individual identity has undergone a process of "discontinuity of experience" (Dunn 1998); the postmodern individual is surrounded by power forces and contrasting signals, which is why (s)he cannot develop a single and clear-cut identity. The dynamic and unstable subject who lives in contemporary society is described by sociologist Grossberg as an individual who lacks a sense of self-awareness:

This "post-humanistic" subject does not exist with a unified identity (even understood as an articulated hierarchical structure of its various subject-positionings) that somehow manifests itself in every practice. Rather, it is a subject that is constantly remade, reshaped as a mobilely situated set of relations in a fluid context. The nomadic subject is amoeba-like, struggling to win some space for itself in its local situation. The subject itself has become a site of struggle, an ongoing site of articulation with its own history, determinations and effects (2006: 116).

Similarly, the process of identity negotiation is intrinsic to the very nature of being an interpreter: the expressions often associated with the interpreting activity, such as "in-between person" or "man in the middle" (Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2002) perfectly describe the sense of non-belonging of the interpreter. The awareness of fragmented identity is a typical trait of the postmodern, contemporary world, in which the boundaries between peoples are becoming increasingly blurred and the "intercultural spaces occupied by translators and interpreters are ideological voids" (Inghilleri 2004: 5). One of the reasons why interpreters struggle to define their professional identity could be attributed to the fact that the interpreter's status has evolved in an inconstant way, since interpreters throughout history have often been overlooked by historians, and the information gleaned from

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<sup>7</sup> A few examples could be found at the following links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VklInyBqKeo>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVJjoe0m6Mo>

chronicles is piecemeal. For example, Kurz points out that the contours of ancient interpreters were rather blurred and undefined:

Some interpreters were slaves, ethnic hybrids or women who formed a special subcaste; others were princes or highly esteemed court interpreters. Some were praised and renowned or considered heroes, while others were accused of misinterpretation or regarded as traitors. Most of them have remained anonymous, but there are some whose names are known (2012).

From Ancient Egypt to the Roman Empire (where interpreters were considered by Herodotus to be an 'independent caste' (Van Hoof 1962: 10)), from the Middle Ages to the conquest of the New World, from the establishment of modern diplomacy to the height of conference interpreting, all interpreters had two common features: they were all non-professionals and their status – together with the role they played – was not always acknowledged. Contrary to the history of translation, whose contribution to the making of history has been enhanced by “the supremacy of the written text over the spoken word” (Delisle & Woodsworth 2012: 248), the role of interpreters in history was often neglected until the inter-war period for two main reasons: a lack of historical documentation and a considerable interest in the major historical events rather than in the people who were behind them and who also contributed to the making of history (Roland 1999: 8). Roland (1999: 27) points out that, in ancient times, translators – who were often monks– were well-educated, whereas interpreters were often just “tradesmen who had grown up in a border region”. Quoting Schleiermacher, Grbić (2011: 250) points out that the German theologian places translation and interpreting in two different realms: the former in the realm of art and the latter in that of scholarship and business: “he presents translation as something that takes place in a somewhat dignified dimension, while interpreting is an everyday and mechanical or mathematical task”. The superiority of the written text over orality, which demonstrates that the work of a translator was always held in high consideration by the cultured élites of the past, has led to a “minoritization” of the study of interpreting and of orality. As Cronin (2002: 387) underlines: “comments on differences between translating and interpreting in translation history are largely confined to the observation that speech is ephemeral and that evidence for interpreting must be sought indirectly through written sources”. Without denying the relevance of these two aspects – the paucity of written documents about interpreter-mediated events is an incontrovertible fact – there is, however, another reason why little is known about the interpreters of the past:

The social status of interpreters may also account for their position in history: they are ethnic and cultural hybrids, often women, slaves or members of a “subcaste” such as the Christians, Armenians and Jews living in British India, for example. Interpretation has often been practised by the displaced and the dislocated – victims of kidnappings, conflict and political upheaval – who have become bilingual or multilingual through their movement across cultures (Delisle & Woodsworth 2012: 248).

The first interpreters were far from being akin to the well-educated, upper-class practitioners with an academic or diplomatic background who became the protagonists of the “Golden Age” of conference interpreting after the First World War. Even though their contribution to the making of



history is undisputable, it is not widely acknowledged in chronicles and old testimonies, not so much because of the ephemeral nature of the spoken word, but because of their social condition, an aspect which also explains why translators have a time-honoured legacy and interpreters do not. To confirm this assumption, Delisle and Woodsworth further add that the interpreter's presence has often been overlooked in history because "their social status did not seem to make them worthy of further historical representation" (2012: 247-248).

From a study of the historical accounts of the interpreters of the past, two sociological aspects emerge: the first is that the interpreting profession (and, consequently, the status of interpreters) has evolved in a discontinuous way and the second is that, before the establishment of the first interpreting schools, the majority of interpreters, regardless of their walks of life, did not voluntarily choose to act as linguistic and cultural brokers. They were often compelled to perform this activity (which only became a profession at a later stage) and, despite the flourishing of the profession from the second half of the twentieth century, many of them, even in more recent times, did not consider interpreting to be their lifetime career (Baker & Saldanha 2009). Before the Enlightenment, interpreters were nothing but slaves exploited during colonisation expeditions because of their knowledge of the *indigenous languages*, such as the slaves who were brought by Columbus to Europe to teach them Castilian Spanish. Many of them were prisoners, civilians trained by missionaries with the aim to spread the Gospel in non-Christian lands, they were aboriginals who were kidnapped and taught the language of their invaders during the conquest of the New World, they were multilingual soldiers who happened to speak indigenous languages. As Kurz (2012) outlines, "taking captured natives back to Europe, showing them to the people at home, converting them to Christianity, teaching them Spanish and using them as interpreters on future expeditions was common practice at the time". However, in some cases, the status of interpreters evolved: some of the soldiers, slaves or indigenous people who acted as *ad-hoc* language mediators were accorded diplomatic status. For some of them, the high social status attributed for knowing more than one language was often a springboard to obtain a more prestigious position (Roland 1999: 36). These "ambassadors" were chosen not on the basis of their social status, but of their language combination, until the Vatican – the founder of modern diplomacy – began to insist that these careers were reserved for the nobility (Roditi 1999: 41).

The examples of the *dragomans* in Turkey and of the *Oranda tsūji* in Japan (Torikai 2009; Takeda 2010) show that interpreters enjoyed a privileged status. In no other country were the *dragomans* such an institutionalised professional category as in Ottoman Turkey or for such a long period of time (15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century): they were paid well, they were subject to the sultan's law, they carried out linguistic and administrative tasks, their posts were usually hereditary – as in the case of the Cruttas family (Reychman 1961) – and were granted diplomatic immunity. According to the historical records from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, attempts were made to train aspiring *dragomans*, who were called *jeunes de langues* (or *giovani di lingua*, according to Roditi 1999: 45) and trained "because the French distrusted the local eastern Mediterranean interpreters" (Baigorri-Jalón 2015: 17). Nevertheless, the powers they wielded entailed risks, and "it was not uncommon for interpreters

to be abused verbally or physically, jailed, even hanged or impaled – only for doing their assigned duty” (Roditi 1999: 48). During the same historical period, Europe was not the only continent in which interpreting was a thriving, high-status activity: as Torikai (2009: 28) reports, in Japan the *Oranda tsūji* (Dutch language officials) not only performed interpreting and translating tasks, but were also employed in the local administrations in the field of foreign relations. They were local officials recruited by the central government, which is why they had to show their unswerving loyalty to the government of Japan. Most interestingly, the job of interpreter was hereditary, since roughly twenty highly-educated families held the position of interpreters during the Edo era. The interpreting profession in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Japan was “a highly organized system with elaborate hierarchical ranking, training and testing, as well as a detailed ‘code of conduct’ with *Oh-tsūji*, chief interpreter, overseeing the entire profession” (*ibid.*: 29).

However, the contours of the profession could not be said to be well defined: the French who preferred to have their own *dragomans* because they did not trust the local interpreters of the countries they traded with, the Japanese interpreters who had to be loyal to the government, interpreters who were asked to “perfect” the speech and to play other roles besides interpreting demonstrate that these figures were not completely understood and that interpreters were regarded as puppets in the hands of the powerful and influential people of their time. This feature is wholly consistent with the definition of the *ante-litteram* postmodern individual described by Powell & Owen (2007: 5): “the so-called renewed postmodern subject is simply a reproduction of the static ‘hollow men’ or the ‘puppets’ inherent in structural (and functional) analysis but with ‘alternative’ subject characteristics appended to them”. It took several centuries before interpreters came to be more conscious of the power they exerted and, most importantly, of the social impact of their work. This increased awareness, however, would never have been reached without the emergence of the first professional associations and interpreting schools, the most significant products brought about by the conference interpreting revolution. Although particular emphasis will be laid on the events narrated by Baigorri-Jalón (2004; 2014) on the birth of the profession and its coming of age at the Nuremberg Trials and at the United Nations, the way the profession has progressed can be generalised, since the underlying assumption of the present work is that status is a universal concept and that interpreters perceive it in the same way, regardless of the countries they work in or their employment conditions.

### 3.1 The Sociological Developments of Conference Interpreting

In his trail-blazing book on the growth of conference interpreting, Jean Herbert writes that “conference interpretation only actually started during the First World War” (1978: 5), which was a real “training school” for the first interpreters. Even though the 1890 Pan-American Conference can be considered one of the first, multilingual conferences (Baigorri-Jalón 2015: 18), the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, where the stakes for a new world order were significantly higher, is regarded by many interpreting scholars as the cradle of a profession re-born with a new guise: conference

interpreting. The interpreters who played a leading role in the conference (Mantoux, Camerlynk and, above all, Jean Herbert) had roughly the same sociological and educational profile: “knowledge of languages, solid academic backgrounds and the cosmopolitanism acquired from traveling and living abroad” (Baigorri-Jalón 2014: 54). Many a successful interpreter of that period had a doctorate and had learnt foreign languages either in academic institutions or in the family or during journeys abroad. They were mainly intellectuals and academics who had written several books, which very skill, according to Jean Herbert, made them such extraordinary interpreters.

According to Roland (1999), interpreters exercised several different forms of power, including *attraction power*, when the person who turns to an interpreter likes him/her as a person (as in the case of Paul Schmidt, Hitler’s interpreter), *expert power*, when monolingual people find themselves and consider the interpreter to be the expert and *legitimate power*, which arises from a situation in which “the communicator realises that there are cross-cultural differences in the way that people discuss differing viewpoints and make decisions, so he may call upon the interpreter to make suggestions” (*ibid.*: 165). The latter form of power has justified several top-ranking interpreters of the past breaching the rules of neutrality and using their superior knowledge of cultural differences to interrupt the conversation and express their own opinions, as in the famous case in which André Kaminker translated into French an entire speech by Molotov with just one sentence “*Mr Molotov dit non*”. When the speaker complained that he did not translate his exact words, he replied “That’s what you ought to have said” (Longley 1968: 4).

It is, therefore, undeniable that interpreters were held in high esteem, and that they often had the same status as diplomats. As Baigorri-Jalón reports, interpreters seemed more like buffers rather than conduits enabling communication, because their role went beyond that of mere language transfers; they had direct contact with the delegates, they contributed to the preparation of speeches, made suggestions and corrections. Baigorri-Jalón further adds that:

To the visibility we must add continuity, since the staff interpreters spent years on the job, whereas the delegates came and went. It is no surprise, then, that the diplomats and dignitaries knew the interpreters personally; to a certain extent, the interpreters were diplomats manqués [...] They worked so closely together that they were likely to form friendships and enmities, affinities and phobias (2014: 121).

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the sociological profile of conference interpreters was clearly outlined: they were highly educated, upper-class, *quasi* diplomats – which is why they felt perfectly at ease with the protocol of the diplomatic environment, and since they were not trained as interpreters, they were thought to possess genius, a talent for languages:

[...] it is no surprise that interpreters considered themselves an important and prominent part of the international parliamentary network of the time, added to the fact that they were often lauded as ‘phenomena’ in the press and public opinion of their day. Because none of them had trained specifically for this job, it was concluded that their ability came from innate gifts and that their work was more art than profession (Baigorri-Jalón 2014: 130).

Their elitarian background, innate abilities, moral qualities and status of “prima donnas” contributed to the creation of the myth of interpreting, first enhanced by the delegates who participated in meetings at international organisations and subsequently sustained by the press. Just as myth is created to make sense of a senseless world and to understand experience in a narrative way, the myth of the infallible interpreter, the right arm of the decision-makers of that time was created to give sense to an extraordinary and inexplicable condition: ordinary people were not able to understand the cognitive mechanisms allowing interpreters to deliver a perfect translation. As Paul-Boncour (1945 in Baigorri-Jalón 2012: 121) writes, “what a marvel to see them work: the English or French translation, depending on whether French or English was spoken, immediately followed each statement; it was so intelligently and precisely rendered that it even replicated the turns of phrase and the nuance of every intonation”. The sense of amazement to which their performances gave rise – that the interpreters did nothing to tone down – was kindled by the lack of knowledge which has always characterised (and still characterises) those who are outside the profession, as well as interpreters themselves not knowing how they managed to perform such tasks.

The common denominator of all the first great interpreters was a sense of contingency (Powell & Owen 2007), whose highest manifestation was that interpreters were “thrown” into the profession, a verb used by Heidegger ([1927] 2010) to describe the finitude of the individual who is “thrown into the world”. The concept of “contingency” is also referred to as “liquidity” of the postmodern era, characterised by fluidity and drift (Bauman 2003). At economic level, this contingency shows itself in the large-scale recruitment at the United Nations which took place after the Nuremberg Trials; in the aftermath of the Second World War, more interpreters were needed and they were desperately sought in schools, universities and state departments. Most of them were freelancers i.e., contingent workers according to the *Encyclopaedia of the Sociology of Work* (Smith 2013: 305), since they were employed with standard arrangements, a condition which ties in nicely with the concept of work in the postmodern world (Carter 2012).

The main job requirements that the future simultaneous interpreters had to fulfill were: 1) a “natural” knowledge of languages; 2) an innate talent, two aspects which kept fostering the conviction that only few people in the world were able to interpret at all. This notion was detrimental for the profession for two reasons: it gave rise to the idea that “interpreters were a finished product of nature and could be found in much the same way as people come across rare birds or fish (that is, phenomena), secondly by ‘testing’ so many and ‘selecting’ so few, he [the Chief of Division A/N] conveyed the belief that the interpreter is precisely that, a ‘rara avis’” (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 82-83). For a long time, being able to interpret was associated with spontaneous knowledge of languages, a belief which is perhaps still rooted not only in the public perception of interpreting, but also in the convictions of interpreters themselves.<sup>8</sup> The first generations of interpreters were too busy being called “geniuses” and “marvels” to stress the fact that they were trained just like other professionals:

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<sup>8</sup> See chapter 4, paragraph 4, figure 24.

as a consequence, current misconceptions concerning interpreting may depend on this major error of appraisal. Despite the rising number of professional associations and the mushrooming of interpreting schools which have characterised the last century, a widespread public ignorance about the profession still remains, linked to the discourses “interpreters are born, not made” and “knowledge of two languages is tantamount to being an interpreter”. Moreover, the hypothesis that these misconceptions are fostered by interpreters themselves cannot be rejected *a priori*.

Although most interpreters of the past could not receive academic training because it did not exist in the early stages of the profession – with the single exception of the Geneva School – many others were just taken in the profession because of their linguistic competence. Academic training, professional associations, state control and other establishing elements which consolidated the institutionalisation of other full-blown professions (Abbott 2014) were established long after the coming of age of conference interpreting, which is probably why certain interpreters still believe in the importance of talent over training or in the self-regulation of the profession. In this respect, an analysis of the criteria making interpreting a profession compared with the parameters used to assess other professions (see chapter 2, paragraph 3.1) might cast a light on the reasons why the professionalisation of interpreting is not yet complete.

The erroneous notions about interpreting were such that, paradoxically, at the exact moment when interpreting became more professionalised with the birth of the simultaneous mode, conference interpreters entered a professional identity crisis. In that historical period, the gap between public perception and the interpreters’ understanding of the profession began to widen. The first representations of the profession, fostered by the mass media and by the testimonies of the delegates who witnessed the prodigious performances of the first great consecutivists and the interpreters at the Nuremberg Trials, revealed a shallow idea of the interpreting profession and of what the interpreters’ task entailed. The prevalence of image over content and the widespread superficiality in reality descriptions are other typical features of the postmodern era, for its culture “is about the spectacle of the images, style over substance, medium over matter (echoing McLuhan), anonymity over first-person narrative, disposability over longevity, present-day over past traditions” (Laughey 2010: 220). Therefore, while the media portrayed the interpreters’ profile in a mythical perspective, interpreters began to feel a sense of unease with the clamour generated by their job. Their daily professional reality was characterised by poor working conditions, which were far from the picture of them popularly imagined:

Interpreters were packed like sardines in badly lit and even more badly ventilated booths, where they had to maintain the level of concentration required of a simultaneous interpreter and these physical conditions could only cause even more tension, which became greater as the working hours increased (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 114).

Although the ‘strike’ and the union action at the UN managed to improve interpreters’ working conditions (Baigorri-Jalón 2004: 115), the perception of the profession did not change much in the minds of non-experts but, thenceforth, it has never been the same in the interpreters’ self-representation of their job. This change in perception – which may be confirmed by the data analysed

in the present work – has to be studied first and foremost from the interpreters’ perspective, which appears to be considerably influenced by institutional and social constraints (Angelelli 2004). Nevertheless, positive changes have taken place since the strike, which touched both the agreement and non-agreement sector: if on the one hand, conference interpreters lost a bit of their glamour and social prestige, on the other they began to follow the path leading to an increased professionalisation. The image of *prima donnas* and *marvels* started to be replaced by one which represented them as highly specialised and technical professionals: at an equal pace with the development of the change of profile, the sociological background of simultaneous interpreters at the UN (and in other international organizations) evolved. From the 1980s onwards, alongside natural polyglots who graduated in subjects other than interpreting and translation and with those who regarded the profession as a way to be employed in other fields, there were people who had studied hard to become interpreters and wanted to be “only” interpreters. Among these, there was a high number of women, whose increase in number in the profession coincided with the wave of male interpreters who either moved up to administrative jobs or were simply ruled out of the profession because they had no training to perform it. A description offered by Baigorri-Jalón of the typical conference interpreter of the 1970s at the UN closely resembles the current sociological profile of interpreters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

The interpreter is female. She comes from a monolingual middle-class family. She starts learning languages at primary and secondary school. She improves her command of the languages she is studying by spending short periods of time in the countries where the languages are spoken. She has a very good command of her mother tongue and a good command of another two languages [...]. She is not a perfect bilingual. She takes a degree course at an interpreting school. She works as a freelance interpreter or translator for a time. She starts to work in the UN after several years of experience when she is just over thirty. She reads newspapers, particularly in her own language and in English and she is up-to date on current affairs. She is fond of reading in several languages [...](2004: 135-136).

The topic of the feminisation of the interpreting profession has been analysed in very few publications hitherto (Kurz 1986; Spânu 2009; Bodzer 2014); in general, interpreting scholars have hypothesised that the increasing feminisation of the profession may be one of the causes of the decline of the prestige of interpreting, though female interpreters are considered to be highly skilled and qualified. While the older generations of interpreters were either people who had learnt languages in their family or during the two wars or were stateless people who could naturally switch from one culture to another, younger generations of interpreters dreamed about being interpreters, deliberately decided to study languages and were determined to pursue a career in the interpreting profession. Motivation, dedication and hard work were the characteristics marking these new generations of interpreters, who *chose* to become interpreters not only on the basis of their skills, but also of their aspirations.

At sociological level, the most important factor which contributed to the change in interpreters’ self-perception of their status is the fact that in the passage from “marvel” to “profession” in conference interpreting and from “ad-hoc, non-professional” to “professional” in public



service interpreting status was no longer *ascribed*, but *achieved*. According to the *Sage Dictionary of Sociology* (Bruce & Yearley 2006: 39), status can be either *ascribed* or *achieved*; an individual who enjoys ascribed status has made no effort to obtain it, as ascribed status is assigned on the basis of race, sex and date of birth. Conversely, achieved status is reached through choice and achievement and is determined by features such as occupation and level of education (Ferrante 2014: 93). Queen Elizabeth II, for example, enjoys ascribed status, whereas a medical doctor has achieved his status after academic training and personal efforts. This distinction is of the utmost importance as far as the evolution of the interpreting profession is concerned: the first generation of interpreters were granted the ascribed status of interpreters simply because they were bilinguals. From the 1960s onwards, with the spread of interpreting schools, the status of “interpreter” began to be achieved, as the majority of interpreting students were not natural bilinguals (Baigorri-Jalón 2004). Likewise, the mushrooming of training institutions and an increased attention paid in the last few years to the importance of having professional public service interpreters has produced a shift in the way these interpreters perceived themselves (though the same cannot be said for the way society still considers them).

What needs to be investigated further is the motivation which led (and still leads) many young men and women to pursue the interpreting career: why do they want to become interpreters? Are there moral convictions underlying this choice or do they just want to be independent and earn money? Studies on the motivation driving young students to become doctors or lawyers (Lentz & Laband 1995; Zelick 2007) revealed that “the desire to help others” was the main concern of aspiring students of medicine and law. Without ignoring the flurry of unconscious motivations which usually manifest themselves at a later stage, the common denominator is that young people embrace the moral values of these professions. As Baigorri-Jalón (2004: 81) states, the misconception of the conference interpreter as a genius has considerably limited the development of the other elements making up a profession, which are fundamental for an occupation to become fully established and seem particularly prominent in other settings in which the profession unfolds. Far from the large and crowded conference halls and from the spotlights of a podium, the interpreting activities which take place in hospitals, courts, detention centres, police stations and refugee camps, despite their invisibility and the lack of social understanding surrounding them, offer a silent though remarkable example of how cherished the social values underpinning the interpreting profession are.

### 3.2 The Sociological Developments of Public Service Interpreting

Postmodernity and globalisation have brought about several paradoxes: in a politically and socially integrated world, gaps between the rich and the poor are becoming wider. The concentration of wealth in the hands of the West – leading to economic and social inequalities in several parts of the world – has created the conditions for migration, whereby people emigrate because of famines, wars and poverty. In a world in which welfare states are progressively being dismantled and immigrants

are ghettoised and discriminated against, several sociologists (Andersen, Taylor & Logio 2014) express concerns as to whether welfare states are compatible with modern, globalised and post-industrial capitalism. Sociologists Diamond and Lodge argue that “the world economy imposes new disciplines on governments, forcing them to restrain spending and curtail social protection in order to remain globally competitive” (2013: 4). This means that political tensions and economic downturn, which have culminated in the resurgence of populist forces, have given scope and opportunities for violating ethical standards and language rights. Yet, as De Mas points out, “people travel. Further and further afield. Whether seeking asylum, travelling for business, politics or pleasure, people are crossing national borders in ever growing numbers” (2001: 1). This is today’s reality which can neither be changed nor stopped, as the recent migration flows from Syria to Western Europe have demonstrated, and most Western countries should be able to come to terms with them as soon as possible, to avoid further humanitarian crises. As Pensky (2009: 66) shows, Western civilisation is entering a phase of “postmodern” migration, which can be described as “a more fluid, rapid, unstable and complex range of migration dynamics”, characterised by a lack of a linear pattern compared to the previous centuries (i.e. population of former colonies moving back to their former power colonisers).

Once again, the presence of interpreters becomes essential to fulfil the need to communicate, not only because they can bridge linguistic gaps, but also because they are an instrument facilitating the integration process and, at the same time, safeguarding the basic pillars of democracy (Gentile P. 2014b). In the Final Report drawn up by the *Special Interest Group of Translation and Interpreting for Public Services* (hereinafter SIGTIPS), the connection between interpreters and the protection of language rights (also enshrined in national legislations all over the world) is expressed very clearly. The study underlines that, when interpreters have a huge impact on the lives of individuals and may even become crucial to the point of deciding questions of life or death, interpreting is “not just a matter of communication, but a matter of natural rights, of human rights: rights to be promoted, defended and guaranteed” (2011: 7). A growing amount of literature in the field of Interpreting Studies (Bischoff & Loutan 2004; Valero-Garcés 2014) points out that there is a connection between open access to public services and an increased sense of acceptance and integration among immigrants. A qualitative study carried out in Switzerland aiming at analysing public service interpreters’ self-perception of their work showed that many interviewed interpreters linked interpreting and integration. One interpreter who participated in the survey revealed that “integration means foreigners feeling accepted in the host country. If you provide an interpreter, you show that Switzerland accepts foreigners, and when foreigners feel well integrated, this benefits the whole society” (Bischoff & Loutan 2004: 16). Hence, public service interpreting could be argued to be a profession rooted in social justice, which is “founded on a simple concept: giving a voice to those who seek access to basic services but do not speak the societal language” (Bancroft 2015: 217).

Nevertheless, despite its considerable social importance, this kind of interpreting has always been regarded as the “stepsister” and the “Cinderella” of the interpreting professions (Mason 2001). Although things are rapidly changing, understanding the reasons behind the different (and still



incomplete) evolution of public service interpreting could prove fruitful to take stock of the current state of the profession. Once again, the reasons for its fragmentary advancement are to be found in history. As in the case of conference interpreting, the evolution of this kind of interpreting has not been homogeneous: while the former possesses a strong professional association (AIIC) which controlled the profession, training, ethics and quality standards, public service interpreting has not spread in a uniform way all over the world and, therefore, professionals have never had the opportunity to organise themselves in a single network. Furthermore, until very recently, public service interpreting had always been regarded as an *ad-hoc* service, provided by family members, friends and untrained staff, an aspect which still remains one of the most widespread misconceptions to eradicate, despite the growing amount of literature demonstrating how dangerous these assumptions could be (Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2007).

The diverse ways in which public service interpreting has progressed could be explained by the fact that it first developed in those countries which have a long immigration tradition (Australia, Canada, Sweden, the USA), and were the first in stepping up to address the needs of the immigrant or aboriginal populations. In the 1970s, Australia implemented anti-discrimination laws giving linguistic minorities, immigrants and aboriginals the right to access public services (Moody 2012) which, as Ozolins (2000; 2010) underlines, was a ground-breaking step in the history of this country and in the development of public service interpreting. After the establishment of the NAATI accreditation system, Sweden followed suit with a system of state authorisation dating back to 1976 (Wadensjö, Dimitrova & Nilsson 2007), together with training initiatives. In the UK, the Institute of Linguists' Educational Trust set up the Community Interpreter Project in 1983, which tapped the resources provided by public service personnel and educationalists and, between 1983 and 1990, provided training, examinations for interpreters and codes of ethics (Carr *et al.* 1997). These efforts led to the creation of the *National Register of Public Service Interpreters* (NRPSI) in 1994. According to Mason (2001), the *First Critical Link Conference* held in 1995 in Geneva Park, Canada, was the most important watershed in the evolution of the profession. On that occasion, when practitioners, academics and various stakeholders gathered, the *Critical Link* network, which is the leading NGO promoting public service interpreting across the globe, was created.

Thenceforth, growing scholarly attention has been paid to public service interpreting, which marked the “social turn” in Interpreting Studies (Pöchhacker 2006: 40). Despite increasing professionalisation, which has been consolidated by European Directives (2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings) and the very recent ISO 113611:2014 standard of qualifications (ISO 2014) – which issues guidelines for public service interpreting – several countries such as Spain (Valero-Garcés & Martin 2008; Valero-Garcés 2014), Italy (Russo & Mack 2005; Rudvin & Tomassini 2011) and many others are still lagging behind in the provision of such services. The reasons for these deficiencies are mostly of a political and social nature. The main discourse, created by politicians and fostered by the media, suggests that immigrants “should just learn our language”: in the UK, Spain and The Netherlands, outsourced management of interpreting services, deriving from a planned dismantling of welfare provisions, is contributing to the de-

professionalisation of public service interpreting (García-Beyaert 2015; Gentile P. *forthcoming*). Several newspaper articles pointing to the “scandalous figures spent by the Government for interpreting services” (*Daily Mail online* 2015) and declarations of MPs in the United Kingdom, who stated that public service interpreting is “a very expensive and poor use of taxpayers’ money” (Hope 2013) are only a few examples of this growing phenomenon. According to García-Beyaert (2015: 53), “browsing the comment sections at the foot of the articles in online newspapers featuring court interpreting generally provides, regardless of the country, a picture of hostility around aspects of language accommodation for newcomers”.

Indeed, cultural differentiation in contemporary society has led to tendencies of closure to others and increased nationalism: “it may be suggested that nationalism has taken to an extreme the concern of postmodern culture with difference, security and belonging. In a sense the core features of postmodern times have been inverted [...] into symbolic violence that is based on authoritarian and xenophobic values” (Delanty & O’Mahony 2002: 162). Discrimination and hostility towards immigrant workers and refugees, which is undoubtedly a negative consequence of globalisation, leads to the belief that public service interpreters work *in favour of* these people, perhaps one of the main reasons why the status of public service interpreters remains unacknowledged: not only is public service interpreting on the “losing side of globalisation” (cf. paragraph 2 in this chapter), but the interpreters’ status and social prestige depend on the social status of their clients.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, if public statements made by politicians create a breeding ground for xenophobia and intolerance, the chances to increase the status of public service interpreters may be jeopardised. As García-Beyaert (2015) remarks, as opposed to the empowered deaf community, the users of public service interpreting services are identified as “strangers” who do not fit into the mainstream culture simply because they do not know the local culture. For example, “those affected by poor court interpreting policy measures do not have common shared experiences as a community, which is a key element in generating reference points on the one hand and a sense of empowerment on the other” (*ibid.*: 55). Empowering the receivers of the interpreting services could be a solution to tackle the profit logic adopted by agencies, which is primarily responsible for the uneven professionalisation of public service interpreting, since such agencies “do not provide a placement for professionals with clear standards and routines of work which are accepted and understood implicitly by purchasers” (Ozolins 2007: 123). There are few doubts that the expansion of public service interpreting will continue at a lightning pace, considering the flurry of training and accreditation programmes, academic conferences, international networks and the legislation implemented. Nevertheless, before heading towards the future, the professional community should ask itself where it stands right now, what has been achieved so far in terms of professional advancement and what the potential drawbacks hindering an even development of the public service interpreting community actually are. Only interpreters themselves could provide answers to all these questions, shedding light on the current state of the profession.

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<sup>9</sup> More information on this topic will be provided in chapter 2, paragraph 3.3.



## 2. Profession and Status: Two Models of Analysis

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### 1. Profession and Status: a Twofold Model of Analysis

The historical and sociological overview of the interpreting profession has shown that the interpreter's status has constantly changed throughout the centuries, and its evolution has gone hand in hand with the progress achieved by the profession. Attempts to define the concepts of *profession* and *status* dominated sociological debates for decades in the past century, with two schools of thought emerging over other theories. The first theorisations identified the key characteristics (*traits*) of the professions to separate them from other occupational groups. These functionalist theories (Carr-Saunders & Wilson 1964), which contributed to shaping the discipline known as Sociology of the Professions, divided the world into the procrustean bed of dichotomic categories and distinguished between *professionals* and *non-professionals* according to taxonomic parameters. The main questions the sociologists sought to answer were: what is a profession and what distinguishes it from a mere occupation? Can status parameters be statistically calculated? Most importantly, what determines professional status in society?

On the other hand, post-structuralist sociologists doubted that the dividing line between professionals and non-professionals was exclusively determined by standardised and objective criteria, which is why they promoted the *symbolic-interactionist* approach (Becker 1972; Dingwall 2012; Abbott 2014). They maintained that the concept of profession could not be scientifically defined, because the term "profession" had to be understood as a *folk concept*, rich in cultural and subjective aspects. Moreover, the scholars supporting the symbolic-interactionist approach argued that the concept of "being professional" can be open to several different interpretations, for there is a major distinction

between *professionalisation* as the social phenomenon aiming to achieve power and status and *professionalism*, which indicates the moral characteristics and principles guiding professionals in their daily working lives (Hargreaves & Goodson 2003).

The present chapter will take into account the socio-economic and the symbolic interactionist perspectives with a twofold methodological framework combining the Sociology of the Professions and Interpreting Studies. It will offer a comprehensive overview of the way the concepts of status and profession have been analysed by sociologists over the years. On the one hand, the socio-economic model of analysis will determine whether interpreting could be regarded as a fully-fledged profession according to the main parameters proposed by the trait theory (education, income, autonomy and control). On the other hand, the symbolic-interactionist model of analysis, imbued with issues concerning power and social prestige, will draw on post-structuralist theories to study the way in which the concepts of profession, status and prestige are morally and ethically conceptualised. This method will prove instrumental to analyse interpreters' self-perception of their profession.

### 2. The Definition Of Profession: The Trait Theory

Professions are one of the most important elements contributing to the advancement of society. The powerful drive towards globalisation – which favoured the development of new professions (such as interpreting) and the consolidation of older ones (such as legal and healthcare professions) – marked the triumph of noble philanthropic values against the background of the twentieth century post-industrial marketplace, which is why Parsons pointed out that the emergence of the professional complex was the most significant structural development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century society:

[The professional complex] has already become the most important single component in the structure of modern societies. It has displaced first the “state,” [...] and, more recently, the “capitalistic” organization of the economy. The massive emergence of the professional complex [...] is the crucial structural development in twentieth-century society (1968: 545).

Early sociological theories attempted to understand the essential elements of professions and explain the role they play in society. The first sociological theories of the professions drew inspiration from the works of Durkheim ([1964] 2014); they emerged in the period in which technological developments and the narrowing of geographical and cultural distances led to an increasing number of occupations striving to acquire a higher professional status. As sociologist Goode (1957) argued, an industrialising society is also a professionalising one, since more and more occupations claim the privileges and rewards once only attributed to the so-called liberal *professions* (barristers and physicians) (Clarke & Pittaway 2014). In line with Goode, Wilensky (1964: 137) noted that the “professionalization of everyone”, derived from the development of market relations, was characterised by the raising of standards of competency and a higher level of education required for those who aspired to become the “professionalised” members of a working community. Therefore, he warned that, if anyone could claim to be a “professional”, the term would eventually lose its meaning. Hence, in order to distinguish professions from non-professions, the term *semi-profession* was coined. A semi-profession was defined as an occupation possessing only a few

features of fully-fledged professions, which is not sufficiently autonomous to be sociologically classified as such. Although some of them are attributed a certain degree of social esteem, semi-professions “exert power over other occupations, clients and the state, but achieve this to a lesser degree than a profession” (Van Teijlingen 2000: 101).

The growing need to draw clear boundaries between professionals and non-professionals led to the development of the *trait theory* (Albrecht, Fitzpatrick & Scrimshaw 2003), whose main objective was to catalogue and classify the unique features (or “traits”) of a profession. Greenwood (1957), for example, listed its five key characteristics: a body of abstract knowledge, professional authority, sanction of the community, a regulative code of ethics and a professional culture. Over time, a considerable number of other traits were added to the list, including rewards based on work achievements, loyalty to colleagues, a long-standing relationship with clients and, perhaps most importantly, a sense of social duty in which economic and material rewards were somehow subordinated to a sense of moral responsibility towards the wellbeing of society (Empson *et al.* 2015).

One of the most complete definitions of the term *profession* was provided by William J. Goode (1957), who identified two core characteristics and several other “derived” features distinguishing a profession from an occupation. The two core characteristics were “a prolonged specialized training in a body of abstract knowledge” and “service orientation”. Among the “derived” characteristics, determined by the core values, Goode highlighted other prominent attributes: 1) its members are bound by a sense of identity and shared values; 2) the profession determines its own standards of education and training; 3) professional practice is officially recognised by some form of license or formal authorisation; 4) the profession gains in income, status and prestige and can demand high calibre students; 5) the practitioner is relatively free of non-expert evaluation and control; 6) its role definitions between members and non-members are agreed upon and are the same for all practitioners; 7) the profession is more likely to be a terminal occupation, which means that once in it, few leave, and a high proportion of them assert that if they had to do so again, they would again choose that job. An important aspect of the professions which is worth mentioning is that the mastering of the technical skills acquired with training is not enough to secure professional status. As Wilensky further states:

The criterion of ‘technical’ is not enough, however. The craftsman typically goes to a trade school, has an apprenticeship, forms an occupational association to regulate entry to the trade, and gets local sanction for his practice. But the success of the claim to professional status is governed also by the degree to which the practitioners conform to a set of *moral norms* that characterize the established professions. These norms dictate not only that the practitioner do [sic.] technically competent, high-quality work, but that he adhere [sic.] to a service ideal-devotion to the client’s interests more than personal or commercial profit [...] (1964: 140).

Apart from possessing the above specified characteristics, all the occupations wishing to exercise professional authority have to undergo a professionalisation process, which is fundamental to achieve status and prestige.

## 2.1 Models of Professionalisation in the Interpreting Profession

Wilensky (1964) was the first who pointed out the main stages of professionalisation, which are summarised by Dyro as follows: 1) the establishment of the first training schools; 2) the first university schools; 3) the first local professional associations; 4) the first national professional association; 5) the first state licensure law; 6) the first formal code of ethics (2004: 596). According to the historical evolution of the interpreting profession (see chapter 1, paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2), conference interpreting has followed this process, although it has never obtained a kind of formal state recognition or authorisation which legally protects the interpreter's professional title. Indeed, Dam and Zethsen (2013: 234) argue that, although much has been done to secure high professional status for AIIC members, the association was not able to secure two important features of the trait theory: monopoly and control over those who enter the profession. To substantiate the above, Dam and Zethsen maintain that "while slightly over 3,000 conference interpreters worldwide are [AIIC] members, it has been estimated that at least as many do not belong to AIIC and are therefore not subject to its strict regulations or its quality requirements" The same point is made by Pöchhacker (2011).

Public service interpreting, on the other hand, can be said to be still involved in the first phase of the professionalisation process, which foresees the establishment of adequate training for its aspiring practitioners. In this case, a higher status can be achieved by claiming an area of specialised expertise, since a high educational level has always been an element distinguishing professionals from non-professionals, which is in line with the theories illustrated by Larson (1977) according to which society confers individuals a higher status because they possess some kind of esoteric knowledge that cannot be mastered without high-level and specialised education.

While the model of professionalisation provided by Wilensky underlines the importance of education in the advancement of professional claims for higher status, the models of professionalisation developed by interpreting scholars have mainly focused on the evolution of the T&I market. In his study of the professionalisation of interpreters in Taiwan, Tseng (1992) linked the concept of status with that of power by postulating that professionals are a social group exercising power and control over knowledge and deciding what counts as true, which is why "certain professions increase their power and status by making claims to special expertise" (Beckett & Maynard 2005: 115). Hence, Tseng developed a model of professionalisation of conference interpreters in Taiwan, which comprises four phases:

- 1) **Market disorder:** it is characterised by constant competition among practitioners and by a general ignorance of the public about the services offered by interpreters. There is little consistency in training standards, so there is a "vicious cycle' of unprofessional behaviour and mistrust of practitioners" (Mikkelson 1996: 81);
- 2) **Consensus and commitment:** in this phase, the interpreting market appears to be more stabilised. Quality training programmes and professional associations have been established;
- 3) **Formation of formal networks:** practitioners collaborate to outline their codes of conduct and to manage admission to the profession;



- 4) **Professional autonomy:** in this phase, clear and established ethical standards are set. “There is appropriate control over who is admitted to the profession, and the professional organisations work closely with the various stakeholders to achieve market control and influence legislation and certification” (Pym 2012: 81).

More than a decade later, Ju (2009) broadened this model by adding other elements such as credentials and clients (cf. Ozolins 2007).<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, interpreting scholars have postulated that language professionals are an interesting example of occupational group identity “because of their ambivalent and insecure status as a profession” (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008: 80). One of the main reasons for this supposed low status is that translators and interpreters rely on linguistic and textual skills and belong to the applied professions in the Humanities. Consequently, “their starting point in the competition for professional prestige is inevitably weaker than that of professions with high scientific authority and codified procedures, such as medicine, law or engineering” (*ibid.*: 81). However, before determining whether interpreting is a high, middling or low status occupation, a comprehensive definition of the concept of status should be taken as a starting point.

### 3. Socio-Economic Status as a Universal Notion

Status is central to social structure and social interaction, though it is far from being an unambiguous concept. Like the concept of *profession*, it is a fluctuating notion, which can either be framed in Weber’s functionalist theories of socio-economic stratification (cf. Morrison 2006; Blau 2008) or in theories privileging moral values, generally detached from economic power (Bourdieu & Thompson 1991b). According to the *Sage Dictionary of Sociology* (Bruce & Yearley 2006: 39), status indicates a specific rank in society to which an individual belongs. According to Turner, status is

A bundle of socio-political claims against society which gives an individual (or more sociologically a group) certain benefits and privileges, marking him or her off from other individuals or groups. This cultural aspect of status gives rise to a second dimension, namely the notion of status as a cultural lifestyle which distinguishes a status group with special identity in society (1988: 11).

Status characterises the individual’s identity in society and is a way to establish social distinctions, though certain sociologists agree that the differences between high and low status contribute to nothing but the creation of social inequalities. According to Ridgeaway, “at a macro level, status stabilizes resource and power inequality by transforming it into cultural status beliefs about group differences regarding who is “better” (esteemed and competent)” (2014: 1). In this way, some social groups will always be placed in a better position compared to others, since the educational level and the amount of money a professional usually earns are a discriminating factor in the organisation of social ranking.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, status can be either *ascribed* – i.e. assigned at birth or assumed involuntarily – or *achieved*, obtained through personal merits (Ferrante 2014: 93).

<sup>10</sup> Ozolins (2007) specifies that agencies are the interpreter’s third client, although there is no code of ethics helping interpreters understand what kind of relation they should have with them.



According to Anthony Giddens (1979), the concepts of *social* and *professional* status are closely intertwined, because the scholar considers status not just a rank in society, but a combination of social criteria, including occupation. According to the theory of social stratification (Ganzeboom & Treiman 1996: 201), professional status is attributed on the basis of the type of occupation and the level of education, attained through personal achievements. Sociologist Abbott confirms the close relationship between *profession* and *status* by arguing that “a profession is organized around the knowledge system it applies, and hence status within profession simply reflects the degree of involvement with this organizing knowledge” (2014: 118). For example, *medical doctor*, *teacher* and *interpreter* are all words giving information on the level of academic training, expertise and remuneration of the professionals. Therefore, *professional status* – which can be said to derive from achieved status – indicates the set of skills enabling a professional to render a service to society. By way of example, when being an interpreter no longer meant being a bilingual from birth or due to particular personal circumstances, the status of interpreters shifted from *ascribed* to *achieved* because interpreters became *professionals* after going through a period of training.

Whether status could be defined and perceived as a universal concept has been a matter of discussion both for sociologists and interpreting scholars. According to Treiman (2008: 300), “members of different societies throughout the world perceive the relative prestige of occupations in essentially similar ways (the average inter-societal correlation, across 60 societies, is about 0.8)”, which leads to the hypothesis that all people from all walks of life – regardless of education, ethnic identity, gender, age or their own occupational position – rank occupations in the same way with respect to their status, with high government officials and learned professionals at the top and unskilled labourers at the bottom (*ibid.*: 301). These theories were supported by Ollivier, whose study showed the way in which people occupying different positions in the social structure (university lecturers, electricians and high-school students) evaluate the status and prestige of each other’s occupations:

Congruence between socioeconomic status and worth is highest among professors, who rank at the top of the three groups in terms of income and education. It is lowest among electricians, whose views closely match Parkin’s (1971) subordinate value system. Electricians largely accept as legitimate the dominant value system, as evidenced by the relatively high correlation between occupational prestige and personal admiration. (Ollivier 2000: 458).

The statement demonstrates that the association between socioeconomic status and social worth is greater among people located at the top of the occupational hierarchy than among those at the bottom, but it does not mean that electricians subverted the status order, since they expressed a high admiration for professions having a higher status from an objective point of view, which indicates that, while *subjective* opinions on status may vary, its *objective* determinants (education and income) hardly change according to country of residence or educational level. In the light of which, occupational status could be regarded as a universal sociological notion and may also be perceived as such, because professions can be listed according to universally-established parameters (education and remuneration). The view is strengthened by Hogg and Abrams, who argue that “status differences between social groups in social systems showing various degree of stratification can be distinguished in the same way” (2001: 105).

Therefore, two points worth investigating are whether the interpreting profession could be defined as such according to the parameters of education and income described in the trait theory and the place it occupies in universal classifications of the professions.

### 3.1 The Interpreter's Status in Social Stratification

In line with the trait theory, social stratification is defined as the classification of people into groups based on shared socio-economic conditions. It possesses four characteristics: 1) it is a trait of society and not just a reflection of individual differences; 2) it carries over from generation to generation; 3) it is universal but variable; 4) it is an expression not only of social inequalities, but also of social beliefs (Cram Textbook 2015). According to functionalist sociologists, a stratified society is the product of the social division of labour, whereby the professionals possessing the features on which laypeople placed particular social value were attributed high status. In the light of which, Foucault (Foucault & Gordon 1980) underlined the importance of education and knowledge as a means to achieve status and power. He believed that power could not exist without knowledge and *vice versa* by stating that “it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power” (Foucault 1980: 52). As Swartz, Gibson and Richter remarked (2002), sociologists before Foucault conceived power as something quantifiable leading to a zero-sum game, whereby some lose it and others take it. On the other hand, Foucault saw power as something which is “constantly negotiated between people and therefore continuously shifting and changing in the context of relationships” (*ibid.*: 102).

Therefore, the fact that some occupations strive for their clientele and autonomy has been considered by certain sociologists an expression of the individualistic character of the professions (Anderson & Davidson 1949). The race to professionalisation described by sociologists (Dyro 2004; Masters 2009; Mosse & Harayama 2011) is a typical phenomenon of Western contemporary societies, characterised by a flurry of powerful economic forces and vested interests; the close link between the construction of one's personal self and identity and the profession practiced leads aspiring professionals to advance its cause whenever possible. As a result, all those professions willing to emerge by advancing their professional interests will have to clash with the claims of other professionalising groups, which also believe they possess the requirements to embark on the path towards full professionalisation. Indeed, Ritzer and Walczak define a profession as an occupation which “has been able to *convince* significant others (i.e. clients, the law) that it has acquired a high degree of constellation of characteristics we have come to accept as denoting a profession” (my emphasis) (1988: 6). Medicine is a case in point: before becoming a fully-fledged occupation, medical doctors had to fight against the encroachment made by others claiming to possess alternative curative methods, such as chiropractic. Such process of differentiation is referred to as “boundary work”, a notion introduced by Gieryn, which is referred to as: “the discursive attribution of selected qualities to scientists, scientific methods, and scientific claims for the purpose of drawing a rhetorical boundary between science and some less authoritative residual non-science” (1999: 4-5). In this regard, interpreters are supposed to distinguish themselves from non-interpreters and/or amateurs because they have acquired certain skills which make them suitable to

carry out interpreting tasks. However, the lack of institutionalisation and full recognition of the interpreting profession, which do not create a clear demarcation line between interpreting and other neighbouring practices – such as translation and cultural mediation – make the boundaries between interpreters and non-interpreters more fuzzy. In their analysis of the translation profession, Koskinen and Dam argue that:

There is a movement from the outside to the inside, as agents attempt to gain access to the confines of the profession, resulting in boundary negotiations and disputes [...]. This is particularly true for less established and contested professions such as translation: its contours are under constant renegotiation both internally and externally (2016: 257).

The same can be said to be true for the interpreting profession. However, the process of differentiation of the profession – characterised by a struggle to secure one's own interests – is based not only on the objective parameters of education and remuneration, but also on the claim to professional exclusivity (cf. Monzó 2009; Rudvin 2015). To put it simply, professionals distinguish themselves from non-professionals not only because of their expert skills, but because they want to assert that they are the only group of practitioners entitled to solve a particular problem in society.

For example, in order to “justify” their presence on the labour market, conference interpreters obtained first the marks of status (i.e. academic degree and codes of ethics) and then began to struggle to achieve higher status and recognition. Public service interpreters, on the other hand, could be said to be still engaged in this process (Wadensjö 2011). Although scarce attention has been paid hitherto to “process models” of boundary creation within the translation professions – with the only exception of the study carried out by Grbić (2009) – the focus has to be placed first on the way sociologists “classify” the interpreting profession. One of the first attempts to study the features of the professions was made by Ganzeboom and Treiman (1996), who took the two main parameters of education and income into account. Ganzeboom and Treiman (*ibid.*: 2) measured the positions of occupations in the stratification system with socio-economic status scores and created the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88; ISCO-08). The latest version of ISCO-08 (Resolution Updating ISCO 2008) comprises four skill levels:

- ✎ Skill level 1 involves the performance of routine or manual tasks, such as digging, cleaning, lifting and carrying materials by hand, for which types of occupations only a basic form of education is required. Occupations such as cleaners and gardeners are included in this category;
- ✎ Skill level 2 comprises those occupations in which electronic machines and mechanical equipment are used. Depending on the complexity of the tasks, the completion of secondary education is essential. Bus drivers and building electricians are included in this category;
- ✎ Skill level 3 generally entails the performance of complex technical and practical tasks which require a body of factual and technical knowledge in the field of expertise. A qualification in higher education is required for a period of three years. Among these professions are found computer support technicians, legal secretaries and commercial sales representatives;
- ✎ Skill level 4 requires a high ability of performing complex problem-solving and taking decisions based on an extensive body of theoretical and factual knowledge in a specialised field. To enter

the occupations, a long period of specialised training (5-6 years) is necessary. The main professionals falling into this category are: lawyers, judges, medical doctors, secondary school teachers and civil engineers.

According to this classification, occupations are divided into ten major groups. The last category (armed forces occupations) is indicated with the number “o” because those who carry out military tasks possess different type of skills, mainly acquired through informal training:

1. Managers
2. Professionals
3. Technicians and associate professionals
4. Clerical support workers
5. Services and Sales Workers
6. Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers
7. Craft and related trades workers
8. Plant and machine operators and assemblers
9. Elementary occupations
- o. Armed Forces Occupations

Each of these major categories comprises several sub-major groups, minor groups and unit groups. According to this classification, interpreting and translation fall into the second category of “professionals”, divided in this way:

- 21 Science and engineering professionals
- 22 Health professionals
- 23 Teaching professionals
- 24 Business and administration professionals
- 25 Information and communications technology professionals
- 26 Legal, social and cultural professionals

Interpreting and translation are included in the last category, which is in turn divided into five subcategories (ISCO-08: 18)

- 261 Legal professionals
  - 2611 Lawyers
  - 2612 Judges
  - 2619 Legal professionals not elsewhere classified
- 262 Librarians, archivists and curators
  - 2621 Archivists and curators
  - 2622 Librarians and related information professionals
- 263 Social and religious professionals
  - 2631 Economists
  - 2632 Sociologists, anthropologists and related professionals

- 2633 Philosophers, historians and political scientists
- 2634 Psychologists
- 2635 Social work and counselling professionals
- 2636 Religious professionals
- 264 Authors, journalists and linguists
  - 2641 Authors and related writers
  - 2642 Journalists
  - 2643 *Translators, interpreters* and other linguists (my emphasis)

Translators and interpreters are classified in the second category of “professions”, sub-major group 26 “legal, social and cultural professionals”, minor group 264 “authors, journalists and linguists” and unit group 2643, “translators, interpreters and other linguists”. However, the ISCO classification does not specify which kinds of interpreting are included in this taxonomic analysis, which means that a lack of knowledge of the many settings where the profession is carried out is still present.

Interestingly, the proximity between interpreters and journalists in the ISCO-o8 leads to the belief that the category mentioned in the classification is conference interpreting, a notion further confirmed by the similarities between the status of journalists and of conference interpreters found in scholarly literature in the field. On the other hand, public service interpreting (and, particularly, healthcare interpreting) has often been compared to nursing because of its “caring” nature (Valero-Garcés 2014b), which is why it could be positioned at level 2635, together with “social work and counselling professionals”. If Tseng’s model is to be taken as a reference (see paragraph 2.1 in this chapter), conference interpreting could be argued to lie at stage 3 of the professionalisation process, because of its weak control over those entering the profession (see paragraph 2 in this chapter). Conversely, public service interpreting could be positioned at stage one of the spectrum. The case of court interpreting and interpreting in other judicial settings is rather ambiguous, because “while some countries have statutory laws regarding the provision of court interpreting, others do not have such laws” (Lee 2015: 189). The gap depends on the history of the single country and the extent to which the country in question has welcomed the allochthonous over the years. In the case of the USA, for example, court interpreting would position itself together with conference interpreting, because it is an established profession. On the other hand, in countries such as Spain (Del Pozo Triviño & Blasco Mayor 2015; Baigorri-Jalón & Russo 2015) and Italy (Falbo & Viezzi 2014), it would occupy the same position as social work. Owing to the different levels of institutionalisation of court interpreting in several countries, the recently issued ISO Guidelines (ISO 13611 2014) make a distinction between the countries where public service interpreting also includes court interpreting and others where it does not. However, as Hlavac points out, the ISO Guidelines are ambivalent as to whether community interpreting encompasses court interpreting or not (2015: 24), which suggests that there is still a great deal of uncertainty as far as the differences between interpreting in courts and in other community settings are concerned. To elucidate further the position of conference and public service interpreting in social stratification, the affinities between journalism and conference interpreting and between nursing and public service interpreting deserve further investigation.

### 3.2 Conference Interpreters and Journalists: Affinities and Shared Challenges in the Professionalisation Process

Just as Pym (2012) made a comparison between translators and computer engineers to analyse their common struggle for the achievement of a higher professional status, the surveys carried out by Kurz (1986a) and Katan (2011a; 2011b) showed that, when conference interpreters were asked which group of professionals they would compare themselves with, they answered that they believed they enjoyed the same status as journalists. The analogy seems to be founded, since journalism and conference interpreting appear to share common features. First of all, technological advances and the development of the mass media have deeply changed the way the two professions are performed and perceived by the public (see chapter 1, paragraphs 2.2. and 2.3). In the field of journalism, technology and the advent of the Internet have “broadened the field of who might be considered a journalist and what might be considered journalism” (Zelizer 2004: 23). This change has led to a merging of journalism with other professions, in which all the hybrid forms of para-journalism (such as editing, proof-reading), characterised by high flexibility and multiple skills, become part of the journalistic process (Gillmor, 2006: xxiv). Technological changes have contributed to the creation of fertile ground for amateurs to encroach upon these professions, blurring the boundary lines between professionals and non-professionals; hence, in the same way in which a blogger can claim to be a journalist, a bilingual can claim to be an interpreter, since the professional title of “interpreter” is not legally protected.<sup>11</sup> The main reason why they are not considered fully-fledged professions is the inability to guarantee exclusivity and control over the profession. The only difference between journalism and interpreting is that, while journalism is a regulated profession with a national register in many countries, there is still no restriction of entry into conference interpreting, thus giving rise to the belief that conference interpreting and journalism are not fully-developed profession, a hypothesis confirmed by the long-standing debates held by sociologists and interpreting scholars as to whether the two occupations could be regarded as full professions. As Witschge and Nygren suggest, “media scholars have considered journalism as a semi-profession, mostly because of this reason of not being able to exclude non-professionals from the field of journalism” (2009: 39-40). Similarly, lack of control of those who enter the translation professions is one of the reasons why interpreting is still undergoing its professionalisation process, which is confirmed by the study carried out by Katan (2011b), who noted that translators and interpreters fear the competition coming from “bilingual specialists” or by “professionals from other fields with knowledge of foreign languages” (*ibid.*: 73). As Gile (2009) argues, the status of top-level professional interpreters appears to be “dragged” down, among others, by untrained ‘bilinguals’ who engage in translation and interpreting activities. The situation is compounded by the fact that “many a layperson is not in the position to (and does not necessarily wish to) see and acknowledge the difference between them and high-level professionals” (*ibid.*: 6). Since the profession is not protected by law, titles such as “conference interpreters” or “healthcare interpreters” fail to draw a clear line between high-level professionals and others. The pursuit of the professionalisation process manifests itself in the autonomy characterised by

<sup>11</sup> The same has been pointed out by Pym (2012) with reference to the status of translators in the European Union.



the ability of an occupation to establish its rules and standards, free of interference from outsiders (Elsaka 2005). When journalism was studied with the taxonomic approach specified in the trait theory, the answer to the question “is journalism a profession?” was the following:

Journalism has no systematic body of theory or knowledge; it has neither extensive education nor licensing as prerequisites of practice; journalism is not characterised by a functionally specific relationship with clients [...]. Based on such an assessment, journalism has been widely regarded as a non-profession (*ibid.*: 36).

A close similarity could be found in the definition provided by Sela-Sheffy, who describes interpreting and journalism as “failed professionalizing” professions:

Among other occupational groups that are to varying extents under-professionalized or marginalized – such as journalists, nurses or craft-artists – translators and interpreters serve a quintessential case for examining how an occupational group deals with its own indeterminacy and marginality (2011: 3).

Referring to the body of knowledge acquired by conference interpreters, Riccardi (1997: 153) argues that “in a society characterised by an ever-increasing specialization in all fields, the interpreter is an anomalous professional, for she is not an expert in a single discipline, but of language in its general sense (my translation)”. The statement further underlines that interpreters, like journalists, do not possess an “extensive body of abstract knowledge” (Goode 1957), for their main expertise consists in the knowledge of more than one language in addition to interpreting technique. Another similarity between journalism and conference interpreting could be found in the way the two professions relate themselves to cultural differences: “for international travel journalists, an aesthetic appreciation of distant cultures and the ability to be, or appear to be, ‘at home in the world’, might reasonably be considered a form of cultural capital bestowing status among peers and credibility among readers” (McGaurr 2015: 39). In the light of which, the role of the journalist as a cross-cultural mediator could be compared to that of the interpreter as a bridge between cultures. Another interesting analogy is their relationship with the mass media: journalists harness the power of the mass media to influence public opinion and have acquired an increased visibility as a group of professionals with the advent of television, just like conference interpreters at the dawn of the profession. It would, therefore, be interesting to assess if, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, conference interpreters still compare themselves to journalists.

### 3.3 Public Service Interpreting as a Caring Profession: a Comparison with Nursing

In sociological literature, nurses have long been regarded as a semi-professional group. The reason for this definition is explained by sociologist Etzioni, who suggested that nursing and social work were semi-professions because “their training is shorter, their status is less legitimated, their right to privileged communication less established, there is less of a specialised body of knowledge and they have less autonomy from supervision or control” (1969: V). One of the main reasons why interpreters are not

regarded as fully-fledged professionals, especially in public service settings, concerns the dichotomy between the concepts of professional service and assistance. One of the most riveting breakthroughs of the “social turn” (Pöchhacker 2009: 39) in Interpreting Studies was not just the recognition of the interpreter as an active participant in the interaction, but an increasing understanding of the social purpose of interpreting activity. In the 1990s, scholars began to comprehend that interpreting was destined for the common good of society, and it was then that interpreting acquired a new, universal value, with the potential to become a driving force of change and social integration. Thenceforth, interpreting started to be increasingly defined as a “service which means that it is supposed to meet needs, and the needs to be met are the needs of the participants in the communicative situation” (Viezzi 2013: 377).

However, in public service settings, the notions of service and assistance tend to be confused, as was shown by Hale (2008: 157), who maintained that the interpreter is often seen as a helper assisting immigrants inside and outside public service institutions. Roberts also pointed out that “community interpreting has grown out of social needs and has been shaped by the social service sector, which “has viewed the community interpreter as akin to a community or social worker” (1997: 12). The similarities between public service interpreting, nursing and social work are often associated with these professionals often dealing with people who live at the margins of society (Bauman 1998). The view is strengthened by the large number of volunteers who work in the field and consider the job a mission rather than a profession. Moreover, job perceptions of interpreters’ professional tasks are also greatly influenced by users and their degree of social prestige. In a study on the nursing profession, Freidson & Lorber (2008) suggest that one of the means of identifying highly professional groups is by the clients they serve. In the case of the professionalisation process of nurses, it was observed that “efforts to advance the prestige and status of the group may lead members to view dealing with the lower class or the poor as an obstacle to the quest for higher professional status” (*ibid.*: 271). They conclude that some sort of transference of this stigma is feared by the professionals working with the poor, a notion which could be easily applied to public service interpreting.

The case of nurses is emblematic because, like medical doctors, they work with all kinds of people of all statuses. The only difference between these professions is that, at least according to the trait theory, nurses do not possess a sufficient body of knowledge to claim a higher professional status. Moreover, they are often seen in a position of subordination to physicians, also because they often carry out the instructions given by doctors. Studies on the status of nurses (Kumar Lal & Khanna 1988) have shown that when nurses’ professional profile was unclear and not perceived as such, doctors and patients tried to define their roles in ways convenient to them. Such role confusion has led to conflicting role expectations and discrepancies between the ideal and the actual role of nurses. Hence, the interpreters’ low status could also be one of the causes of *role conflict* in public service settings (see paragraph 4.3.2 in this chapter).

Another aspect which could have hindered the advancement of the professionalisation process is the predominance of women in the nursing profession. Nurses are seen as cheerful and loving, and ‘nurturance’ is a fundamental ingredient of traditional nursing (Gordon 2006). As Abbott and Meerabeau



further specify, “caring is seen as a natural attribute of women and is, therefore, downgraded and devalued, not recognized or rewarded for its skills” (1998: 10). In general, “nursing is often understood as an extension of women’s care work in the home, and this belittling view is reflected in pay inequity and degrading treatment” (Stryker & Gon 2014: 212). Since several studies (Marin & Ortega Herráez 2010; Dean & Pollard 2011; Pym 2012; Bancroft 2015) suggest that public service interpreters are mostly women, these features may have an impact on their status and professionalisation project.

#### 4. The Definition of Profession: the Symbolic-Interactionist Approach

The turning point in the evolution of the discipline called Sociology of the Professions was reached when several aspects of the trait theory were pushed too far. At the end of the 1960s, certain sociologists attempted to provide numerical classifications of criteria defining a profession: Hickson and Thomas (1969), for example, sought to illustrate a hierarchy of professions with a Guttman scale using the professional attributes identified by a variety of observers. Despite the success of the experiment, “the authors found themselves unable to take account of the most important features of professionalism” (Jackson 1970), which left out of consideration professions such as teaching, nursing and social work, defined as semi-professions. This method proved counterproductive mainly because the occupational status of other professions such as teaching was measured by sociologists against the criteria of the most successful examples of professionalisation (medicine and law) and found teaching and several other professions largely wanting (Hargreaves & Goodson 2003).

Around the end of the 1960s, therefore, the structuralist-functionalist explanations of the professions began to be severely criticised. Despite Wilenky’s theorisations concerning ‘the professionalisation of everyone’, in a world characterised by increasing fragmentation and specialisation of the workforce, the term ‘professional’ began to be extended to an increasing number of occupations. This process is part of the phenomenon of the “new work order”, whereby the term *professional* is included in a “discourse system” which links the members of different professions sharing the same work ideology, education and forms of socialisation (Kong 2014: 1). The new assumptions concerning the discourse of the professions have led sociologists to conceptualise alternative paths to professionalisation, such as the *flexible professionalism*, characterised by a broader sense of professional community, which replaces the scientific certainty of knowledge established by the trait theory with “common agreements and certainties about professional knowledge and standardised practices” achievable at local level (Hargreaves & Goodson 2003: 9). Currently, this professionalisation model is thought to prove more fruitful for those occupations whose professionalism was not fully recognised by the trait theory, such as, among others, teaching.

Sociological analyses carried out in the post-structuralist period (Freidson 1986) have demonstrated that not only do the features of the professions evolve over the years, but there are also conflicts within the professions themselves. Hence, the argument of homogeneity and stability used by functionalist sociologists was questioned. The main topic challenged by opponents of functionalist theories was that, with the rise in the number of aspiring professionalising occupations, the boundaries

supposed to distinguish professions from other types of employment were becoming increasingly blurred.<sup>12</sup> Another argument brought to the fore by post-structuralists was that some of the main traits attributed to professions were not accurately defined: for instance, functionalist theorists argued that professionals had to receive a long period of specialised training, but as Freidson (1989) suggested, it was never stated how long, how theoretical and how specialised it had to be. Furthermore, according to Larson (1977), the definition of service orientation was even more complex, because it implicitly took for granted that the behaviour of professionals was somehow more ethical than that of people carrying out other occupations, an assumption which has never been tested empirically. Therefore, a new perspective on the professions was adopted when sociologists began to conceive professions more as “natural concepts fraught with ideology” (*ibid.*: xi) than as objects of investigation characterised by a set of clear-cut traits. More recent approaches to the study of professions have postulated that the term has to be understood as a *folk concept*, deriving from popular representations (Dingwall 2012: 14). Freidson argues that, rather than “defining” professions, sociologists “would do better to devote themselves to the study and explication of the way ordinary members of particular occupations invoke and employ the term [profession] during the course of their everyday activities, to study how such members ‘accomplish’ professions independently of sociologists’ definitions” (2004: 21). This new method of analysis “attempts to develop better means of understanding and interpreting what is conceived of as a concrete, changing, historical and national phenomenon” (*ibid.*). Consequently, sociologists embracing this theory argue that there is no single, truly explanatory trait or feature able to group under the umbrella-term “profession” all the occupations existing today (Dingwall & Lewis 1983), as their basic assumption is that one cannot determine what a profession is in an absolute sense. As Bourdieu argues, a profession

is a folk concept which has been uncritically smuggled into scientific language [...]. It is the social product of a historical work of construction of a group and of a representation of groups that has surreptitiously slipped into the science of this very group [...]. The category of “professions” [...] grasps at once a mental category and a social category, socially produced only by superseding or obliterating all kinds of economic, social, ethnic differences and contradictions which make the “profession” of “lawyer” a space of contradiction and struggle (1989: 37-38).

By stating that a profession is not only a sociological product, but also a “mental category” produced in a specific social context, the sociologist underlines that the term should take into consideration moral attributes rather than economic incentives. According to Becker (1970), a profession does not pertain exclusively to the domain of social scientists, because members of the profession employ the term “profession” to describe themselves and laypeople use it to refer to certain kinds of work and not to others. In this way, *profession* acquires another kind of meaning. While functionalist sociologists described the professions as boxes containing a series of elements (the above-mentioned “traits”), symbolical approaches were more prone to describe professions as symbols, representing “what people have in mind when they say an occupation is a *profession*” (*ibid.*: 93). As Becker adds, the symbol is “a standard to which they [laypeople, A/N] compare occupations in deciding their moral worth. It

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<sup>12</sup> Wilensky’s theories about the “professionalization of everyone” suggest that the so-called “new professions” would be hybrids combining professional and non-professional orientations (1964).

represents consensus in society about what certain kinds of work groups *ought* to be like, though it is not an accurate picture of any reality” (1972: 187). Despite the plethora of opinions as to whether an occupation could be really defined as a profession, Becker (1970) points out that there is general agreement on the elements characterising a profession as more ethically praiseworthy than others. The scholar further adds that moral characteristics are pursued by virtually all kinds of occupations: when claiming for a higher status, members of the semi-professions try to advance their moral and ethical standards rather than other criteria of the professions. As a consequence

the symbol of the ideal profession consists of a set of ideas about the kind of work done by a real profession, its relation with members of other professions, the internal relations of its own members, its relations with clients and the general public, the character of its own members’ motivations, and the kind of recruitment and training necessary for its perpetuation (*ibid.*: 93).

An interesting part of this passage refers both to the internal relations of the members of the profession and the relations professionals have with their clients, which recall the theories formulated by Durkheim (cf. May 1996) concerning the moral dimension of a profession. Every professional group has a certain level of authoritativeness, achieved not only with education and standardised methods of recruitment, but also through consensus on the professional group’s objectives, defined by Rudvin (2015) as a sense of collective identity. The symbolic approach portrays professionals as a group wielding high power and *deciding* how to use it. In most cases, they use it in the best interests of people, although this feature does not apply to all practitioners. The social objectives pursued by medicine are often presented as a case in point, for keeping society healthy is seen as one of the most significant tasks that guarantee social equilibrium. The reasons why medicine is seen as the most popular symbolic embodiment of a profession could be found in clients being convinced that the services offered by physicians are not only competent, but also unselfish. The doctors’ body of knowledge entails a great deal of power because it has the potential to solve a specific social problem, but it could also be potentially dangerous if it is used to benefit third parties or themselves. Nevertheless, the way the *symbol* of the profession is portrayed by laypeople shows a group whose primary interest is the common good of society and whose professional activities are governed by a code of ethics, which is enforced by professional associations. This is one of the reasons why professional associations are seen as paramount guarantors of professionalism and ethical behaviour.

Another important aspect is represented by the professional’s decision-making power, a distinguishing element marking the differences between high and low status professions. The higher the decision-making power of the professionals, the higher the level of responsibility when carrying out a task. As far as the interpreting profession is concerned, Baker and Saldanha (2009: 83) argue that dialogue interpreters have a great deal of power which is not, however, a real decision-making power and could not be compared to the institutional power exercised by doctors, lawyers, etc. They are the real decision-makers who sometimes share their power with interpreters and other times enter in conflict with them for the attainment of such power. In turn, interpreters decide whether to position themselves as a submissive and passive element in the communication or as an authoritative institutional

voice.<sup>13</sup> In this case, the symbol attached to interpreters by laypersons corresponds roughly to that of a technical professional who mechanically repeats utterances (and adopts the *try to translate as faithfully as possible* approach) rather than an active decision-maker constructing meaning through his/her agency (Donovan 2011). If this is the way laypeople perceive the interpreter's work, how do interpreters perceive themselves as a professional group? Do they believe in the social importance of their work and, if so, to what extent?

The symbolic approach would prove fruitful to analyse the subjective perceptions of the interpreting profession in aspects such as the difference between status and prestige, the difference between subjective and objective perceptions of status and the relationship between positioning and role and status and role. The most important aspect of this method aims to assess the degree of social esteem that a specific occupation has in society, i.e. its *prestige*, attributed "on grounds that have nothing to do with the professions' distinctiveness, such as the high income and the upper-middle-class status of professionals" (Larson 1977: xi).

#### 4.1 Status and Prestige: Two Different Concepts

One of the most widespread misinterpretations of the concept of *status* is that it is often confused with *prestige*. Although the two terms are often used interchangeably, in sociology status and prestige fall into two completely different domains: status is determined by objective institutional and economic parameters, whereas prestige is influenced by social and symbolically functional codes. According to Ollivier (2000: 441), status could be regarded as a parameter which gives general information about the desirability of an occupation in terms of material rewards, whereas prestige refers to the moral qualities attributed to a profession enhanced by the symbolic-interactionist approach. The close relationship between the concepts of status and prestige is also shown in functionalist theories suggesting that every *status* position in the social hierarchy conveys a certain degree of social *prestige* (Stolley 2005; Smith 2013; Andersen, Taylor & Logio 2014).

According to sociologists Macionis and Plummer (2008), Weber was the first to differentiate *status* from *prestige*: while Marx believed that social prestige and power exclusively depend on economic position, Weber pointed out that "an individual might have high standing on one dimension of inequality but a lower position on another. For example, bureaucratic officials might wield considerable power, yet have little wealth and social prestige" (*ibid.*: 250). Although the main markers of professional status – education and income – reflect a certain economic and social power and indicate an individual's social rank, Weber said that the social importance of a profession did not depend exclusively on the above-mentioned parameters. Indeed, although possession of wealth generally gives high status, an avid finance manager and a school teacher enjoy different social prestige in the eyes of society (cf. Giddens 2006). In this sense, social prestige is linked to the concepts of *respect* and *social esteem*, attributed by the general public on the basis of the social importance accorded to a profession. According to Linda Hargreaves,

<sup>13</sup> Baker and Saldanha also state that this confusion about the way interpreters should "position" themselves leads to role conflict. Although this assumption cannot be entirely rejected, a distinction between *positioning* and *social role* has to be made (see paragraph 4.3.1 in this chapter).

prestige is defined as “influence, reputation or popular esteem derived from characteristics, achievements and associations” (2009: 217). Years before, sociologist Hoyle (2001) gave a more detailed definition, providing a distinction between:

- ✎ **Occupational Status:** the category to which knowledgeable groups (e.g. civil servants, politicians, social scientists, etc.) allocate a particular occupation in the social scale;
- ✎ **Occupational Prestige:** the public perception of the relative position of an occupation in a hierarchy of occupations;
- ✎ **Occupational Esteem:** the regard in which an occupation is held by the general public by dint of personal qualities which members are perceived as bringing to their core task. Dedication, competence and care are the main three qualities determining occupational esteem.

In the light of which, the prestige of a profession is not only determined by “knowledgeable groups”, but also by the way laypeople evaluate it. In line with social psychologist Wertheimer (Luchins & Luchins 1978), Hoyle argues that prestige is assigned by laypeople according to subjective and emotional criteria, as the desire for social recognition is one of the basic, innate characteristics of mankind (2001). In line with the view of the profession as a symbol, Bourdieu and Thompson (1991) argue that prestige falls into the domain of *symbolic capital*, an approach in which the role played by external and irrational components in determining social esteem is taken into consideration.

A survey (Harris Interactive 2009) carried out in the U.S. showed that the social prestige of fire-fighters increased substantially after the events of 9/11. The questionnaire outcome showed that a profession considered to have a high social value is not necessarily a highly-paid job or a job requiring a solid academic background. In the light of which, a prestigious profession could be said to represent the institutionalisation of altruistic values: medical doctors treat diseases, lawyers and judges ensure that the law is upheld, teachers contribute to the spreading of knowledge and interpreters help people who speak different languages to communicate. However, too often has conference interpreting been considered a fascinating but mechanical activity, both by the general public and academia itself, as the interest in the neurological and cognitive aspects of interpreting developing in the 1970s has demonstrated. On the contrary, interpreting is not just to be regarded as a profession in terms of remuneration, level of education and fame, but also as an expression of the social value of mutual understanding. Public service interpreters embody the inconsistency between the high social value of the services they provide – which endows them with a high degree of prestige intended as moral worthiness – and the low socio-economic status they enjoy. Therefore, a sharper focus on the moral characteristics of interpreting may also help shed light on the social purpose pursued by conference interpreters, which is why the present study aims at eliciting information on interpreters’ views about the social importance of their work.

### 4.2 The *Looking-Glass Self* and the Public Perception of the Profession

Another perspective gained from the post-structuralist approach to the study of the professions –which draws on the theories advanced by Cooley at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – concerns the way the

symbol of the profession is perceived by laypeople. More recently, McIntyre (2013), pointed out that a person's self grows out of society's interpersonal interactions and the perceptions of others. The theory of the *looking glass self* describes how an individual's self-concept is the result of communication and interaction with others; therefore, Cooley argues that individuals evaluate themselves on the basis of how they think that society perceives and evaluates them. In turn, the individual develops a self-concept of who (s)he is. According to several sociologists (Manna & Chakraborti 2010), the looking glass self is a social product which develops with social interaction. The process leading to the development of self-awareness was described by Cooley as divided into three phases: “the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgement of that appearance; the imagination of this judgement and some sort of feeling, such as pride or mortification” (Baumeister 1999: 26). This idea of the perception of self had been further honed by Mead (1934), who extended the ideas of self-concepts to role-taking – “a process by which a person mentally assumes the role of another person or group in order to understand the world from that person's point of view” (Kendall 2015: 83). In this process, individuals take as their model those individuals whose esteem and approval are particularly desired. They are called *significant others*, and constitute a point of reference for the construction of identity. On the other hand, the *generalised other* represents a combination of other people's views constituting the feedback on individuals' actions and reflecting the values of society. By way of example, the *significant other* for a nurse could be a head physician, whereas the *generalised other* reflects the opinions of patients, other colleagues and physicians.

In this study, interpreters are asked to evaluate the perception of the *generalised other*, which is represented by the values and understanding of society. This method of analysis has already been applied to the study of self-perception of nurses (Walker *et al.* 2012) and accountants (Neimark *et al.* 2010). As for the translation professions, Tyulenev (2014: 52), wrote that “translators and interpreters are likely to conceive of themselves as being influenced by their clients, audience and society as a whole”. In so doing, the scholar referred to the definition given by Simeoni (1998) about the subservience of the translator which, according to Sela-Sheffy (2008; 2011), may have contributed to the low status translators believe they enjoy. Similarly, the myth of the invisible interpreter, challenged by several scholars especially in the field of public service interpreting (Angelelli 2004; Valero-Garcés & Martin 2008; Valero-Garcés 2012), might have had an impact on the way society perceives interpreters and, in turn, on the way they conceive themselves as professionals.<sup>14</sup> However, since the looking-glass self is made up of individuals' perceptions of how others see them, it may not accurately reflect what the generalised others believe.

In the case of interpreters, *significant others* could be colleagues, clients, speakers and service providers, whereas the generalised others could be the people outside the profession. As far as the interpreting profession is concerned, studies have demonstrated that contrasting opinions on interpreting have been advanced; Kurz (1986a) asked senior high-school students and first-year T&I

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<sup>14</sup> A few years before the study by Angelelli, Berk-Seligson (1990) demonstrated that the interpreter is not invisible, especially in legal settings: first of all, because (s)he has to take the oath and second because often the magistrates address the interpreter directly. Third, if communication breaks down, it is almost always the interpreter's responsibility.



students (who may be regarded as *generalised others* in that they have not yet entered the profession) to compare the status of interpreters with that of other professions. The result was that both groups related the status of conference interpreters to that of lawyers and scientists, whereas interpreters related themselves to journalists (see paragraph 3.1 in this chapter). Nevertheless, the opinions of laypeople (i.e. the *generalised other*) on the interpreting profession have hardly been investigated.

Understanding the way the interpreting profession is represented and understood by laypeople is crucial to take stock of the way in which the profession has evolved over time; in turn, it could lead to a greater understanding of the interpreters' professional identity. As Olin points out, a good public image of a profession is not just a cosmetic matter, but "is important to the vitality, effectiveness, acceptance, and funding of the profession" (2013: 93). The more a profession is perceived positively by the public, "the more likely it is to gain support for its programmes, to have its services utilized, to maintain morale, to attract recruits and to have its voice heard" (Reid & Misener 2001: 194). Despite the lack of reliable evidence on the public perception of the interpreting profession, sociological studies carried out on other occupations – such as social work – found that the public has confused ideas about the professional role of social workers and that "a vaguely negative connotation of social work seems to have been the stereotype" (Condie *et al.* 1978: 47). Therefore, the negative or hazy public perception of professionals by the general public could have negative consequences on their self-perceived status, above all "in a society which sets great store by the symbols of office, role differentiation and other outward manifestations of status" (Bowden & Wijasuriya 1994: 189). Research has also shown that, when the public rarely interacts with a professional category, its views on the profession are largely influenced by the mass media. In her study on the public perception of social workers, Gibelman illustrated that when lawyers and physicians were featured in TV shows and films, their professional qualifications and ethical behaviours were accentuated, whereas social workers were often depicted as "uneducated and bumbling, if not outright laughable" (2004: 332). In this case, the biased representation of social workers did reinforce the negative stereotypes attributed to the whole professional category. A survey on media portrayals of teachers (Hargreaves *et al.* 2007; 2009) revealed a similar outcome. Hargreaves (2009) also observed that, if the public has a distorted perception of a profession, practitioners will be less likely to enact their social role. This means that the way *status* is perceived influences interpreters' and laypeople's beliefs on *role*, which is why the study of the relationship between these two sociological concepts deserves an in-depth analysis.

### 4.3 The Relationship between Status and Role in the Interpreting Profession<sup>15</sup>

The interpreter's role is undoubtedly one of the most widely discussed issues in Interpreting Studies. Controversies about interpreters' perceptions of their role have raged unabated for over a decade, showing that the interpreter's role is generally perceived among scholars to be unclear and ill-defined, especially in public service settings. As Gentile A., Ozolins and Vasilakakos postulate, "a kaleidoscope of

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<sup>15</sup> The section comprising paragraphs 4.3, 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 has been partly published in the paper "The Conflict between Interpreters' Role and Professional Status: A Sociological Perspective" in Valero-Garcés, Carmen, Bianca Vitalaru & Esperanza Mojica López (Eds.) *(Re)Visiting Ethics and Ideology in Situations of Conflict*, Alcalá de Henares, Universidad de Alcalá Publicaciones, 195-205.

roles is not conducive to the creation of professional identity, ethical standards and esprit de corps amongst interpreters [...] we regard it as axiomatic that clarification of the role of the interpreter will lead to increased professionalism and a better service to clients” (1996: 32). However, interpreters’ status, a key element for the study of role, has been largely ignored in interpreting research, as a large and growing body of literature has investigated the interpreter’s role mainly from a dialogue-based approach (Wadensjö 1998; Baraldi & Gavioli 2007). Evidence gathered from recent studies on the status of translators (Pym 2012; Ruokonen 2013; 2016) seems to suggest that a blurred definition of the translational professions has a negative impact on the development of a clear professional role, which is linked not only to a set of interactional and dialogic factors, but also to professional patterns. As Ozolins underlines, issues of ethics and role – which develop regardless of the setting(s) in which interpreting is practiced – could be dealt with if interpreters take two fundamental aspects into consideration:

Internally, the profession needs to bring an increasingly diverse group of practitioners to see themselves as having a certain role and identifiable professional commitment, including ethical commitment; externally, there has to be a role perception among non-interpreters needing language transfer that professional interpreters can add value by enhancing communication and acting ethically (2015a: 320).

In the light of which, self-awareness of role is a fundamental sign indicating interpreters’ ethical commitment to the profession which, in turn, reveals a higher awareness of the function they play not only in the single mediated interaction, but also in society at large. The rationale guiding a detailed analysis of the relationship between status and role was that interpreters with a clearer-cut status (i.e. conference interpreters) would give a more consistent definition of their role, whereas a professionalising occupation like public service interpreting – whose practitioners have a more complex view of their status – still lacks a defined perception of role. As Angelelli (2004) points out, working settings have a great impact in determining the way interpreters see their role in the interaction, and the flurry of (often contradictory) arguments expressed in codes of ethics do not help figure out how interpreters are supposed to behave depending on the circumstances. Building on these premises, the hypothesis that a lack of defined role stems, among other things, from a low self-perception of status could be advanced. As Oetzel and Ting-Toomey argue, nurses (semi-professionals to whom public service interpreters compare themselves) experience role conflict because patients expect them to be nurturing and caring, but doctors often see them as the keepers of the rules. Therefore, “they need to distance themselves from patients to be perceived as legitimate by doctors while simultaneously feeling pressured to make eye contact, listen with empathy, and show concern for the patients” (2013: 442). The same applies to public service interpreters, who find themselves in conflicting situations in which the expectations of the service providers and those of the minority language speaker do not coincide, an aspect which merits discussion.

#### 4.3.1 Status as a Determinant of Role

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (Scott & Marshall 2009: 654), role “highlights the social expectations attached to particular status positions”. The definition illustrates that there is a striking



correlation between role and status. Roles indicate a social position, and characterise “the enactment of the social structures under which the interaction takes place” (Henriksen 2008: 44), whereas status indicates “the manifestation of an individual’s status” (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee 2014: 14). Giddens (1979: 118) argues that role is a normative concept, detached from conversational patterns, because it is made up of the attitudes that others expect of the occupant of a given position or status. However, one question that needs to be asked is on what basis these social expectations are built up. According to Turner (2011: 415), social expectations related to role are “associated with the boundaries of status and identity”, which explains why an analysis of the interpreter’s role cannot be separated from the study of professional status.

The connection between role and status was first studied by Linton (1936), who maintained that role is a set of duties and obligations associated with a status position within a group. The main tenets of role theory point out that “role and status are quite inseparable. There are no roles without statuses or statuses without roles” (Harigopal 1995: 5); hence, status is what a person is in relation to others, and role is what s/he does. Even though the concept of role has been criticised for being like a suit of armour imprisoning the individual in a rigid pattern of pre-determined actions (Mason 2009), most sociologists agree that statuses are occupied, whereas roles are performed (Ferrante 2014: 128). In the light of this view, it is status that is fixed, since it is personified, whereas role, that is performed, has a rather dynamic connotation, which is why an increased awareness of role may help the interpreter to avoid continuous position negotiations during the interaction. Giddens (1979: 118) also points out that individuals’ identity and roles are shaped by status, which is described as “a combination of social criteria such as occupation, kin, relation, age, etc.” Occupation is one of the main indicators of a person’s status, which defines the individual’s position in the social structure; for instance, the status of judge cannot be replaced by that of architect. Once an individual’s professional status is widely acknowledged, roles become internalised patterns of behaviour that are constantly repeated in daily practices. According to this view, it is status that determines role, especially in the professional field.

In well-established professions, the two concepts do not usually conflict, but when the professional status is unclear, standards of codes of ethics do not clearly frame the role that these professionals are supposed to play (Zucker-Conde 2009), which is what happens in the interpreting sphere, with the *vexata quaestio* of the gap between “the role that is prescribed for interpreters (through codes and rules, both inside and outside the classroom) and the role that unfolds in the practice of interpreting (in hospitals, in meetings, in the courts, at schools, and in the community at large)” (Angelelli 2004: 2). Such discrepancy leads to role conflict, because “the higher the status incongruence of a category, the higher the role incongruence” (Sinha 2003: 227). Consider the role expectations regarding two professionals, a physician and an interpreter, in the following examples: physician is a professional status, a position in a social structure, which comprises many roles determining the way doctors are supposed to behave in relation to people who occupy other statuses (nurses, patients, colleagues, etc.). The role obligations that doctors have towards patients indicate that they are expected to make diagnoses, treat them, respect their privacy, etc. Patients, in turn, expect doctors to ask questions about their health, perform an examination, make diagnoses and prescribe treatment, which indicates that when professional status is

defined, “power and distribution of power are already embedded in role and legitimated by structure” (Henriksen 2008: 53). The sociological phenomenon is referred to as “role crystallisation” (*ibid.*: 60), and indicates the process of structural legitimisation in the enactment of certain tasks.

In conference interpreting, there has been an evolution in the way the interpreter’s role is conceived by AIIC: as Zwischenberger points out, in the 1980s working definition of AIIC, the interpreter was defined as a *responsible linguistic intermediary*, whereas in the 2004 definition, interpreters were considered to be *professional language and communication experts*, which shows that “a shift from the linguistic intermediary to a focus on professionalism appears to have occurred” (2011: 122). The results of her large-scale survey carried out on 704 conference interpreters showed that the institutional portraits of the role interpreters are supposed to play are an integral part of socialisation and professional identity. Nevertheless, the study revealed that the way the interpreter’s role is portrayed in codes of ethics or in representations of professional associations is still not clear-cut. This aspect is even more controversial in the field of public service interpreting, as shown by Hale’s list of the five roles public service interpreters play (Hale 2007): 1) Advocate for the minority language speaker; 2) Advocate for the institution or service provider; 3) Gatekeeper (who controls the mediation by reinforcing or excluding the information provided by the speakers); 4) Facilitator of communication, who feels responsible for the outcome of the interaction; 5) Faithful renderer of the speakers’ utterances. The classification of the roles interpreters enact during mediation shows that, whether these roles are “prescribed” by codes of ethics or “deduced” by the interpreter’s attitude during mediation, they are still contradictory and in contrast one with the other. In the field of public service interpreting, Roberts advocates that:

A better understanding of the roles of the community interpreters is needed, both to service providers and to individual clients. However, the role of the community interpreter today is ill-defined or too vast. He is often expected to be not only a mediator between languages, but also a helpmate and guide, cultural broker and even advocate and conciliator. Role combination certainly constitutes a problem for community interpreters (1997: 20).

Without going into the details of the controversial field of role as analysed in Interpreting Studies, one of the most remarkable examples of their status being seen as unclear is found in the legal field, where the court requires there to be an alternation of different interpreters through the various stages of a criminal trial (see paragraph 4.3.3 in this chapter). One of the justifiable reasons for the procedure is related to issues of privacy, but there is another concealed motivation, which has also emerged from interviews with legal experts (Mikkelsen 2008): legal professionals fear that interpreters could be biased. When an interpreter is asked to translate confidential conversations with prosecutors, defence lawyers and their clients, there is a general impression that “the interpreter colludes with either party” (Palmer 2007: 20). Even though “no one would want a biased interpreter rendering services in a court proceeding, yet, the nature of the interpreting process requires that the interpreter establishes a rapport with the individuals with whom she is working” (Mikkelsen 2008: 83). Nevertheless, the prejudice of the biased interpreter clearly demonstrates a lack of recognition of the interpreter’s professionalism, since, for example, a defendant would never suspect that his guilt might influence his solicitor, even if the lawyer perfectly knows his client’s condition. The bond of trust which characterises fully-fledged

professions is one of the interpreting profession's missing links, and it creates a huge gap between the immense potential power held by the interpreter to change the course of an event and his undervalued professional status, whose enhancement is hampered by unqualified persons who happen to be recruited on the basis of a certain language combination. As Srivastava (2007: 66) puts it, the trust of the client is based on the expectations that the provider of a service will be knowledgeable, an aspect which has been eroded in the relationship between interpreters and their clients. By way of example, the growing knowledge of English in conference settings might lead clients to think they know what interpreters are doing, and, therefore, they allow themselves to judge and correct the interpreter if they believe that (s)he has not translated correctly. In public service settings, the bond of exclusive trust between language professionals and service providers has not yet been fully established, apart from a few "success stories", mostly occurring in those countries that have developed consolidated accreditation and training systems.

A comparison between the New York Lawyer's Code of Professional Responsibility (2007) and the Massachusetts Code of Professional Conduct for Court Interpreters of the Trial Court (2009) supports this assumption, since the word "bias" appears five times in the interpreters' code and just once in the lawyers'. Lawyers "should avoid bias and condescension toward, and treat with dignity and respect, all parties, witnesses, lawyers, court employees, and other persons involved in the legal process" (2007: 8), which means that they are expected to treat every person in the court respectfully and, above all, impartially. There is no mention of the fact that they could have a prejudice against the defendant, or that somebody may have a bias against them, because it is implicit that the pattern of behaviour expected of them is engrained in the nature of their professional task, which is that of defending their client against accusations. Lawyers' acknowledged status serves as a sort of "seal of approval", a guarantee that their role will be performed adequately. As far as interpreters are concerned, the following statement is made: "In the event that a court interpreter becomes aware that a participant in a proceeding views him/her as being biased, the court interpreter should disclose that knowledge to the appropriate court authority" (2009.: 5). This remark clashes with what is stated in the first paragraph of the Code of Conduct, where interpreters are defined as "highly skilled professionals who fulfil an essential role in the administration of justice" (*ibid.*: 1), and is in sharp contrast with the very idea of professionalism, which involves the performance of an intellectual operation with great individual responsibility. As Burris (1998: 6) reports, interpreters feel like "gum on the bottom of somebody's shoe", especially when they are working in the courtroom setting. In line with these views, Morris notes that, in the English-speaking world, legal attitudes to court interpreting are ambiguous, as they tend to reject the alien element, which is represented by the non-English speaking person:

The law's denigratory attitude to foreigners, and its related distaste at having to deal with the problems which arise from their presence in the host country, exclude its making proper interpreting arrangements for its dealings with them. In this way, its dire fears about defective communication become self-fulfilling (1995: 28).

Although it has been demonstrated that the interpreter is a fundamental part of the courtroom structure, legal players "underestimate, not to say denigrate, the value and importance of interpreters and of interpreting in general" (Lipkin 2010: 87). The attitude is shown by the fact that "officers define the

interpreter's role mainly in terms of invisibility, neutrality, impartiality and accuracy of interpretation. They say that the interpreter's task is 'just interpret'" (Tryuk 2012). The assumptions lead to believe that, where there is no defined status, the interpreter's activity, and consequently his/her role, appears blurred and vague, and the issues create the conditions for interpreters to experience role conflict and ambiguity.

#### 4.3.2 The Interpreter's Role Conflict and its Professional Causes

In 1976 Anderson published one of the first papers ever written on the sociological issues concerning the interpreter's role ([1976], in Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2002). He was the first to stress that interpreters do not just experience cognitive overload, but also suffer from role conflict, stemming from the pivotal position they occupy in the interaction. As Pöchhacker (2004) points out, the professionalisation of conference interpreting has led to a codification of the interpreter's role which has been conceptualised as performed by a non-person in a neutral position, hence the interpreter's function has always been compared with that of an "invisible conduit". As Monacelli points out, the physical conditions in which simultaneous interpreting is performed have contributed to the impression of the mechanic nature of the task. In the classic conference setting, she argues, "the interpreter is literally invisible – placed in a soundproof, glass-fronted booth [...]" (Monacelli 2009: XI), which is why those who have a scarce knowledge of how interpreting works could have the impression that it is an automatic process.

In public service settings, several studies (Valero Garcés & Martin 2008) on doctors' and judges' perceptions of the interpreter's role have demonstrated that some of them agree with a participatory stance, while others prefer the interpreter to act as a machine; therefore, the interpreter (who in many cases is not a professional) does not know how (s)he should behave, given the delicate nature of certain situations and the fact that the majority of Codes of Ethics propose an unrealistic and anachronistic view of her professional role. Role conflict occurs in this case because interpreters find themselves in a real dilemma, where any decision they make may have negative repercussions for one party or another. As Mason highlights, "the interpreter is subject to conflicting pressures from employers, clients and other participants" (2001: i). According to Rahim, role ambiguity sets in when "the information about the expectations and, above all, the consequences of a certain role performance either does not exist or, if it exists, it is not properly communicated" (2011: 71). Role ambiguity is only the prelude to role conflict since, according to role conflict theory, every person operating in a formal organisational structure (a court, a hospital or a police station) should have specified tasks or position responsibilities providing guidance to those who work in that setting. If interpreters do not know what they are expected to accomplish, and how they will be judged, they will find decision-making difficult and will have to rely on a trial-and-error approach to meet the expectations of the other parties in the communication (cf. Rizzo *et al.* 1970: 151). In other words, they will be forced to negotiate both their position and role, respectively within and without the interpreted interaction. The interpreters' role conflict is not just the outcome of the participants' opposing demands during the interaction, but is also the result of conflicting perceptions of their professional status, which originate in the professional environment they serve in. A study carried out in India (Kumar Lal & Khanna 1988: 319-334) demonstrated that there is a clear correlation

between those who are regarded as “semi-professionals” and the role conflict they experience. The phenomenon was studied in the 1980s by carrying out semi-structured interviews with nurses, who are considered a semi-professional group with a low status (see paragraph 3.2 in this chapter). The data showed conflicting role expectations and discrepancies between the ideal and the actual role performed by nurses in hospitals, as both doctors and patients tended to define nurses’ role in ways that suited them best. The same occurs with interpreters, who are often told what they have to do (“Just translate word for word what I say” [Dean & Pollard 2005: 261]) or find themselves in an inter-sender conflict, which takes place when the role behaviour required by one sender is inconsistent with the demands of another. As Swabey and Gajewski Mickelson argue, if the interpreter lacks a clear understanding of his/her role, (s)he makes decisions inconsistent with standard practices in the field, hence role conflict occurs (2008: 52), which also happens when the police authority appoints the interpreter as an *ausiliario di polizia giudiziaria* (adjunct criminal investigation officer) (Vigoni 1995: 337-412), as in the case of Italy, whereas the defendant expects him/her to perform the “advocate role” (Hale 2007: 45), thus determining what has been referred to as a “general professional identity crisis” (Maier 2007: 4). A possible solution to the conflict can be found in the process of socialisation, which has been defined as “a process by which a lay person is being adopted into a profession” (Lai & Lim 2012: 31), and is concerned with the learning of the norms, attitudes, behaviours, roles and values which are unique to a profession. In the case of public service interpreting, it may be suggested that the values interpreters should foster are integration, fairness, equity and social justice, and their professional mission should be that of contributing to the creation of a fairer world.

### 5. Status in Interpreting Studies. An Overview of Literature

The references to professional status in interpreting studies literature, scattered across several studies, demonstrate that the subject has never been systematically, extensively and empirically studied, if not in comparison with the status of translators (Dam & Zethsen 2013). The methodology adopted by translation scholars has fallen into the category of Cultural Studies rather than into the Sociology of the Professions: the many references made to the “translator’s habitus” (Simeoni 1998; Wilss 1999; Wolf & Fukari 2007; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008; Tymoczko 2010a; Liu 2011; Vorderobermeier 2014) show that much attention has been paid to the symbolic capital and agency of the translator (Buzelin 2013: 192). The few in-depth studies on the translator’s status adopting the methodological framework of the Sociology of the Professions have only been conducted in recent years (Dam & Zethsen 2011; 2013; 2015; Pym 2012).

In line with most of the literature on the status of translators, the status of interpreters has never been analysed with the lens of the trait theory (MacDonald 1995; Baeza 2005). On the contrary, the approaches of the trait theory have been criticised because they “assign much weight to formal, institutional and economic factors of the professions” (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011: 4). Yet, opinions and hypotheses on status have always been expressed on the basis of economic parameters (the assumption that conference interpreters earn more than public service interpreters) and of other social aspects such as education, visibility, power/influence (Dam and Zethsen 2013), the main determinants

adopted in sociological theorisations of the professions, showing that a two-tiered approach combining socio-economic and cultural parameters is needed to confirm or reject those assumptions. Literature in the field of interpreting tends to draw a distinction between the status of conference and public service interpreters. As Setton argues:

For most of history, conference interpreting has enjoyed a higher occupational status than interpreting in public services [...]. This can be attributed to the difficulty of SI, to the perceived scarcity of qualified practitioners [...] to the higher status given to international events than to intra-social encounters such as welfare, medical or legal interviews; but also to the interest in preserving a certain mystique, and the claim to special knowledge and skills, that are among the hallmarks of an organised and autonomous profession (2010: 72).

Similarly, De Pedro Ricoy maintains that “it is a well-known, demonstrable fact that conference interpreters enjoy a higher professional status than PSI interpreters, which is reflected in their long-standing recognition as members of professional associations (and/or their status within multinational organisations) and their higher pay rates” (2010: 110). These hypotheses suggest that the status of conference interpreters has always regarded as very high (Pöchhacker 2004), whereas the social embeddedness of public service interpreting, “together with the status of its often disadvantaged clientele, has contributed to its lack of prestige” (Corsellis 2008: 7). Assuming that these notions are true, the *extent* to which the differences exist should be investigated further. Therefore, for the sake of consistency, the literature on the status of conference and public service interpreters will be analysed separately and in chronological order.

### 5.1 Status in the Literature on Conference Interpreting

Just as the images fostered by the mass media (see chapter 1, paragraph 2.3) promoted the “feats” of the first legendary interpreters, the first representations of conference interpreting created by scholars in the field have contributed to the creation of the myth of conference interpreting. In 1952, Jean Herbert described the profession with the following words:

A conference interpreter has no doubt one of the most interesting professions of our times. He is given the opportunity of making personal contacts with the most outstanding personalities in all fields of activity and in all countries. He is called upon to travel in every part of the world under the best possible conditions and to visit a number of places to which the general public is not admitted. Owing to the very stress and fatigue inevitable entailed by interpretation, he works fewer hours than most other people and therefore enjoys more leisure. He has over his fellow conference-workers [...] the invaluable advantage of being free to do what he likes as soon as the meeting is over [...]. In addition to which, he is generally very well paid for kindly listening [...]. No wonder he is envied (*ibid.*: 84).

Despite the mythical image, the status of conference interpreters has been mostly overlooked, perhaps because interpreters have always been believed to enjoy high status, which is why in-depth investigations have seldom been carried out. The studies and references to the topic could be divided into three categories:

- 🔗 Speculative hypotheses on the status of interpreters;



- ↳ Surveys comparing translators and interpreters;
- ↳ Surveys focusing exclusively on conference interpreters;

The first group includes the first studies on the interpreters' working conditions and qualitative research on the status of conference interpreters at national level. One of the first studies investigating the interpreter's working conditions was carried out by Sanz (1931), who reported that, at a time when the United Nations and other international organisations had not yet been established, interpreters carried out other tasks or jobs to make a living. Therefore, he assumed that the interpreters' status was blurred and undefined. Although they do not focus specifically on status, prestige and job satisfaction, other small-scale studies have taken into account national perspectives: the situation in Japan presented by Kondo (1988), that of Taiwan illustrated by Tseng (1992), that of Germany illustrated by Feldweg (1996) and that of Korea showed by Choi and Lim (2002) have shed light on the interpreter's profile, though they mainly focused on the role conference interpreters play in society. Kondo explains that the relatively low status interpreters enjoy in Japan stems from the Japanese socio-cultural context. As "in Japan eloquence has never been a necessary condition for a man to be great, as it is in many other lands, people who use a lot of words to communicate are usually looked at with scorn" (1988: 73). After a thorough description of the professionalisation process of conference interpreting in Taiwan, Tseng points out that "we can hardly conclude that interpreting has become a fully-fledged profession" (1992: 147). However, Tseng also argues that, despite their relatively low status, after struggles and negotiations, practitioners in Taiwan have reached consensus on ways to obtain higher fees and better working conditions. In line with the assumptions specified by Sanz, Feldweg argues that conference interpreting falls within the domain of the "free professions", the definition of which is still "imprecise and ambiguous" (1996: 74). Nevertheless, he argues that the primary concern of a profession should be to serve the common good and maintains that conference interpreting is socially relevant: "without the service provided by conference interpreters, the current global exchange of views and information, of ideas and research would be unthinkable" (*ibid.*: 75). Hence, the scholar underlines that conference interpreting has to draw on these values to enhance its social prestige.

Choi and Lim (2002) argue that the status of a profession depends on the extent to which the skills embodied by a professional are difficult to find and can be straightforwardly replaced. For example, society needs both janitors and medical doctors, but the skills of janitors are easier to acquire and can be replaced more smoothly than those possessed by doctors, whose expertise is difficult to acquire. In Korea, the status of interpreters was considered to be relatively low until a documentary broadcast by the national television showed that the opposite was true, an aspect confirming once again that the mass media have played a crucial role in giving visibility to the profession (see chapter 1, paragraph 2.3). Nevertheless, the two authors point out that social acceptance has not gone hand in hand with economic recompense: "interpretation was viewed merely as a service provided for the client, and many interpreters found that after a few years, in spite of financial rewards, they were still viewed as professional inferiors" (2002: 627).

The survey by Ozolins (2004) on the state of interpreting practitioners in Australia, which surveyed NAATI-accredited conference and public service interpreters, provides a comprehensive overview of the

way the profession is perceived by practitioners. Both conference and public service interpreters indicate that fees have decreased and that regulation and accreditation are fundamental to protect the interpreter's status and professionalism. As one of the respondents to the NAATI questionnaire observed: "without these measures there would be lots of insecurity, uncertainty and worries in the profession. Actually it does not seem like a real profession. You feel threatened by almost everything every time" (2004: 53).

Indeed, certain interpreting scholars have hypothesised that a decline in the status of conference interpreters has taken place. In *Introducing Interpreting Studies*, Pöchhacker (2004: 173) points out that surveys carried out by AICC indicate that "the prestige of the profession has declined over the years, though this appears to have little effect on the high level of job satisfaction among conference interpreters". Although he acknowledges that a higher status means being in a stronger position to negotiate higher fees and better working conditions, Gile (2009) underlines that in the field of conference interpreting, the speakers and listeners – who often hold a high status in society – see interpreters in two ways: either as secretaries and low-level language staff or as high-status professionals. In the first case, "they are sometimes refused higher access to the speaker and to documents" (*ibid.*: 45), whereas in the second, interpreters are in a far better position to do their job well. In a survey carried out by Hale (2011) on the state of court interpreting in Australia, the relationship between the conditions in which interpreters work and the respect they receive as professionals is further underlined.

The second category of studies on status comprises the surveys comparing, among other aspects, translators' and interpreters' perceptions of status carried out by Katan (2009; 2011), Zwischenberger (2011), Setton and Guo (2011). In his study on the interpreters' and translators' *habitus*, focusing mainly on the gap between academic theories and professional practice, Katan (2009: 111) maintains that interpreters "saw themselves – and were seen by translators – as having a relatively high professional autonomy". Surprisingly, when asked to compare their status with that of other professionals, the majority of translators and interpreters answered that they had the same status as "teachers" and "secretaries" (54% of translators and 58% of interpreters), with fewer interpreters opting for "journalist" and "consultant" (less than 20%). Nevertheless, the translators interviewed in Katan's survey believe that interpreters enjoy a higher social esteem. As one respondent remarked (*ibid.*: 133), "for interpreters (thinking here mostly of conference interpreting) there is no real competition" (Business interpreter, Master in T/I, Finland). In questions concerning job satisfaction, there was little difference between interpreters and translators, who were either "pretty" (50%) or "extremely" satisfied (21%), which shows that "though they are extremely aware of their relatively low professional autonomy, this does not stop them from being pretty to extremely satisfied" (*ibid.*: 149). The general picture emerging from a second survey carried out by Katan (2011b) is that there is no awareness of what is required to turn an occupation into a fully-fledged profession (a body of T&I knowledge, more autonomy, a unified code of ethics, etc.). Overall, it appears that "the T/I group surveyed are focused on their local realities, their immediate, and very individual, developmental paths, and focused very much on the text [...] For the moment we still have an occupation rather than a fully-fledged profession" (*ibid.*: 84).



The results confirm the hypotheses advanced by Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger (2008; 2011). Drawing on the theories of the “cultural fields” (Bourdieu 1993), they analyse the translation professions in terms of spiritual added value. One of the main strategies they suggest to improve the status of these professionals is adopting an emphasis on expert knowledge, membership of professional associations, academic qualifications, etc., the typical parameters adopted by sociologists to describe the professionalisation process:

Occupations acquire professional status through a complex process that entails a struggle for unity. [...] A professional community arises with shared norms, training, working practices, and regulatory mechanisms [...] When this community is strong enough, the same values can be found in training programs, accreditation and approval processes, licensure policies and professional practice. This results in coherence, unifies the profession, sets it apart from others, and provides a means to defend it against ‘incursions’ into one or more realms of the professional community (Cochran-Smith *et al.* 2008: 990)

The results obtained in the survey by Setton and Guo (2011) confirm that interpreters – whose professional profile appears to be more clearly delineated – enjoy higher status than translators. “Twelve respondents (19%) saw interpreters as close to lawyers or management consultants [...], but only eight of them made these choices for T/Is generally” (Setton & Guo 2011: 104). However, there was general satisfaction with the interpreters’ status, which was regarded as higher than the perceived status of translators, but still rather low in the occupational prestige ladder (Ballantine & Roberts 2010). The study carried out by Zwischenberger (2011) on AIIC interpreters’ perception of their role has shown that important differences prevail in the way interpreters conceive the social importance of their work according to the variables of gender, employment status (freelance or staff) and educational level. She found, for example, that women rated their work as slightly more important than did men. The same applies to freelance interpreters and to interpreters who do not have a degree, who attribute a greater significance to their work than university graduates. These variables are equally worth investigating in the study of interpreters’ status.

The third and final category of studies in the field of status includes the studies carried out exclusively on the job satisfaction and perceived status of conference interpreters. Drawing on the results obtained by Cooper, Davies and Tung (1982), who measured the impact of occupational stress on job performance and job satisfaction, Kurz (1986a) conducted a survey on job satisfaction addressed to Austrian conference interpreters and AIIC interpreters domiciled elsewhere. 60 respondents completed the questionnaire (20 from Austria, 40 from elsewhere). The small-scale survey showed that:

- ☒ More than 70% of respondents were female;
- ☒ The average age range was 40-49 years;
- ☒ More than 50% of the interviewees had more than 20 years’ experience;
- ☒ 95% were freelance interpreters;
- ☒ More than 90% were satisfied with their income;
- ☒ More than 90% of interpreters were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their job;
- ☒ Only 50% of respondents were satisfied with the social prestige of the profession;

↳ Interpreters compared their status to that of journalists;

The findings by Kurz demonstrate that, nearly thirty years ago, conference interpreters were highly satisfied with their income and with their job in general. Nevertheless, the scholar argues that “even though conference interpreters enjoy their work, they somehow feel that it does not get the appreciation it deserves”, a comment which attempted to explain the lower score (50%) obtained by respondents as far as social prestige is concerned. An interesting finding is that the interviewed interpreters tended to compare their status to that of journalists (Austrian sample: 46.6%; international sample: 32.5%), although she underlines that the low answer frequencies obtained by the other professional groups mentioned in the question did not allow a detailed breakdown of the total answers. Another survey carried out a year later by Rojas (1987) among freelance and staff conference interpreters working in Geneva revealed that 92.7% of respondents were satisfied with their work and 80.5% were satisfied with their income, which roughly corresponds to the findings obtained by Kurz (1986).

In 2005 and in 2009, AIIC published two reports aiming at portraying the current state of conference interpreting. The first survey (2005), which collected 931 responses, is rather representative of the AIIC population, and elicited information on parameters such as: workload, market trends, modes of interpreting, languages, demand, continuing education, stress and job satisfaction. The overall results obtained for these parameters were:

- ↳ The majority of interpreters were women (3-1 ratio);
- ↳ The mean age was 49;
- ↳ The vast majority were freelance interpreters (9-1 ratio);
- ↳ The largest share of respondents (32.72%) had been working as interpreters for 15 to 20 years now;
- ↳ 34% of freelance respondents worked between 51 and 100 days, and 27% between 101 and 150 days a year; the market trend appeared to have remained stable according to 40% of respondents;
- ↳ Simultaneous remained the most widely used mode of interpreting;
- ↳ The top language pairs (by number of days) were EN>FR and FR>EN, though the demand for EN>ES was steadily rising;
- ↳ 38% of interpreters answered that they were learning new languages, which is in line with the principles of continuing education;
- ↳ The most stressful factors were: “fast speeches”, “unintelligible speakers”, “highly technical matters”, “poor air supply in booth”. Low remuneration is hardly mentioned among these factors;
- ↳ 81% of staff interpreters and 70% of freelancers declared themselves highly satisfied with their work.

The report concludes that dissatisfaction is primarily related to the changes in the working environment that restrict the interpreters' ability to do their job. The main dissatisfaction factors were “the rise of Global English that leaves many interpreters frustrated – and/or bored, if they happen to work in the English booth - and the lack or tardiness of materials to prepare properly”. The trends showed in the

2005 survey appear to have been generally confirmed by the 2009 survey (Neff 2015a), whose response trends were:

- ✎ A growing number of members was shortly to reach retirement age (staff members in particular) without a corresponding potential for replenishment, which means that AIIC needed to attract new members to the association. Neff added that the number of young AIIC candidates had dropped “from 254 in 2005 (8.5%) to only 110 (3.7%) in 2009”;
- ✎ Market trends showed that the non-agreement sector and the United Nations System were the two most volatile markets;
- ✎ The workload appeared to have plummeted in 2009 owing to the crisis: “Whereas in 2008 only 20% of freelance respondents reported that their workload had gone down, 37% of them indicated that it declined in 2009;
- ✎ The use of simultaneous appeared to have gone down slightly (86.5% in 2005 to 84.9% in 2009), whereas that of *bidule* had increased from 2.6% in 2005 to 4.5% in 2009. A growing market sector worldwide was radio and television;
- ✎ The highest remuneration rates were registered in Switzerland (mean lower rate CHF 1111/mean upper rate CHF 1324), Germany (€ 696/€ 868) and France (€ 587/€ 791). The lowest average rates were reported in South America, Israel and Mexico/Central America;
- ✎ In 2009, the most frequently used conference languages were English and French (92% & 75% of all days reported respectively). Spanish (48.7%) still remained the third most common language. The language combinations most in demand were EN>FR and FR>EN, followed by ES>EN;
- ✎ 35.6 % of respondents reported studying languages, which registered a drop compared to 2005 (38%);
- ✎ As for stress factors, in all countries/regions, fast speeches were identified as the number one stressor. Global English was the second most common source of stress among interpreters;
- ✎ Job satisfaction was high. 78.5% of respondents declared themselves to be “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their job;

The 2009 report concluded that “compared to 2005 things have not changed much, although there are some signs indicating that the general image of the conference interpreting profession among the professionals themselves is changing”. Although the two surveys are not primarily concerned with the interpreter’s professional status, the fairly high fees show general satisfaction with the profession, which is going to face a generational change. However, potentially worrying trends emerged in the second survey: the workload has shrunk owing to the 2008 global recession, fewer interpreters were engaged in continuing education and the rise of badly-spoken Globish was liable to undermine the demand for interpreters, especially in Europe.

Recently, another attempt to study the status of conference interpreters empirically was made by Dam and Zethsen (2013), who compared the perceived status of 86 interpreters and translators working for the European institutions. The reason for choosing such a sample was that “the aim was to select as homogeneous a sample of interpreters and translators as possible, with a strong professional profile and

presumably at the high end of the interpreter-/translator-status continuum”. The methodology chosen by the Danish authors fell under the criteria established by the trait theory (Jackson 1970; Hodson & Sullivan 2011): remuneration, education, visibility/fame, power/influence and importance/value to society. Despite the limited amount of respondents (only 23 interpreters), the findings obtained by Dam and Zethsen (2013) are of great interest for the present study: the hypothesis that conference interpreters have reached the highest professionalisation level was only partially supported by the questionnaire findings, whose mean rates were no higher than 3.39 points on a scale from 1 to 5 for almost all status parameters. The main differences between the two groups were that interpreters believe that people outside the profession regard interpreting as a highly skilled activity and perceive themselves as being more visible than translators. Although the survey cannot claim to be representative of the interpreting profession in general, “low to intermediate status is an inherent feature of the translation profession as a whole, since not even the supposed superstars present a top-level status profile” (Dam & Zethsen 2013: 255). In all the existing inquiries on status, an overall job satisfaction emerges, which depends mainly on the kind of work interpreters perform rather than on the external appreciation which the profession enjoys among non-interpreters. Nevertheless, while hardly any study has been carried out to assess the status of conference interpreters, the status of public service interpreters appears to be less of an object of study.

## 5.2 Status in the Literature on Public Service Interpreting

As already illustrated in the previous chapter, the evolution of conference and public service interpreting has taken two different paths of professionalisation (Pöchhacker 2007: 12), which have led to the different development of these two professions. One of the main consequences of this uneven evolution is that, while research on conference interpreting began in the 1960s, it was only at the beginning of the 1990s that the attention of interpreting scholars shifted towards public service interpreting, i.e. the disciplinary drift towards social studies referred to as “the social turn in Interpreting Studies” (Pöchhacker 2009: 40). In the literature of public service interpreting, the interpreter’s status has been analysed with three main approaches:

- ✎ Status as participation in the mediated interaction (Wadensjö 1998; Roy 2000; Rudvin 2002; Janzen 2005; Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2007; Gavioli 2009; Valero-Garcés 2010; Falbo & Straniero Sergio 2011; Baraldi & Gavioli 2012);
- ✎ Status in relation to the interpreter’s professionalisation path and the main hindrances preventing public service interpreting from becoming a full profession (Corselli 2009; Angelelli & Jacobson 2009; Ozolins 2010; Rudvin & Tomassini 2011);
- ✎ Status in relation to the interpreter’s self-perception of role (Angelelli 2004; Hale 2007; Valero-Garcés & Martin 2008; Roy & Napier 2015);

The present chapter will focus on the second and the third perspectives. Although an empirical study of the interpreters’ perception of status has been lacking in public service interpreting, the fact that it has

always been attributed a low status is demonstrated by one of the first definitions given to this kind of interpreting:

Any interpretation provided by non-professional interpreters. Amateur interpreters provide service in hospitals, public meetings, medical offices, stores, social service agencies, schools, churches, parent organizations, police departments, real estate officers [...]” (González, Vásquez & Mikkelson 1991: 29).

A few years later, Mikkelson argued that public service interpreting “is the least prestigious and the most misunderstood branch of the interpreting profession” (1996: 127), even though, of course it is not less difficult or less important than conference interpreting. Other references to the status of public service interpreters could be found in Laster and Taylor (1994: 17), who argue that the professional subordination of interpreters is expressed and maintained in courts through several practices: the interpreter is neither duly informed of the topic of the mediation, nor (s)he is provided with relevant information. According to Laster and Taylor (1994: 17), “this is part of an ongoing struggle in which interpreters strive to assert their independent professional identity and lawyers project a counter-image of interpreters as mere assistants, with a role and status inferior to that of their own”.

As Roberts (1997: 11) points out, definitions of public service interpreting often contain the words “assistance” or “service”, which are rarely used for conference and business interpreting. The view is shared by Gehrke (1989), who stressed that public service interpreting was a combination of interpreting and social work and compared it to other “caring professions” such as nursing, midwifing, social work and, to some extent, teaching (Abbott & Meerabeau 1998; Gillies *et al.* 2008; Baskin 2011) (see paragraph 3.3 in this chapter). This view is also shared by Verrept (2008: 195), who reports that the low status of mediators in hospitals “makes it hard for them to defend patients’ rights or to intervene when the patient’s well-being or dignity were at stake”. In their study of Belgian public service interpreters’ self-perception of the profession, Salaets and Van Gucht (2008: 279) asked 19 interpreters which aspects concerning the perception of their role and image in society needed to be improved: the majority of them answered that “higher wages” were necessary to enhance professional status, while other respondents ticked the option “the profession should be recognised”, which demonstrates once again that public service interpreters lack adequate remuneration and social appreciation. As Rudvin (2015: 443) argues, there are links between training, prestige and status, because a lack of a solid professional identity leads to an erosion of professional performances. Furthermore, the scholar draws a clear distinction between the societal barriers hindering the professionalisation of public service interpreting (trust and exclusivity, jurisdiction, motivation) and the obstacles internal to the profession (lack of training, lack of reward, impact on society). Among these, the issue of payment is of utmost importance, in that “accepting to work for a low pay is discredited by other members of the profession as it is harmful both to themselves as individuals (unfair competition) as well as to their perceived group status” (Rudvin 2015: 438). The study carried out by Angelelli (2004), who showed empirically the visibility of interpreters, also postulates that their self-awareness is determined by working conditions and by social and external factors, a hypothesis confirmed by the results obtained by Zwischenberger (2011), who suggests that social aspects do determine the way in which interpreters perceive their role.

Consistently with the professional model developed by Tseng (see paragraph 3.1 in this chapter), several scholars (Russo & Mack 2005; Hale 2007; Tryuk 2012; Valero-Garcés 2014a; 2014b), believe that one of the main reasons for the low status of public service interpreters is the lack of adequate education and training. Hale (2005; 2007) insists upon the need for training, the only factor that can contribute to the enhancement of the status of public service interpreters. Training tends to be a discriminatory factor because “other professionals who work with interpreters, who have been required to acquire professional qualifications in order to practise, understandably tend not to treat interpreters as equals” (2007: 167). The lack of appreciation of the interpreter’s work has been underlined by Tryuk, who believes that professionalisation is only the third stage after training and academisation: “only in this way market regulation could be achieved, an appropriate regulatory framework for the profession could be created and, as a consequence, the interpreter’s status could be defined” (2008: 88). In her description of the status of the healthcare interpreter in Italy, Tomassini (2012: 41) underlines the importance of education, one of the main driving forces of professionalisation: “there are limited educational opportunities available for such professionals, and this has a big impact on their social status, remuneration level and job opportunities”. The study by Ortega Herráez, Martí and Martín (2009) showed that, against the background of a lack of professionalisation, healthcare interpreters perceive their responsibility as being that of humanitarian workers, an impression which corresponds to the comparison between interpreters and nurses (see paragraph 3.2 in this chapter).

Other studies (Laster and Taylor 1994; Ozolins 2000; Hertog 1999; 2003; Hertog & Van Gucht 2008) indicate that institutional constraints may hinder the development of the profession. As Laster and Taylor suggest, “legislation creating the right to an interpreter in legal proceedings; changes in immigration policy and demographic shifts and the advent of computer technology which performs an interpreting function” can all represent an obstacle to full professionalisation.<sup>16</sup> As Ozolins (2000: 21) points out, “unlike conference interpreting, which grew as a profession-driven field, public service interpreting has grown essentially as an institution-driven field, with important consequences for status and professional issues”. Nevertheless, the survey on the *status quaestionis* of the provision of legal interpreting in the EU (Hertog & Van Gucht 2008: 189) showed that in most Member States, “sufficient legal interpreting and translation skills and structures are not *yet* in place”, which is why in 2009 the non-profit association EULITA was established under the Criminal Justice Programme of the Directorate-General Justice, Freedom, Security of the European Commission. Among other things, EULITA “is further committed to promoting quality in legal interpreting and translation through the recognition of the professional status of legal interpreters and translators” (Eulita mission statement 2015). In this respect, the implementation of the European Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings marks a turning point in the implementation of a consistent and adequate provision of legal interpreting services in all EU Member States. Being a resource whose development largely depends on national constraints and welfare policies, public service interpreting is a sector in

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<sup>16</sup> Twenty-one years later, two out of three of the foreseen changes have taken place: 1) the implementation of the European Directive 2010/64/EU, which has established the right to translation and interpretation in criminal proceedings; 2) the recent immigration flows which have sparked the resurgence of populist political ideologies aiming at shifting immigrants and refugees away from national borders (Gentile P. *forthcoming*).

which the status of practitioners is more likely to vary at national level than that of conference interpreting. Some countries (such as Australia, Norway, Sweden and the UK) have succeeded in establishing a National Register of Interpreters, with the consequent enhancement of the interpreters' social recognition. A recent survey carried out in Norway – addressed to the interpreters of the Norwegian National Register – indicates that the majority of interpreters are proud of their profession. “They find that the job offers interesting challenges and they accept most assignments. Most interpreters wish to continue as interpreters as long as there is a demand for their language” (IMDi rapport 2013: 12). The findings demonstrate that, where the relevant educational and legal provisions are implemented, the status and societal recognition of public service interpreters become established.

Besides legal interpreting, a field in which steps forward have been taken – at least at institutional level – the status of public service interpreters appears to be largely uneven, undocumented and understudied. Nevertheless, the recent publication of the special issues of *MonTI* (2015) on the current status of the interpreting profession and of *JoSTrans* (2016) dedicated to the status of translators have shown that the status of the translation professions is one of the most burning issues in T&I studies today, thus confirming that the trend is beginning to be reversed.



# 3. Methodology and Objectives of the Study

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## 1. Putting Theory into Practice. Combining the Sociology of the Professions and Interpreting Studies

The first two chapters have served two main functions: the first pinpointed the most significant milestones in the history of interpreting from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, to determine the factors which contributed to its professionalisation and the way in which the status of interpreters has changed over the years. The second provided insights into the salient theories of the Sociology of the Professions, with the aim of formulating hypotheses as to whether conference and public service interpreting could be regarded as professions according to sociological criteria. Hence, after having scrutinised the way status and profession are conceptualised in a sociological perspective, the core of the research is presented in the present chapter. The main questions of the study are:

- ↳ Who are the interpreters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and what is their sociological makeup?
- ↳ Do they see themselves as fully-fledged professionals?
- ↳ Which factors influence their perception of status?
- ↳ Do they believe that their work is appreciated by society?
- ↳ How could their status be improved?

The main research hypothesis was that conference interpreting is a fully-fledged profession in socio-economic terms, whereas public service interpreting is still involved in a process of professionalisation, which implies “a range of individual and collective efforts, including struggles to achieve a certain social status [...]”. (Wadensjö, Englund Dimitrova & Nilsson 2007: 2). The



hypothesis stems from an analysis of the socio-economic parameters of status elucidated in the trait theory (Hodson & Sullivan 2011), which indicates that the higher the professionals' educational level and income, the higher their socio-economic status. In the light of which, the socio-economic status of conference interpreters could be said to be rather high, whereas that of public service interpreters is more likely to range from average to low. The second underlying assumption of the present work derives from symbolic-interactionist theories (Dingwall 2012) describing the term *profession* as a popular concept, with a clear distinction between status (social ranking) and prestige (social value). The latter indicates that a profession is not defined as such on the basis of the level of education achieved or the amount of money earned by a practitioner, but by the degree to which laypeople regard the profession as fundamental to the functioning and the well-being of society. Therefore, there is not always a direct relationship between a professional's level of education and his/her income and social esteem. Moreover, professionals' self-perceptions of the importance of their job could be also distorted; a recent study on the status of teachers found major differences in perceptions of teacher status from inside and outside the profession: "in particular, teachers tend to underestimate the respect the public has for them and the public perception of the desirability of the occupation, with teachers rating the occupation lower than the public at large" (Moreau 2014: 53). The presence of such differences will be noted in the present study as well. The reason is that previous studies carried out in Interpreting Studies (Angelelli 2004) have shown that interpreters' self-perception of status and prestige is mostly influenced by socio-economic factors, by the changes of the market and by work experiences, which ties in nicely with theories postulating that the notions of profession, status and prestige do not derive exclusively from socio-economic parameters, but are constructed by laypeople (and by professionals themselves) through experience and shaped by external elements (for example, the mass media). In addition, Angelelli (2004) demonstrated that social variables such as gender, socio-economic status and level of education also have a great impact on interpreters' self-perception of role visibility. Likewise, the extent to which sociological aspects (i.e. gender, age, country of residence, level of education etc.) influence interpreters' self-perception of status will be investigated.

The present research project is based on quantitative analysis of questionnaires, whose design draws inspiration from previous surveys carried out on the status of translators and interpreters (Kurz 1983; 1986; Dam & Zethsen 2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2016; Sela-Sheffy 2008; 2010; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2008; Katan 2009; 2011b; Setton & Guo 2011; Zwischenberger 2011). Although face-to-face interviews could have been more appropriate a method for eliciting patterns, perceptions and attitudes on such a delicate aspect of interpreters' professional lives, the quantitative approach was chosen to provide a snapshot of the interpreting profession as a whole, with a view to laying out the foundations for further research. Apart from a few cases (Katan 2009; 2011b; Zwischenberger 2011), interpreting scholars have mostly conducted small-scale surveys aiming to assess interpreters' attitudes about a very specific topic.<sup>17</sup> Since status is understood as a universal

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<sup>17</sup> In his analysis of 40 surveys carried out on the interpreting profession, Pöchhacker (2011: 52) notes that only ten studies on the profession obtained more than 100 respondents.

concept (at least at socio-economic level), the aim of the present study is to determine whether interpreters perceive their status in the same way across the globe. Hence, large-scale questionnaires were needed to elicit information on interpreters' general views of the profession and the extent to which they are satisfied with their work. As mentioned, the two questionnaires were designed by taking into account the theoretical premises elucidated in the previous chapters, which are taken from sociological speculations and previous research carried out in the field of Interpreting Studies.

## 2. The Questionnaires

Questionnaires are among the most frequently adopted tools in social research, since they help determine the attitudes of respondents and enable the formulation of generalisable statements from the information obtained. In the questionnaire design, close-ended questions were preferred to open questions because they allowed a greater uniformity of responses and could be easily comparable and processed with statistical softwares. Moreover, questionnaires with close-ended questions take less time from the interviewer, which is why they are more likely to receive a higher number of respondents than open surveys. 5-point Likert scales (also known as agree/disagree scales) were preferred to attitudinal responses, although there was a risk that the majority of informants would concentrate responses in the middling option. Indeed, there is a great deal of controversy among social scientists concerning the use of the middling option in Likert scales:

This scale suffers from two limitations. The first limitation is its scope, with only five points, two at the extreme end (i.e. one and five), and the one midpoint the scale suffers from its own bounded parameters. Second, many respondents have shown a reluctance to use extreme values especially if the labels are extreme, such as when words like 'never' and 'always' are used. This could lead to a restricted set of scores making it difficult to measure differences or changes over time (Azzara 2010: 100).

Another limitation of this method is that the validity of responses depends on a high response rate and that the researcher can never be completely sure about what respondents actually mean with their answers. Moreover, designing a questionnaire also means anticipating some (if not all) of the responses, which is in contrast with the research objective of obtaining unexpected data (Munn-Giddings & Winter 2013). Despite their limitations, questionnaires were preferred to face-to-face interviews because they provided information on a wide section of the population in a short period of time. In addition, they ensured complete anonymity and gave respondents the opportunity to answer whenever they wanted.

The first questionnaire, addressed to conference interpreters, was designed at the Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies, Trieste, in April 2014. It was piloted in May and launched at the end of June. Before sending it, a pilot study was carried out with the first draft of the questionnaire, which consisted of 39 questions. 13 interpreting professors at the same department were invited to complete the questionnaire: 6 of them did so. The small scale experiment was useful to evaluate feasibility, time, and statistical variability to refine or remove certain questions. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of 35 closed-ended questions. The second

questionnaire was designed at the University of Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, under the supervision of the FITISPos research group,<sup>18</sup> directed by Professor Dr. Carmen Valero-Garcés, in September 2014. It was piloted in October and closed at the beginning of January 2015. A pilot study was also carried out in this case: the questionnaire was administered to 13 professors and Ph.D. students who teach public service interpreting at the University of Alcalá de Henares, Spain, internationally renowned in this research field: 7 of them replied to the survey, which consisted of 39 questions and presented the same parameters and layout as the first one. The final version of the second questionnaire contained 37 questions. Unlike the first survey, which was drafted and distributed in English only (according to a perhaps naïve belief that all conference interpreters have a good knowledge of English), the second questionnaire was translated into English, French, Spanish, Italian and German,<sup>19</sup> since studies (Valero-Garcés, Vitalaru & Mojica López 2014) demonstrate that not all interpreters working in public services have a good command of the English language.

### 2.1 The Online Platform

Both questionnaires were electronically based and placed on the online survey platform *Surveymonkey.com*, where respondents were able to log on from a link provided to them. Before choosing *Surveymonkey*, other online survey creators, such as *LimeSurvey* and *Google Surveys*, were tested. The former is a free open-source tool which can be easily customised. However, the platform was not user-friendly and programming abilities were required to use it to the best of its potential. Another disadvantage of the programme is that it took considerable time to load when access was established with the administrator account. The *Google* platform was free and easy to use, but had few customising features. Besides being appealing and presenting a wide range of templates, *Surveymonkey* was chosen because of its integrated features: for instance, the survey results could be downloaded in several format files (pdf, word, powerpoint, xls and csv). In addition, the software was integrated with the IBM software of statistical analysis SPSS®, whose export contains a .sav file. One disadvantage was that an annual fee must be paid to be able to formulate an unlimited number of questions (the limit for free usage is set at 10 questions). Since the surveys consisted of 35 and 37 responses, the tool could not be used with a free account. Fortunately, several discount options were available for students and researchers. Thanks to the user-friendliness of the *Surveymonkey* platform, both surveys – whose questions had already been designed and proofread – were placed on the platform in less than 30 minutes. The structure of the questionnaires was devised according to ten sections for the first survey on conference interpreters and twelve for the second addressed to public service interpreters.

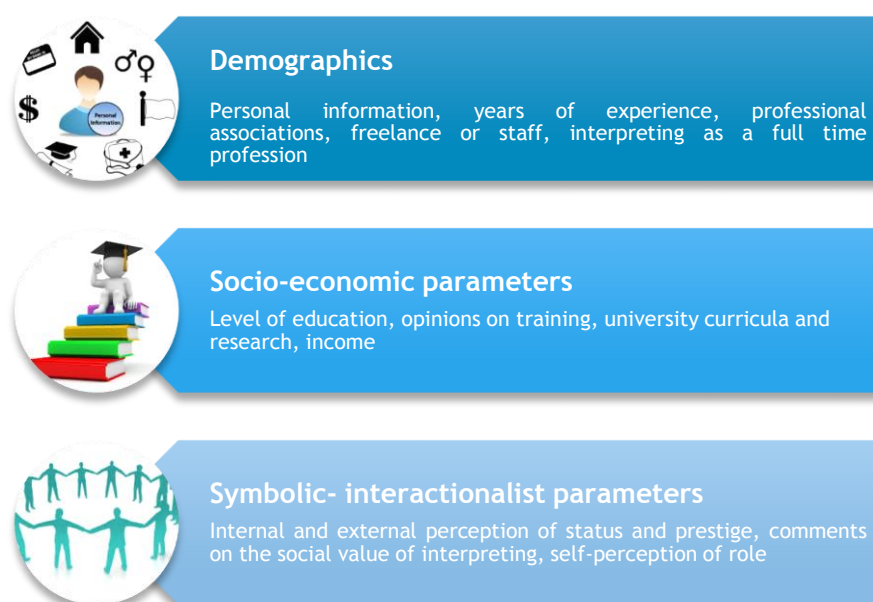
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<sup>18</sup> The Training and Research on Public Service Translation and Interpreting Group is a research group comprising various universities, such as the University of Alcalá de Henares (including the faculties of Law, Nursing, Medicine, Pedagogy) and other universities located in Madrid (Universidad Autónoma and Universidad Complutense). Its main objectives are training, research and practice in public service interpreting. Further information can be found at the following link: [http://www3.uah.es/traduccion/grupo\\_fistispos/historia\\_y\\_filosofia\\_English.html](http://www3.uah.es/traduccion/grupo_fistispos/historia_y_filosofia_English.html)

<sup>19</sup> Special thanks goes to Giuseppe Ruocco, Andrea Rizzi, Elisa Bade, Leticia Arcos Álvarez and Sara Cabrillo Chamán for their help with the translation of the questionnaire into French, German and Spanish.

## 2.2 Questionnaire Sections

As mentioned, the structure of the questionnaires draws inspiration from previous surveys on the status of translators (Katan 2009; 2011b) and of translators and interpreters (Dam & Zethsen 2013). The parameters drawn from the studies by Katan mainly concern the aspects related to education and role, whereas questions on the importance of interpreting to society drew inspiration from the study by Dam and Zethsen (2013). Both surveys are divided into three macro sections (demographics, socio-economic parameters, symbolic-interactionalist parameters). The structure of the surveys follows the order of the parameters provided in the previous chapter and may be graphically represented as follows (figure 2):



**Figure 2:** graphical representation of the questionnaire design.

To show the way the structure was implemented in the survey design, the sections of the two questionnaires will be analysed separately in detail. Apart from certain questions, both questionnaires presented a symmetrical structure, which allowed inter-group comparisons.

### 2.2.1 The First Questionnaire. The Status of Conference Interpreters

The first questionnaire was addressed to conference interpreters and collected 805 responses worldwide and 469 open comments.<sup>20</sup> The macro sections illustrated above were further divided into micro parts which follow the order illustrated below:

1. Demographics (sex, age, country of residence);

<sup>20</sup> The count refers exclusively to the number of optional open comments. The same applies to the second questionnaire.

2. Professional identity (years of experience, professional associations, freelance or staff, interpreting as a full time profession);
3. Opinions on public service interpreting;
4. Education and opinions on research in interpreting;
5. Remuneration;
6. Exposure of the interpreting profession in the media;
7. Self-perception of status;
8. Self-perception of prestige and the social value of interpreting;
9. Self-perception of role;
10. Comments on the future of the interpreting profession.

Apart from the first section, aiming to elicit interpreters' personal information, sections 4 and 5 focused on the socio-economic parameters of education and income illustrated in the trait theory, whereas the second section (7-9) analysed the symbolic characteristics of the profession, corresponding to the internal and external perceptions of status, prestige and role. The first two sections (demographics and professional identity) aimed at gathering demographical info. The data obtained from the answers collected from the first and the second sections (sex, age, country of residence and working status) were regarded as independent variables for the evaluation of all the other questions.

Section number three allowed comparison between both groups of professionals, which is why it was designed in a specular way for both questionnaires and comprised three questions. In the first, conference interpreters were asked whether they have ever worked in public services. In the second, interpreters who replied "no" to the previous question were asked to choose a list of possible motivations for their choice among those proposed. In the third question of the section, respondents were required to express their opinions on public service interpreting.

The section on education (number four) was made up of seven questions, which collected information not only regarding the educational level of respondents, but also on their beliefs on the importance of training. Drawing inspiration from Katan (2011b) – whose survey paid much attention to educational issues and attitudes – a question concerning the importance interpreters attribute to university modules and curricula was included, with a view to ascertaining which academic subjects were attached a high degree of importance. Other questions of the section were designed to investigate the significance they assign to a postgraduate degree in translation and interpreting, interpreting theory and to academic research in the field. One hypothesis was that older generations tended to hold on to the older tradition privileging the creative and innate aspect of conference interpreting over training, whereas younger generations were likely to attach a higher value to specialised training. A question eliciting respondents' opinions on academic research was also included in this section, to determine whether practitioners considered research an asset enriching the profession. Since income is included among the socio-economic determinants of status according to sociological theories (MacDonald 1995), a question on income was deemed useful to assess interpreters' degree of satisfaction with their income. However, the question did not attempt to

gather detailed numerical information on the interpreters' average income, to prevent respondents from abandoning the questionnaire.

A parameter which is hardly present in the previous studies on interpreters' status and role (Katan 2009; 2011b; Zwischenberger 2011; Dam & Zethsen 2013) concerns the representation of interpreters in the mass media. The study carried out by Hargreaves *et al.* on the status of teachers (2007) showed that the media portray a negative image of the profession, referred to as “teacher bashing”; 29% of the news in 2003 focused on teachers involved in scandals (i.e. sexual relationship with students, financial misconduct, etc.). Other studies (Heyman, Alaszewski & Shaw 2010) have also revealed that medical doctors complain about the way they are represented in the media, particularly in TV drama series (Goldacre *et al.* 2003). The results suggested that doctors are rather disappointed with media's criticism of the profession. One of them remarked: “The media demonises the medical profession—seizing upon the occasional failure (of course these must be addressed) to condemn the entire profession”. Therefore, if subjective opinions on the professions are deeply influenced by the images portrayed by the mass media, the way conference interpreters are described by the means of communication has a huge impact on the ideas that laypeople have of the profession. As Diriker (2004) points out, momentous events are one of the main triggers of the news concerning interpreters. The scholar identified four factors contributing to the increase of the interpreter's presence (at least in the Turkish media), which are:

- ↳ **Big Money**, which interpreters are assumed to earn;
- ↳ **Big Mistakes**, which interpreters allegedly make;
- ↳ **Personal Fame**, which some interpreters acquire either from simultaneous interpreting or from their parallel professions/engagements;
- ↳ **Big Career**, as which some news items present SI.

The second aspect merits special attention. Recently, the scandal caused by the fake sign language interpreter at Nelson Mandela's funeral (NBC news 2013) accused of making signs up is a typical example of how a profession whose appeal resides in the opportunity of witnessing historic events can be marred by such gross misconduct. Hence, interpreters' opinions on the presence of the interpreting profession in the media are worth investigating.

The section on status and prestige contained eight questions. The first two were related to interpreters' self-perception of professional status: the first aimed to investigate which group of professionals they compare themselves with, whereas the second focused on the way they believe laypeople position them in the social hierarchy, i.e. what status they think outsiders attribute to them. Consistently with the sociological categories mentioned in chapter 2 (see paragraph 3.1), the groups of professions referred to in the questions were drawn from the ISCO Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08). The groups of professionals included (from the highest to the lowest):

1. **CEO, finance manager, legislator.** These professionals are included in the first category of the ISCO classification and enjoy high status not so much because of their level of education (which might be the same at that of other professionals), but because of their high income and high degree of responsibility deriving from their being in



charge of a large company or nation. Nevertheless, in the light of recent research on interpreters' status (Dam & Zethsen 2013), interpreters would hardly place themselves in the first category;

2. **Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer.** The three professions belong to the so-called “fully-fledged professions” (Dingwall & Lewis 1983), not only because they require a high educational level to be practiced, but also because of the knowledge they possess, which consists of “the schooled application of their unusually esoteric knowledge and complex skill” (*ibid.*: 13). On the basis of the interpreters' high level of education and their (supposedly) fairly high income, one possible hypothesis was that a large number of interpreters would regard themselves as akin to the above-mentioned professionals, at least in the way they perceive themselves.
3. **Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist.** Although they are all included in the second ISCO category (“professionals”), their degree of professionalisation is still controversial. As Mikk *et al.* (2010) point out, the teaching profession has been seen by sociologists as a semi-profession, owing to its weak intellectual and scientific foundations. Sociological studies also revealed that “greater voids existed between the teaching profession and high status professions” (Hargreaves *et al.* 2007: XII). Journalists were included in this category mostly because they are not able to guarantee exclusive monopoly of the profession (see chapter 2, paragraph 3.2). As Nygren argues, “it is not possible to exclude non-professionals from the field of journalism” (2011: 208). Architects were included in the category for two main reasons: the ISCO classification of occupations places them at the bottom of the category “science and engineering professionals”, at the top of which physicists and mathematicians are found. As Brain (1991) points out, the architecture profession has been limited in its control of market monopoly. Another sign of weakness of the status of architecture is that a large percentage of work for which the architect is responsible is carried out by people over whom (s)he has little control. Crinson & Lubbock (1994: 2) add that architecture is a weak profession, vulnerable to the encroachment of all the factors involved in building, such as clients, landowners, engineers, etc. Moreover, in recent years, there has been widespread consensus among sociologists that architecture is suffering an acute professional crisis (Cupers 2013), undermining its foundations. A fair (though smaller) portion of conference interpreters could choose this option when asked to evaluate their self-perceived status, whereas a higher number of respondents were likely to choose this alternative when asked to rate how others perceive them.
4. **Primary school teacher, nurse and social worker.** As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger (2011) argued that the status of interpreters was akin to that of social workers and nurses. Although they were referring to public service interpreters, the category was included to evaluate whether conference interpreters see their status as that of semi-professionals. If so, conference interpreting could be said to have lost a great deal of status over the years. The reason for grouping the professions together stems from the definition provided by sociologist Etzioni (1969), whose work

is entitled: “The Semi-Professions and their Organization: Teachers, Nurses, Social Workers”.

Section number 8 aimed at eliciting information on interpreters’ self-perception of prestige. Questions on prestige were put together in a separate part of the survey not only because status and prestige are regarded as two separate sociological concepts, but also because previous studies on the status and prestige of teachers (Hargreaves *et al.* 2007; Grimmitt *et al.* 2012) designed the questionnaires on the basis of the difference between “occupational prestige (the public’s view in relation to hierarchy of status of occupations) and occupational esteem (status accorded by those who see how they go about their tasks)” (*ibid.*: 65). As illustrated in sociological theories (see chapter 2), a profession distinguishes itself for being dedicated to the common good. Therefore, in an increasingly globalised world, is interpreting useful for the common good? Do interpreters believe that their job goes beyond a simple act of translating? Most importantly, does society believe in the usefulness and in the added value of interpreting? The three questions on prestige included: the way interpreters consider their social esteem, the degree of prestige they believe others attribute to them, and whether they believe that the prestige of conference interpreting has declined over the years. The latter was placed at the end of the section, to prevent respondents from being biased in answering the questions concerning their self-perception of prestige. The section also comprised questions on the social value of conference interpreting, aiming at eliciting information on the extent to which interpreters regard their profession as important to society and the level to which the occupation could be defined as an attractive one. Sociologists define this feature as “desirability level of a profession” (Boulis & Jacobs 2010), which is why interpreters were asked whether they would recommend the interpreting profession to their sons/daughters. The question aimed to assess to what extent professional reality corresponds to the previous expectations of practitioners. The assumption behind the question was that one could be satisfied with one’s job, but would not necessarily recommend it as a career option.

The last micro-section of the symbolic-interactionist model of analysis focused on role perception. In the light of the theories about the relationship between status and role (see chapter 2, paragraph 4.3.2), conference interpreters, who are more likely to have a higher consideration of their status than public service interpreters, could see their role as more clearly defined. Drawing on the definitions of role provided by Hale (2007) and on evidence gathered from studies on role perception (Zwischenberger 2011; 2013), a series of role definitions were proposed in the question, in order to determine whether interpreters see themselves more as enablers of communication, cultural mediators or invisible conduits. In the light of the literature published in recent years (Diriker 2004; Monacelli 2009), the hypothesis was that they no longer conceive themselves as invisible professionals.

As the questionnaire focuses on the state of the profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the last section consisted of three questions regarding interpreters’ views on the future of the profession. In the first question of the section, interpreters were asked whether they believe that the status of conference interpreting will improve in the future. The second presented a list of possible future changes and



respondents were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 to 5, the likelihood of the foreseen changes taking place (i.e. the interpreting profession will be acknowledged, the development of public service interpreting, daily fees, etc.). The third proposed to estimate, on a scale from 1 to 5, the possible effectiveness of four solutions which could prove fruitful to enhance interpreters' status (i.e. academic qualifications as a condition to access the profession, visibility of the profession in the mass media, state regulation and a more active role of professional associations).

### 2.2.2 The Second Questionnaire. The Status of Public Service Interpreters

The second survey was addressed to public service interpreters and presented the same structure as the first questionnaire; it collected a total number of 888 responses and 718 qualitative comments. The questionnaire sections were divided as follows:

1. Demographics (sex, age, country of residence);
2. Professional identity (years of experience, professional associations, working settings, interpreting as a full time profession);
3. **Opinions on conference interpreting;**
4. Education and opinions on research in interpreting;
5. Remuneration;
6. Exposure of the interpreting profession in the media;
7. Self-perception of status;
8. Self-perception of prestige and the social value of interpreting;
9. Self-perception of role and **role conflict;**
10. **Tasks other than interpreting;**
11. Comments on the future of the interpreting profession;
12. **Opinions on the European Directive 2010/64/EU.**

Since the world of public service interpreting is far more complex and less institutionalised than that of conference interpreting, several more questions were added to the questionnaire to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the status and role perception of public service interpreters. First, a question concerning the setting(s) interpreters work in (healthcare, legal, educational etc.) was added.

The section on education, training and research contained a further crucial question: interpreters were asked which level of education they deem appropriate to work as public service interpreters. The question might help shed light on the ongoing debate concerning the level of training that public service interpreters have to receive before being able to work (Corsellis 2005; De Pedro Ricoy 2010). The question was included to complement the previous inquiry asking respondents whether they hold a MA degree in translation and interpreting. Although very few affirmative to this question responses were expected, it was left unchanged to maintain the symmetry needed to carry out statistical analyses between the two questionnaires.

An added section concerned role conflict. As shown in the previous chapter, interpreters experience role conflict, which is defined as “the level to which a person experiences pressures within one role that is incompatible with pressures that take place within another role” (Glissmeyer, Bishop & Fass 1985). This role confusion has a close connection with status, as it is a common feature of semi-professions. Since public service interpreters have been defined as a “semi-professional group” (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011), this added parameter is, therefore, of the utmost importance for the analysis of the link between professionalisation, status and social role. Another sub-section of this group of questions aimed to elicit information as to whether interpreters working in public services carry out other tasks than just interpreting. Literature in the field (Valero-Garcés & Martin 2008) shows that public service interpreters perform tasks going beyond interpreting, such as providing informative material, translating documents and doing sight translations. Sociological literature (Roussel 2011) underlines that, in a constantly changing working environment, nurses are required to perform in new roles and ever changing circumstances (i.e. coordination, management, administration, etc.). Such situations lead to role strain and role conflict, which can be reduced “through educational programs aimed at socializing nurses into the new roles” (*ibid.*: 222). Assuming that nursing and public service interpreting are semi-professions, the question sought to glean empirical evidence on the state of professionalisation of public service interpreting and it could also yield interesting insights on how interpreters are perceived by service providers. Interpreters were asked how often they perform the above-mentioned tasks, to determine whether they are seen by public authorities and service providers as language professionals or as social workers with knowledge of two languages.

Another added question in this section concerned the extent to which respondents experience emotional and psychological stress during interpreting assignments. Research in public service interpreting (Valero-Garcés 2006; Bodzer 2014; Cox 2015; Toledano Buendía & Del Pozo Triviño 2015; Valero-Garcés 2015a; Valero-Garcés 2015b) revealed that interpreters suffer emotional and psychological strain when they work in traumatic situations, when, for example, refugees report episodes of war, torture and gender violence. Interpreting in mental healthcare is also regarded as a very delicate sector (Van de Mierop, Bevilacqua & Van Hove 2012; Bot 2013). Apart from the power asymmetries characterising the interactions (Lázaro Gutiérrez 2012; 2013), the type of setting is a crucial factor generating stress for the interpreter; the most frequently recurring difficulties quoted by interpreters interviewed in previous surveys were that interpreters struggle to maintain professional distance and impartiality. The studies on the topic revealed that service providers offer no psychological support for interpreters, despite irrefutable evidence showing that interpreters suffer from stress, anxiety, depression and even burnout syndrome (Cordero Cid 2013). Hence, a question on the psychological impact of certain interpreting situations was asked to ascertain the interpreter’s degree of involvement in stressful situations and the extent to which it influences his/her performance.

The last section concerned the impact of the European Directive 2010/64/EU and similar measures on the future of the profession. The European Directive on the Right to Translation and

Interpreting in Criminal Proceedings is referred to as a “milestone in the long history of efforts by legal interpreters and translators to obtain a certain measure of official recognition” (Katschinka 2014: 105) and as “the first European norm aiming at guaranteeing a fair trial (*my translation*)” (Gialuz 2011: 9). Its main objective was to “introduce a uniform system of qualification and to improve the quality of court interpreting throughout the EU with a view to ensuring a fair trial in all Member States” (Šarčević 2015: 226). Nevertheless, the Agis I and Agis II projects (1998-2008) showed that adequate legal interpreting and translation skills and structures are not yet available and that, where they are, they lack coherence and clear organisation (Hertog & Van Gucht 2008). In the medical field, a recent study revealed that support for cross-border healthcare patients is neither guaranteed nor provided across the European Member States (Angelelli 2015), a potentially dangerous inconsistency with the objectives set forth in Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. Therefore, the implementation of the European Directive 2010/64/EU, which aims, among the other things, to create a register of interpreters and translators who have to be “appropriately qualified” (Art. 5 (2)), can contribute to the enhancement of the professional status of public service interpreters. In the last question of the second survey, interpreters were asked to rate the extent to which the implementation the European Directive 2010/64/EU or of other similar measures constitutes a step towards professionalisation.

### 2.3 Distribution

Following the completion of the survey on the platform *SurveyMonkey.com*, the two questionnaires were distributed. The method chosen to disseminate the survey was twofold: in order to reach the largest population possible, professional associations of interpreters<sup>21</sup> were contacted in 64 countries.<sup>22</sup> In addition, *snowball sampling* was used (Black 2011). The method consisted of choosing survey subjects upon referring to other survey respondents: during the survey distribution process, several respondents asked whether they could send the link to the questionnaire to other colleagues. Some asked for the permission to place the link on the social media, a method which proved successful to reach non-members of professional associations, thus allowing a comparison between members and non-members. To speed up the distribution phase, the secretaries and/or the presidents of several professional associations were contacted. The method was chosen for various reasons: the first is that not every association possesses a direct, accessible list of members with their e-mail addresses (on the IAPTI website, for example, a search box allows the user to choose only an interpreter), the second is that certain websites were not translated into English (see, for example, the website of the Association of Indonesian Translators) and, lastly, because it was assumed that interpreters would be more willing to reply to the questionnaire if it was forwarded

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<sup>21</sup> In certain countries, professional associations include both interpreters and translators.

<sup>22</sup> The countries where the questionnaires were distributed are: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Mexico, Moldova, Norway, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, South-Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, UK, USA, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela.

to them by a representative of their own association. Nevertheless, a risk associated with this method is that, if the persons contacted forgets to forward the link, the survey will not reach the other members of the professional network.

Despite having obtained a representative amount of responses (1693), the overall response rate could be said to be rather low, considering that AIIC has more than 3,000 members worldwide. On the other hand, the abandonment rate was satisfactory (roughly 10% for the first and roughly 20% for the second questionnaire), which means that 90% (n = 863) and 80% (n = 1055) of the respondents who began the questionnaire completed it. The abandonment rate was higher in the second questionnaire because a not insignificant number of interpreters who do not work in public services started the questionnaire, but then realised that it was not their working field as they progressed through the questionnaire. In some cases, they sent emails in which they explained the reasons why they decided not to complete the survey. For the distribution of the first questionnaire, the survey was sent to the complete list of interpreters' associations drawn from the *Lexicool* platform<sup>23</sup> and to all associations mentioned in the list provided by Pym (2012) in his report on the status of translators in the European Union. Thanks to personal contacts, the link to the first questionnaire was also placed on the internal online platform of interpreters working at the DG Interpretation of the European Union, a method which allowed the collection of several responses from staff interpreters.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, the same was not possible for interpreters working at the United Nations, though many of them are also AIIC members and were reached through the AIIC network. Two weeks after the first distribution, a reminder was sent to the secretariats of the professional associations.

As for the distribution of the second questionnaire, the main associations of public service interpreters were contacted, such as, among others, the Australian Institute for Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT), the U.S. National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT), the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI, UK) and the Association of Police and Court Interpreters (APCI, UK). In addition, the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI) and the interpreters of the Norwegian National Register, who were very keen in answering the questionnaire, distributed it to other associations and colleagues in other countries. In this case, the help of networks such as the European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation (ENPSIT), EULITA, Critical Link International and the FITISPos Research Group, was of fundamental importance for the distribution of the survey to reach a large number of public service interpreters. Since the aforementioned are very difficult to locate, especially in those countries in which the profession is not well established or has very blurred contours, the snowball sampling method was of crucial importance. In Italy, for example, where there is no register of court interpreters and the professional profiles of interpreters and cultural mediators are not well defined, the second survey was distributed to the Italian

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<sup>23</sup> [http://www.lexicool.com/translator\\_associations.asp?IL=2](http://www.lexicool.com/translator_associations.asp?IL=2)

<sup>24</sup> A special thanks goes to Elisabeth Laderchi, Brian Fox, Francesco Bazzanella, Chiara Gandolfi, Cristina Scardulla, Marco Rucci, Francesca Simonetto, Giuseppe Ruocco, Linda Fitchett and Lucia Sollecito for their enormous help with the distribution of the first survey.

Association of Court Interpreters (ASSITIG) and to several associations of cultural mediators (such as, the Associazione Multietnica Mediatori Culturali, AMMI and Interethnos). The same method was used for Spain, where the survey was designed and first distributed; the questionnaire was sent to the Red Comunica,<sup>25</sup> the Asociación Profesional de Traductores e Intérpretes Judiciales y Jurados (APTIJ), the Judicial Interpreters of the Spanish Ministry of Justice and Ministry of the Interior. As for healthcare interpreters, the survey was sent to associations of cultural mediators in the Madrid region.<sup>26</sup>

As for other world regions (Central and South America, Africa and Asia), the questionnaire was sent to national professional associations (i.e. associations of *traductores y intérpretes públicos* found in several South-American countries). For the distribution of the survey in these areas, certain AIIC members who were also certified as court or healthcare interpreters asked to fill out the questionnaire and forwarded it to local associations of public service interpreters. In this case, the questionnaire cover letter included a footnote inviting AIIC respondents exclusively to consider their experience as public service interpreters when answering the second questionnaire. However, the number of responses gathered from these regions is significantly lower than that obtained from other countries. Overall, it has emerged that the profession of court interpreting appears to be more highly developed than other public service interpreting settings and, especially outside Europe, it is closely associated with conference interpreting (Mikkelson 2014a). Hence, the analysis of the responses given by court interpreters will take this aspect into account.

### 3. Statistical Analysis

The questionnaire data was analysed with the IBM software of statistical analysis called *Statistical Package for Social Science* (SPSS).<sup>27</sup> The survey platform *SurveyMonkey* provided the opportunity to download the results for each survey in .sav files, a format compatible with SPSS. In addition, the *SurveyMonkey* function “calculate relative frequency”, enabling the data to be summarised by counting the responses for each level of a given variable was used. For the two surveys, *independent* and *dependent* variables were scrutinised. An *independent* variable is also known as “predictor variable” and represents the value the researcher has control over, which can be chosen and/or manipulated. It leads the *dependent* variable to change (Muth 2006): for instance, if a calculation of the degree to which opinions concerning role and status depend on the interpreter’s gender has to be made, *status* is the dependent variable and *gender* is the independent variable, which never changes. In the analysis of the first questionnaire, the main independent variables taken into account were:

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<sup>25</sup> Red Comunica is a network of researchers in public service interpreting coming from several Spanish universities.

<sup>26</sup> A special thanks goes to Pascal Rilof (ENPSIT), Angela Sasso (Critical Link International), Geoffrey Buckingham (APCI), Leonardo Doria de Souza (IMDI), Dr. Eugenia Dal Fovo (Interethnos), Prof. Carmen Valero-Garcés, Dr. Raquel Lázaro-Gutiérrez (FITISPos Research Group), Dr. Miguel Ortega Herráez (APTIJ), Kirsten de Gelder (Kiev Linguistic University), Prof. Jim Hlavac (Monash University) and Antoon Cox (Vrije Universiteit Brussels) for their invaluable help with the distribution of the second survey.

<sup>27</sup> My heartfelt thanks goes to Dr. Francesco Foroni, Francesco Loscocco and Massimo Lumaca for their help with the use of the SPSS software.

- ↳ Gender
- ↳ Age
- ↳ Country of residence
- ↳ Type of employment (freelance or staff interpreter)
- ↳ Level of education.

The variables were chosen according to their potential impact in the determination of other parameters, such as perceptions of status and prestige. For example, it was assessed whether considerations on prestige change according to the respondent's age, in order to evaluate empirically whether 25 years-olds have the same opinions on prestige compared with 55 years-old respondents. For the second questionnaire, the variable "type of employment" was replaced with the interpreter's work setting(s). The main statistical tests carried out were: the Pearson's chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) and the Student's *t*-test.

### 3.1 Pearson's Chi-Square test

The chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) is a non-parametric test, for it analyses a population with a ranked order. Generally, non-parametric methods are necessary when data has a ranking but no clear numerical interpretation, such as when respondents are asked to assess preferences on a scale from 1 to 5. Since the majority of the questions contained in the questionnaires present a ranked structure allowing respondents to express their opinions, the chi-square test was a necessary tool to assess correlations among dependent and independent variables. The formula used to calculate Pearson's chi is:

$$X^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

**O** stands for observed frequency and **E** indicates the expected frequency. In the calculation, the expected count is subtracted from the observed count in order to find the difference between the two (the "residual"). Subsequently, the square of that number is calculated to eliminate positive and negative values. Then, the result is divided by the expected frequency. The *sigma* indicates that all is for which relationship is calculated have to be summed. Another important value for the calculation of the chi-square test is the degrees of freedom (DF), corresponding to the number of values free to vary. According to McHugh (2013), unlike most statistics, the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) provides information not only on the significance of any observed differences, but it also gives detailed information on which categories account for any differences that were found. This test is employed to test the difference between an actual sample and another hypothetical or previously established distribution, such as the distribution which may be expected owing to chance or probability. Furthermore, it aims to compare "the number of cases falling into each cell of the table with the frequency that would be expected if there were no association between the two variables" (Foster

2001: 156). Its output consists of a cross-tabulation showing the *actual* number contrasted with the *expected* number of cases. In the analysis of the questionnaire data, the chi-square is used to test whether there is a significant relationship between, for instance, an independent variable (i.e. age) and interpreters' perception of the prestige of the profession. The main assumption for the chi-square test of independence is that individual observations are independent of each other, i.e. that no observation has an impact on others. The hypothesis is that older generations see interpreting as a prestigious profession, whereas younger interpreters believe that the profession has lost its allure. The significance of the  $p$  value is the most frequently used parameter assessing the presence and the extent of the association between the variables. If the significance value ( $p$ ) is equal to or lower than 0.05, there is a significant association between the variables, thus showing that considerations on the prestige of the interpreting profession depend on the age of participants.

Another important premise of the chi-square test is that the expected count of the cells of the contingency table – which is comprised in the SPSS calculation output of the test – should not be too small; the minimum count of the cells is 5, which means that each cell has to have a minimum expected cell frequency (Weinberg & Abramowitz 2002). When the data has 20% or less than 5 counts, a Fisher's exact test is generally used in lieu of the Pearson's chi-square. When the expected frequencies are too low, the sample size is too small and the sampling distribution of the test statistic is too deviant from a chi-square distribution to be highly representative. Therefore, the Fisher's exact test computes the exact probability of the chi-square statistic to be accurate. Generally, SPSS provides information on the cell count and on the degree of suitability of the chi-square test. If, for example, when the chi-value is calculated, a footnote placed at the bottom of the contingency table indicates that more than 20% of the cells have an expected count less than 5, it would be advisable to carry out a Fisher's exact test instead of a chi-square. Nevertheless, in most cases, in the analysis of the two surveys, the chi-square was used when the number of variables was higher than 2 (i.e. age, country of residence, work setting [only for the second questionnaire]), whereas when the number of variables was 2 or less (i.e. gender, working status [only for the first questionnaire], level of education), a Student's  $t$ -test was used to calculate the difference between the variables.

### 3.2 Student's $T$ -test

Unlike the Pearson's chi-square, which analyses the frequencies of the responses, the Student's  $t$ -test is a parametric test comparing the means of two groups; its main objective is to assess whether there is a significant difference between the means. There are three types of  $t$ -tests: the one-sample  $t$ -test, the unpaired  $t$ -test and the paired  $t$ -test. In the analysis of the questionnaire data, the unpaired  $t$ -test was used, because it compares two unpaired groups (Field 2009). For example, in the analysis of the questionnaire responses, the  $t$ -test is used to assess whether there is a significant difference between men and women for a given question or parameter (such as perception of status). If the significance value ( $p$ ) is lower than 0.05, there is a significant difference between men and women in their opinions on status. In the analysis of the two questionnaires, another value which will be



taken into consideration is the standard deviation (SD), which measures the dispersion of a set of data from its mean. A standard deviation close to 0 indicates that the data points tend to be very close to the mean (also called the expected value) of the set, whereas a high standard deviation indicates that the data points are spread over a wider range of values (*ibid.*). Hence, the more spread apart the data, the higher the deviation ( $\sigma$ ). The standard deviation is calculated as the square root of variance with the following formula:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2}{N}}$$

$\sigma$  indicates the standard deviation,  $x$  corresponds to the value of each population,  $\bar{x}$  stands for the mean of the values and  $N$  is the total number of the population. In the analysis of the two questionnaires, the standard deviation of the values will be included when the results of the  $t$ -tests are reported.

The unpaired  $t$ -test was carried out by assuming equal variance, a value measuring how far a set of numbers is spread. A small variance indicates that the data points tend to be very close to the mean (expected value), while a high variance indicates that the data points are widely spread around the mean and from each other. The formula used to calculate the  $t$ -test is the following:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{N_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{N_2}}}$$

In the formula,  $\bar{x}_1$  and  $\bar{x}_2$  stand for means of the two sets of data of the two groups (i.e. men and women) divided by the standard deviation of differences between groups. The other values indicate:  $S_1$  = Standard deviation of first set of values;  $S_2$  = Standard deviation of second set of values;  $n_1$  = Total number of values in first set;  $n_2$  = Total number of values in second set. The use of the  $t$ -test is more appropriate when the sample sizes are equal; however, in social sciences, samples of the same size are seldom collected (especially when questionnaires are distributed), and this test is carried out because it *weights* the means of each sample.

#### 4. Limitations of the Study

Although the collected sample ( $n = 1693$  respondents) could be said to be fairly representative of the populations under scrutiny, the present study mainly focuses on interpreters' subjective perception of professional status. As mentioned in the previous chapter, a sociological analysis of the individual's *looking-glass self* is susceptible to partial or distorted interpretations. As Kendall points out: "because the looking-glass self is based on how we imagine other people view us, we may develop self-concepts based on an inaccurate perception of what other individuals think of us" (2015:

83): one of the reasons why the measurement of personal beliefs and attitudes remains “one of the most difficult in social research and one to which an adequate solution is not in sight” (Oppenheim 2000: 149). To avoid potential biases, a survey of the general population’s opinions would have proved more fruitful to support or reject the response patterns of interpreters. Nevertheless, being a large-scale investigation, an interview of the samples taken by the world population would have been excessively time-consuming. Moreover, it would have required the assistance of a research team including sociologists, statisticians and opinion pollers. Drawing on the considerable amount of literature published on interpreters’ self-perception of role (Roy 1989; 1993; Mikkelsen 1998; Angelelli 2004; 2006; Valero-Garcés & Martin 2008; Katan 2009; 2011b; Zwischenberger 2011; Tipton 2014), the present research aims to provide an overview of the current state of the profession by putting the interpreter’s beliefs, concerns and needs at the centre of the investigation. Depending on the resources available, future research will take the perspectives of service providers and interpreters’ users into account.

A second reason why the present study could be open to criticism is that the questionnaires were not distributed to sign language interpreters. The decision not to include this professional category was dictated by the fact that sign language interpreting cuts across several settings, which is why a third questionnaire and several other sections would have to be added. Nevertheless, the importance of the development of sign language interpreting (Roy & Napier 2015) – which contributed to spurring the professionalisation process of public service interpreting – has been underlined in the present work on more than one occasion.

Another limitation of the study is that, although it was meant to be a global survey, the majority of responses comes from the European continent, especially in the first questionnaire. This trend is highly similar to that observed by Katan (2011b), whose questionnaire on the status of translators mainly collected responses from Europe. Although a reminder was sent for both surveys, very few responses were collected from Asian countries, Africa and The Russian Federation. Since recent research reveals that in several Arab countries (Taibi 2014) and in China (Setton 2011; Setton & Guo 2011) interpreting is a thriving profession, future research could focus on the comparison between Eastern and Western perspectives on the interpreting profession.

# 4. The Status of Conference Interpreters. Analysis of the First Questionnaire

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## Introduction

The analysis of the first world survey will provide a breakdown of the 805 responses given by conference interpreters. To facilitate the reading, the list of the questionnaire sections is presented once again below:

1. Demographics (sex, age, country of residence);
2. Professional identity (years of experience, professional associations, freelance or staff, interpreting as a full time profession);
3. Opinions on public service interpreting;
4. Education and opinions on research in interpreting;
5. Remuneration;
6. Exposure of the interpreting profession in the media;
7. Self-perception of status;
8. Self-perception of prestige and the social value of interpreting;
9. Self-perception of role;
10. Reflections on the future of the interpreting profession.

The analysis will proceed as follows: a graph will be illustrated for each question, then reference will be made to relevant literature or to the open comments. Lastly, statistical analyses will be carried out to check for similarities or differences among independent variables (gender, age, country of

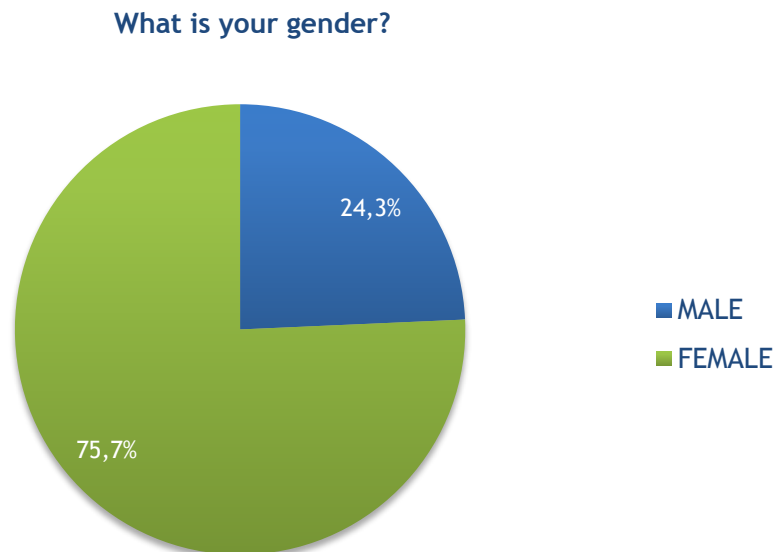
residence, freelance or staff, level of education) and all other dependent variables (income, media exposure, self-perception of status, prestige and role and opinions on the future of the profession). Although 469 qualitative comments were collected, only the most relevant to the discussion will be included in the present chapter. A complete list of all the open remarks can be found in the Appendix II.

### 1. Demographics

In this section, data will be illustrated according to the first three parameters, fundamental to collect information on the interpreters' biographical data. Complete anonymity was preserved in the response collection and analysis.

#### 1.1 Gender

Data collected on gender shows an interesting though not surprising aspect of the interpreting profession: out of a total of 805 respondents, 75.7% are women (n = 609), whereas men account for 24.3% of the sample (n= 196). The results are shown in figure 3:



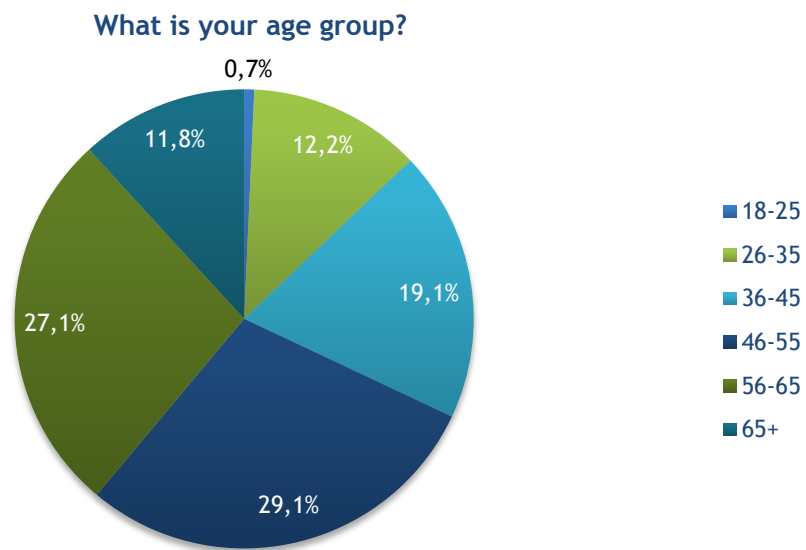
**Figure 3:** gender of respondents

The picture clearly illustrates that conference interpreting is a feminised profession. A similar trend was already noticed by Kurz in her 1986 survey, which showed a predominance of women in the profession (70%). The proportion seems not to have changed in the span of 30 years, as the recent survey carried out by Zwischenberger (2011) confirmed. The present results should raise awareness of the topic of the feminisation of the interpreting profession which, though widely neglected in

Interpreting Studies, could provide valuable insights into how the profession is performed and perceived today. Therefore, *gender* was chosen as an independent variable to assess whether the increasing feminisation of conference interpreting has (or could have) repercussions on the interpreters' perception of other dependent variables, such as income, status and prestige.

## 1.2 Age

As for the age of participants, the majority of respondents are between 46 and 65 years of age (56.2%, n = 452), with a slightly higher proportion in the 46-55 age group. Details are shown in the graph below (Figure 4):



**Figure 4:** age of respondents

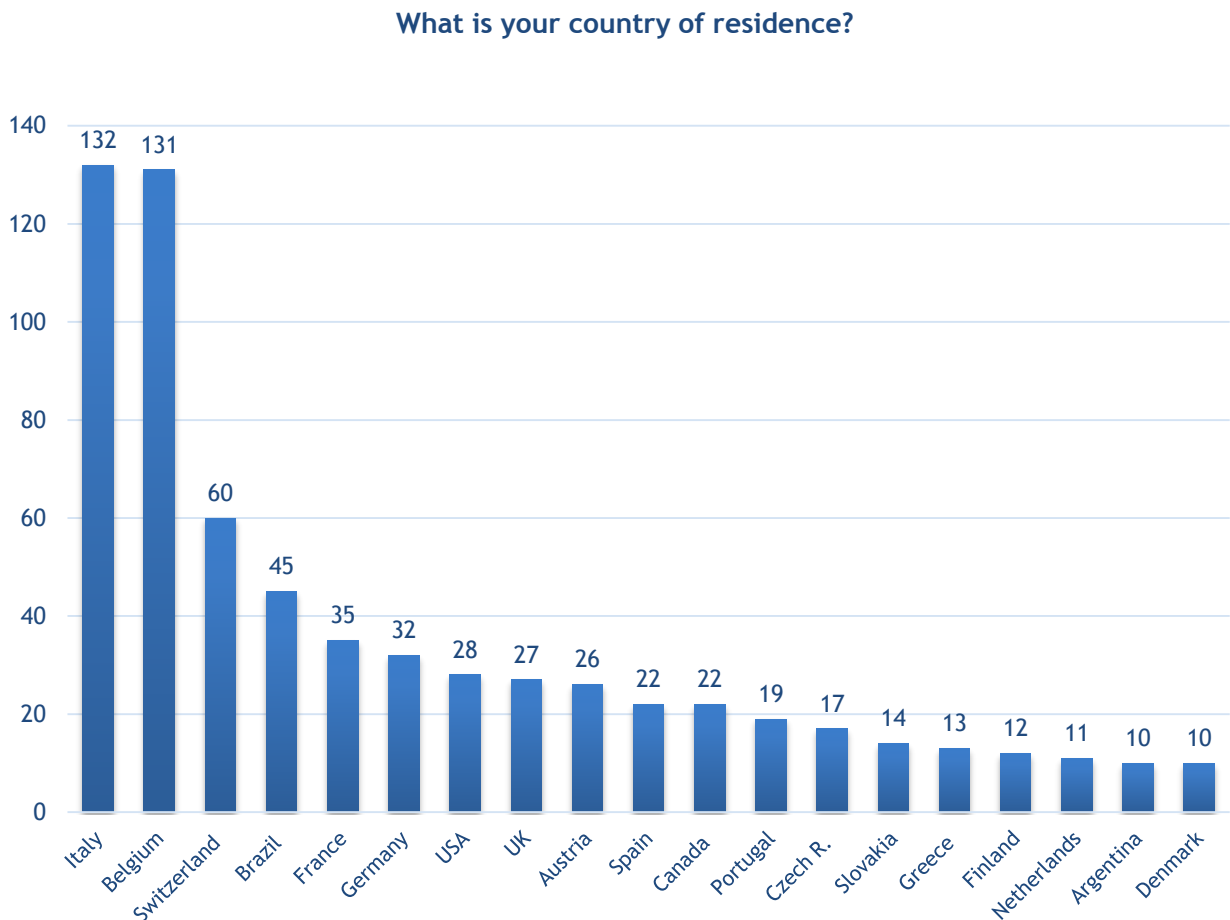
Only 0.7% of the interviewed ticked the option 18-25, and 11.8% are over 65. Although the majority of professional conference interpreters is between 50 and 60 years of age, it is encouraging to see that roughly 30 per cent of professionals are in their thirties. In the survey by Kurz (1986a), 40% of the interviewed were aged between 40 and 50 years, a figure which is roughly in line with the current picture. The same trends were also present in the survey carried out by Zwischenberger (2011), showing an average of 52 years in the sample population. In the questionnaire carried out in China by Setton & Guo (2011), the average range was 36.3, which indicates that Chinese interpreters are younger than their European colleagues.

The low percentage of under-25 respondents in the present sample could be attributable to the fact that respondents of this age groups are still receiving training in interpreting, whereas interpreters who are over 65 are probably retired or no longer working full-time. Together with

gender, age will be analysed as an independent variable. As one of the objectives of the present research is to study the evolution of the interpreting profession and of the interpreter's sociological profile over the years, a comparison between younger and older generations of interpreters on certain parameters might cast light on what has changed in the attitudes towards the profession itself and its professional practice and could also prove fruitful to envisage the challenges for the future of the profession.

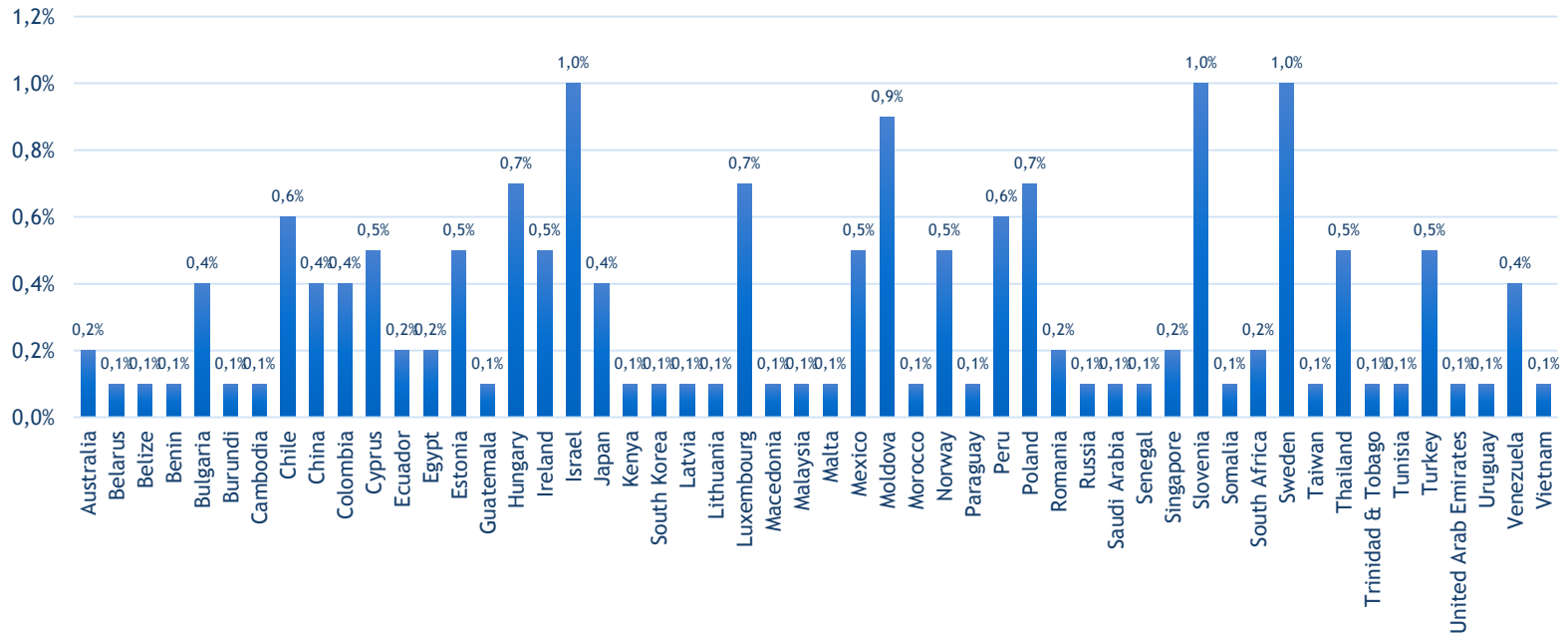
### 1.3 Country Of Residence

As already stated in the previous chapter, although the present study was meant to be a global survey, data showed a widely Eurocentric perspective, with the European continent accounting for 78.8% of respondents: Italy is one the most represented countries, which accounts for 16.4% of respondents (n = 132), followed by countries hosting the headquarters of many international organizations, such as Belgium with 16.3% (n = 131) and Switzerland with 7.5% (n = 60) (Figure 5):



**Figure 5:** countries most represented in the questionnaire.

Outside Europe, the countries most represented are Brazil with 5,6% of respondents (n = 45) and the United States of America with a percentage of 3,5% (n= 28). The other countries are shown below (Figure 6):



**Figure 6:** countries least represented in the questionnaire.

Though Australia has one of the most advanced systems of accreditation of translators and interpreters (NAATI), only two Australian respondents completed the questionnaire, although the percentage of respondents in the second survey on public service interpreting coming from this world region is significantly higher (see chapter 5, paragraph 1.3). The lack of respondents for the first questionnaire might be attributable to the fact that only 18 conference interpreters in Australia and 2 interpreters in New Zealand are AIIC members.

The same can be said as regards Russia and some Far East countries, which were very difficult to reach, as some of the members who received the questionnaire either did not reply to the email invitation or they distributed the questionnaire, but their colleagues did not complete it. Two issues might have contributed to hampering the spread of the survey: first, the network of personal contacts in those countries was not large enough to disseminate the questionnaire more adequately. Secondly, the first questionnaire was only drafted in English, by virtue of a (naïve) assumption that a conference interpreter should be able to understand English. In any case, the use of Russian, Chinese or Japanese would have made the analysis of the data – and, in particular, of the open comments written in one of these languages – more cumbersome. However, the number of responses obtained from the first questionnaire could be said to be representative of the population under scrutiny.



## 2. Professional Identity

The second section of the questionnaire aims to gain insight into the interpreters' professional experiences and identity. The data may help increase understanding of the features defining conference interpreters as professionals (years of experience, membership of professional associations, interpreting as a full-time profession, type of employment). The results will be presented as follows: 1) years of experience; 2) membership of professional associations; 3) working status (freelance or staff); 4) interpreting as a full-time profession; 5) other jobs apart from interpreting.

### 2.1 Years Of Experience

The distribution of responses for this parameter is mainly homogeneous, as shown in the graph below (Figure 7):

How long have you been working professionally in the field?

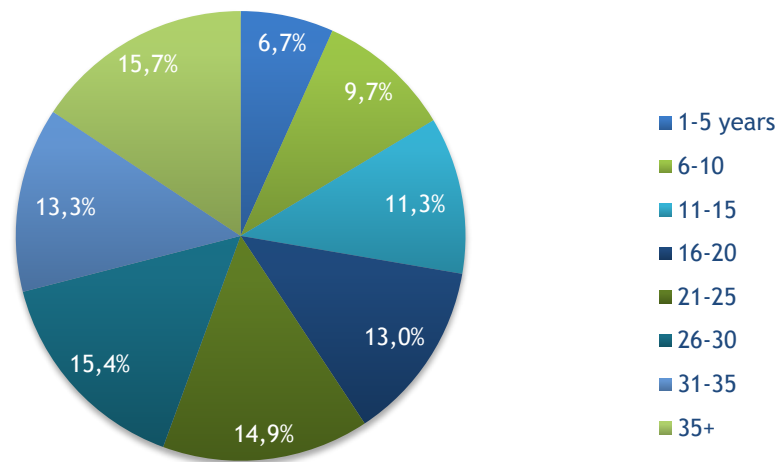


Figure 7: years of experience.

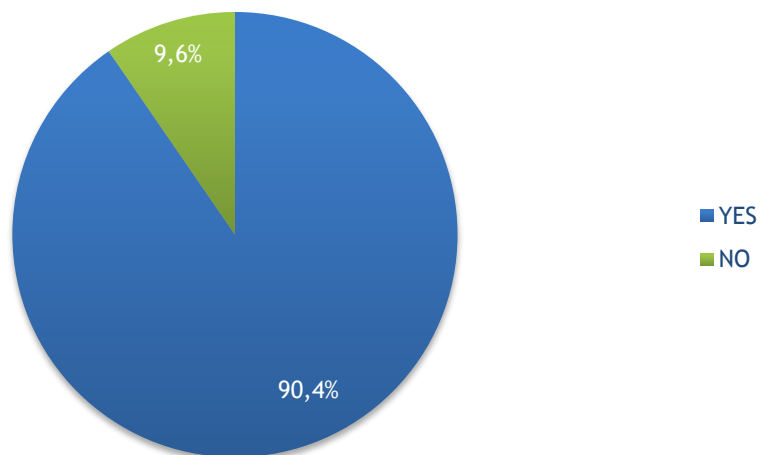
The figure shows that roughly 59.3% (n= 477) of respondents have been working as conference interpreters for more than 21 years, which suggests that there is a correlation between years of age and years of experience in the professional field. Since 48.2% of the interviewed is between 36 and 55 years of age, it could be argued that, by and large, conference interpreters start to work professionally shortly after graduation. However, a comparison with the data gathered by Kurz (1986a), where  $\frac{3}{4}$  of respondents replied that they started in the profession at the age of 20-29 (against 43.8% of the current sample) indicates that, currently, young people enter the profession later than previous generations. One of the factors which may have contributed to the trend is the

increasing competition in the T&I market, as will be shown by the analysis of the last questions of the survey.

## 2.2 Membership Of Professional Associations

Professional associations are defined as “forums for the exchange of knowledge and dissemination of new knowledge related to practice” (Greer, Grover & Fowler 2007). In designating who is qualified to practise interpreting, professional associations exert control over the possession of specialised skills, hereby guaranteeing trustworthiness and accountability. Hence, being a member of a professional association may draw the line between professionals and amateurs. As Pym (2014: 74) argues, professional associations play a fundamental role not only in the enhancement of public awareness, but also in professionals’ process of empowerment. Furthermore, he maintains that professional associations “are able to emit signals of professional status [...] translators might be recognized as being relatively trustworthy because of the associations they belong to, in addition to the institutions they have degrees from, the professional exams they have passed and the professional experience they have accrued” (*ibid.*: 467). Hence, in a survey on the status of interpreters, a question concerning the membership of a professional association was crucial. The graphical representation of interpreters’ membership of professional association is shown below (Figure 8):

Are you a member of any professional association?



**Figure 8:** membership of professional associations.

Since the link to the questionnaire was sent to professional associations worldwide, the majority of interpreters interviewed (90.4%,  $n = 728$ ) belong to a professional organisation, which means that professional conference interpreters have the opportunity to collaborate and create networks with their peers in order to share and disseminate best practices in the field. The professional associations most represented are (figure 9):

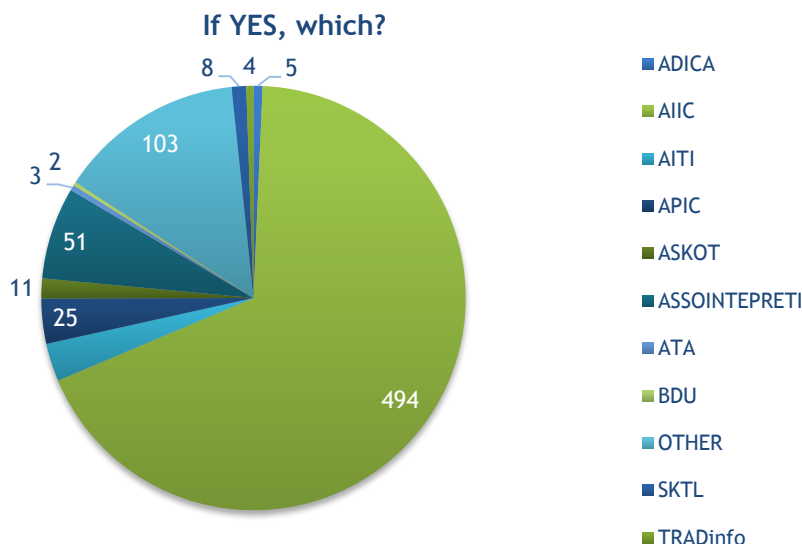


Figure 9: breakdown of the professional associations.

As the graph shows, 67.9% (n = 494) of respondents are AIIC members, whereas the second most represented association is the Italian Association of Conference Interpreters (*Assointerpreti*). A chi-square test reveals that there is a close correlation between age and membership of a professional association ( $\chi^2 = 106.491$ , DF = 5,  $p < 0.05$ ), which suggests that a large proportion of young respondents do not belong to any professional association. The data is confirmed by the contingency table below (figure 10):

|                         |                | Are you a member of any professional association? |       | Total |       |
|-------------------------|----------------|---|-------|-------|-------|
|                         |                | YES   | NO    |       |       |
| What is your age group? | 18-25          | Count   | 2     | 4     | 6     |
|                         | Expected count | 5,4   | ,6    | 6,0   |       |
| 26-35                   | Count          | 65  | 33    | 98    |       |
|                         | Expected count | 88,6  | 9,4   | 98,0  |       |
| 36-45                   | Count          | 138   | 16    | 154   |       |
|                         | Expected count | 139,3   | 14,7  | 154,0 |       |
| 46-55                   | Count          | 221   | 13    | 234   |       |
|                         | Expected count | 211,6   | 22,4  | 234,0 |       |
| 56-65                   | Count          | 209   | 9     | 218   |       |
|                         | Expected count | 197,1   | 20,9  | 218,0 |       |
| 65+                     | Count          | 93  | 2     | 95    |       |
|                         | Expected count | 85,9  | 9,1   | 95,0  |       |
| Total                   |                | Count   | 728   | 77    | 805   |
|                         |                | Expected count                                    | 728,0 | 77,0  | 805,0 |

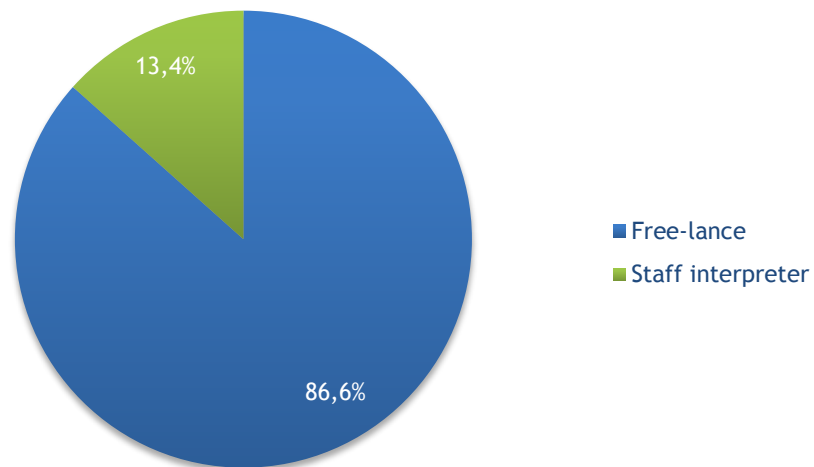
Figure 10: contingency table showing the relationship between age and membership of a professional association.

In the line reporting the age range 26-35, there is a lower number of respondents (65) compared to the expected count of responses (88) who ticked the option YES, which might support the assumption that aspiring members manage to meet the minimum entry requirements later in life. Considering the current market situation, two possible interpretations present themselves: either they are not interested in joining a professional association, or the period of time needed to become eligible for such networks is lengthening.

### 2.3 Type Of Employment

Autonomy is considered a core feature of a profession, since professionals can make independent judgements about their work (Bayles 1989: 21), just as other established professions (i.e. medicine and law). Therefore, interpreters were asked if they worked as freelance or staff interpreters (figure 11):

Do you work as a freelance or staff interpreter?



**Figure 11:** breakdown of freelance and staff respondents.

As the graph shows, the majority of professional conference interpreters are freelancers (86.6%, n = 697), whereas staff interpreters only account for a small proportion (13.4%, n = 108). The figure reveals that conference interpreting and translation are mainly freelance professions, an aspect which has been mainly regarded as positive for professional autonomy, but that, when access to the profession is not regulated, might hinder the achievement of power and control typical of other liberal professions. With reference to the status of translators, Gouadec (2007: 169) argues that, “freelancers see themselves as dynamic, business-like people. Choosing to be self-employed gives them ‘professional’ status along with architects, doctors and other qualified practitioners”. However,

unlike doctors and lawyers, who are both state-regulated and work as freelance professionals, interpreting is a non-regulated occupation in many countries, which is why, on the one hand, the status of freelancer gives a higher sense of autonomy, but, on the other, competition coming from non-professionals is not completely beaten off.

A statistical analysis reveals that more men are employed as staff interpreters, which is confirmed by a *t*-test ( $t = 2.100, p < 0.05$ ) illustrating that there is a huge difference between the mean scores of men ( $n = 196; M = 1.17; SD = .38$ ) and of women ( $n = 609; M = 1.11; SD = .32$ ). The contingency table obtained with the chi-square test shows the mean variation more clearly. The parts in bold indicate the most striking differences (figure 12):

|                      |                |                | Do you work as a freelance or staff interpreter? |                   | Total |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|--|-------------------|-------|
|                      |                |                | Freelance  | Staff interpreter |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE           | Count          | 161  | <b>35</b>         | 196   |
|                      |                | Expected count | 169,7  | <b>26,3</b>       | 196,0 |
|                      | FEMALE         | Count          | 536  | <b>73</b>         | 609   |
|                      |                | Expected count | 527,3  | <b>81,7</b>       | 609,0 |
| Total                | Count          | 697            | 108  | 805               |       |
|                      | Expected count | 697,0          | 108,0  | 805,0             |       |

Figure 12: proportion of female and male conference interpreters and the type of employment.

Another variable worth analysing is the level of education of respondents (figure 13):

|  |                |                | Do you work as a freelance or staff interpreter? |                   | Total |
|--|----------------|----------------|--|-------------------|-------|
|  |                |                | Freelance  | Staff interpreter |       |
| Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? | YES            | Count          | 424  | <b>73</b>         | 497   |
|  |                | Expected count | 430,3  | <b>66,7</b>       | 497,0 |
|  | NO             | Count          | <b>273</b>                                       | 35                | 308   |
|  |                | Expected count | <b>266,7</b>                                     | 41,3              | 308,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 697            | 108  | 805               |       |
|  | Expected count | 697,0          | 108,0  | 805,0             |       |

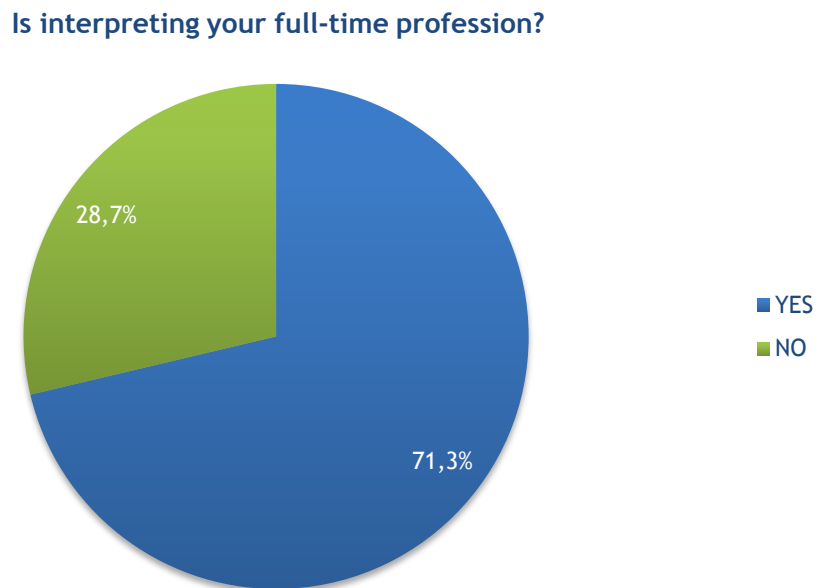
Figure 13: proportion of freelance and staff interpreters according to their level of education.

Although a Student's *t*-test ( $t = 1.345, p > 0.05$ ) reveals that there is no significant difference between the two variables, subtle discrepancies could be found in the contingency table above, which shows

that a higher number of staff interpreters have a MA degree in T&I compared to the expected response count. On the other hand, a slightly higher number of freelancers do not have a postgraduate degree in T&I. The findings show that staff interpreters have received targeted training in simultaneous and consecutive interpretation.

## 2.4 Interpreting As A Full-Time Profession

In sociological literature, a full-time occupation is a *conditio sine qua non* for a profession to distinguish itself from a hobby. Previous studies (Katan 2011b; Pym 2012) investigated whether translation was regarded as a full-time profession. Since one of the main features of a profession is that it is a lifetime commitment to a career (Ornstein *et al.* 2010), the respondents of the present sample were asked if they work exclusively as interpreters (figure 14):



**Figure 14:** answers given by respondents as to whether interpreting is their full-time job.

As the graph shows, 71,3% of interpreters (n = 574) say that they work as interpreters full-time against 28,7% of respondents (n = 231) whose main profession is not conference interpreting. Though Katan (2011b: 69) suggests that interpreting can be regarded as an “occupation which is not a ‘job’”, data from the present questionnaire points out that conference interpreting is often a full time job. However, assuming that the boundary between translation and interpreting begins to become blurred and that interpreters and translators are said to have “mixed professional roles” (Katan *ibid.*: 85), respondents were asked whether they carried out another job besides conference interpreting. The answers were as follows (figure 15):

Apart from interpreting, do you have another job? (You can choose more than one option)

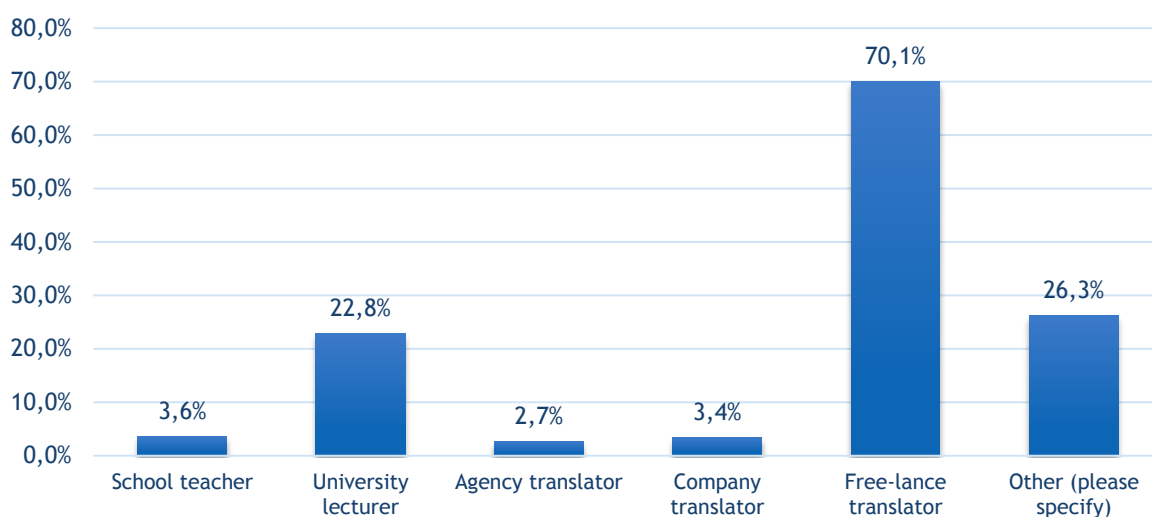


Figure 15: conference interpreters’ other jobs.

As the figure shows, 70.1% of conference interpreters also work as freelance translators (n = 394), 22.8% as university lecturers (n = 128), 3.6 % (n = 20) work as school teachers, 3.4% (n = 19) of them are employed in companies (some of them specified “multinational” companies), 2.7% (n = 15) of interpreters work in-house in translation agencies. A considerable proportion of respondents (19.3%, n = 148) ticked “other” as an option. The high number of responses gathered for the option “freelance translator” suggests that Katan’s hypothesis on the blurred contours of the translation professions could be said to be confirmed. This view is strengthened by Dam and Koskinen, who suggest that “the boundaries of the field [of translation AN] remain fuzzy” (2016: 2). A breakdown of responses given for the latter option is illustrated below (figure 16):

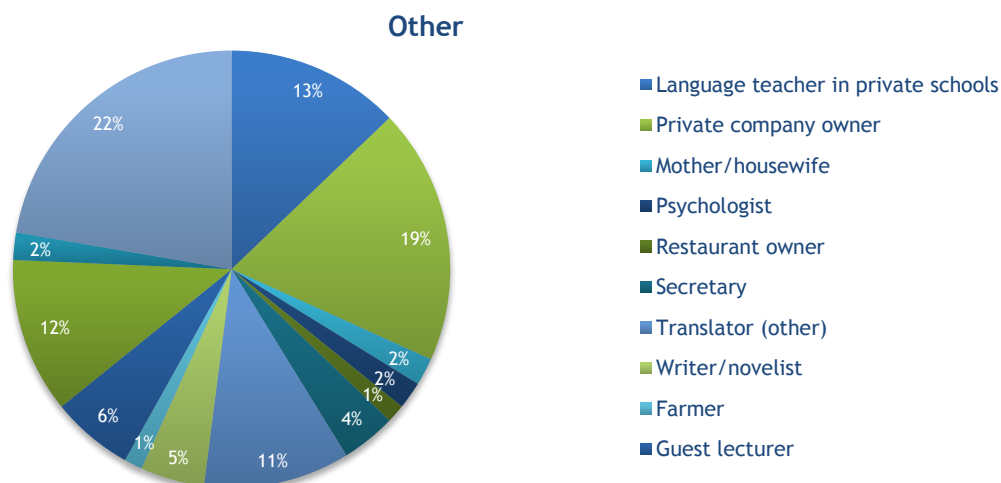


Figure 16: breakdown of other jobs carried out by conference interpreters.



A considerable number of non-full-time interpreters (33%, n = 49) gave incomplete or illogical responses (such as: freelance interpreter, freelance translator, I don't do any other job; etc.). A substantial 19% (n = 28) said that they work as company owners ("head of translation company", "head of language services", "owner/manager of a translation and interpreting agency", "business owner" etc.); 13% (n = 19) work as language teachers in private institutes, 6% (n = 9) answered that they are "guest lecturers" and 5% (n = 7) of respondents replied that, in addition to being interpreters, they are also writers/novelists/bloggers. Another interesting aspect is that 4% (n = 6) also work as "secretaries" and another 2% (n = 3) as "journalists", two options included in questions on status (23-24); 2% (n = 3) is made up of "psychologists" and another 2% (n = 3) of "mothers", a perhaps ironic way to point out that being a parent can also be considered a job. 1% (n = 2) work in the food industry and another 1% (n = 2) work in the agriculture sector as farmers. One respondent admitted having left the profession to devote himself to farming.

Special attention has to be paid to the 11% (n = 17) of conference interpreters who work as interpreters and translators for NGOs and non-profit organisations. It is not clear whether they also work in conflict zones or whether they simply volunteer during social forums or similar events. An interesting aspect to be mentioned is that the trend of volunteering has drawn the attention of some scholars (Boéri & Maier 2010) who describe the crucial role that translation and interpreting play in the counter-narratives of globalisation. For interpreters, social forums represent a way to do networking, to gain interpreting experience and to struggle for a cause they believe in, a motivation falling within the discourse of the empowered translator (Calzada-Pérez 2003; Tymoczko 2010b). According to Tymoczko, in the new theory of societal power transcending all levels of society, translators "make choices about what values and institutions to support and oppose, determining activist strategies and picking their fights". Likewise, interpreters volunteering in the social forums make choices about what to interpret and why and, in doing so, they challenge the myth of neutrality. By forming networks of solidarity across the globe, interpreters become agents of social transformation, a trend which is likely to become increasingly prominent in the years to come.

### 3. Opinions On Public Service Interpreting (PSI)

To allow inter-group comparison, conference interpreters were asked to express their attitudes and beliefs about public service interpreting. In the first question, conference interpreters were asked whether they have ever worked in public services (figure 17):

Have you ever worked in public services (courts, hospitals, immigration offices, police stations)?

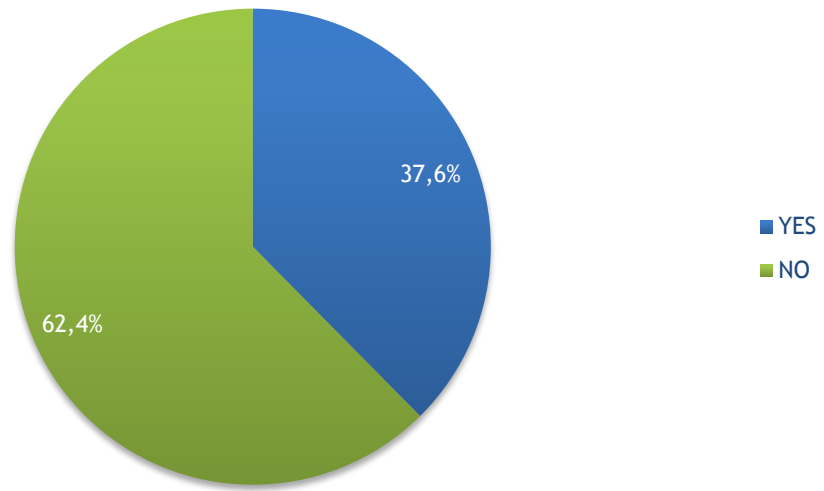


Figure 17: breakdown of respondents working in public services.

A substantial percentage of respondents (62.4%, n = 502) replied that they have never worked in PSI settings; however, the number of positive responses is not insignificant (37.6%, n = 303). The second question aims to elicit information on the reasons why they have never worked in public services (figure 18):

If NOT, what are the main reasons for your choice? (Please tick 2 options)



Figure 18: conference interpreters' main reasons for not working in public services.

The most prominent reason seems to be that conference interpreters have never worked in public service settings simply because they have never been presented with the opportunity (50.3%,  $n = 259$ ). The statistical analysis reveals that a higher percentage of women work in this sector, with a significant difference between both groups reported by a Student's  $t$ -test ( $t = 1.318, p < 0.05$ ). Details are shown in the contingency table below (figure 19):

| Contingency table What is your gender? * Have you ever worked in public services (courts, hospitals, immigration offices, police stations)? |        |                |  |       |       |
|---|--------|----------------|--|-------|-------|
|   |        |                | Have you ever worked in public services (courts, hospitals, immigration offices, police stations)? |       | Total |
|   |        |                | YES  | NO    |       |
| What is your gender?  | MALE   | Count          | 66   | 130   | 196   |
|   |        | Expected count | 73,8   | 122,2 | 196,0 |
|   | FEMALE | Count          | 237  | 372   | 609   |
|   |        | Expected count | 229,2  | 379,8 | 609,0 |
| Total   |        | Count          | 303  | 502   | 805   |
|   |        | Expected count | 303,0  | 502,0 | 805,0 |

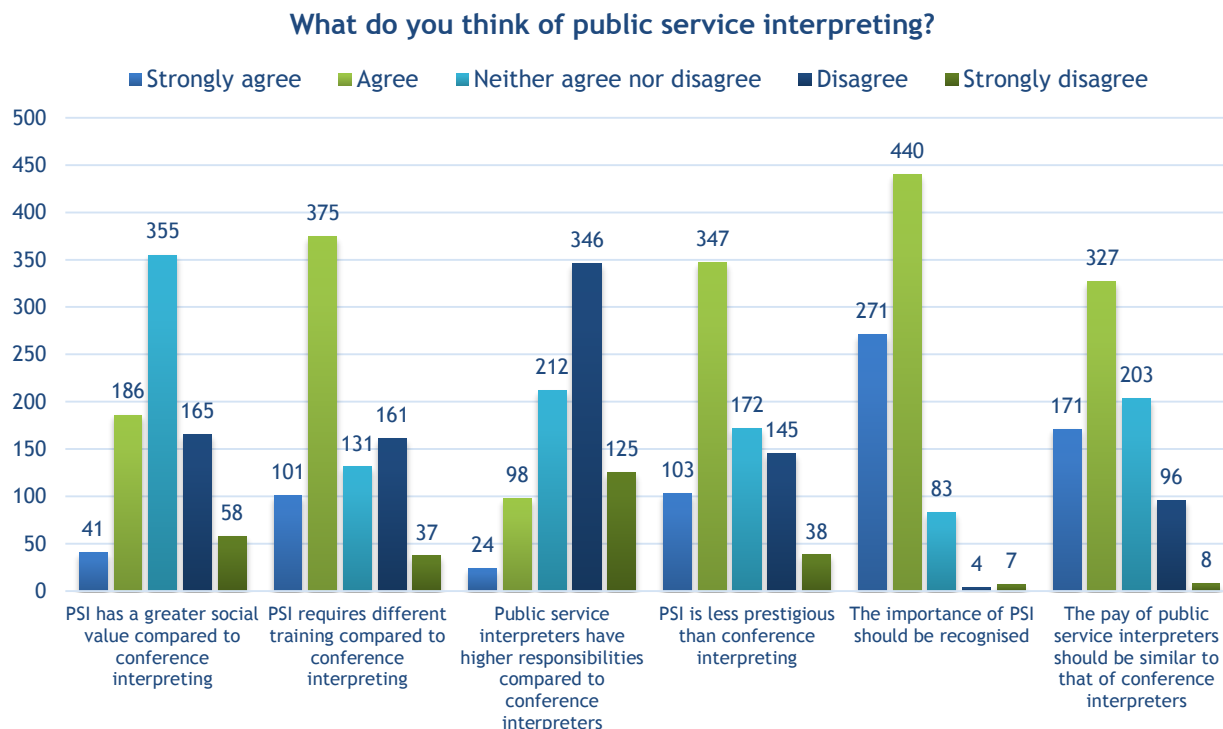
**Figure 19:** contingency table representing the number of female and male interpreters who work as public service interpreters.

Certain interpreters declared they were certified as public service interpreters, but they have never had the chance to work in the field (“I have just recently passed the Public Translator and Commercial Interpreter National Exam, therefore I believe I will soon work in public services, but haven't had the chance yet” [Female, Brazil]; “I had to take an exam and now I wait for the ministry of justice to put me on their records” [Female, Slovakia]).

The second most ticked option was that public service interpreting is poorly remunerated (37.3%,  $n = 192$ ). A few of them confirmed that they stopped working in the field because of low payment (“I no longer work in this field because of payment issues” [Male, Burundi]; “I no longer work in the courts due to low pay” [Female, UK]). Others simply answered that they are not interested in working in public services (21.2%,  $n = 109$ ), mostly because they have no time to take assignments in this field (“I have a full time contract elsewhere, so no spare time to do so” [Male, Austria]; “I've worked exclusively for the UN since graduating from interpretation school” [Female, Canada]). A smaller percentage of conference interpreters (16.3%,  $n = 84$ ) replied that they were not trained to work as public service interpreters (“I trained as a conference interpreter and have always worked as such. I have been too busy as a conference interpreter to do community or public service interpreting, which usually pays less” [Female, Canada]; “My training was for conference interpretation” [Female, Sweden]). With regard to the option “other”, 14% of interpreters ( $n = 72$ ) answered that they do not work in public services because there is a lack of demand for such services in their country of residence (“There's not really a demand for that in Brazil” [Female, Brazil]; “there

is no demand in my country for these services” [Female, Chile]). Overall, the response pattern appears to reflect the uneven professionalisation process of public service interpreting.

The third question aimed to elicit conference interpreters’ subjective opinions on public service interpreting (figure 20):



**Figure 20:** conference interpreters’ opinions on public service interpreting.

The response pattern indicates that, by and large, conference interpreters agree that PSI requires specific training, that the importance of the profession should be acknowledged and that the remuneration of professionals should be higher. However, there seems not to be such widespread agreement on the fact that PS interpreters have higher responsibilities and greater social value than conference interpreters (although the proportion of positive responses for this option appears to be high). Unsurprisingly, a large number of conference interpreters do believe that public service interpreting is less prestigious. A more detailed comparison of the responses obtained for the two groups will be carried out in chapter 6.

#### 4. Training, Education and Research

Training was believed to deserve an entire section in the questionnaire design, not only because it is a crucial factor for professional development in a general sense, but also because, in a period of market confusion in the T&I sector, it is one of the pillars constituting professionalism, distinguishing qualified from non-qualified interpreters. In the historical evolution of the profession, “it was only during the establishment of the League of Nations that there turned out not to be enough of these natural and multilingual talents. To cover the growing need for conference interpreters,

some sort of formal training had to be provided” (Kalina 2014: 18). Although in the first years a trial and error approach was common practice because no standardised training and evaluation method existed, “there was no doubt that universities were the only institutions where such highly specialised training could be provided” (*ibid.*: 20). As Neff argues, “in order to secure its status, the profession has to first set up a sound foundation of academic training for future service providers, which will, in turn, ‘professionalise’ the sector that will be served” (2015b: 220).

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the sociology of the professions regards specialised training as a fundamental step towards the achievement of full professionalisation. According to Ryan and Cooper:

A profession entails a long period of specialized training. Because professional work requires specialized intellectual skills, it requires specialized intellectual training. General education such as that represented by a bachelor’s degree is valued but it is not considered adequate. The specialized training must cover a substantial period and not be obtained in crash courses or correspondence schools (2012: 476).

One of the main prerequisites to enter a profession is a university degree, since a professional is “a person who masters and applies a body of knowledge in a specific area of inquiry” (Greer, Grover & Fowler 2007: 16). In the same way as attorneys master a body of knowledge associated with the practice of law, conference interpreters harness the skills acquired during their academic career, which is why training at university level would be preferable. In the light of which assumptions, a question concerning the possession of a postgraduate degree in interpreting was considered necessary to assess the degree of specialisation that conference interpreting has achieved over the years. The same question will be used as an independent variable (together with gender, age, country of residence and employment status) to determine whether there is a significant difference in the response pattern between respondents who have a MA degree in interpreting and respondents holding a different kind of degree. The responses are shown below (figure 21):

#### Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?

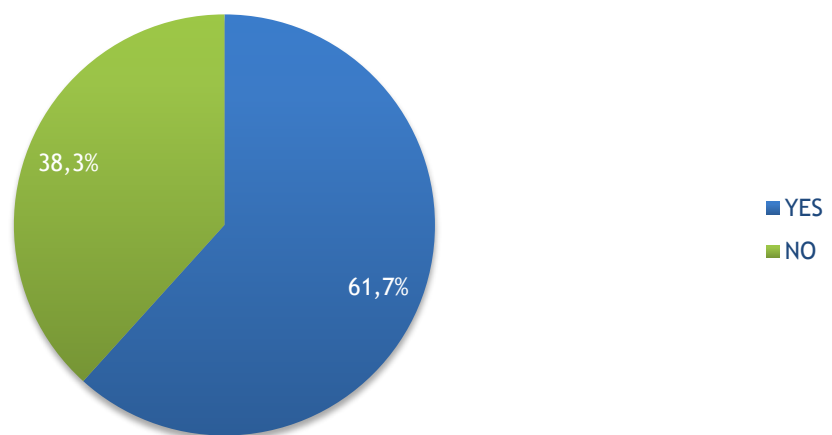
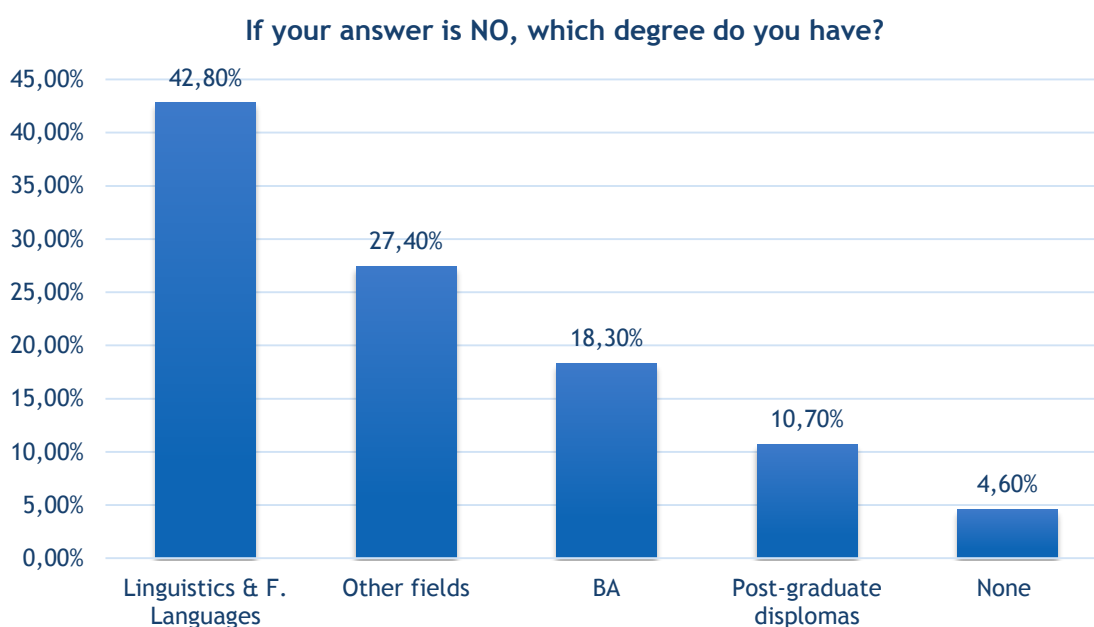


Figure 21: interpreters’ level of education.

The sample shows that 61.7% of conference interpreters ( $n = 497$ ) throughout the world have a degree in translation/interpreting, which testifies to the increasing importance attached to specialised and academic training. However, the remaining 38.3% ( $n = 308$ ) is made up of conference interpreters who do not have an MA in translation/interpreting. At statistical level, no significant difference between men ( $n = 196$ ;  $M = 1.38$ ;  $SD = .488$ ) and women ( $n = 609$ ;  $M = 1.38$ ;  $SD = .486$ ) was found with a Student's  $t$ -test ( $t = .170$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Although the majority of respondents answered that they have an MA in translation and interpreting, there is still a remarkable 38.3% ( $n = 308$ ) of conference interpreters who do not have a degree in T&I. The figure below provides a breakdown of the level of education of conference interpreters who do not have a degree in interpreting (figure 22):



**Figure 22:** type of degree held by conference interpreters who do not have an MA in translation/interpreting.

A considerable number of respondents have a degree in Linguistics and Foreign Languages (42.8%,  $n = 129$ ), whereas 27.4% ( $n = 83$ ) have a degree in a subject other than interpreting, such as Law, Business and Administration, Art, Engineering, Dentistry, Economics, Science, etc. 18.3% ( $n = 55$ ) of respondents only have a BA in translation/interpreting or in one of the above subjects. 10.7% ( $n = 30$ ) of respondents wrote that they have a postgraduate diploma, which is the name of the certificates obtained after a BA when MAs did not exist as such. Indeed, certain respondents specified this aspect in the open comments (“Interpreting diploma. MAs did not exist in the days when I trained”, [Female, Switzerland]. “Diploma. MA in interpreting did not exist at that time”, [Female, Germany]. “A so-called diploma”, [Female, Switzerland]). 4.6% ( $n = 11$ ) of respondents have no degree at all, which may be due to the fact that they live in a country which does not offer specialised training in conference interpreting. It could also be attributable to the fact that, up until the 1960s, there were not many institutions providing training in conference interpreting. The hypothesis was

that older generations (from 56 years of age) do not have a degree in translation/interpreting, whereas younger generations (18-45) do, as a result of the increasing specialised training offered by universities. A chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 52.541$ ,  $DF = 5$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) indeed demonstrated that there is a correlation between age and the possession or non-possession of an MA in T&I, as shown in the figure below (figure 23):

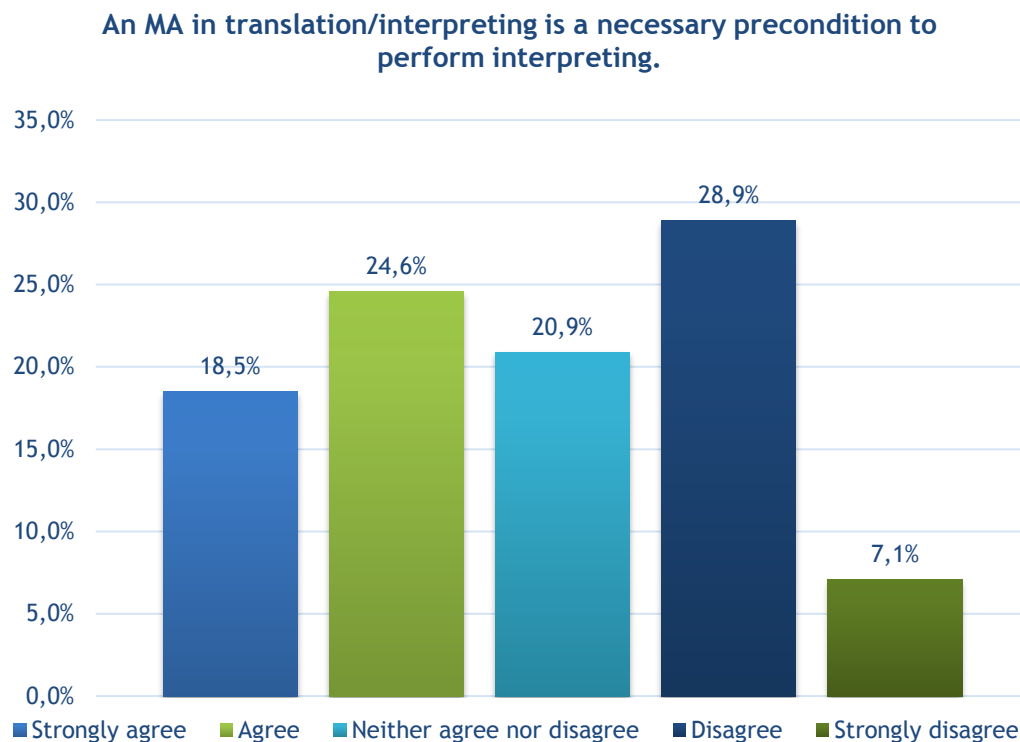
| Contingency table: Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? * What is your age group? |     |                         |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|---|-----|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |     | What is your age group? |       |       |       |       |       | Total |       |
|   |     | 18-25                   | 26-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | 65+   |       |       |
| Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?  | YES | Count                   | 5     | 83    | 114   | 139   | 111   | 45    | 497   |
|   |     | Expected count          | 3,7   | 60,5  | 95,1  | 144,5 | 134,6 | 58,7  | 497,0 |
|   | NO  | Count                   | 1     | 15    | 40    | 95    | 107   | 50    | 308   |
|   |     | Expected count          | 2,3   | 37,5  | 58,9  | 89,5  | 83,4  | 36,3  | 308,0 |
| Total   |     | Count                   | 6     | 98    | 154   | 234   | 218   | 95    | 805   |
|   |     | Expected count          | 6,0   | 98,0  | 154,0 | 234,0 | 218,0 | 95,0  | 805,0 |

**Figure 23:** results of a chi-square test comparing age and possession of an MA in translation/interpreting.

In the *yes* column it is shown that in younger generations (18-45) the number of people who have an MA exceeds the expected count, whereas in older generations (46-65+) fewer people than expected have an MA. The reverse is true as for the *no* column: the number of people who do not have an MA in translation and interpreting exceeds the expected count as far as older generations (46-65+) are concerned. On the one hand, the findings empirically confirm the hypothesis that conference interpreting is becoming increasingly prominent in university curricula; on the other, they suggest that there is a huge gap between older and younger generations, reflected in considerations on how the status of conference interpreter could be achieved. Older generations – which account for 51.2% of interpreters who do not have an MA in interpreting – are more likely to sustain the myth that interpreters are “born, not made”, as they learnt to interpret on the spot or through experience. Younger generations, instead, appear to value more the importance of academic education, which contributes to enhancing the belief that interpreters can also be made.

As for the country of residence, differences arose among continents. Europe is the only continent where the majority of respondents have an MA degree ( $n = 429$ ), followed by America ( $n = 28$ ), Asia ( $n = 12$ ), and Africa ( $n = 2$ ). The figures may be attributed to the higher and longer-standing presence of interpreting schools in Europe, to a longer tradition of training in conference interpreting and, most importantly, to the presence of the headquarters of certain international organisations.

The following question on training aimed at eliciting information about whether interpreters regarded a postgraduate degree in translation and interpreting as essential to carry out the profession (figure 24):



**Figure 24:** graph illustrating interpreters' beliefs on the importance of a MA in T&I.

The results obtained for this question appear to be highly heterogeneous. As the graph illustrates, 43.1% (n = 347) ticked either “strongly agree” or “agree”, whereas 36% (n= 290) of respondents chose “disagree” or even “strongly disagree”. 20.9% of the interviewed population (n = 168) did not give a definite answer. The outcome is rather surprising, because several conference interpreters define themselves as professionals and want to be regarded as such, but, at the same time, they do not consider a degree in interpreting a fundamental step to pursue a career in interpreting. In this respect, three hypotheses could be formulated:

1. The majority of interpreters who gave a negative answer do not have a degree and are over 50, which is why they align themselves with the line of thought “interpreters are born, not made”;
2. The interpreters who disagree with this comment have a degree in T&I, but still do not regard it as necessary to work as interpreters (in this way, the discourse according to which “anyone who knows two languages can be an interpreter”, generally fostered by non-interpreters, is likely to gain more ground);
3. Interpreters attended university courses which do not confer an MA.

In order to test the first hypothesis, statistical tests were carried out. A chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 69.318$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) showed that there is indeed a close correlation between these two variables, as shown in the contingency table below (figure 25):



**Contingency table: An MA in translation/interpreting is a necessary precondition to perform interpreting. \* What is your age group?**

|  |                            |                | What is your age group? |       |       |       |       |      | Tot.  |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
|  |                            |                | 18-25                   | 26-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | 65+  |       |
| An MA in translation/interpreting is a necessary precondition to perform interpreting. | Strongly agree             | Count          | 1                       | 39    | 37    | 33    | 32    | 7    | 149   |
|  |                            | Expected count | 1,1                     | 18,1  | 28,5  | 43,3  | 40,4  | 17,6 | 149,0 |
|  | Agree                      | Count          | 2                       | 33    | 35    | 54    | 52    | 22   | 198   |
|  |                            | Expected count | 1,5                     | 24,1  | 37,9  | 57,6  | 53,6  | 23,4 | 198,0 |
|  | Neither agree nor disagree | Count          | 1                       | 11    | 29    | 57    | 52    | 18   | 168   |
|  |                            | Expected count | 1,3                     | 20,5  | 32,1  | 48,8  | 45,5  | 19,8 | 168,0 |
|  | Disagree                   | Count          | 2                       | 13    | 45    | 68    | 65    | 40   | 233   |
|  |                            | Expected count | 1,7                     | 28,4  | 44,6  | 67,7  | 63,1  | 27,5 | 233,0 |
|  | Strongly disagree          | Count          | 0                       | 2     | 8     | 22    | 17    | 8    | 57    |
|  |                            | Expected count | ,4                      | 6,9   | 10,9  | 16,6  | 15,4  | 6,7  | 57,0  |
|  | Total                      | Count          | 6                       | 98    | 154   | 234   | 218   | 95   | 805   |
|  |                            | Expected count | 6,0                     | 98,0  | 154,0 | 234,0 | 218,0 | 95,0 | 805,0 |

**Figure 25:** statistical association between age and the importance of a MA in T&I.

By way of example, respondents in the 65+ column tended to answer in a negative way: in the fourth line, 40 interpreters answered “disagree” against an expected count of 27.5. On the other hand, in first line, 39 interpreters between 26-35 years of age versus an estimated count of 18.1 believe that a MA in T&I is necessary. The same can be said for the second line, where 33 respondents answered that they believe that an MA is fundamental versus an estimated count of 24.1. Hence, data confirms that younger generations attribute a higher value to specialised education. For older generations, not having a degree was not seen as a problem for two main reasons: the first is that, up to the 1960s, there were no university degrees in interpreting. The analysis was confirmed by a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = -15.341, p < 0.05$ ) which showed that respondents with a specialised degree attach a high importance to specialised education.

The second reason is of a psychological nature. Those who have no official academic training or no training at all regard themselves as pure, natural talents who learnt “on the spot” and developed interpreting skills with experience and hard work, which explains why older generations of interpreters tend to privilege talent over discipline, genius over training. The relationship between the lack of an academic degree and beliefs on the supposed uselessness of university diplomas is better reflected in some open comments written by interpreters with more than 20 years of experience:

Interpretation has little to do with academic studies. Languages can be learned in many ways and the best way is usually "living it". Yes, one need to learn the technique and the ethics of

interpretation but it is and will always be a handicraft profession. The most talented interpreters do not necessarily have an academic degree of Interpretation but have learned the profession in a tailor-made course for example. Others may be useless interpreters forever although they have an academic degree. The interpreter should be tested to see the performance. For me personally it was great to do the Master in Conference Interpreting and I happened to have academic studies that has to do with languages and interpretation before that but I have met excellent interpreters that have very different backgrounds and as I said the best performing interpreter is not always the one with the academic studies. The many interpreter schools are also changing the labor market a great deal. As there are a lot of enthusiastic "so called" interpreters that have a less demanding idea of how the profession should be exercised the profession's reputation, remuneration and general working conditions are getting worse. Another problem is that if the client do not get a clear added value from interpretation they will not ask for it again. To be a professional interpreter also implies keeping up high standards when it comes to working conditions (Female, Spain).

Interpreting is really the profession where the academic qualifications are less important than some personal studies and experiences (Female, Estonia).

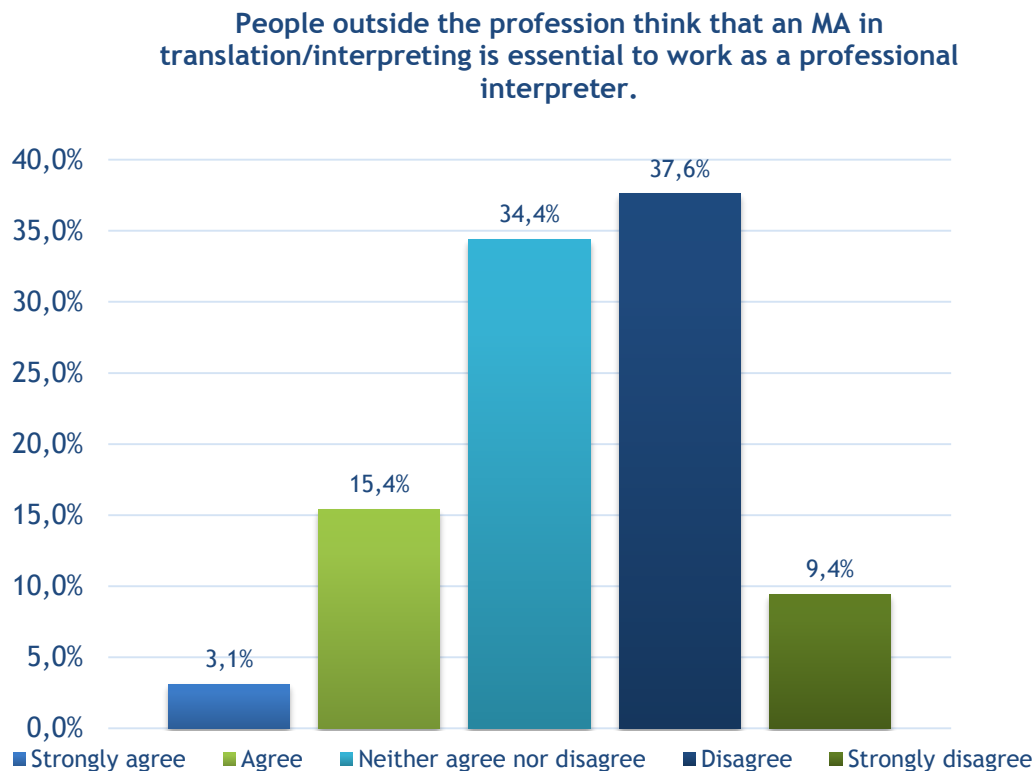
Interpreting requires talent. Interpreters do not need training in any technical aspect of language (phonetics etc.). It would be as asking musicians to study the physics of sound. Interpreters need more training in public performance (acting, voice coaching, breathing) and specific subjects, such as law, economy, finance, international relations, geopolitics, etc. (Male, Slovenia).

The trouble is that too many post-grads with MAs can't actually interpret in real life, student selection needs dramatic improvement (Female, Belgium).

General culture is "probably" more important than language knowledge. (Male, Brazil).

The main points emerging from these comments can be summarised as follows: 1) training for conference interpreters need not be strictly academic; 2) considering that some untrained interpreters are good interpreters, whereas some trained interpreters lack talent, interpreting requires more genius than formal training; 3) selection criteria in interpreting schools have to be stricter; 4) general knowledge is still considered to be the main feature of a good interpreter. Although the present work does not aim to go into the details and complexities of interpreters' training, certain reflections on the sociological implications of the above-mentioned perspectives are crucial. Data shows that there is a glaring contradiction between interpreters' concept of professionalism and what they think is required to achieve it. On the one hand, the majority of the interpreters interviewed in the sample see themselves as professionals but, on the other, there is no widespread agreement that interpreting has to receive postgraduate training. The main reason for this answer is that not all graduate interpreters have talent. Nevertheless, the fact that not all graduates are good at interpreting does not mean that academic training is not necessary, because the same principle also applies to other professions: not all graduate lawyers or medical doctors are talented, but the law foresees that they have to be trained at postgraduate level. In a sociological perspective, academic training gives future professionals the opportunity not only to learn

specialised skills, but also professional ethics. In this respect, Gile underlines that, during their training period, “instructors should stress professional ethics and professional pride, a major factor marking the difference between a true professional and an amateur, which makes it reasonable for the former to seek good social status and working conditions” (2009: 120-121). Since education helps students develop a comprehensive professional identity, the claim that talent should be preferred over education is no longer tenable. For the sake of consistency, a second question on the same topic was asked (figure 26):



**Figure 26:** level of education of a conference interpreter as perceived by laypeople.

The figures show that a total of 47% (n = 379) of the sample do not believe that there is a general recognition among laypeople of the educational level that interpreters are supposed to have and that 34.4% of respondents are not able to express a clear opinion in this respect. Even though a survey among the general population would have yielded more reliable results, the fact that a only tiny proportion of respondents (149 out of 805) are convinced that laypeople are aware of the level of expertise and skills interpreters have to possess shows that conference interpreting is far from being considered a fully-fledged profession by society. If interpreting is to be seen as such a profession, there should be no doubt among laypeople (and also among interpreters themselves) that conference interpreting is an occupation which deserves thorough academic training, just like other liberal professionals, whose high level of expertise is never questioned. As for university curricula, interpreters were asked what degree of importance they attributed to a list of subjects (figure 27):

In a university curriculum, how would you rate the importance of the following subjects?

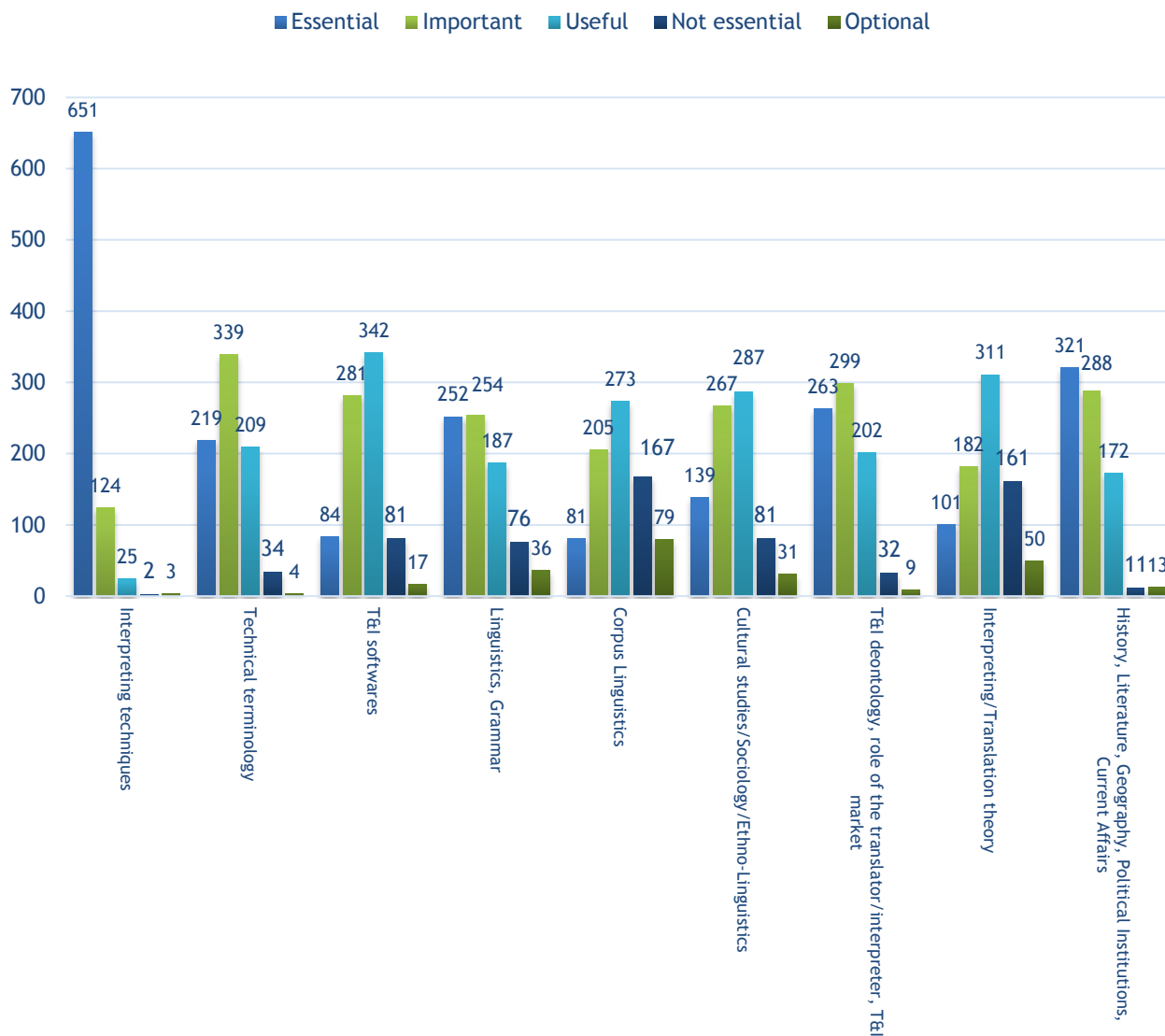
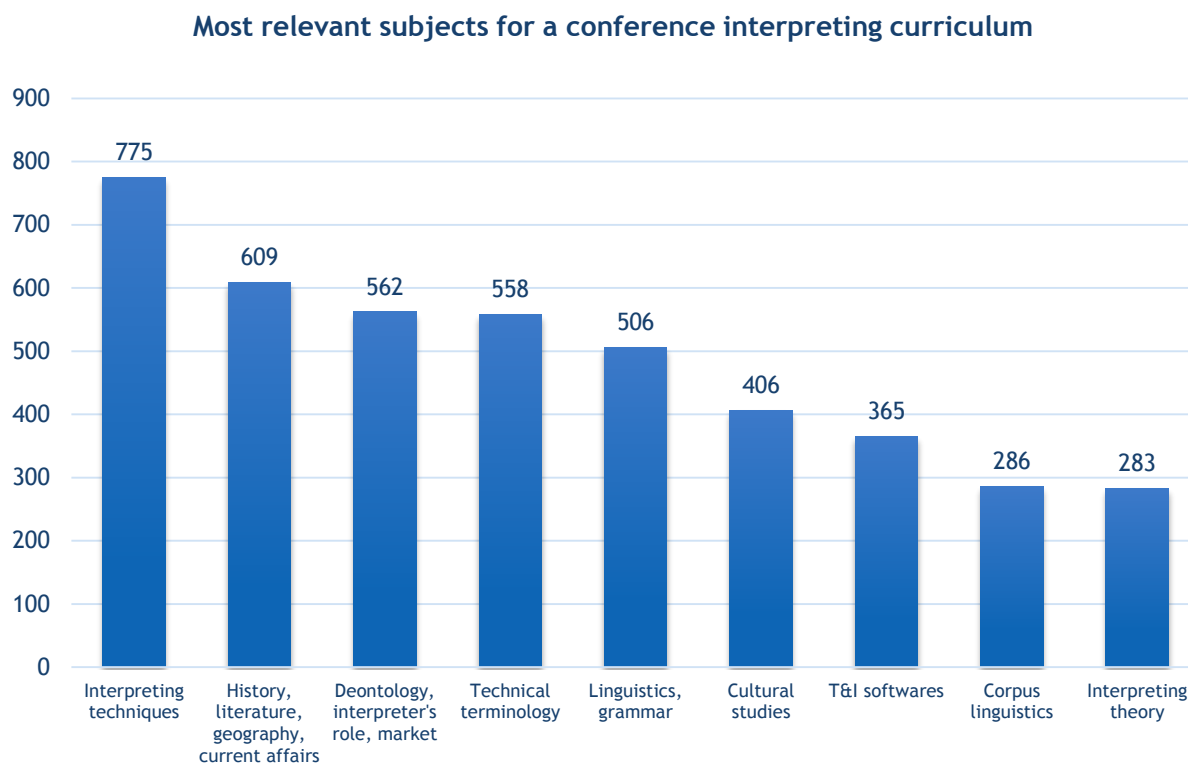


Figure 27: classification of the subjects deemed relevant in a university curriculum in conference interpreting.

In order to assess which of the proposed subjects were considered more relevant in a postgraduate degree, data obtained from the responses given for parameters “essential” and “important” were added together. A breakdown of the responses according to the level of importance attributed to the single subjects is illustrated in the graph below (figure 28):



**Figure 28:** breakdown of the most relevant subjects for a university curriculum according to interpreters.

A total of 651 respondents consider “interpreting techniques” essential for interpreting training and 124 regard them as “important” (for an aggregate of 96%). As was to be expected, interpreting techniques were regarded as the core of interpreters’ training, and only a small proportion of them (5 respondents out of 805) do not acknowledge their importance. This is in line with the theories postulating that the teaching of interpreting techniques is fundamental not only because it prepares future interpreters to develop “the linguistic skills needed to ensure the required automatism in the use of the target language” (Chernov 2004: 199), but also because students learn to consider the conference not as an event placed in a vacuum, but as a “communicative event with its own textuality” (Pöchhacker 2004), with a communicative purpose, a target audience, and its internal structure.

The second most important aspect conference interpreters regard as useful for their education is general knowledge (n = 609), which does not only concern a broad awareness of current affairs and political institutions, but also a sound knowledge of the literature, legal systems, geography and traditions of the countries whose languages are studied by future interpreters. The importance of an interpreter’s general knowledge has been underlined by several other scholars (Gambier *et al.* 1997; Phelan 2001; Garzone & Viezzi 2002; Diriker 2004; Pöchhacker 2004; Gile 2009; Snelling 2009; Gillies 2013; Valero-Garcés 2014a; Mikkelsen & Jourdenais 2015) who agree that future interpreters should have an insatiable curiosity and be constantly up to date with current affairs. This aspect of an interpreter’s training is undoubtedly relevant, although there has been a broad

discussion on whether this supposed “general knowledge” should be taught in class or whether it should be the interpreter’s responsibility to acquire knowledge on certain topics. According to Snelling (2009: 91), who believes that the expression “general knowledge” is inadequate owing to its vagueness, there are a few suggested readings for the future interpreter whose mother tongue is not English; the author explains that they could guide students through the most influential literary and historical events regarded as relevant in the English-speaking world. What emerges from the present data is that, according to respondents, more attention should be paid to these topics in class, with specific courses devoted to their study. As one interpreter explained, “I wish more time was dedicated to the study of subjects such as geopolitics, history etc., which are too often taken for granted” (Female, UK).

The third most important feature of an academic course in interpreting is deontology (n = 562), the role of the interpreter and the current T&I market situation. The figure seems to indicate the way interpreting curricula could change in the future, which testifies to the great contribution brought about by the “social turn” in Interpreting Studies (Pöchhacker 2004; Hansen, Chesterman & Gerzymisch-Arbogast 2009) and by the growing body of literature in research into community interpreting. Conference interpreters are gaining increasing awareness of their function in the communicative framework and, just like public service interpreters, know what their responsibilities are and no longer see themselves as invisible professionals. The fact that they believe that deontology and role issues should be a subject worth teaching demonstrates that what has been already shown in studies on community interpreters (Angelelli 2004; Pym, Shlesinger & Jettmarová 2006; Wolf & Fukari 2007; Valero-Garcés & Martin 2008; Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2007; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011; Ricoy, Perez & Wilson 2010) on the visibility of their role applies to conference interpreters as well. Moreover, respondents also believe that students should be better informed about the current T&I market situation, in order to be able to uphold the profession and become informed and reliable professionals. In the survey carried out by Kurz, one of the most widespread complaints about the training they received was that they would have liked a “better preparation for actual working situations” (1986a: 38). In the span of 29 years, little has changed, at least in the light of certain comments indicating that students enter the market completely unaware of how to “survive” in it.

Another important feature of a university curriculum in interpreting is considered to be the study of “technical terminology”, which is regarded as “essential” or “important” by 558 respondents (roughly 69%), but there is also an interesting number of respondents (209, 25%) who consider it “useful” but not fundamental. For most interpreters, training should be devoted to learning how to acquire the necessary technical terminology to prepare for a conference. As Collados Aís *et al.* (2007) point out, the interpreter’s use of correct terminology enhances the client’s confidence in the interpreter’s trustfulness and reliability.

The fifth most relevant subject for training is the study of linguistics and grammatical features of a language (n = 506). Even though students of conference interpreting courses are fluent in the languages they study, it does not mean that linguistic subtleties and grammar rules should be ignored for a series of reasons: the first is that, as emerges from the present and previous surveys,

most interpreters are nowadays asked to interpret into their B language. The second reason is that, as the grammar and the vocabulary of a language change over time (especially in the case of English, which is in constant development), a student should be made aware of these alterations in order to implement them.

The sixth section includes subjects such as Cultural Studies, Sociology and Ethnolinguistics (n = 406), which are rarely included in university curricula, but that can be taught as optional subjects for those who are willing to increase their knowledge of the sociological and sociolinguistic aspects of interpreting, of the development of languages and the link between language and culture. Though these subjects do not seem to have a practical usefulness applicable to most interpreting skills, they could broaden students' general education which, by definition, focuses more on *knowledge*, whereas training concentrates on the mastering of *skills*.

T&I softwares are not regarded as very important by interpreters, which is quite surprising considering that 57.9% of the interpreters interviewed also work as in-house or freelance translators. One possible reason for this answer is that several translation agencies offer a period of training on the translation softwares professionals are going to use within that company. Another plausible motive might be that they find it useful but they think it more suitable for a translators' curriculum, or perhaps because they have already received some basic training on CAT tools during their BA.

Corpus Linguistics is defined as "the branch of linguistics that studies languages on the basis of corpora" (Kenny 2014: 23). In recent years, several studies (Straniero Sergio & Falbo 2012; Defrancq, De Sutter & De Clerck 2015) have demonstrated the usefulness of applying corpus-based studies to the study of spoken language, as was already shown by Shlesinger (1998). As it is a developing field of study in interpreting research, practicing professionals may not yet be familiar with the subject. In the open box for comments, some informants specified that they do not know what corpus linguistics means and others replied that it was perhaps more useful for students who want to pursue an academic career. However, studies carried out on interpreted-mediated events<sup>28</sup> may also be used as teaching material to give information on the actual working environment and the stumbling blocks likely to occur during a conference.

The subject which is still considered to be least relevant for interpreters' training is interpreting theory, i.e. the body of literature which deals with several aspects of the theory and practice of conference interpreting (strategies, effort model, quality, role of the interpreter, etc.). The result is in contradiction with the essence of a profession according to sociological theories ("professional occupations require a specialized body of knowledge acquired by extensive academic preparation", Livingstone 2009: 54). However, the interpreting body of knowledge is a theorisation of reality, for it is built on the observation of the working environment, which explains why several respondents regard the development of practical and technical skills as more relevant to their training. Overall, as already pointed out by Katan (2011), the picture emerging from this graph is that the majority of

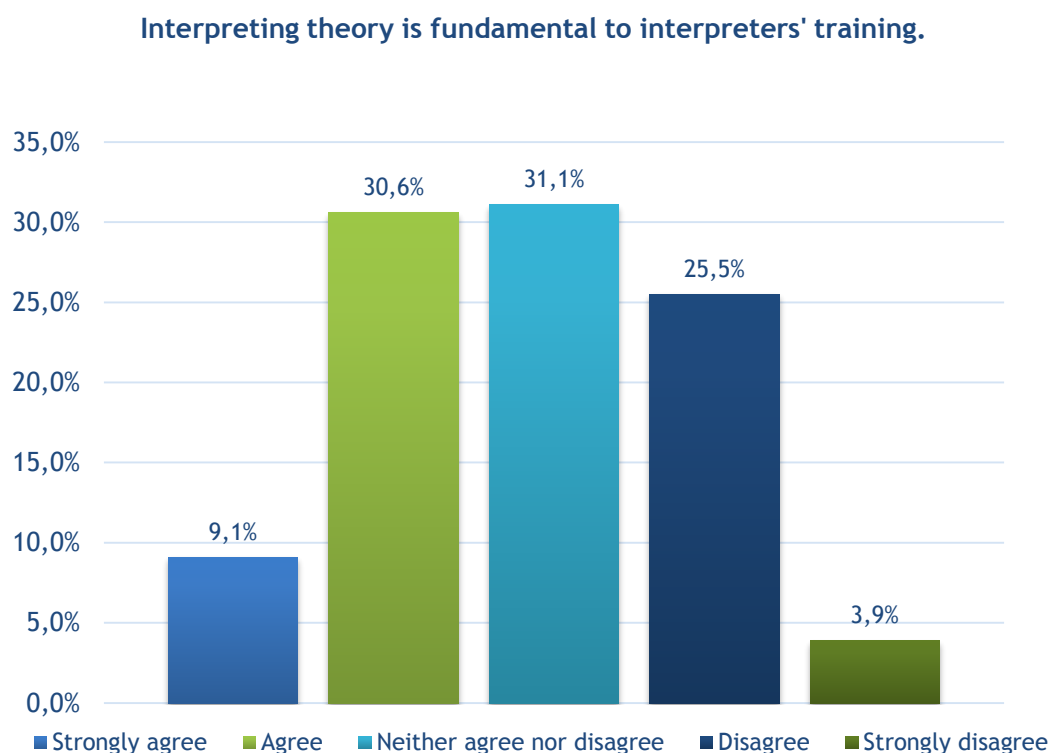
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<sup>28</sup> One representative example of the development of corpora in interpreting studies is the EPIC corpus (European Parliament Interpreting Corpus), which is drafted in Italian, English and Spanish (Russo, Bendazzoli, Sandrelli & Spinolo 2012).

the professionals interviewed believe that the academic training of interpreters should be highly practical and that a very short time is to be devoted to theoretical speculation. However, recent studies (Agost & Ordóñez López 2015) are trying to fill this gap between theory and practice by insisting that:

The profession is unlikely to achieve genuine professional status without some interaction with a discipline that provides it with a coherent framework [...]. We do not expect lawyers to shun academia and theory and follow their innate sense of what is right or wrong. We accept law as a profession precisely because it is not (or not just) an intuitive practice, because it requires solid training in theoretical and practical matters, and because it is indisputably linked to a healthy and stable academic discipline (*ibid.*: 363).

In order to investigate the matter further, another specific question was asked about interpreting theory (figure 29):



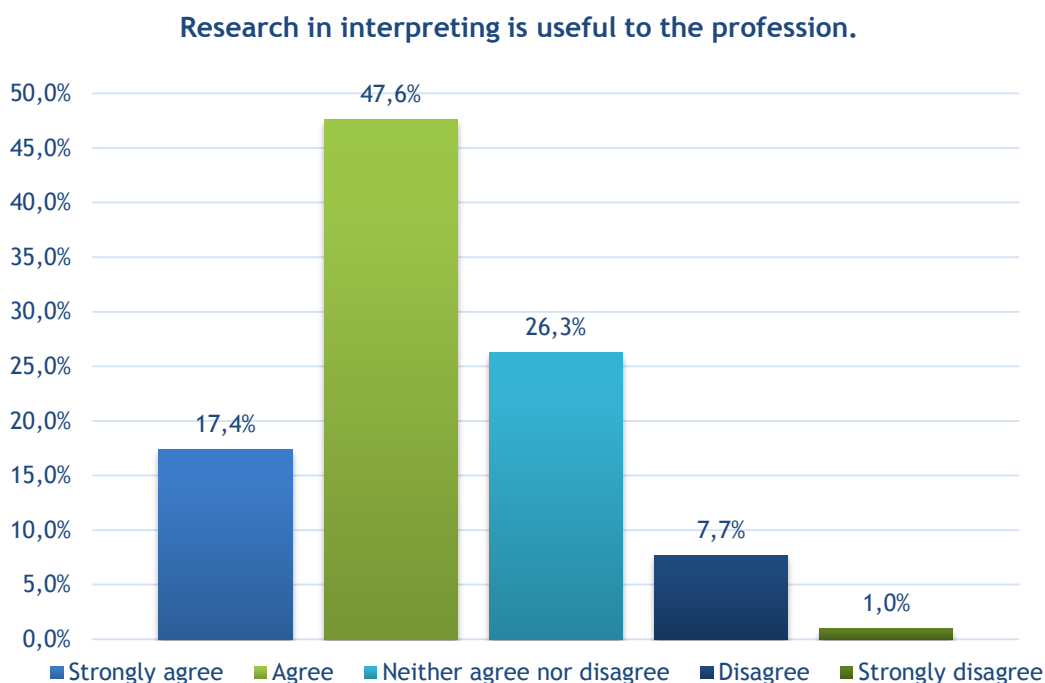
**Figure 29:** interpreters' opinions about the usefulness of interpreting theory.

Surprisingly, 39.7% (n = 319) of respondents believe that interpreting theory is fundamental to interpreters' training versus a 29.4% (n = 236) of interpreters who believe that the opposite is true. 31.1% (n = 250) of the population interviewed did not adopt a clear position. A statistical analysis reveals that both interpreters with an MA in interpreting and the other group highly value the teaching of theory, which is in contrast with the hypothesis that non T&I graduates were more likely to underestimate its relevance in a academic curriculum. A Student's *t*-test ( $t = -.341, p > 0.05$ ) shows no significant difference between informants with an MA (n = 497; M = 2.83; SD = 1.04) and those who do not hold an MA in translation and interpreting (n = 308; M = 2.86; SD = 1.00).



However, the discrepancy between the answers given in question 17 and question 18 might be attributed to the fact that interpreters believe that theory is relevant for their training, but if they have to compare the pertinence of theory with more practical subjects such as interpreting techniques, theory is attributed lesser importance.

The last question of the section on training focuses on research, a topic which has attracted the attention of several scholars (Lambert & Moser-Mercer 1994; Gambier *et al.* 1997; Nicodemus & Swabey 2011; Hansen, Chesterman & Gerzymisch-Arbogast 2009; Gile *et al.* 2001) who have underlined the relevance of research in interpreting to enhance the status of the profession. As Gile (2001) pointed out, the main reasons why research is significant for interpreters and the profession as a whole are: 1) research in interpreting has a social role because, if it is associated with academia, “it can help raise the social status of interpreters and support their claims for a remuneration similar to that of highly qualified professionals” (Gile 2013) research has encouraged reflection about interpreting, and helped develop central concepts which serve as guidelines to trainers and practitioners. Over the years, interpreting research has witnessed several “turns” (Snell-Hornby 2006), from the neurolinguistic to the more recent “social turn” of the 1990s and has helped devise questions concerning training in matters such as selection criteria, standardised training or whether interpreters are born or made, not to mention the social and ethical problems pointed out by the research in community interpreting. Hence, interpreters were asked to rate the importance of research for the development of the profession. The response pattern is the following (figure 30):



**Figure 30:** interpreters’ views on research in interpreting.

In general, a good portion of conference interpreters (65%,  $n = 523$ ) believe that research is “useful to the profession” and only 8.7% ( $n = 70$ ) of respondents do not acknowledge its importance. The

first positive aspect of these answers is that there is an even statistical distribution of respondents according to age, with an insignificant difference among participants. Surprisingly enough, respondents who do not have a MA in interpreting value academic research slightly more than their colleagues holding a postgraduate degree in T&I, as shown in the table below (figure 31):

| Contingency table Research in interpreting is useful for the profession. * Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? |                            |                |  |       |       |
|---|----------------------------|----------------|--|-------|-------|
|   |                            |                | Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? |       | Total |
|   |                            |                | YES  | NO    |       |
| Research in interpreting is useful for the profession.  | Strongly agree             | Count          | 77   | 63    | 140   |
|   |                            | Expected count | 86,4   | 53,6  | 140,0 |
|   | Agree                      | Count          | 230  | 153   | 383   |
|   |                            | Expected count | 236,5  | 146,5 | 383,0 |
|   | Neither agree nor disagree | Count          | 138  | 74    | 212   |
|   |                            | Expected count | 130,9  | 81,1  | 212,0 |
|   | Disagree                   | Count          | 45   | 17    | 62    |
|   |                            | Expected count | 38,3   | 23,7  | 62,0  |
|   | Strongly disagree          | Count          | 7  | 1     | 8     |
|   |                            | Expected count | 4,9  | 3,1   | 8,0   |
| Total   |                            | Count          | 497  | 308   | 805   |
|   |                            | Expected count | 497,0  | 308,0 | 805,0 |

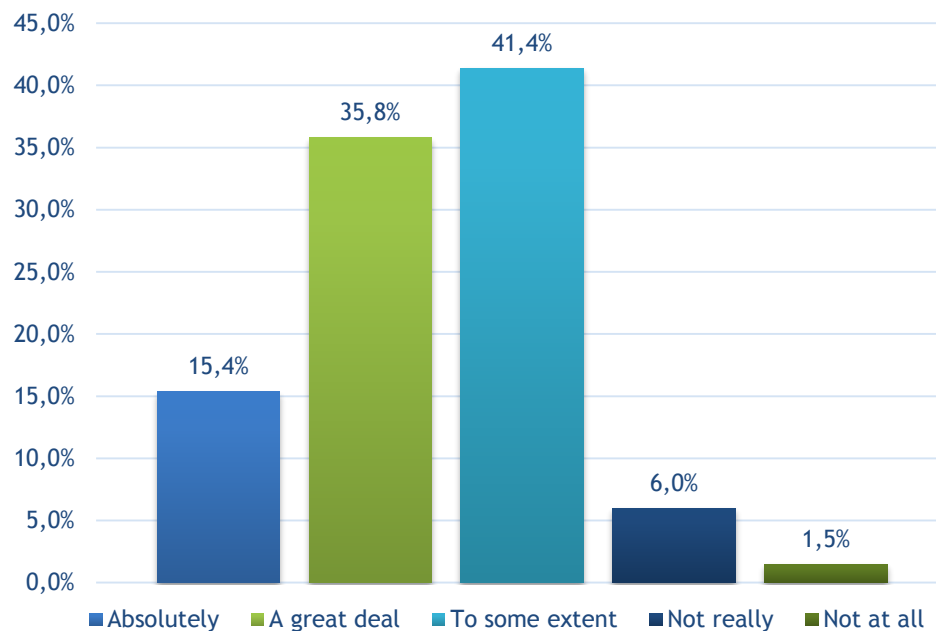
**Figure 31:** contingency table indicating the relationship between educational level and the value attributed to academic research.

Moreover, a Student's *t*-test ( $t = 3.022, p < 0.05$ ) revealed that the scores obtained by those who have an MA in T&I ( $n = 497, M = 2.34, SD = .89$ ) and those who do not ( $n = 308, M = 2.15, SD = .82$ ) differ significantly. This surprising outcome suggests that those trained in T&I tend to underestimate research, perhaps because they prefer to practice the profession rather than investigate its complexities. Nevertheless, the majority of researchers in the academic field of Interpreting Studies is made up of interpreters/trainers (Nicodemus & Swabey 2011), known as *practitioners-cum-researchers* ("practisearchers"). A possible reason for the lack of interest in interpreting research is that interpreting lecturers are often required to be practicing conference interpreters (according to the requirements issued by AIIC). As teaching and research are their secondary activities, they are not academics in the full sense of the word and research is not part of their work (Gile 2001: 18). Moreover, owing to its interdisciplinarity, the status of interpreting research as a discipline is still not as solid as that of other better established academic fields, even though the increasing number of publications and Ph.D. programmes in the field suggests that the situation is going to change in the future.

## 5. Income

Together with the level of education, remuneration is one of the main parameters defining a high-status profession. According to sociologists, high remuneration is the natural consequence of a high educational level: “high education is recognized both as an engine of economic growth and as a gatekeeper to individual positions of high remuneration and status [...]. It follows that most jobs of high remuneration and status will be acquired through an advanced degree, probably beyond the bachelor degree” (Ponnusamy & Pandurangan 2014: 169). A high level of education usually leads to high-status jobs, which are usually well remunerated. Even though high pay is not always synonymous with high prestige (Gentile P. 2013), income is considered to be “a predictor of social outcomes”, a credential for high status (Calhoun, Rojek & Turner 2005). Conference interpreters have always been said to enjoy high pay owing to their supposed high socio-economic status, an assumption confirmed by Dam & Zethsen (2013) who argue that conference interpreting is the most highly paid fringe of the translation professions. Hence, a question concerning interpreters’ remuneration was necessary to confirm or reject the above-mentioned assumptions (figure 32):

### Do you think that a conference interpreter's remuneration is adequate?



**Figure 32:** interpreters’ opinions over remuneration.

At first glance, the theories appear to be confirmed: a total of 51.2% of respondents (n = 412) believe that conference interpreting is either “absolutely” or “a great deal” remunerated, whereas a considerable number of interpreters interviewed (41.4%, n= 333) think that conference interpreting is remunerated only “to some extent”. A small minority (7.5%, n = 60) does not agree with the widespread myth describing conference interpreters as highly-paid professionals. As already

mentioned, no specific information about the amount of money earned by interpreters annually was requested in order to prevent respondents from abandoning the questionnaire. At statistical level, a chi-square was carried out with five variables: gender, age, country of residence, freelance or staff and possession of a MA in interpreting.

As far as the variable “gender” is concerned, according to the *Encyclopaedia of Gender and Society* “as more women have entered the labour force, the difference between the average wages of men and women has decreased. However, a gender wage gap still exists, where male workers earn significantly more than female workers do” (O’Brien 2008: 385). In the present sample, a Student’s *t*-test showed no significant difference between men (n= 196, M = 2.44, SD = 0.9) and women (n = 609; M = 2.41; SD = 0.86), with a *t* = .374, *p* > 0.05. This lack of significant difference shows that men and women have the same level of income and that assumptions pointing out that the higher presence of women in a profession results in lower fees could be rejected.

Likewise, the independent variable “age” was not a determining factor in the evaluation of income ( $\chi^2 = 12.941$ , DF = 20, *p* > 0.05), which means that there is no statistical difference between age groups. Nevertheless, the results should be analysed with caution because the amount of money that a young graduate or a person without dependent children considers more than sufficient to make ends meet is not the same as that needed by individuals with dependent children.

The comparison between remuneration and country of residence is worth scrutinising for sociological reasons: since conference interpreting is a “very rarely regulated profession at national level” (AIIC 2015), the main hypothesis was that the global financial recession and the increasing market competition had had an impact on the average income of conference interpreters. A comparison of the data obtained for each continent reveals that Europe is the continent where interpreting is perceived as better remunerated, followed by America, Asia, Oceania and Africa. For reasons of readability, the countries analysed in the contingency table are those which obtained a minimum of ten responses (figure 33):

**Contingency table What is your country of residence? \* Do you think that a conference interpreter's remuneration is adequate?**

|                                    |           | Do you think that a conference interpreter's remuneration is adequate? |              |                |            |            | Total |       |                |       |                |       |                |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|
|                                    |           | Absolutely   | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |       |                |       |                |       |                |
|                                    |           |  |              |                |            |            |       | Count | Expected count | Count | Expected count | Count | Expected count |
| What is your country of residence? | Argentina | 4  | 1,7          | 2              | 3,6        | 4          | 4,0   | 0     | ,6             | 0     | ,2             | 10    | 10,0           |
|                                    | Austria   | 10   | 4,4          | 10             | 9,4        | 4          | 10,3  | 2     | 1,4            | 0     | ,4             | 26    | 26,0           |
|                                    | Belgium   | 31   | 22,0         | 55             | 47,6       | 39         | 51,9  | 4     | 7,3            | 2     | 2,2            | 131   | 131,0          |
|                                    | Brazil    | 8  | 7,6          | 23             | 16,4       | 14         | 17,8  | 0     | 2,5            | 0     | ,7             | 45    | 45,0           |
|                                    | Canada    | 8  | 3,7          | 5              | 8,0        | 9          | 8,7   | 0     | 1,2            | 0     | ,4             | 22    | 22,0           |
|                                    |           | Count  | 1            | 10             | 4          | 2          | 0     | 17    |                |       |                |       |                |

|                          |                |             |             |             |      |      |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------|------|-------|
| Czech Republic           | Expected count | 2,9         | 6,2         | 6,7         | ,9   | ,3   | 17,0  |
| Denmark                  | Count          | 2           | 3           | 5           | 0    | 0    | 10    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,7         | 3,6         | 4,0         | ,6   | ,2   | 10,0  |
| Finland                  | Count          | 3           | 5           | 4           | 0    | 0    | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,0         | 4,4         | 4,8         | ,7   | ,2   | 12,0  |
| France                   | Count          | 2           | 18          | 13          | 1    | 1    | 35    |
|                          | Expected count | 5,9         | 12,7        | 13,9        | 1,9  | ,6   | 35,0  |
| Germany                  | Count          | 4           | 11          | 14          | 2    | 1    | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | 5,4         | 11,6        | 12,7        | 1,8  | ,5   | 32,0  |
| Greece                   | Count          | 1           | 5           | 7           | 0    | 0    | 13    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,2         | 4,7         | 5,2         | ,7   | ,2   | 13,0  |
| Italy                    | Count          | 5           | <b>33</b>   | <b>74</b>   | 14   | 6    | 132   |
|                          | Expected count | 22,2        | <b>48,0</b> | <b>52,3</b> | 7,3  | 2,2  | 132,0 |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 2           | 5           | 4           | 0    | 0    | 11    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,8         | 4,0         | 4,4         | ,6   | ,2   | 11,0  |
| Portugal                 | Count          | 3           | 4           | 10          | 2    | 0    | 19    |
|                          | Expected count | 3,2         | 6,9         | 7,5         | 1,1  | ,3   | 19,0  |
| Slovakia                 | Count          | 0           | 7           | 7           | 0    | 0    | 14    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,4         | 5,1         | 5,5         | ,8   | ,2   | 14,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 2           | 9           | 11          | 0    | 0    | 22    |
|                          | Expected count | 3,7         | 8,0         | 8,7         | 1,2  | ,4   | 22,0  |
| Switzerland              | Count          | <b>16</b>   | 23          | 19          | 2    | 0    | 60    |
|                          | Expected count | <b>10,1</b> | 21,8        | 23,8        | 3,3  | 1,0  | 60,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 7           | 4           | 10          | 5    | 1    | 27    |
|                          | Expected count | 4,5         | 9,8         | 10,7        | 1,5  | ,4   | 27,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 3           | 10          | 12          | 3    | 0    | 28    |
|                          | Expected count | 4,7         | 10,2        | 11,1        | 1,6  | ,5   | 28,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 112         | 242         | 264         | 37   | 11   | 666   |
|                          | Expected count | 112,0       | 242,0       | 264,0       | 37,0 | 11,0 | 666,0 |

**Figure 33:** contingency table analysing interpreters' remuneration depending on the country of residence.

The contingency table shows that, regardless of the country they live in, conference interpreters answer that they are fairly well remunerated. The only exception appears to be Italy, where only 5 respondents believe that interpreting is “absolutely” well remunerated against an expected count of 20.3 and 33 people think that the profession is “a great deal” remunerated against an expected count of 47.2. Aside from the fact that the professional title is not protected by law, another possible reason to justify the pessimism of Italian respondents is that tax pressure is very high in Italy. According to the OECD statistics, “the tax wedge is generally high in Italy, especially so among low-income earners [...]. Such high taxation induces lower labour demand and/or disincentives to work” (OECD 2015: 74). Yet, if the situation is compared with other countries with higher taxation burdens, such as Belgium or Denmark (OECD 2011), there is no such discrepancy with the distribution of responses, which is perhaps attributable to the high quality of welfare, especially in Denmark. As for

the United States, a report published on *US News* (2015) revealed that “interpreters and translators earned a median annual salary of \$42,420 in 2013. The best-paid earned more than \$77,140” and the salary of interpreters increased in the period going from 2004 to 2012 from \$32,500 a year in 2004 to \$53,410 a year in 2012. Nevertheless, the report also underlined that interpreters and translators still earn less than other professionals such as clinical social workers (\$52,520), middle school teachers (\$56,630) and school psychologists (\$72,710). A positive score was registered in Brazil, where a higher number of respondents (23) said that interpreting is highly remunerated compared to the expected count (16). Nevertheless, to ascertain the relationship between remuneration and job satisfaction, the estimates need to be supported by more substantial empirical evidence.

The fourth variable is regarded as a case in point in correlation with remuneration, for it shows whether there are any differences (and if so, to what extent) between freelance interpreters who work in the agreement sector and those who are employed full-time by international organisations. The main hypothesis was that staff interpreters earn more than freelancers. It was confirmed by the results of the Student’s *t*-test, which showed that there is a significant difference in terms of remuneration between the groups (freelance  $n = 697$ ,  $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ; staff  $n = 108$ ;  $M = 2.11$ ;  $SD = 0.86$   $t = 4.03$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significantly higher salary for staff interpreters.

The last variable is the relationship between respondents who possess an MA in interpreting and respondents holding another kind of degree. The main hypothesis reflects the assumption that those who have a postgraduate degree earn, on average, a higher income. However, a Student’s *t*-test showed that there is no significant difference between the two groups, as the average between those who have an MA in interpreting ( $n = 497$ ,  $M = 2.40$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ) and those who do not ( $n = 308$ ;  $M = 2.45$ ;  $SD = 0.86$ ), is not significant for the test ( $t = -875$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). These figures show that the null hypothesis is rejected and that the theories formulated by certain sociologists (Jackson 1970; Craig 2013) may be applied to this specific case. Indeed, in salaried work a higher degree qualifies for some high responsibility jobs, but it does not always mean that these occupations are better remunerated. When referring to the situation in the UK, Craig maintains that:

Those who do some post-graduate study are unlikely to be earning very high salaries or very low salaries in comparison with other graduates. The point to be made here is that a post-graduate qualification [...] is not a means of earning a high salary, but a means for entering a particular occupation (2013: 52).

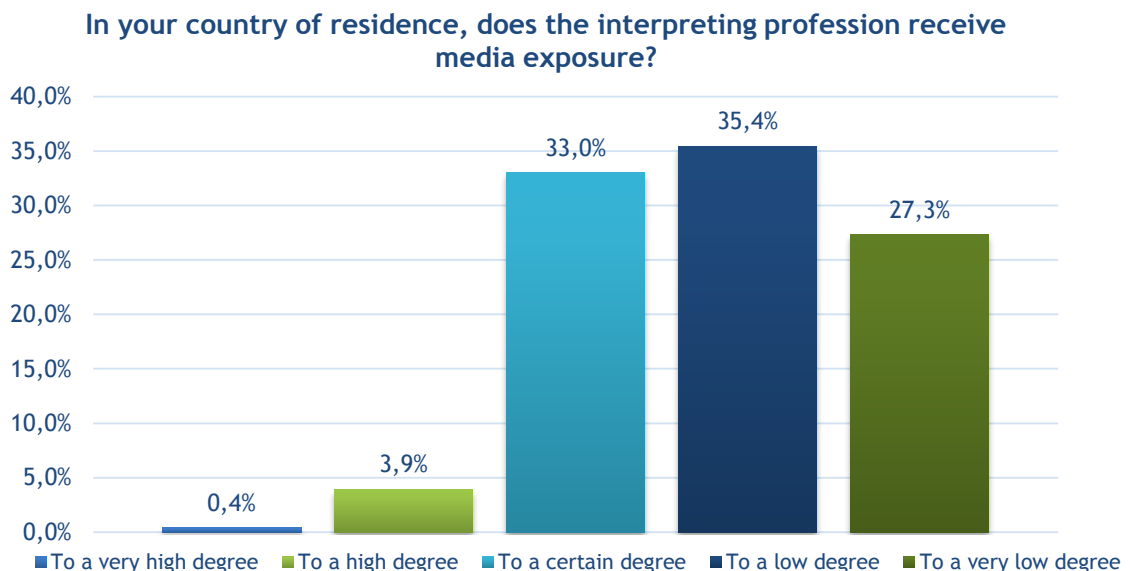
This is even more true for freelancers, who can earn fairly high (or low) salaries regardless of the kind of degree they have.

## 6. The Representation of Interpreting in the Mass Media

The representation of conference interpreting in the mass media has so far received scant attention in Interpreting Studies. Apart from the flourishing field of talk-show interpreting Straniero Sergio 2007; Amato & Mack 2011; Dal Fovo 2014), which has greatly contributed to shedding light on the

role played by the interpreter in this kind of dialogic interaction, interpreters' considerations on the way they are portrayed in the discourse of the mass media has not yet been thoroughly investigated. The topic of media representation has been widely discussed as far as other professions are concerned; the impact of popular culture on the perception of scientists and physicians shows that laypeople have, more often than not, an idealised conceptualisation of these occupations, which stems from the images proposed by the US entertainment business. In the light of these assumptions, there is no doubt that the mass media are one of the main sources influencing public opinion, as they “project social stereotypes, ideology, moral and aesthetic conventions, which are interiorised by the spectators” (Tyulenev 2014). According to Clifford (2001), “the fictional world of lawyers bears as little relationship to the truth as does the fictional world of doctors, politicians, and all other callings that make up the stock characters of what has undoubtedly become one of our largest industries: entertainment”.

However, a distinction has to be made between the image presented by the entertainment industry and that of the press. In the first case, a romanticised view of the professions is presented, which depicts, for example, the physician as a hero and the lawyer as a brilliant (though sometimes manipulative) professional. The second trigger of media discourse is the press, which is not always benevolent with professions and professionals: for example, when the discovery of new medicines is reported by the press, the description of the side effects may arouse public distrust in medicine. As a consequence, studies (Hofoss *et al.* 1996; Codish *et al.* 2014) have pointed out that doctors' disapproval of press coverage of the medical profession has increased over the last few years. Likewise, the professional persona of lawyers is portrayed as controversial by the press, especially because the lawyer's knowledge may also be used against people's interests. Hence, a general idea regarding the current representation of interpreters in the media across the globe would prove fruitful to assess on what occasions the interpreter appears on the screen and how (s)he is depicted. Respondents gave the following answers (figure 34):



**Figure 34:** interpreters' consideration over the exposure of the profession in the mass media.

Only 4.3% of respondents (n = 34) thought that conference interpreting is represented in the media. A very high portion of respondents (33%, n = 266) answered that the profession is only represented “to a certain degree”, which may mean that they do not have a clear opinion on this matter. However, an even higher percentage of the interviewed (62.7%, n = 505) replied that the mass media seldom pay attention to conference interpreting. Taken together, the figures show that the press hardly pays attention to the work of conference interpreters. In statistical terms, significant differences were found for the variable “gender” ( $t = -2.110, p < 0.05$ ), which suggests that a higher number of women believe that interpreters are hardly ever represented in the media. On the other hand, with reference to the variable “age”, no huge differences were found ( $\chi^2 = 7.440, DF = 4, p > 0.05$ ). The other variable is the interpreters' country of residence; a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 84.439, DF = 72, p < 0.05$ ) found significant dissimilarities among countries (figure 35):

| Contingency table What is your country of residence? * In your country of residence, does the interpreting profession receive media exposure? |                |  |                  |                     |                 |                      |       |
|---|----------------|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------|
|   |                | In your country of residence, does the interpreting profession receive media exposure? |                  |                     |                 |                      | Total |
|   |                | To a very high degree  | To a high degree | To a certain degree | To a low degree | To a very low degree |       |
|   |                | Argentina  | Count            | 0                   | 0               | 5                    |       |
|   | Expected count | ,0   | ,4               | 3,5                 | 3,7             | 2,5                  | 10,0  |
| Austria   | Count          | 0  | 1                | 10                  | 8               | 7                    | 26    |
|   | Expected count | ,1   | 1,0              | 9,0                 | 9,5             | 6,4                  | 26,0  |
| Belgium   | Count          | 1  | 9                | 57                  | 37              | 27                   | 131   |
|   | Expected count | ,4   | 5,1              | 45,2                | 48,0            | 32,3                 | 131,0 |
| Brazil  | Count          | 0  | 2                | 14                  | 20              | 9                    | 45    |
|   | Expected count | ,1   | 1,8              | 15,5                | 16,5            | 11,1                 | 45,0  |
| Canada  | Count          | 0  | 3                | 8                   | 7               | 4                    | 22    |
|   | Expected count | ,1   | ,9               | 7,6                 | 8,1             | 5,4                  | 22,0  |
| Czech Republic  | Count          | 0  | 0                | 5                   | 10              | 2                    | 17    |
|   | Expected count | ,1   | ,7               | 5,9                 | 6,2             | 4,2                  | 17,0  |
| Denmark   | Count          | 0  | 0                | 3                   | 4               | 3                    | 10    |
|   | Expected count | ,0   | ,4               | 3,5                 | 3,7             | 2,5                  | 10,0  |
| Finland   | Count          | 0  | 0                | 3                   | 4               | 5                    | 12    |
|   | Expected count | ,0   | ,5               | 4,1                 | 4,4             | 3,0                  | 12,0  |
| France  | Count          | 0  | 0                | 12                  | 19              | 4                    | 35    |
|   | Expected count | ,1   | 1,4              | 12,1                | 12,8            | 8,6                  | 35,0  |
| Germany   | Count          | 0  | 0                | 18                  | 11              | 3                    | 32    |
|   | Expected count | ,1   | 1,2              | 11,1                | 11,7            | 7,9                  | 32,0  |
| Greece  | Count          | 0  | 2                | 4                   | 4               | 3                    | 13    |
|   | Expected count | ,0   | ,5               | 4,5                 | 4,8             | 3,2                  | 13,0  |
| Italy   | Count          | 1  | 2                | 41                  | 44              | 44                   | 132   |
|   | Expected count | ,4   | 5,2              | 45,6                | 48,4            | 32,5                 | 132,0 |
|   | Count          | 0  | 0                | 3                   | 5               | 3                    | 11    |



|                          |                |     |      |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| The Netherlands          | Expected count | ,0  | ,4   | 3,8   | 4,0   | 2,7   | 11,0  |
|                          | Count          | 0   | 0    | 5     | 5     | 9     | 19    |
| Portugal                 | Expected count | ,1  | ,7   | 6,6   | 7,0   | 4,7   | 19,0  |
|                          | Count          | 0   | 0    | 3     | 4     | 7     | 14    |
| Slovakia                 | Expected count | ,0  | ,5   | 4,8   | 5,1   | 3,4   | 14,0  |
|                          | Count          | 0   | 0    | 6     | 10    | 6     | 22    |
| Spain                    | Expected count | ,1  | ,9   | 7,6   | 8,1   | 5,4   | 22,0  |
|                          | Count          | 0   | 5    | 21    | 25    | 9     | 60    |
| Switzerland              | Expected count | ,2  | 2,3  | 20,7  | 22,0  | 14,8  | 60,0  |
|                          | Count          | 0   | 0    | 8     | 12    | 7     | 27    |
| United Kingdom           | Expected count | ,1  | 1,1  | 9,3   | 9,9   | 6,6   | 27,0  |
|                          | Count          | 0   | 2    | 4     | 14    | 8     | 28    |
| United States of America | Expected count | ,1  | 1,1  | 9,7   | 10,3  | 6,9   | 28,0  |
|                          | Count          | 2   | 26   | 230   | 244   | 164   | 666   |
| Total                    | Expected count | 2,0 | 26,0 | 230,0 | 244,0 | 164,0 | 666,0 |
|                          | Count          |     |      |       |       |       |       |

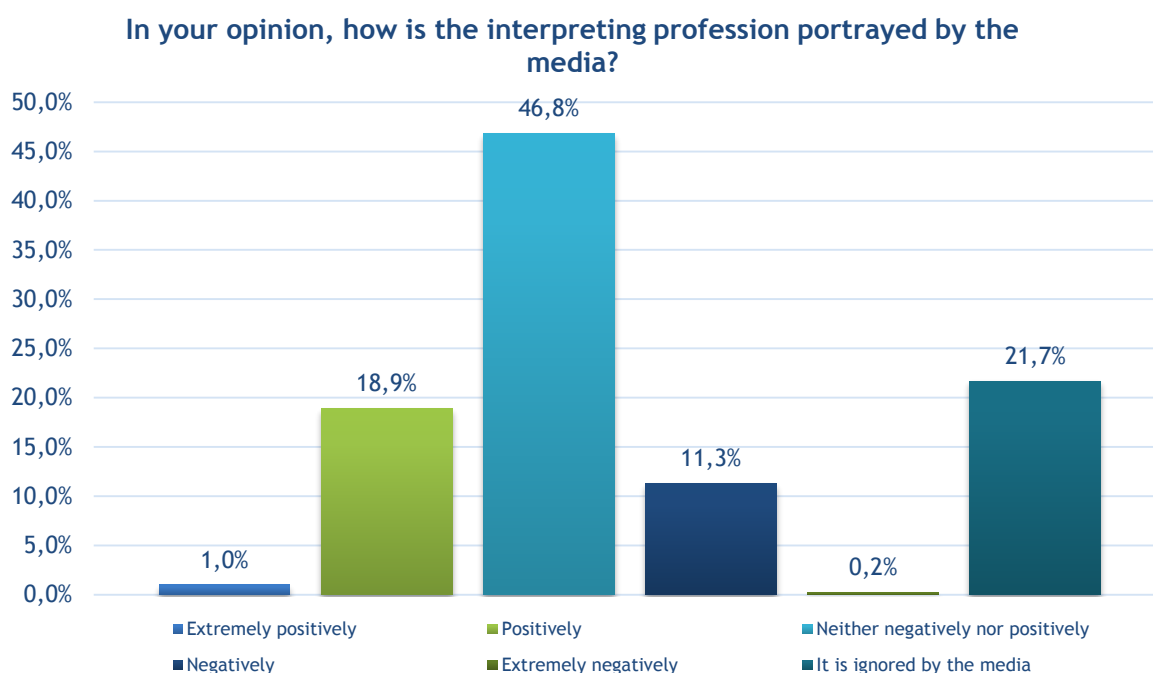
**Figure 35:** contingency table showing the responses given regarding media coverage of the interpreting profession according to respondents' country of residence.

As the table shows, a significantly higher portion of respondents residing in Belgium answered that interpreting receives the attention of the media “to a high degree”. In Switzerland, more interpreters than expected answered that interpreting was represented “to a high degree” against a higher proportion of interviewees who do not agree with the statement. On the other hand, countries such as France, Germany, Italy and Spain present an even distribution of responses with no major differences between the actual count and the expected number of responses. The analysis of this variable shows that the profession seems to be represented in the media only in those countries where conference interpreting plays a key role within the main international organisations, an assumption confirmed by the analysis of the fourth variable, concerning the differences between staff and freelancers (figure 36):

|  |                   | Contingency table Do you work as a freelance or staff interpreter? * In your country of residence, does the interpreting profession receive media exposure? |                  |                     |                 |                      | Tot   |       |
|--|-------------------|---|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------|-------|
|  |                   | In your country of residence, does the interpreting profession receive media exposure?  |                  |                     |                 |                      |       |       |
|  |                   | To a very high degree   | To a high degree | To a certain degree | To a low degree | To a very low degree |       |       |
| Do you work as a freelance or staff interpreter? | Freelance         | Count   | 3                | 27                  | 219             | 248                  | 200   | 697   |
|  |                   | Expected count  | 2,6              | 26,8                | 230,3           | 246,8                | 190,5 | 697,0 |
|  | Staff interpreter | Count   | 0                | 4                   | 47              | 37                   | 20    | 108   |
|  |                   | Expected count  | ,4               | 4,2                 | 35,7            | 38,2                 | 29,5  | 108,0 |
| Total  | Count             | 3   | 31               | 266                 | 285             | 220                  | 805   |       |
|  | Expected count    | 3,0   | 31,0             | 266,0               | 285,0           | 220,0                | 805,0 |       |

**Figure 36:** contingency table showing the responses regarding media coverage of the interpreting profession according to their working status.

A Student's *t*-test ( $t = 2.279, p < 0.05$ ) showed that freelancers are far more pessimistic than staff interpreters. The data confirms the hypothesis specified above. In general, the results of the first question on the representation of conference interpreting in the media reveal that the profession does not receive the media attention it deserves. The second question of this survey section aimed to assess whether the media reflected a positive or a negative image of the profession (figure 37):



**Figure 37:** conference interpreters' opinions on how the profession is represented in the media.

The graph suggests that there is no widespread conviction about the way the profession is represented in the mass media. 19.9% of respondents ( $n = 160$ ) think that the media reflect a positive image of the profession, another 11.5% ( $n = 93$ ) believe that the profession does receive attention from the mass media but in a negative way and a huge majority of respondents (46.8% ,  $n = 377$ ) maintained a neutral standpoint. Interestingly, 21.7% ( $n = 175$ ) of the interpreters interviewed argue that interpreters are utterly ignored by the media. This last parameter was added to check the consistency of the response pattern for the two questions of this section (Verhoeven 1994). Although an in-depth study of the way interpreters are portrayed in the mass media has never been carried out, the data obtained from the questionnaires confirms the discrepancy between the image of the profession promoted by the entertainment sector and that shown by the press. To substantiate the above, the survey carried out by Katan (2011b) showed that a Google search for 'interpreter' results in a list featuring the actress Nicole Kidman, who gives the profession high visibility and status (cf. Apostolou 2009). However, as Diriker (2004) points out, interpreters are often noticed in the press when there is a failure in communication and therefore tend to appear in

the press when a “big mistake” is made (see chapter 3, paragraph 2.2.1). The main statistical differences will be considered according to the four variables: gender, age, country of residence, freelance or staff.

When asked to express their beliefs on *how* conference interpreters are portrayed in the media, significant differences between female and male professionals are found. Considering the means of participants between men ( $n = 196$ ,  $M = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 1.36$ ) and women ( $n = 609$ ,  $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ), a Student’s  $t$ -test revealed that there is a significant difference between the two groups ( $t = -2.924$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The same can also be seen in the contingency table, where the proportion of negative responses given by men is significantly lower than that given by women (figure 38):

**Contingency table What is your gender? \* In your opinion, how is the interpreting profession portrayed by the media?**

|        |                | In your opinion, how is the interpreting profession portrayed by the media? |            |                                   |            |                      |                            | Tot.  |       |
|--------|----------------|---|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|
|        |                | Extremely positively  | Positively | Neither negatively nor positively | Negatively | Extremely negatively | It is ignored by the media |       |       |
| Gender | MALE           | Count   | 3          | 53                                | 87         | 20                   | 0                          | 33    | 196   |
|        |                | Expected count  | 1,9        | 37,0                              | 91,8       | 22,2                 | ,5                         | 42,6  | 196,0 |
|        | FEM.           | Count   | 5          | 99                                | 290        | 71                   | 2                          | 142   | 609   |
|        |                | Expected count  | 6,1        | 115,0                             | 285,2      | 68,8                 | 1,5                        | 132,4 | 609,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 8   | 152        | 377                               | 91         | 2                    | 175                        | 805   |       |
|        | Expected count | 8,0   | 152,0      | 377,0                             | 91,0       | 2,0                  | 175,0                      | 805,0 |       |

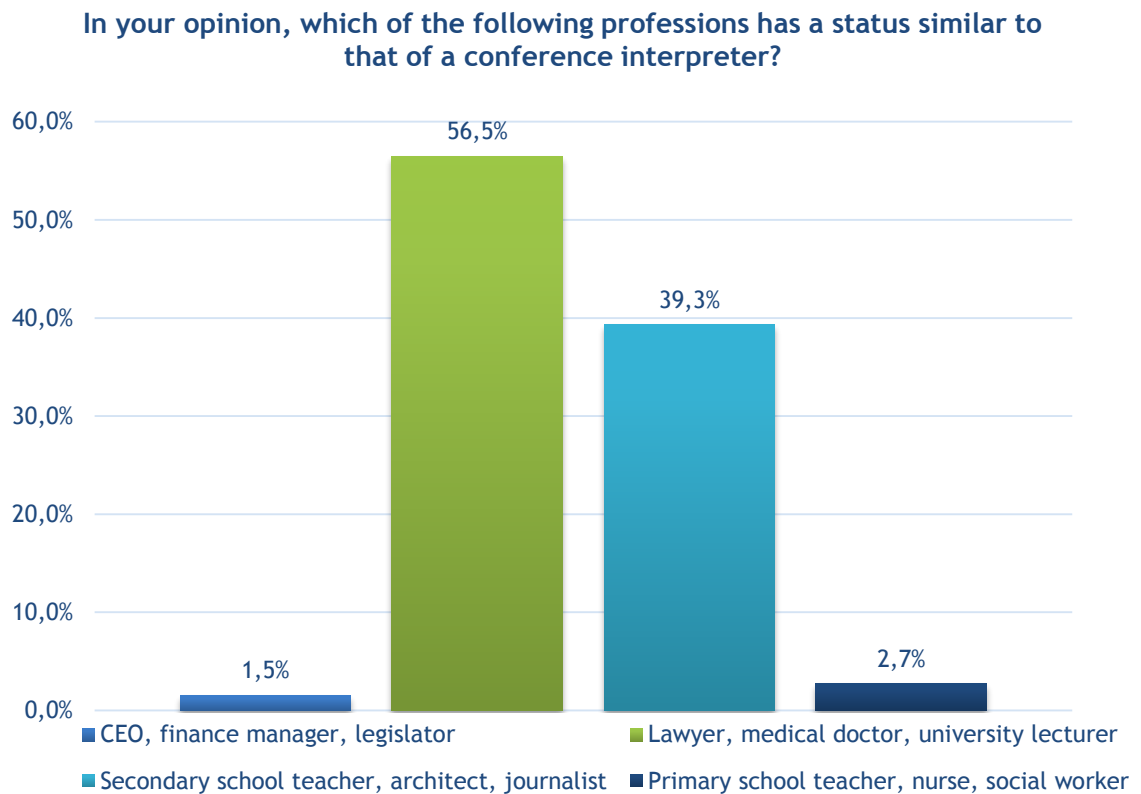
**Figure 38:** contingency table showing the differences between men and women regarding the way the profession is represented in the media.

Data confirms that women are less self-confident than men, a result which is consistent with the data obtained from the previous questions. With regard to age and country of residence, no significant differences were found between groups. On the other hand, a higher proportion of staff interpreters believe that the profession is positively represented in the mass media. The  $t$ -test showed, in fact, that there is a significant difference between freelance ( $n = 697$ ;  $M = 3.61$ ;  $SD = 1.42$ ) and staff interpreters ( $n = 108$ ;  $M = 3.18$ ;  $SD = 1.26$ ). The result was  $t = 2.990$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . The general picture emerging from the analysis of the two responses is that conference interpreters neither believe that interpreting is present in the media (which is shown by the high scores obtained for the parameter “it is ignored by the media”), nor that the image of the profession enjoys a good reputation. There are, however, differences at statistical level: women tend to be more distrustful than men when it comes to evaluating media portrayals of the profession; younger generations believe that conference interpreting appears more often in the media, probably because they are more likely to have easier access to them. Those who seem to have a better view of the way interpreting appears in the media are staff interpreters, an outcome confirmed by the analysis

carried out by country, showing that the countries where interpreters seem to be held in higher esteem by the media are Belgium, Switzerland and Brazil, which is currently experiencing rapid economic growth. The lowest scores were obtained by Italy, where both freelancers and staff have the same (negative) opinion on how the profession is represented in the mass media.

## 7. Status

The analysis of this variable, which is the core of the present work, will be carried out from the interpreter’s point of view. The sociological analysis of the two socio-economic parameters of status (education and remuneration) has confirmed that conference interpreting could be considered, at least formally, a fully-fledged profession. However, the data has to be corroborated by subjective questions which may help ascertain whether interpreters believe they enjoy high status. In order to answer this question, interpreters had to specify to which professional group they compare themselves. Four groups of professions were provided, divided into the categories issued by the Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-o8), listed by the *International Labour Organization* (ILO). The lowest group, which included manual workers, farmers and other similar occupations was not taken into consideration. Their answers are shown in the graph below (figure 39):



**Figure 39:** conference interpreters’ self-perception of status.

The graph shows that 56.5% (n = 455) of conference interpreters relate their status to that of medical doctors and university lecturers. Another large portion of respondents (39.3%, n = 316) believe that the status of conference interpreters is more akin to that of journalists or school teachers (Clark, Livingstone & Smaller 2012). In the AIIC survey carried out by Kurz (1986a), the majority of those interviewed in the Austrian sample regarded their status as being similar to that of journalists (46%). In the survey recently conducted by Dam and Zethsen (2013), conference interpreters did not position themselves at the top of the status continuum, which leads to the conclusion that the status of interpreters may have decreased over the years, despite the high level of education and remuneration (see chapter 2, paragraph 3.2). The finding indicates that interpreters' self-perception of status is consistent with responses given to the objective parameters of education and remuneration. There are, however, differences at statistical level. As for the gender of participants, given the test scores of men (n= 196, M = 2.39, SD = 0.57) and women (n = 609; M = 2.44; SD = 0.57), a Student's *t*-test showed that there is no significant difference between male and female interpreters ( $t = -0.962, p > 0.05$ ). The results are shown in the contingency table generated by a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 1.189, DF = 3, p > 0.05$ ) (figure 40):

**Contingency table What is your gender? \* In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter?**

|                      |                | In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|----------------------|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|                      |                | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE           | Count   | 4   | <b>115</b>                                      | 72   | 5     | 196   |
|                      |                | Expected count  | 2,9   | <b>110,8</b>                                    | 76,9   | 5,4   | 196,0 |
|                      | FEMALE         | Count   | 8   | 340   | 244  | 17    | 609   |
|                      |                | Expected count  | 9,1   | 344,2   | 239,1  | 16,6  | 609,0 |
| Total                | Count          | 12  | 455   | 316   | 22   | 805   |       |
|                      | Expected count | 12,0  | 455,0                                       | 316,0   | 22,0   | 805,0 |       |

**Figure 40:** contingency table showing the relationship between gender and self-perception of status.

Though the contingency table shows that men are slightly more confident than women (see the figures in bold), the difference is, in statistical terms, insignificant, which is an encouraging signal for women in the profession.

The second independent variable is age, which is fundamental to determine whether the opinions of younger and older generations on status differ. The main hypothesis was that younger generations would assign a higher status to conference interpreters, by virtue of the idealised view and the higher expectations about the profession that young graduates usually have before entering

the profession. The result of the chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 27.216$ ,  $DF = 15$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) shows that there is a significant relationship between interpreters' age and their views on status, which means that the way interpreters see their status changes depending on age (figure 41):

**Contingency table What is your age group? \* In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter?**

|                         |       |                | In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|
|                         |       |                | CEO, manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 | Count          | 1   | 3   | 1   | 1  | 6     |
|                         |       | Expected count | ,1  | 3,4   | 2,4   | ,2   | 6,0   |
|                         | 26-35 | Count          | 1   | 59  | 34  | 4  | 98    |
|                         |       | Expected count | 1,5   | 55,4  | 38,5  | 2,7  | 98,0  |
|                         | 36-45 | Count          | 3   | 98  | 51  | 2  | 154   |
|                         |       | Expected count | 2,3   | 87,0  | 60,5  | 4,2  | 154,0 |
|                         | 46-55 | Count          | 4   | 128   | 97  | 5  | 234   |
|                         |       | Expected count | 3,5   | 132,3                                       | 91,9  | 6,4  | 234,0 |
|                         | 56-65 | Count          | 2   | 123   | 85  | 8  | 218   |
|                         |       | Expected count | 3,2   | 123,2                                       | 85,6  | 6,0  | 218,0 |
|                         | 65+   | Count          | 1   | 44  | 48  | 2  | 95    |
|                         |       | Expected count | 1,4   | 53,7  | 37,3  | 2,6  | 95,0  |
| Total                   |       | Count          | 12  | 455   | 316   | 22   | 805   |
|                         |       | Expected count | 12,0  | 455,0                                       | 316,0   | 22,0   | 805,0 |

**Figure 41:** contingency table showing the relationship between age and considerations on status.

The most significant differences are to be found between interpreters in the age range 36-45 and those who are over 65: in the first group, a higher number of respondents associates conference interpreting with fully-fledged professions such as physicians and lawyers. On the other hand, a higher proportion of those in the group 65+ believes that conference interpreters are more similar to secondary school teachers and journalists. One possible interpretation is that, more often than not, older generations were “thrown” into the profession without being properly trained (see chapter 1, paragraph 3.1).

As for the variable “country of residence”, considering that the number of responses cannot be said to be statistically significant for all countries, only those countries which collected a minimum of ten responses were considered for the statistical assessment. For reasons of readability, the contingency table will only contain the above-mentioned selected cases (figure 42):

| Contingency table What is your country of residence? * In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |                |     |   |   |   |  |       |
|--|----------------|-----|---|---|---|--|-------|
| What is your country of residence?   |                |     | In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |
|  |                |     | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
|  |                |     | Count   | Expected count                              | Count   | Expected count                               |       |
| Argentina  | Count          | 1   | 6   | 3   | 0   | 10   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,1  | 5,7   | 3,9   | ,3  | 10,0   |       |
| Austria  | Count          | 1   | 14  | 11  | 0   | 26   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,4  | 14,7  | 10,2  | ,7  | 26,0   |       |
| Belgium  | Count          | 0   | 78  | 49  | 4   | 131  |       |
|  | Expected count | 2,0 | 74,0  | 51,4  | 3,6   | 131,0  |       |
| Brazil   | Count          | 0   | 30  | 14  | 1   | 45   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,7  | 25,4  | 17,7  | 1,2   | 45,0   |       |
| Canada   | Count          | 0   | 12  | 10  | 0   | 22   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,3  | 12,4  | 8,6   | ,6  | 22,0   |       |
| Czech Republic   | Count          | 0   | 10  | 7   | 0   | 17   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,3  | 9,6   | 6,7   | ,5  | 17,0   |       |
| Denmark  | Count          | 0   | 5   | 5   | 0   | 10   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,1  | 5,7   | 3,9   | ,3  | 10,0   |       |
| Finland  | Count          | 0   | 6   | 6   | 0   | 12   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,2  | 6,8   | 4,7   | ,3  | 12,0   |       |
| France   | Count          | 0   | 26  | 9   | 0   | 35   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,5  | 19,8  | 13,7  | 1,0   | 35,0   |       |
| Germany  | Count          | 0   | 19  | 13  | 0   | 32   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,5  | 18,1  | 12,6  | ,9  | 32,0   |       |
| Greece   | Count          | 0   | 11  | 2   | 0   | 13   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,2  | 7,3   | 5,1   | ,4  | 13,0   |       |
| Italy  | Count          | 2   | 60  | 64  | 6   | 132  |       |
|  | Expected count | 2,0 | 74,6  | 51,8  | 3,6   | 132,0  |       |
| The Netherlands  | Count          | 0   | 7   | 4   | 0   | 11   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,2  | 6,2   | 4,3   | ,3  | 11,0   |       |
| Portugal   | Count          | 0   | 8   | 9   | 2   | 19   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,3  | 10,7  | 7,5   | ,5  | 19,0   |       |
| Slovakia   | Count          | 0   | 4   | 8   | 2   | 14   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,2  | 7,9   | 5,5   | ,4  | 14,0   |       |
| Spain  | Count          | 0   | 15  | 7   | 0   | 22   |       |
|  | Expected count | ,3  | 12,4  | 8,6   | ,6  | 22,0   |       |

|                          |                |    |      |      |     |      |
|--------------------------|----------------|----|------|------|-----|------|
| Switzerland              | Count          | 0  | 34   | 26   | 0   | 60   |
|                          | Expected count | ,9 | 33,9 | 23,6 | 1,6 | 60,0 |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 0  | 15   | 9    | 3   | 27   |
|                          | Expected count | ,4 | 15,3 | 10,6 | ,7  | 27,0 |
| United States of America | Count          | 2  | 12   | 14   | 0   | 28   |
|                          | Expected count | ,4 | 15,8 | 11,0 | ,8  | 28,0 |

**Figure 42:** contingency table showing the distribution of responses in the selected countries.

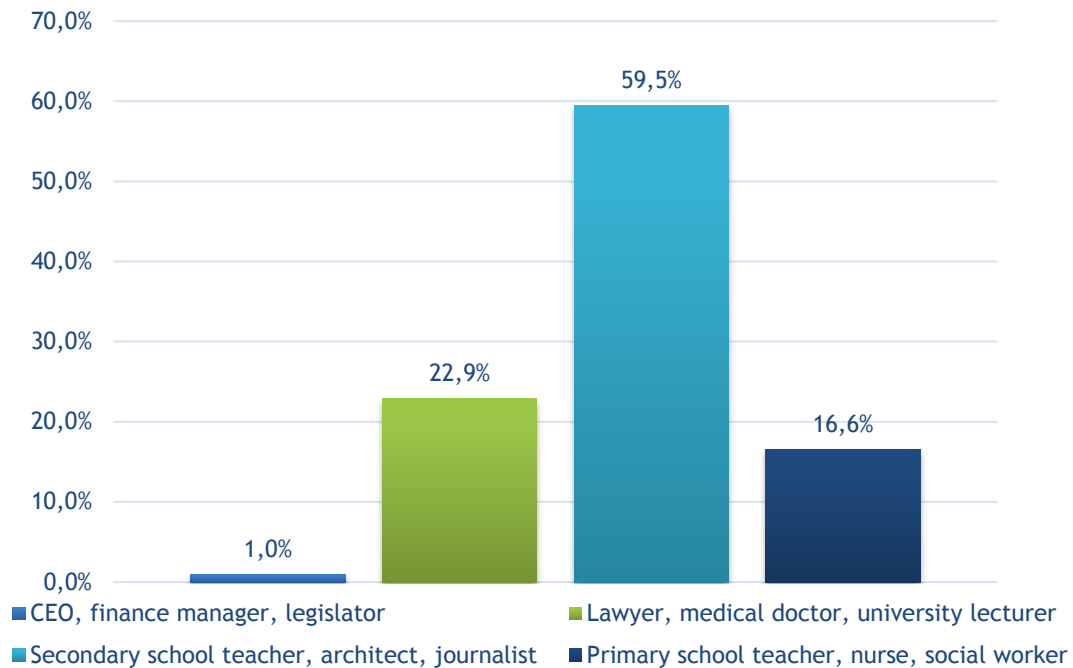
The contingency table, which illustrates the most striking cases in the European continent, provides a snapshot of the state of the profession in nineteen countries. Apart from Italy, whose scores have been among the most negative in several questions, the positive case of France might be explained by the fact that the French language has always held historical relevance in the field of international relations and that France is the cradle of the profession; it hosts the headquarters of several international organisations, AIIC was founded in Nice, the *École Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs* (ESIT) was among the first interpreting schools founded in Europe and eminent scholars such as Danica Seleskovitch greatly contributed to the advancement of interpreting at academic level. It is therefore not surprising that the perceived status of interpreters in France continues to be higher compared to that of other Western countries.

With regard to Belgium, even though there is a number of interpreters who believe that the profession enjoys a rather high status, there is also a significant number of respondents who ticked the medium (school teacher) and the lowest options (nurse). In Switzerland, a higher number of respondents than expected believes they enjoy a high status. As far as the third variable is concerned, a Student's *t*-test ( $t = -.416, p > 0.05$ ) suggested that there is no significant difference between freelance ( $n = 697, M = 2.42; SD = .57$ ) and staff interpreters ( $n = 108, M = 2.45; SD = .55$ ). The same non-significance relationship was found with a Student's *t*-test ( $t = -.271, p > 0.05$ ) between respondents who have an MA in T&I ( $n = 497, M = 2.43; SD = .55$ ) and those who do not ( $n = 308, M = 2.42; SD = .60$ ).

The second perspective, concerning the symbolic-interactionist model of analysis, is based on the theories of the looking-glass self expressed by Cooley in the 1920s (cf. McIntyre 2013), who maintained that a positive or negative perception of the self derives from the way individuals think that others judge them. Although the theories were formulated to explain the development of character and personality, they can be applied to the public perception of the interpreting profession. As previously mentioned, the looking-glass self is the product of social interaction and is built on the relationship between self and society (Manna & Chakraborti 2010). By the same token, the result of interpreters' interaction with their clients and with the general population gives them an idea of the extent to which others consider the profession one of high status. The answers are shown in the box below (figure 43):



According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter?



**Figure 43:** interpreters' opinions on how they believe society sees them.

The findings demonstrate that there is a high level of status discrepancy in the interpreting profession, which means that interpreters consider themselves fully-fledged professionals, but they believe they are not accorded the status they deserve. In the second question, only 22.9% of respondents (n = 184) believe that society sees them as akin to lawyers, physicians and university professors, a figure which is in stark contrast with the answers given to the previous questions (56.6%). In the question, the majority of interpreters (59.5%, n = 479) believe that the general population (including their clients) accords them a lower status; there is also a lower but not insignificant portion of respondents (16.6%, n = 134) who are even more downhearted about the external image that society has of them. The view is also expressed in comments written by respondents in the comment box placed at the end of the survey. The remarks demonstrate the way interpreters think they are considered by society: in one comment, a respondent refers to the long-standing stereotype that knowledge of languages is tantamount to being an interpreter, which still appears to be one of the most widespread misconceptions related to the interpreting profession.<sup>29</sup> Another concern regarding the profession points out that clients regard interpreting as a waste of

<sup>29</sup> "Just as Internet makes people believe they can have everything for free, it is assumed that with every pupil learning 2 foreign languages and with google translate the profession will disappear like the dinosaurs. What will happen will be as in photography: digital technology makes photographers of us all, till the dust settles and people realize any professional work is done on film to this day, from Hollywood movies to the front pages of digital photography magazines shot on medium format...film. In other words, it is likely our profession will be squeezed into even more of a niche market, those lucky to be in will still make a comfortable living, the others will likely struggle to make ends meet and have to do other jobs as well" (Female, Belgium).

money.<sup>30</sup> One of the reasons for this lack of consideration is underlined by a respondent who reports that clients have little understanding of what the interpreter does, a tendency that is apparently also spreading in the large international organisations.<sup>31</sup> Another informant points out that laypeople believe that interpreters' fees are too high (though they have never changed in years),<sup>32</sup> while another agrees that the public has strange and controversial ideas about interpreters and calls for an increased self-promotion of interpreters.<sup>33</sup> A statistical analysis according to five variables (gender, age, country of residence, freelance or staff, and level of education) will shed light on whether and to what extent opinions of status (which is the independent variable) vary according to the dependent variables.

As for the esteem interpreting enjoys in society, a significant difference between men and women was found through a Student's *t*-test ( $t = -.962; p < 0.05$ ). The results are illustrated below (figure 44):

| Contingency table What is your gender? * According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |                |   |   |   |  |       |       |
|--|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|  |                | According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|  |                | CEO, manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| What is your gender?   | MALE           | Count   | 2   | 63  | 110  | 21    | 196   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 1,9   | 44,8  | 116,6  | 32,6  | 196,0 |
|  | FEMALE         | Count   | 6   | 121   | 369  | 113   | 609   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 6,1   | 139,2   | 362,4  | 101,4 | 609,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 8   | 184   | 479   | 134  | 805   |       |
|  | Expected count | 8,0   | 184,0                                       | 479,0   | 134,0  | 805,0 |       |

**Figure 44:** contingency table showing the differences in men and women's consideration of external status.

As the table shows, there is a huge difference between men ( $n = 196; M = 2.76; SD = .645$ ) and women ( $n = 609; M = 2.96; SD = .650$ ). The main differences between the two groups can be observed in the second column: as for men, there is a 19-point difference between the actual and the expected count, and for women the reverse is true with a difference standing at 18 points. What emerges from this analysis is that men seem to be extremely confident about the way they present themselves to others.

<sup>30</sup> "I am only getting started in the profession and enjoy it a lot but I feel like the situation is changing towards smaller linguistic regimes and lower pays (especially on the private market). A lot of people are questioning the usefulness of interpreters and consider them a waste of money. To tackle that, we need to be excellent to prove our added value and we need to explain better why we are useful and why we should be paid "so much" while indeed, avoiding wasting resources" (Female, Belgium).

<sup>31</sup> "Few people outside interpreting manage to understand what we do (even in the big international organisations), though the principle of it is fairly straightforward". (Male, Belgium).

<sup>32</sup> "Interpreting used to be more appreciated earlier, now people have mobile phones with dictionaries and google translator and they think that interpreters are not needed anymore. I hear many times that we cost too much although the fees have been the same last 10 years!" (Female, Finland).

<sup>33</sup> "A useful, very fulfilling, but little understood profession in our Peruvian market. The public has strange and quite erroneous ideas about interpreters: wizards, secretaries, machines, among them" (Female, Peru).

As for the “age” parameter, the result of the chi square test ( $\chi^2 = 11.522$ ,  $DF = 15$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) points out that there is no association between the two variables, which means that younger respondents do not differ from older ones in their opinions concerning how society sees them. On the one hand, the outcome can be interpreted in a positive way, because it points to a stable trend across the different age ranges; the other side of the coin is that older and younger generations believe that society attributes a middling status to conference interpreting. Consequently, despite the improvements in training and research, the increasing academisation, the fee regulation process and an increased self-awareness of role, the status of conference interpreters seems not to have improved much in the eyes of society.

The third independent variable under scrutiny is the interpreter’s country of residence. Once again, to facilitate readability, only the countries which gathered a minimum of ten responses will be included in the contingency table (figure 45):

| <b>Contingency table What is your country of residence? * According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter?</b> |                |   |   |   |  |      |       |
|---|----------------|---|---|---|--|------|-------|
|   |                | According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Tot. |       |
|   |                | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |      |       |
| What is your country of residence?  | Argentina      | Count   | 1   | 2   | 6  | 10   |       |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,1  | 2,2   | 6,0  | 1,6  | 10,0  |
|   | Austria        | Count   | 0   | 3   | 23   | 0    | 26    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,3  | 5,8   | 15,7   | 4,3  | 26,0  |
|   | Belgium        | Count   | 2   | 45  | 66   | 18   | 131   |
|   |                | Expected count  | 1,4   | 29,1  | 79,1   | 21,4 | 131,0 |
|   | Brazil         | Count   | 1   | 9   | 30   | 5    | 45    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,5  | 10,0  | 27,2   | 7,4  | 45,0  |
|   | Canada         | Count   | 0   | 5   | 12   | 5    | 22    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,2  | 4,9   | 13,3   | 3,6  | 22,0  |
|   | Czech Republic | Count   | 0   | 3   | 13   | 1    | 17    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,2  | 3,8   | 10,3   | 2,8  | 17,0  |
|   | Denmark        | Count   | 0   | 2   | 6  | 2    | 10    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,1  | 2,2   | 6,0  | 1,6  | 10,0  |
|   | Finland        | Count   | 0   | 1   | 10   | 1    | 12    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,1  | 2,7   | 7,2  | 2,0  | 12,0  |
|   | France         | Count   | 1   | 9   | 20   | 5    | 35    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,4  | 7,8   | 21,1   | 5,7  | 35,0  |
|   | Germany        | Count   | 0   | 5   | 25   | 2    | 32    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,3  | 7,1   | 19,3   | 5,2  | 32,0  |
|   | Greece         | Count   | 0   | 3   | 9  | 1    | 13    |
|   |                | Expected count  | ,1  | 2,9   | 7,8  | 2,1  | 13,0  |

|                          |                |     |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Italy                    | Count          | 1   | 19    | 75    | 37    | 132   |
|                          | Expected count | 1,4 | 29,3  | 79,7  | 21,6  | 132,0 |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 0   | 0     | 9     | 2     | 11    |
|                          | Expected count | ,1  | 2,4   | 6,6   | 1,8   | 11,0  |
| Portugal                 | Count          | 0   | 4     | 13    | 2     | 19    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 4,2   | 11,5  | 3,1   | 19,0  |
| Slovakia                 | Count          | 0   | 0     | 10    | 4     | 14    |
|                          | Expected count | ,1  | 3,1   | 8,5   | 2,3   | 14,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 0   | 5     | 14    | 3     | 22    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 4,9   | 13,3  | 3,6   | 22,0  |
| Switzerland              | Count          | 0   | 22    | 31    | 7     | 60    |
|                          | Expected count | ,6  | 13,3  | 36,2  | 9,8   | 60,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 1   | 4     | 11    | 11    | 27    |
|                          | Expected count | ,3  | 6,0   | 16,3  | 4,4   | 27,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 0   | 7     | 19    | 2     | 28    |
|                          | Expected count | ,3  | 6,2   | 16,9  | 4,6   | 28,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 7   | 148   | 402   | 109   | 666   |
|                          | Expected count | 7,0 | 148,0 | 402,0 | 109,0 | 666,0 |

**Figure 45:** contingency table showing the distribution of responses on status in the selected countries.

As the table shows, the countries where interpreters believe they are better regarded by society are Belgium and Switzerland. As in the previous tests, Italy's scores are the lowest of all countries. As for the fourth variable, which investigates the differences between freelance and staff interpreters, a Student's *t*-test ( $t = .339, p > 0.05$ ) comparing the means of freelance ( $n = 697; M = 2.92; SD = .66$ ) and staff interpreters ( $n = 108; M = 2.89; SD = .61$ ) showed that there is no significant difference between the two groups (figure 46):

|  |                   | According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|  |                   | CEO, manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| Do you work as a freelance or staff interpreter? | Freelance         | Count   | 8   | 158   | 412  | 697   |       |
|  |                   | Expected count  | 6,9   | 159,3   | 414,7  | 697,0 |       |
|  | Staff interpreter | Count   | 0   | 26  | 67   | 15    | 108   |
|  |                   | Expected count  | 1,1   | 24,7  | 64,3   | 18,0  | 108,0 |
| Total  | Count             | 8   | 184   | 479   | 134  | 805   |       |
|  | Expected count    | 8,0   | 184,0                                       | 479,0   | 134,0  | 805,0 |       |

**Figure 46:** contingency table showing the differences between freelance and staff interpreters as regards their external perception of status.

The analysis of this variable shows that staff interpreters neither regard themselves as the “stars of the translation professions” (Dam & Zethsen 2013), nor do they believe they hold a high reputation in society. An analysis of interpreters’ perception of prestige will either corroborate or question the results obtained for interpreters’ internal and external perception of their status. As for the variable regarding the level of education, no significant difference between the two groups was found, as was also indicated by a Student’s *t*-test (freelance  $n = 497$ ;  $M = 2.88$ ;  $SD = .64$ ; staff  $n = 308$ ;  $M = 2.96$ ;  $SD = .66$ ;  $t = -1.580$ ,  $DF = 803$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Nevertheless, respondents who have a specialised degree in interpreting do not believe that society holds them in higher esteem than their colleagues (figure 47):

**Contingency table Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? \* According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter?**

|  |                | According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|--|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|  |                | CEO, manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? | YES            | Count   | 5   | 119   | 299  | 74    | 497   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 4,9   | 113,6   | 295,7  | 82,7  | 497,0 |
|  | NO             | Count   | 3   | 65  | 180  | 60    | 308   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 3,1   | 70,4  | 183,3  | 51,3  | 308,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 8   | 184   | 479   | 134  | 805   |       |
|  | Expected count | 8,0   | 184,0                                       | 479,0   | 134,0  | 805,0 |       |

**Figure 47:** contingency table showing the differences between respondents with and without a MA degree as regards their external perception of status.

The findings point out that there are differences between the two groups at the lowest level: paradoxically, respondents who have a degree in T&I tend to be more pessimistic concerning their perception by the generalised other.

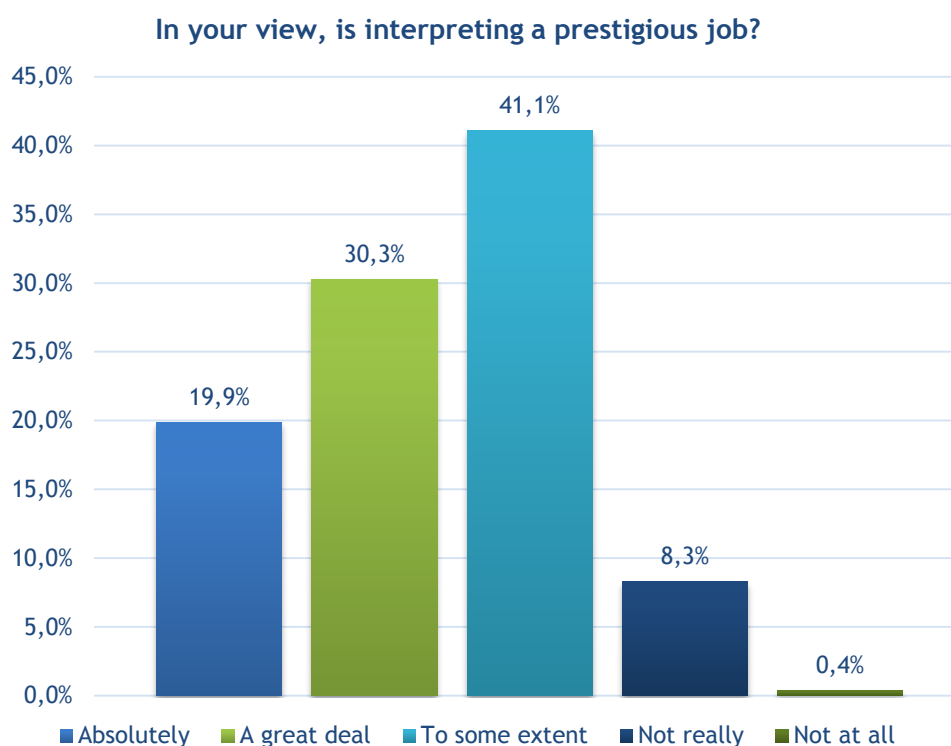
## 8. Prestige and Desirability of the Profession

This study starts from the premise that the notions of status and prestige, though closely interconnected, are not always related to each other, which means that an individual who enjoys a high status does not necessarily hold the same degree of prestige. The reason behind the choice lies in the fact that, at sociological level, the concept of prestige refers to the theory of *symbolic capital* advanced by Pierre Bourdieu and Thompson (1991). The authors point out that, while status – which is attributed on the basis of the type of occupation and the level of education – is one of the main factors contributing to the creation of *economic capital*, prestige falls into the domain of *symbolic*

*capital*. The two parameters of education and remuneration have an impact on evaluations of prestige, but external and irrational factors also play an important role in determining social esteem (see chapter 2, paragraph 4.1). The analysis of this paragraph will be carried out as follows:

- ↳ First, interpreters' self-perception of prestige will be illustrated;
- ↳ Second, interpreters' opinions about how others see them will be shown;
- ↳ Third, interpreters' opinions as to whether they believe that the profession has lost prestige will be described;<sup>34</sup>
- ↳ Lastly, interpreters' considerations as to whether they would recommend a career in interpreting to their children will be taken into account.

The results of interpreters' self-perception of prestige are shown below (figure 48):



**Figure 48:** Interpreters' self-consideration of prestige.

As this graph indicates, respondents believe that interpreting is a rather prestigious job when it comes to evaluating it in their own perspective. 50.2% of respondents ( $n = 404$ ) believe that conference interpreting is either “absolutely” or “a great deal” prestigious, whereas a slightly smaller percentage (41.1%,  $n = 331$ ) thinks that interpreting enjoys middling prestige. Only a small portion of respondents (8.7%,  $n = 70$ ) regard their prestige as low, a figure which can be said to be encouraging, because it indicates that the profession is seen as rewarding. At statistical level, a Student's  $t$ -test ( $t = .953$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed an insignificant difference between men ( $n = 196$ ;  $M = 2.44$ ;  $SD = .912$ ) and women ( $n = 609$ ;  $M = 2.37$ ;  $SD = .036$ ). Surprisingly, women obtained a higher

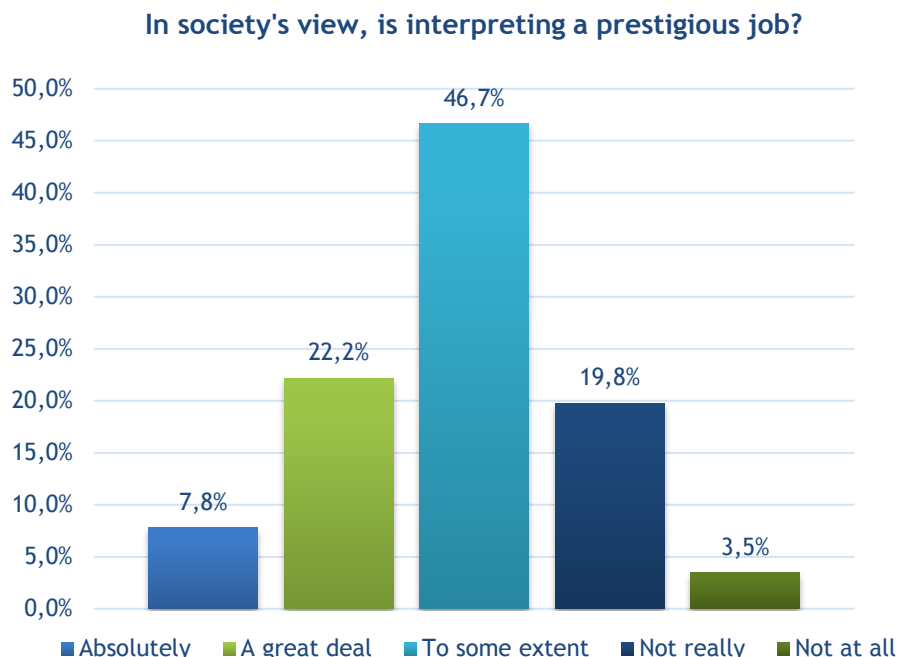
<sup>34</sup> The question was placed at the end of the section to obviate interpreters' bias.

score compared to the expected count, which indicates that women, who are generally more pessimistic about their social ranking, regard conference interpreting as a desirable and rather fulfilling occupation. As regards age, even though the results of the chi-square test reveal that there is no association between the variables ( $\chi^2 = 19.182$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), differences were found between younger and older respondents. By way of example, informants in the age group 26-35 believe that interpreting is far more prestigious compared to older generations, whose scores did not differ much from the expected distribution of the responses.

The statistical differences among the countries with at least ten responses indicate that there are no striking differences between the variables ( $\chi^2 = 89.017$ ,  $DF = 72$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), which suggests that neither in Belgium nor in Switzerland is the prestige of interpreters as high as one would expect. The pattern was rather even for the two countries, in which the actual count of respondents is roughly the same as expected. Considering the surprising results obtained from the analysis of the question about interpreters' self-perception of status – which showed that staff interpreters do not regard themselves as high-status professionals – an analysis of the variable is also crucial for the assessment of self-perceived prestige. A *t*-test ( $t = -1.124$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no significant relationship between freelance ( $n = 697$ ;  $M = 2.37$ ;  $SD = .91$ ) and staff interpreters ( $n = 108$ ;  $M = 2.48$ ;  $SD = .86$ ). The study of both variables (status and prestige) confirms that staff interpreters do not regard their profession as more prestigious, at least in their self-assessment of prestige.

As far as the level of education is concerned, a surprising outcome emerged from a Student's *t*-test ( $t = 2.171$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ): there is a significant difference between graduates in T&I ( $n = 497$ ,  $M = 2.44$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) and their colleagues ( $n = 308$ ,  $M = 2.30$ ,  $SD = .88$ ) in their self-perception of prestige. Apparently, respondents holding a degree in T&I do not deem interpreting to be a prestigious profession. One possible hypothesis is that respondents who do not have a degree in T&I reside in emerging countries, where the profession enjoys a higher status but fewer education opportunities are present. The other possible explanation is that those who do not have a specialised postgraduate degree in interpreting belong to older generations, who have witnessed the “Golden Age” of the interpreting profession.

In the light of the surprising outcome emerging from the first question on prestige, light had to be cast on whether they believed that their job is appreciated by others. In the analysis of the symbolic value of the interpreting profession, prestige is indicated by the social importance and respect attributed to a group of professional by laypeople. The results are presented in the graph below (figure 49):



**Figure 49:** conference interpreters' opinions as of the level of prestige attributed by laypeople to interpreting.

Unsurprisingly, only 30% (n = 242) of those interviewed believe that interpreting is held in high esteem by society, a figure which is considerably lower than responses given to the previous question (50.2%, n = 404). Considering that the lowest scores (23.3%, n = 187) only account for seven percentage points less than the first two highest options and that a substantial portion of respondents chose the middling alternative, it could be concluded that the interpreter's prestige, as seen by society, goes from middling to low. The striking feature of these results is that they are in line with what Kurz found in her survey as early as in 1986. Even though they were generally satisfied with their work, the AIIC interpreters appeared to have the impression that their prestige was underrated and that their work was not sufficiently appreciated at home. Only 5% of the interpreters domiciled in Vienna and 2.5% of those domiciled elsewhere were very satisfied with their prestige. Thirty years later, the trend appears not to have been reversed. At statistical level, a Student's *t*-test was performed to assess intra-group differences between men and women. The results of the contingency table obtained from a chi-square test are illustrated below (figure 50):

|                      |        | Contingency table What is your gender? In society's view, is interpreting a prestigious job? |              |                |            |            | Total |       |
|----------------------|--------|--|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|
|                      |        | In society's view, is interpreting a prestigious job?  |              |                |            |            |       |       |
|                      |        | Absolutely   | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE   | Count  | 13           | 59             | 91         | 27         | 6     | 196   |
|                      |        | Expected count   | 15,3         | 43,6           | 91,5       | 38,7       | 6,8   | 196,0 |
|                      | FEMALE | Count  | 50           | 120            | 285        | 132        | 22    | 609   |
|                      |        | Expected count   | 47,7         | 135,4          | 284,5      | 120,3      | 21,2  | 609,0 |



|       |                |      |       |       |       |      |       |
|-------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Total | Count          | 63   | 179   | 376   | 159   | 28   | 805   |
|       | Expected count | 63,0 | 179,0 | 376,0 | 159,0 | 28,0 | 805,0 |

**Figure 50:** contingency table showing men's and women's considerations of how they believe society sees the prestige of the profession.

The table shows that there is a significant difference between men and women in the way they perceive their prestige when referring to laypeople. With a variation of roughly 15 points, men appear to be highly self-confident. The differences in the means obtained from men ( $n = 196$ ;  $M = 2.77$ ;  $SD = .88$ ) and women ( $n = 609$ ;  $M = 2.92$ ;  $SD = .93$ ) suggest that women are far more pessimistic than their male colleagues when it comes to evaluating the way their profession is seen by others ( $t = -2.137$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). As for age, no remarkable differences were found between groups. On the other hand, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 92.814$ ,  $DF = 72$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) showed that the response pattern was highly heterogeneous across countries (figure 51):

| What is your country of residence? |                | In society's view, is interpreting a prestigious job? |                |                |                |            | Total |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------|-------|
|                                    |                | Absolutely  | A great deal   | To some extent | Not really     | Not at all |       |
|                                    |                | Count   | Expected count | Count          | Expected count | Count      |       |
| Argentina                          | Count          | 2   | 4              | 3              | 1              | 0          | 10    |
|                                    | Expected count | ,8  | 2,2            | 4,6            | 2,0            | ,4         | 10,0  |
| Austria                            | Count          | 2   | 4              | 14             | 5              | 1          | 26    |
|                                    | Expected count | 2,1   | 5,7            | 11,9           | 5,2            | 1,1        | 26,0  |
| Belgium                            | Count          | 10  | 37             | 55             | 22             | 7          | 131   |
|                                    | Expected count | 10,4  | 28,9           | 60,2           | 26,2           | 5,3        | 131,0 |
| Brazil                             | Count          | 8   | 11             | 20             | 6              | 0          | 45    |
|                                    | Expected count | 3,6   | 9,9            | 20,7           | 9,0            | 1,8        | 45,0  |
| Canada                             | Count          | 3   | 3              | 10             | 6              | 0          | 22    |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,8   | 4,9            | 10,1           | 4,4            | ,9         | 22,0  |
| Czech Republic                     | Count          | 1   | 2              | 10             | 4              | 0          | 17    |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,4   | 3,8            | 7,8            | 3,4            | ,7         | 17,0  |
| Denmark                            | Count          | 1   | 1              | 7              | 0              | 1          | 10    |
|                                    | Expected count | ,8  | 2,2            | 4,6            | 2,0            | ,4         | 10,0  |
| Finland                            | Count          | 1   | 0              | 8              | 3              | 0          | 12    |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,0   | 2,6            | 5,5            | 2,4            | ,5         | 12,0  |
| France                             | Count          | 3   | 9              | 15             | 8              | 0          | 35    |
|                                    | Expected count | 2,8   | 7,7            | 16,1           | 7,0            | 1,4        | 35,0  |
| Germany                            | Count          | 1   | 4              | 17             | 9              | 1          | 32    |
|                                    | Expected count | 2,5   | 7,1            | 14,7           | 6,4            | 1,3        | 32,0  |
| Greece                             | Count          | 3   | 3              | 4              | 3              | 0          | 13    |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,0   | 2,9            | 6,0            | 2,6            | ,5         | 13,0  |
| Italy                              | Count          | 6   | 23             | 59             | 37             | 7          | 132   |
|                                    | Expected count | 10,5  | 29,1           | 60,6           | 26,4           | 5,4        | 132,0 |
| The Netherlands                    | Count          | 0   | 3              | 4              | 3              | 1          | 11    |
|                                    | Expected count | ,9  | 2,4            | 5,1            | 2,2            | ,4         | 11,0  |

|                          |                |      |       |       |       |      |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Portugal                 | Count          | 1    | 7     | 9     | 2     | 0    | 19    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,5  | 4,2   | 8,7   | 3,8   | ,8   | 19,0  |
| Slovakia                 | Count          | 0    | 1     | 8     | 3     | 2    | 14    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,1  | 3,1   | 6,4   | 2,8   | ,6   | 14,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 3    | 6     | 9     | 4     | 0    | 22    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,8  | 4,9   | 10,1  | 4,4   | ,9   | 22,0  |
| Switzerland              | Count          | 5    | 20    | 27    | 6     | 2    | 60    |
|                          | Expected count | 4,8  | 13,2  | 27,6  | 12,0  | 2,4  | 60,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 2    | 2     | 11    | 7     | 5    | 27    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,1  | 6,0   | 12,4  | 5,4   | 1,1  | 27,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 1    | 7     | 16    | 4     | 0    | 28    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,2  | 6,2   | 12,9  | 5,6   | 1,1  | 28,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 53   | 147   | 306   | 133   | 27   | 666   |
|                          | Expected count | 53,0 | 147,0 | 306,0 | 133,0 | 27,0 | 666,0 |

**Figure 51:** interpreters' opinions on the extent to which they believe that society sees the profession depending on their country of residence.

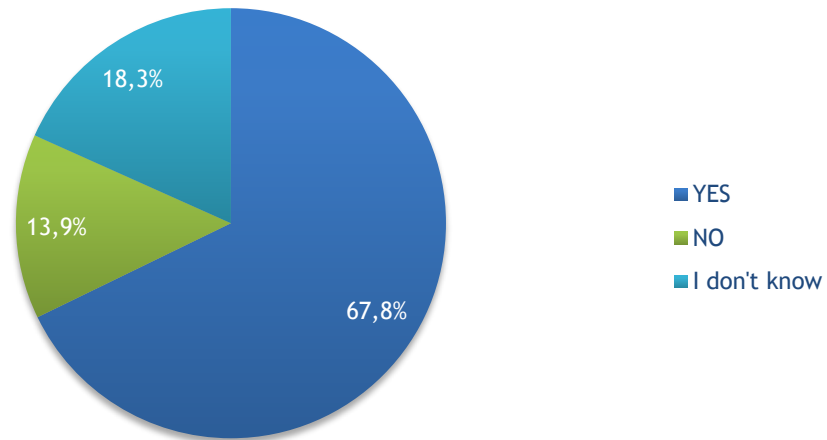
At first glance, Belgium, Switzerland and Brazil obtained higher scores than other countries. Likewise, a Student's *t*-test ( $t = -.120, p > 0.05$ ) revealed that the means obtained by freelance ( $n = 697$ ;  $M = 2.88$ ;  $SD = .933$ ) and staff interpreters ( $n = 108$ ;  $M = 2.89$ ;  $SD = .895$ ) were almost equal. The same could be said for respondents with a degree in T&I and their colleagues ( $t = .982, p > 0.05$ ); the result of the statistical test showed that there is no difference between the two groups, with interpreters who do not have a postgraduate degree in interpreting tending to be somewhat more confident than others. One possible explanation for the disillusionment shown by respondents with an MA in translation and interpreting is that they feel that they have dedicated themselves to the study of interpreting for years, cherishing high expectations about the future of the profession and, nonetheless, they feel their job is somewhat underestimated by the general public. However, recent research on translation students' expectations of the profession (Ruokonen 2016) suggests that they are neither too pessimistic nor idealistic. Although no such on the subject has been carried out on interpreting students, it could be hypothesised that they hold too high expectations of the status of the profession, which may stem from the idealised portrayal of conference interpreting. More research is needed on this matter.

### 8.1 The Evolution of Prestige

As mentioned at the beginning of the paragraph, this question was placed after the two questions about self-perception in order not to influence interpreters in their responses. The question was formulated as a statement because it was thought that the Likert scale, which scatters the responses

over five different levels, would not give a clear-cut view of how strongly they agree or disagree with the remark made in the question. The results obtained are shown below (figure 52):

**The interpreter's prestige has declined over the years.**



**Figure 52:** interpreters' opinions on the decline in prestige of the profession.

As the graph shows, the majority of interpreters (67.8%, n = 546) believe that the prestige of conference interpreting has declined over the years, while a considerably lower proportion believe that it has remained unchanged (13.9%, n = 112). A somewhat higher number of professionals was undecided and ticked the neutral option (18.3, n = 147). At statistical level, there seems to be general agreement across the board: all respondents, irrespective of their gender, age, country of residence and working status showed the same response patterns. However, a few interesting trends were registered for the variables of age and possession of an MA in interpreting. As can be seen from the contingency table, older generations tend to be more pessimistic than younger professionals (figure 53):

|                         |                | The interpreter's prestige has declined over the years. |      |              | Total |     |
|-------------------------|----------------|---|------|--------------|-------|-----|
|                         |                | YES   | NO   | I don't know |       |     |
| What is your age group? | 18-25          | Count   | 3    | 1            | 2     | 6   |
|                         |                | Expected count  | 4,1  | ,8           | 1,1   | 6,0 |
| 26-35                   | Count          | 68  | 7    | 23           | 98    |     |
|                         | Expected count | 66,5  | 13,6 | 17,9         | 98,0  |     |
| 36-45                   | Count          | 100   | 21   | 33           | 154   |     |
|                         | Expected count | 104,5   | 21,4 | 28,1         | 154,0 |     |
| 46-55                   | Count          | 150   | 35   | 49           | 234   |     |
|                         | Expected count | 158,7   | 32,6 | 42,7         | 234,0 |     |
| 56-65                   | Count          | 158   | 34   | 26           | 218   |     |
|                         | Expected count | 147,9   | 30,3 | 39,8         | 218,0 |     |

|       |                |       |       |       |       |
|-------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 65+   | Count          | 67    | 14    | 14    | 95    |
|       | Expected count | 64,4  | 13,2  | 17,3  | 95,0  |
| Total | Count          | 546   | 112   | 147   | 805   |
|       | Expected count | 546,0 | 112,0 | 147,0 | 805,0 |

**Figure 53:** contingency table showing the differences concerning the decline in prestige of conference interpreting as seen by younger and older generations of interpreters.

The table shows that in the “yes” column there is a 9 point variation between the actual and the expected counts for the age range 56-65, which means that older generations of conference interpreters, who have seen how the market situation has changed over the years, no longer believe that conference interpreting enjoys the social esteem it used to have at the dawn of the profession. Another interesting aspect was that there is a major difference in evaluations on the decline of prestige according to the type and level of education of respondents (figure 54):

|  |     | The interpreter's prestige has declined over the years. |            |              | Total |       |
|--|-----|---|------------|--------------|-------|-------|
|  |     | YES   | NO         | I don't know |       |       |
| Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? | YES | Count   | <b>366</b> | 46           | 85    | 497   |
|  |     | Expected count  | 337,1      | 69,1         | 90,8  | 497,0 |
|  | NO  | Count   | 180        | <b>66</b>    | 62    | 308   |
|  |     | Expected count  | 208,9      | <b>42,9</b>  | 56,2  | 308,0 |
| Total  |     | Count   | 546        | 112          | 147   | 805   |
|  |     | Expected count  | 546,0      | 112,0        | 147,0 | 805,0 |

**Figure 54:** contingency table showing the differences concerning the decline in prestige of conference interpreting according to the possession of a MA degree in interpreting.

A difference of 29 points separates the actual from the expected counts of the first column indicating respondents with an MA. In a nutshell, a significantly higher number of interviewees with a postgraduate degree in interpreting seem to believe that the profession has lost prestige over the years compared to those who do not have the same kind of degree. The outcome of this question confirms once again that respondents holding an MA in T&I had higher expectations of the profession, which were not fulfilled by the actual working conditions of the labour market, a phenomenon sociologists call “reality shock” (Masters 2009). Some interpreters commented:

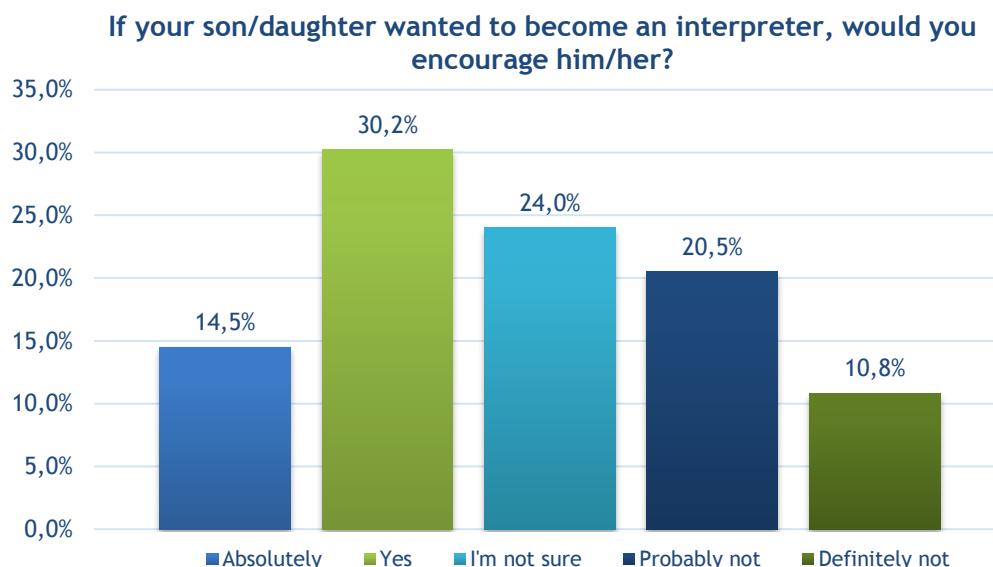
Non-interpreters are usually completely awed when they hear that I am a conference interpreter who does SIMULTANEOUS interpreting ("oh that must be so difficult, I don't understand how anyone can do that!"). When they hear that I mainly work in the language pair Finnish <> English, their admiration disappears: "But why, everyone speaks English!" The same attitude is also often seen in consecutive situations, where clients either refuse to rely on an interpreter altogether (regardless of the level of their language skills) or constantly monitor the

performance of the interpreters and eagerly correct any mistakes, or supposed “mistakes”. (Female, Finland).

The lack of prestige of the job can perhaps be ascribed to the fact that everybody speaks at least one language; a degree of multilingualism is not unusual (Male, Belgium).

The knowledge of English will continue to grow. Many potential users see interpreters as a necessary evil. It is human that we human beings do not want to be dependent on others. So most people would prefer to communicate directly in bad English rather than to pay for an interpreter. On top, most users are not aware of the enormous culture gaps that exist (Male, Belgium).

These respondents associate prestige with the importance attached to conference interpreting by people outside the profession. In the two examples reported above, English as lingua franca is to be blamed for the loss of prestige of conference interpreting. Considering that the knowledge of English, whether true or supposed, is growing among non-interpreters, an interpreter working with English no longer sounds fascinating to people outside the profession. Indeed, there is a growing tendency to check whether the interpreter translates correctly, which should be seen as a sign of confidence loss towards the professional category. Generally, the reputation of a profession is tarnished by the unethical work of its practitioners: as Jeffrey (2012: 103) points out, some occupations have lost a certain degree of public confidence because a few practitioners have put their own interests above those of their clients. The misbehaviour is regarded as the main cause of loss of legitimisation. However, contrary to what happens in most professions, the decrease in public recognition of conference interpreting appears to be attributable to one of the consequences of globalisation rather than to misconduct of the professional category (see chapter 1, paragraph 3.1). Another parameter assessing the prestige of a profession is its degree of desirability, an aspect of the translation professions which was already mentioned by Gile *et al.* (2001). The parameter was assessed with a question that, at first glance, may sound personal, but that proved fruitful to elicit a more honest response (figure 55):



**Figure 55:** degree of desirability of the interpreting profession.

In the question, interpreters were asked to determine whether they would recommend conference interpreting as a career to their (actual or potential) children. The distribution of responses is highly heterogeneous: 44.7% of interpreters (n = 360) would be inclined to recommend conference interpreting, whereas 31.3% of them (n = 252) would not give such career advice. A considerable number of respondents (24%, n = 193) do not know how they would behave in this situation. Statistical tests indicated that responses do not differ according to the gender of respondents ( $t = .216, p > 0.05$ ). However, the answers differ significantly only according to age ( $\chi^2 = 42.738, DF = 20, p < 0.05$ ), as shown in the contingency table below (figure 56):

| What is your age group? |                | If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her? |       |              |              |                | Tot   |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|-------|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------|
|                         |                | Absolutely   | Yes   | I'm not sure | Probably not | Definitely not |       |
| 18-25                   | Count          | 0  | 4     | 2            | 0            | 0              | 6     |
|                         | Expected count | ,9   | 1,8   | 1,4          | 1,2          | ,6             | 6,0   |
| 26-35                   | Count          | 21   | 30    | 28           | 14           | 5              | 98    |
|                         | Expected count | 14,2   | 29,6  | 23,5         | 20,1         | 10,6           | 98,0  |
| 36-45                   | Count          | 28   | 50    | 46           | 22           | 8              | 154   |
|                         | Expected count | 22,4   | 46,5  | 36,9         | 31,6         | 16,6           | 154,0 |
| 46-55                   | Count          | 23   | 68    | 52           | 57           | 34             | 234   |
|                         | Expected count | 34,0   | 70,6  | 56,1         | 48,0         | 25,3           | 234,0 |
| 56-65                   | Count          | 32   | 66    | 42           | 46           | 32             | 218   |
|                         | Expected count | 31,7   | 65,8  | 52,3         | 44,7         | 23,6           | 218,0 |
| 65+                     | Count          | 13   | 25    | 23           | 26           | 8              | 95    |
|                         | Expected count | 13,8   | 28,7  | 22,8         | 19,5         | 10,3           | 95,0  |
| Total                   | Count          | 117  | 243   | 193          | 165          | 87             | 805   |
|                         | Expected count | 117,0  | 243,0 | 193,0        | 165,0        | 87,0           | 805,0 |

**Figure 56:** contingency table showing the degree of desirability of the interpreting profession as seen by younger and older interpreters.

The answers to this question indicate that, as age raises, the number of negative responses increases. Another variable which has yielded interesting results is “possession of a MA” (figure 57):

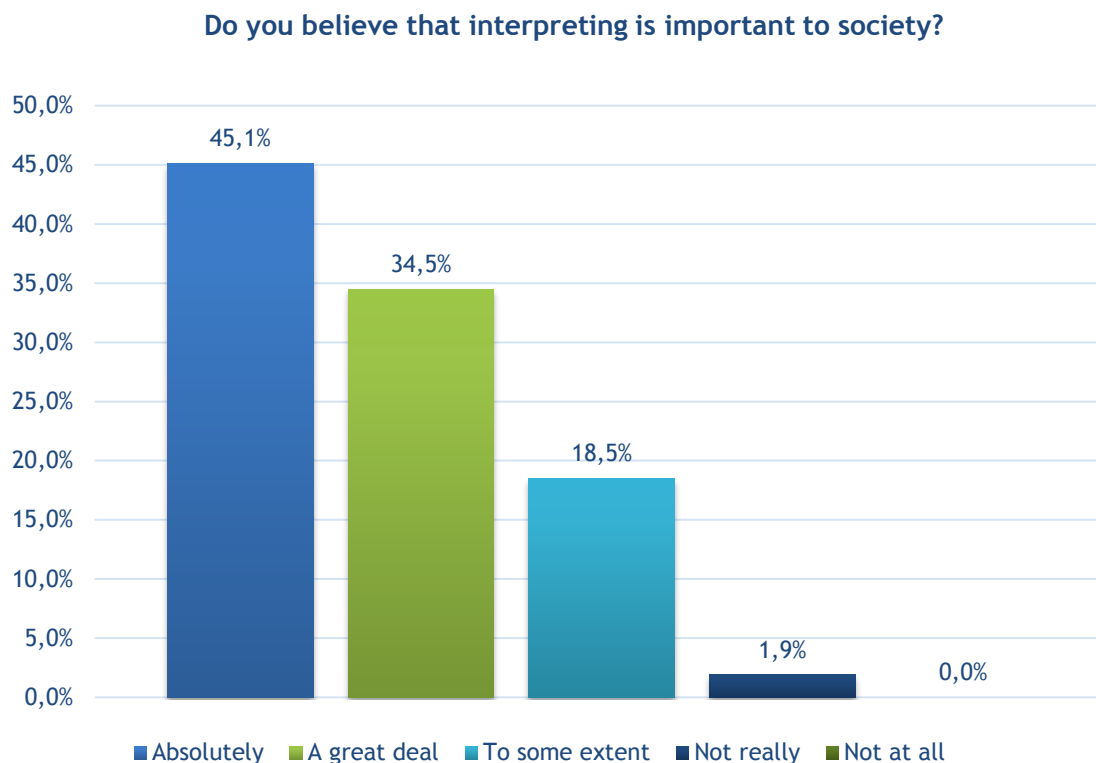
| Contingency table Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?/ If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her? |     |  |       |              |              |                |      |       |
|--|-----|--|-------|--------------|--------------|----------------|------|-------|
|  |     | If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her? |       |              |              |                | Tot  |       |
|  |     | Absolutely   | Yes   | I'm not sure | Probably not | Definitely not |      |       |
| Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?   | YES | Count  | 66    | 144          | 127          | 98             | 62   | 497   |
|  |     | Expected count   | 72,2  | 150,0        | 119,2        | 101,9          | 53,7 | 497,0 |
|  | NO  | Count  | 51    | 99           | 66           | 67             | 25   | 308   |
|  |     | Expected count   | 44,8  | 93,0         | 73,8         | 63,1           | 33,3 | 308,0 |
| Total  |     | Count  | 117   | 243          | 193          | 165            | 87   | 805   |
|  |     | Expected count   | 117,0 | 243,0        | 193,0        | 165,0          | 87,0 | 805,0 |

**Figure 57:** contingency table showing the degree of desirability of the interpreting profession as seen by interpreters with different types of degree.

Although a Student's *t*-test ( $t = 1.855, p > 0.05$ ) revealed that there are no significant differences between the groups, the table shows that respondents who hold a specialised degree in interpreting are more pessimistic than those who do not have a MA in T&I. In the words of a respondent, "the overall economic situation makes things worse for everyone in the sector, and it is increasingly difficult to make a decent living by interpreting alone. An increasing number of colleagues (myself included) are considering other career options. This is why I am not sure if I would encourage my children to become interpreters" (Female, Finland). In the light of which, it could be stated that conference interpreters are rather doubtful about the desirability of their profession.

## 9. Social Value

A profession has, by definition, a significant social value, which is why, in this study, prestige considerations are corroborated by questions aiming to determine whether interpreters think that the interpreting profession is an activity that goes beyond an automatic act of translation, and consequently attribute value to it. This parameter was already analysed by Dam and Zethsen (2013) in their study, which is why respondents of the present work were asked to assess whether they believe that the knowledge and skills of interpreting can be used for the common good (figure 58):



**Figure 58:** interpreters’ opinions on the social value they attribute to their work.

These answers reveal that a high number of conference interpreters (79.6%, n = 641) attach great importance to the interpreting profession. A smaller number of respondents (18.5%, n = 149) believe that interpreting is important only “to some extent” and an insignificant portion of respondents ticked the lowest options available (1.9%, n = 15), showing that interpreters are well aware of the importance of successful communication, seen as a fundamental value in a multicultural and multilingual society (Weber & Salah 2014). A Student’s *t*-test ( $t = .688, p > 0.05$ ) demonstrated a non-significant difference of the two variables, which shows that male and female interpreters consider interpreting as socially valuable. In the second parameter, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 7.270, DF = 15, p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no association between age and the importance attributed to the profession. Likewise, no difference was found as for country of residence, ( $\chi^2 = 66.380, DF = 54, p > 0.05$ ) and working status ( $t = -1.362, p > 0.05$ ). As for the level of education, a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = 2.293, p < 0.05$ ) demonstrated that there is a huge discrepancy between the two groups (figure 59):

|     |       | Do you believe that interpreting is important to society? |              |                |            | Total |
|-----|-------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|-------|
|     |       | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really |       |
| YES | Count | 209   | 177          | 101            | 10         | 497   |



|  |                |       |       |       |      |       |
|--|----------------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting? | Expected count | 224,1 | 171,6 | 92,0  | 9,3  | 497,0 |
|  | NO             | Count | 154   | 101   | 48   | 5     |
|  | Expected count | 138,9 | 106,4 | 57,0  | 5,7  | 308,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 363   | 278   | 149   | 15   | 805   |
|  | Expected count | 363,0 | 278,0 | 149,0 | 15,0 | 805,0 |

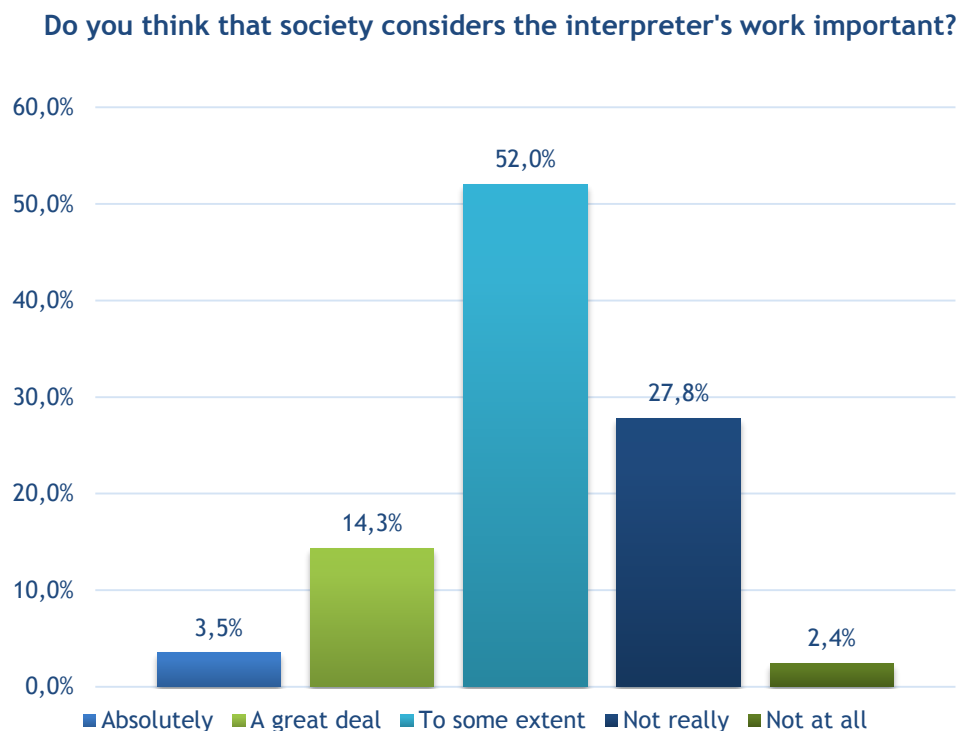
**Figure 59:** considerations on the social value of conference interpreting as perceived interpreters with and without an MA in interpreting.

The table shows that those who have a postgraduate degree in interpreting seem not to appreciate the social value of what they do. The results are rather worrying, especially because the previous tests have shown that the majority of the respondents with an MA in interpreting belong to younger generations, who will decide, with their attitude, what the interpreting profession will look like in the future. Even though questions concerning the comparison between conference and public service interpreters will be analysed in the next chapters, it is worth noting that interpreters also working in the public services tend to attribute a higher social value to interpreting activity (figure 60):

|  |                | Do you believe that interpreting is important to society? |              |                |            | Total |     |
|--|----------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|-------|-----|
|  |                | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really |       |     |
| Have you ever worked in public services (courts, hospitals, immigration offices, police stations)? | YES            | Count   | 156          | 100            | 45         | 2     | 303 |
|  | Expected count | 136,6   | 104,6        | 56,1           | 5,6        | 303,0 |     |
|  | NO             | Count   | 207          | 178            | 104        | 13    | 502 |
|  | Expected count | 226,4   | 173,4        | 92,9           | 9,4        | 502,0 |     |
| Total  | Count          | 363   | 278          | 149            | 15         | 805   |     |
|  | Expected count | 363,0   | 278,0        | 149,0          | 15,0       | 805,0 |     |

**Figure 60:** conference interpreters working in public services and their opinions on the social value of interpreting.

As the tables shows, conference interpreters who have also worked in public services tend to assign a higher social value to the profession than respondents who say they have never worked in this field. Considering that, by and large, interpreters recognise the social importance of interpreting, the degree to which they believe that society acknowledges their job is shown in the graph below (figure 61):



**Figure 61:** interpreters’ opinions on the social value they believe society attributes to their work.

This graph confirms the results already shown by Zwischenberger (2011) and Dam and Zethsen (2013), who pointed out that the lack of users’ interest and the ignorance of clients about the interpreter’s job in general are the main cause of rising frustration among interpreters, who do not believe that their profession is sufficiently appreciated (as shown in the analysis of the parameters “status” and “prestige”). As a consequence, if interpreters believe that the profession has lost prestige over the years, they will no longer find it desirable or socially valuable. As already shown by Dam and Zethsen (2013), in this case too, among the most widespread cause of negative convictions about the profession is found the rise of global English, which generates a sense of uselessness in the professional category, with a consequent (presumed) decline of the role they play in society. As one interpreter commented:

Where we once met a clear need we are now seen as irrelevant to communication; English is now used widely and is now aspirational, so people prefer to speak imperfect English rather than their own language. This has led to a lessening of expectations so limited English is acceptable. We also have to deal with the introduction of machine translation such as Google - the result is acceptable and the modern world loves gadgets. Those who have been our clients since we established the profession post WWII no longer need us to the same extent; those who do need us are unwilling or unable to pay the fees we are used to commanding. This is a conundrum the profession needs to discuss (Male, Switzerland).

This interpreter clearly underlines the evolution of the role interpreters have experienced throughout history: English has become a widely spoken language and fewer clients require

interpreting services. At statistical level, a significant difference was found between men and women (figure 62):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/ Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important? |        |   |              |                |            |            |                  |       |
|---|--------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------------|-------|
|   |        | Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important? |              |                |            |            | Total important? |       |
|   |        | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |                  |       |
| What is your gender?  | MALE   | Count   | 11           | 39             | 105        | 38         | 3                | 196   |
|   |        | Expected count  | 6,8          | 28,0           | 102,0      | 54,5       | 4,6              | 196,0 |
|   | FEMALE | Count   | 17           | 76             | 314        | 186        | 16               | 609   |
|   |        | Expected count  | 21,2         | 87,0           | 317,0      | 169,5      | 14,4             | 609,0 |
| Total   |        | Count   | 28           | 115            | 419        | 224        | 19               | 805   |
|   |        | Expected count  | 28,0         | 115,0          | 419,0      | 224,0      | 19,0             | 805,0 |

**Figure 62:** contingency table showing how male and female interpreters describe their work as perceived by others.

A Student's  $t$  ( $t = -4.049, p < 0.05$ ) shows that women are less self-confident than men. One possible explanation for this lack of confidence can be attributed to the fact that women tend to lose self-esteem when they are not given a clear feedback, as already pointed out by Dam and Zethsen (2013). Several sociological studies of women in the medical profession (Adams 2005; Bowman, Frank & Allen 2002) demonstrated that, socio-economic status being equal, women tended to be more self-assured when they were provided with a detailed feedback of their performance. In the light of the results, it could be safely argued that there is more need to train women not only to acquire the skills needed to perform the job, but also to be more self-confident, which is particularly needed if the professional is to keep up with the times.

No important differences were found with regard to age ( $\chi^2 = 25.077, DF = 20, p > 0.05$ ). There is, however, a significant difference among countries ( $\chi^2 = 101.197, DF = 72, p < 0.05$ ), with Belgium and Switzerland being the countries where conference interpreting seems to be more recognised at social level. Other statistical tests revealed that there is no difference between freelance and staff interpreters ( $t = -.231, p > 0.05$ ). On the other hand, a substantial difference was found between graduates and non-graduates in T&I ( $t = 2.433, p < 0.05$ ), with the former ( $n = 497, M = 3.1, SD = .78$ ) being far more pessimistic than the latter ( $n = 308, M = 3, SD = .82$ ).

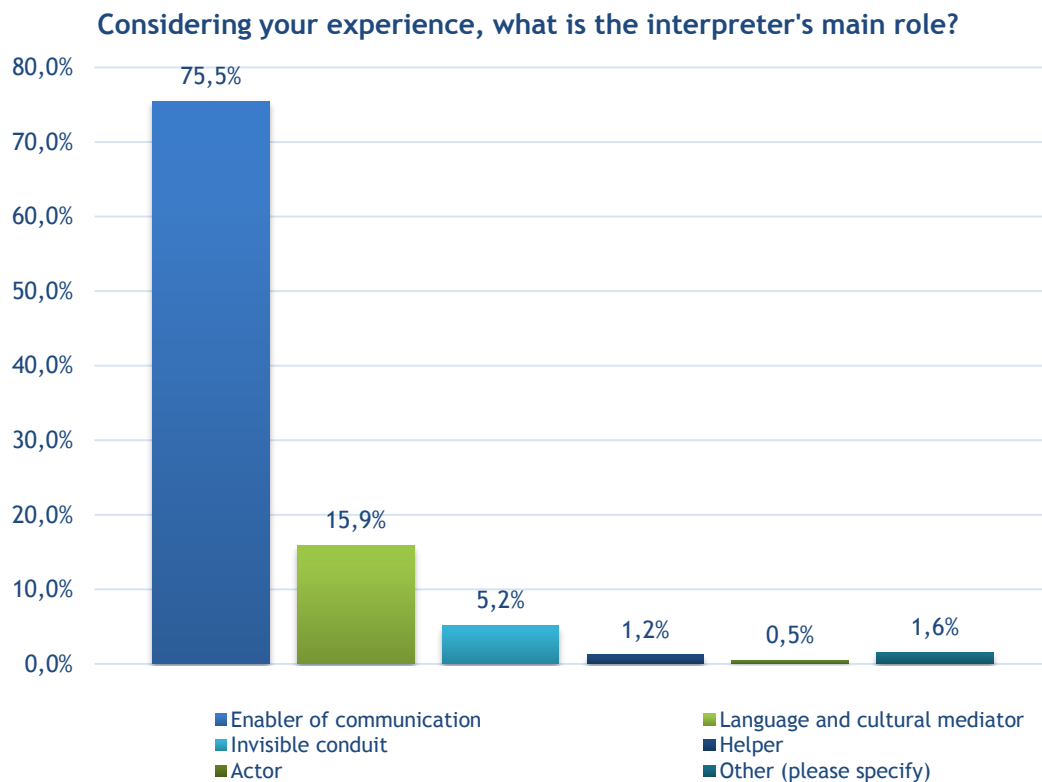
## 10. The Interpreter's Role

In the light of the results obtained for the previous questions, sociological theories about the relationship between role and status can be applied to conference interpreting. In his literature review of the interpreter's role in conference settings, Al Zahran (2007) divided the roles played by conference interpreters into six categories:

- ↳ **Entremise intelligente.** The first theorisations on the interpreter's role were formulated by Seleskovitch (1978: 112), who speculated that the interpreter is an intermediary with a relative degree of intervention, depending on the extent to which the interlocutors understand each other's cultural differences.
- ↳ **Identified with the client.** In his study on the development of role conflict, Anderson suggested that a bilingual person considers his/her first language his/her mother tongue. As a consequence, the bilingual interpreter will tend to identify him/herself with the speaker of his/her mother tongue rather than with speakers of other languages. (S)he is, therefore, consciously or unconsciously serving the interests of one of the two parties. In this situation, the interpreter would not experience role conflict, which stems from the expectations that different interlocutors place on him/her (see chapter 2, paragraph 4.3.3).
- ↳ **Invisible conduit.** The idea of the interpreter as an invisible conduit is perhaps the longest-standing conceptualisation which still remains difficult to uproot today, especially in conference interpreting. The view, introduced by Kopczynski (1994), depicts the interpreter as a detached ghost who acts in a social vacuum. Although these notions have been questioned by several scholars (Angelelli 2004), it has been shown that "this professional ideology remains unchallenged and is still shared between professional associations and practitioners" (*ibid.*: 78). According to Diriker, codes of professional ethics severely limit the interpreters' agency. For example, Article 5 of the AIC code of ethics "strictly limits their role to that of a linguistic intermediaries, prohibiting all kinds of involvement in the interpreting process, even against patent untruths, derogatory and vulgar remarks" (Diriker 2004: 31).
- ↳ **The visible interpreter.** As mentioned above, Angelelli (2004) advocates an increased visibility of the interpreter's role in conference and community settings alike. Contrary to the theories describing the interpreter as an invisible voice cut off from reality, Angelelli maintains that social factors such as ethnicity, gender, power and status have an impact on how interpreters perceive their role. All these aspects influence the interpreter's performance which can never be 100% neutral. Moreover, the neutrality prescribed by the codes of ethics and what the interpreter does in reality are in conflict and undermine the interpreter's self-confidence.
- ↳ **The cultural mediator.** The issue of whether the conference interpreter should act as a cultural mediator was raised by Kondo (1990) in a paper reporting an emblematic example of how communication can go awry when the interpreter neglects the cultural features of communication. In a bilateral meeting between President Nixon and the Japanese Prime Minister Sato, Nixon asked Sato to limit Japanese exports of textile goods to the United States. Sato answered in a polite way and said something like "I will deal with this matter in a forward-looking manner", which was translated into English with "I'll take care of it". When Nixon found out that Sato would not do anything to reduce exports, he felt betrayed. The diplomatic incident, which could have had more dramatic consequences in a different situation, poses the question of how the interpreter is supposed to act in such circumstances. In that case, the interpreter did what all codes of ethics told him to do, that is "to translate

literally and faithfully”, but in that situation saying something like “The Prime Minister says he will think about it, but in Japanese politeness this means that he is not promising anything” would have caused less trouble to the two heads of state.

The issue of cultural mediation is still debated (especially in the field of public service interpreting) and has been exhaustively explained by several interpreting scholars (Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2002; Pöchhacker 2004; Diriker 2004; Torikai 2009; Zwischenberger 2011), but there is still little agreement on which role the conference interpreter is supposed to play. In order to attempt to shed light on the interpreter’s role, interpreters were asked the following question (figure 63):



**Figure 63:** interpreters’ self-perception of role.

As the graph shows, an overwhelming majority of interpreters (75.5%,  $n = 608$ ), regardless of sex, age, employment status level of education believes that the interpreter’s role is to enable communication. A smaller portion (15.9%,  $n = 128$ ) thinks that interpreters should act as cultural mediators and only 42 (5.2%) respondents appeared to have remained faithful to the myth of the invisible conduit. Overall, the results suggest that conference interpreters have become more aware of the complexities of the profession and know that, in some circumstances, they have to play the role of active participants in communication. Interestingly, a  $t$ -test ( $t = 1.918, p > 0.05$ ) revealed that there are no differences between freelance and staff interpreters, which means that even staff interpreters, who work mainly in the simultaneous mode, no longer think that the interpreter should

be invisible. Other answers were “helper” (1.2%, n = 10) and “actor” (0.5%, n = 4). In the open box for comments placed at the end of the question, interpreters gave some interesting replies:

Both Enabler and Mediator depending on the knowledge/education degree shared by speaker and listeners (Female, Belgium).

Both enabler of communication and language/cult. mediator (Male, USA).

A + B Enabler and mediator (Male, Austria).

The first 3 points (Female, Germany).

Political tool (Female, Belgium).

Window dressing (Female, Kenya).

Depends WHERE and WHAT you are interpreting (Female, Belgium).

All of the above (Male, Italy).

All of the above (Female, Switzerland).

Professional communicator (Female, Brazil).

Transmit a message accurately (Female, Spain).

Passing the message on. And that MAY require a bit of mediation, a bit of diplomacy. It DOES require a thorough understanding of the parties seeking to communicate, as persons, as parts of their society. (Female, UK).

The majority of the comments indicate that the interpreter should be able to make communication possible and mediate between cultures, as underlined in the first three remarks, whereas another respondent wishes interpreters were enablers of communication but at the same time cultural mediators and invisible conduits (4). Another respondent believes that the interpreter is a political tool (5), which probably means that in conferences in which political issues are at stake, the interpreter's role is fundamental not only in communication, but also in the political process. As Pöchhacker (2004: 131) points out, among the various roles expected of the interpreter, (s)he should also be able to “grasp the speaker's intention beyond mere words”. In so doing, the interpreter gives his/her own contribution to the message and, as a consequence, (s)he actively participates in the decision-making process. In her analysis of political speeches at the European Parliament, Beaton-Thome shows that the EU institutional hegemony “is strengthened by simultaneous interpreters, primarily through extensive use of conceptual metaphor strings in the interpretation” (2007: 271). In this way, the interpreter is far from being a conduit, but helps consolidate the official ideology of the EU by adopting a socially-oriented approach, which is enacted in three main cases: (1) decisions to interpret off-microphone utterances (or not), (2) ‘improvement’ of poor quality language, and (3)

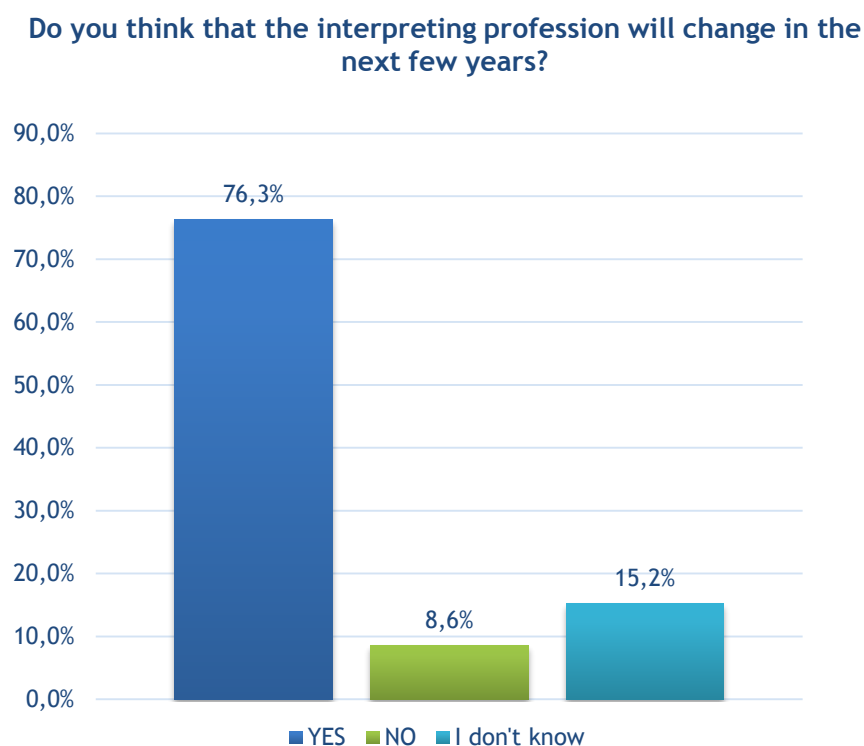
translational shifts. With a provocative intention, an interpreter from Kenya (6) wrote that the interpreter is a decorative and perhaps useless element. Another respondent commented that the role of the interpreter largely depends on the type of communicative situation, a feature underlined by several scholars (Diriker 2004; Monacelli 2009), who believe that conference interpreters are physically present and that their role depends on the socio-cultural constraints of communication. A couple of respondents (8-9) wrote that a good interpreter should perform all the roles mentioned in the open-ended question.

The subsequent comment recalls the notion of the interpreter as a professional communicator described by Hatim and Mason (2005: 1-2) who wrote that, as the translator/interpreter is both text receiver and producer, (s)he is a special kind of communicator because (s)he “interacts closely with the source text, whether for immediate response (as in the case of the simultaneous interpreter) or in a more reflective way (as in the translation of creative literature). The role of the interpreter as a “professional communicator” was also stressed by Déjean Le Féal (1990: 155), who argued that the interpreter’s “language and oratory quality should be at least on the same level as that of the original speech, if not better, given that we are professional communicators while some speakers are not [...]”. The penultimate comments refers to the quality criteria described by AIIC, which maintains that the interpreter’s job is to communicate the speaker’s intended message “accurately, faithfully and completely”. This view is also held by Viezzi, who mentions “accuracy” among his four quality criteria: he also points out, however, that even though one would expect accuracy to be important in all settings of interpreting, “accuracy varies according to the text to be interpreted, relevance being generally a key factor” (2013: 383). The author argues that, for example, in the passage from imperial to metric measurement systems, the most accurate translation of 50 feet, which is 15.24 meters, would sound inappropriate in a setting other than engineering or precision mechanics. Therefore, the accurate transmission of the message, as pointed out by one respondent (11) should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The most complete definition of the interpreter’s role found among the various comments is the last one (12), which strikes the right balance between mediation and fidelity to the message.

Overall, the responses given in this questionnaire confirm the results illustrated by Zwischenberger (2011: 126) apart from the parameter “helper”, which obtained a higher number of responses in the 2011 survey (8.9%) than the present study (1.2%). Although the present results bear witness to a heightened sense of professional identity, the interpreters’ perception of their role depends on a series of physical, social and cultural constraints, and therefore a univocal and clear-cut definition of role cannot be outlined for two main reasons: 1) role is a “multidimensional construct” (*ibid.*: 131), which can be analysed across several perspectives; 2) conference interpreters’ self-perception of their status still seems to be rather vague and ill-defined. In the light of the sociological theories illustrated earlier in this paragraph, if the concept of status is not completely interiorised by a professional category, the role the professionals play in their working lives and in society at large will never be clear. Further research on status is needed to shed more light on the interpreter’s perception of professional role.

## 11. The Future Of The Profession

The last section of the questionnaire aims to foresee what the profession will look like in the future according to conference interpreters. Most of them were very keen on answering the questions and wrote several open comments. This section comprises three questions: the first asks interpreters whether they think that the profession will change in the future, the second asks them to rate the likelihood of a series of changes taking place and the third asks interpreters to rate the effectiveness of a series of measures aiming at improving the interpreter's status. The answers to the first question were as follows (figure 64):



**Figure 64:** conference interpreters' opinions on the future of the interpreting profession.

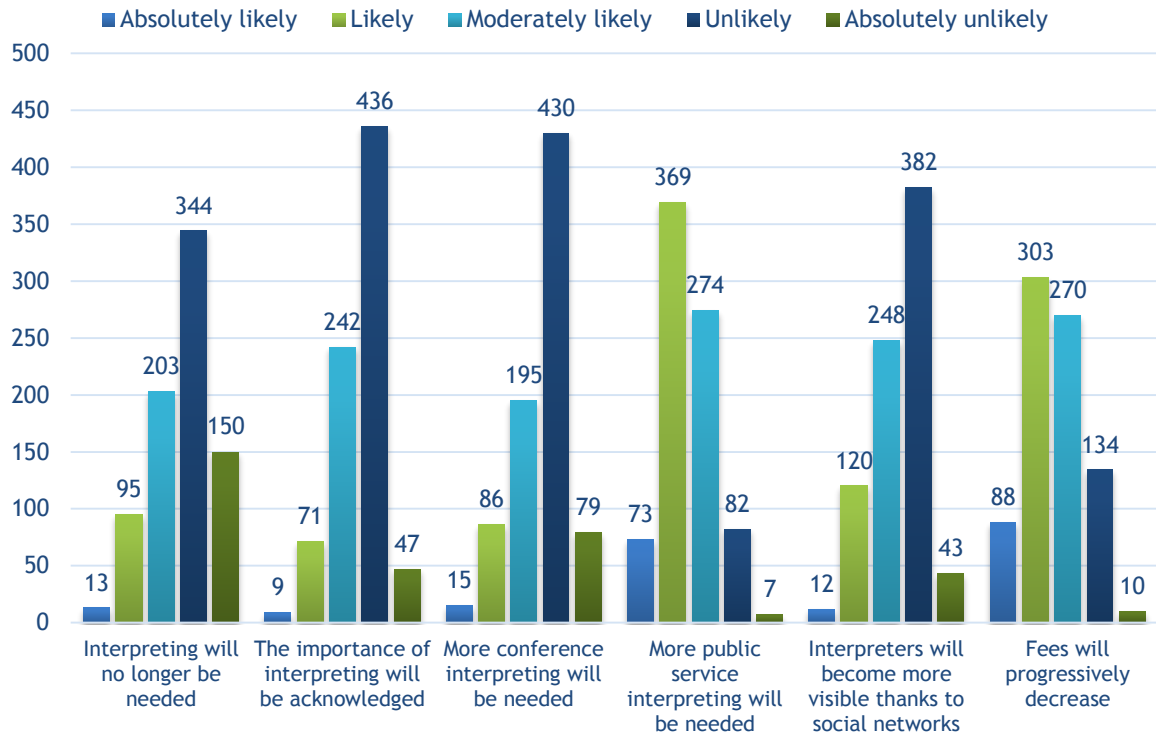
As the graph shows, the majority of interpreters (76.3%, n = 614) think that the profession is destined to change in the future, whereas a far smaller proportion of the surveyed population is undecided (15.2%, n = 122). A very small section of the interviewed population (8.6%, n = 69) foresees no changes in the near future. As one respondent pointed out, technology and the increasing visibility of public service interpreting will contribute to changing the profession:

More remote interpreting, video-conferencing, the role public service interpreting will become increasingly important (immigration). General knowledge of languages will increase, which is why interpreting will be needed only in specialised fields (trade unions, works councils, major international conferences). European institutions will represent a significant exception with a more sustained demand (democracy, national identity) (Male, Finland).

The following question attempts to provide answers (figure 65):



In your opinion, to what extent are the following changes likely to occur?



**Figure 65:** interpreters' opinions on the future changes of the profession.

It comes as no surprise that many interpreters do not see a bright future for the profession. Nevertheless, a good portion of respondents (61.3%,  $n = 494$ ) believes that, in one way or another, interpreting will continue to exist but it will still remain unacknowledged by the majority of the population (60%,  $n = 483$ ). A few possible reasons to justify this answer pattern can be found in some of the comments written by interpreters in the comment box. One respondent remarked that interpreting will never become a widely recognised profession because “society will no longer be able to distinguish between brilliant interpreters, good ones or mediocre ones because the English language is being slaughtered” (Female, USA). Another interpreter wrote: “In very few instances people acknowledge the importance of interpreting and also when interpreting services are requested, interpreters are looked upon as some sort of weird creatures and only very rarely and by very few people as professionals” (Male, Italy). A significant discrepancy was found between men and women for all the parameters illustrated above. As for age, all respondents answered consistently. Another striking difference was found between those who have an MA ( $n = 497$ ;  $M = 2.37$ ;  $SD = .744$ ) and those who hold a different degree ( $n = 308$ ;  $M = 2.57$ ;  $SD = .821$ ) with a  $t$ -test ( $t = -3.437$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Indeed, a contingency table revealed that those who have an MA, who are on average younger than those falling into the second group, have a far more pessimistic view about the future of the profession (figure 66):

Contingency table: Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?/ The importance of interpreting will be acknowledged

|                           |     | The importance of interpreting will be acknowledged |        |                   |          |                     | Tot   |       |
|---------------------------|-----|---|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|-------|-------|
|                           |     | Absolutely likely                                   | Likely | Moderately likely | Unlikely | Absolutely unlikely |       |       |
| Do you have an MA in T&I? | YES | Count   | 4      | 35                | 138      | <b>288</b>          | 32    | 497   |
|                           |     | Expected count                                      | 5,6    | 43,8              | 149,4    | <b>269,2</b>        | 29,0  | 497,0 |
|                           | NO  | Count   | 5      | <b>36</b>         | 104      | <b>148</b>          | 15    | 308   |
|                           |     | Expected count                                      | 3,4    | <b>27,2</b>       | 92,6     | <b>166,8</b>        | 18,0  | 308,0 |
| Total                     |     | Count   | 47     | 9                 | 71       | 71                  | 436   | 47    |
|                           |     | Expected count                                      | 47,0   | 9,0               | 71,0     | 71,0                | 436,0 | 47,0  |

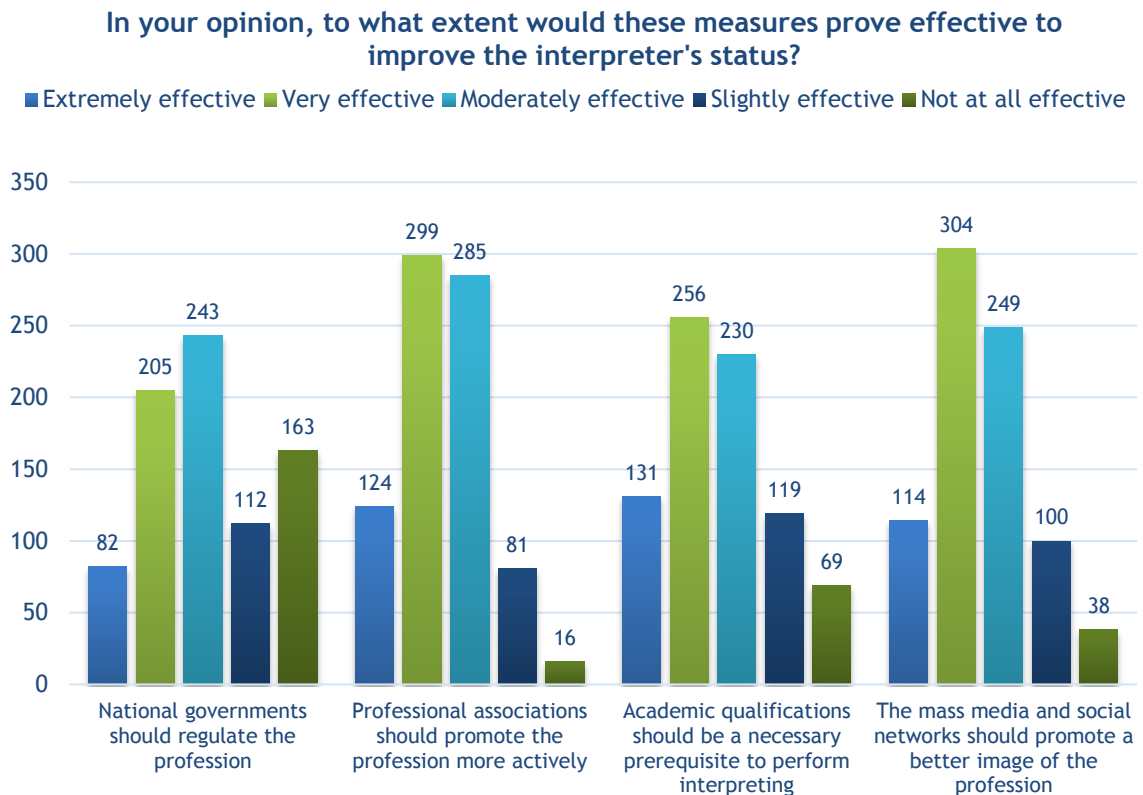
**Figure 66:** correlation between interpreters' level of education and the prospects they foresee for the future.

The differences in bold indicated that those who specialise in conference interpreting are more discouraged than the second group. It is perhaps too soon to tell whether training institutions or the T&I professionals are to be blamed. What is clear is that, if immediate action is not taken, nobody will be able to safeguard the profession in the future, not even interpreters themselves.

The following question aimed to investigate whether interpreters think that the social media are going to increase the visibility of the profession. 52.7% (n = 425) believe that it is not going to happen, despite the high number of blogs, *Twitter* and *Facebook* profiles created by interpreters to raise awareness of the profession.<sup>35</sup> The last of this series of questions focuses, once again, on fees. Even though there seems to be general satisfaction with the interpreter's remuneration, they still believe that the average fee for a working day will decrease. Some respondents believe that interpreters themselves are responsible for this change ("if interpreters accept decreasing fees, they will decrease" (Female, Switzerland)), others argue that the market situation has contributed to the downgrading of the profession. As one interpreter remarked: "too many graduates, falling demand, less cake for everyone. Higher expectations regarding quality, very few people able to meet expectations. There will be a rise of the grey market" (Male, Belgium).

In the light of which, interpreters were asked to evaluate possible solutions to contribute to raise the status of interpreters and to prevent the profession from becoming extinct (figure 67):

<sup>35</sup> The most visited interpreters' blogs (in English) include: The Interpreter Diaries, Interpretings.net and Their Words, Your Voice.



**Figure 67:** solutions proposed to raise the status of the profession.

The first solution was proposed because interpreting is a non-regulated profession in several countries. Interpreters' opinions are not equally distributed on this question, though a slightly higher portion of respondents are favourable to the introduction of the measure (35.6%,  $n = 287$  in favour and 34.1%,  $n = 275$  contrary). Unlike many other professionals having to undergo a licensing examination (i.e. physicians, lawyers) to practice the profession, interpreting does not have such a kind of screening, though it might be useful to determine those who are qualified enough in order to work as professional interpreters. As two respondents commented:

Interpreters suffer from being a freelance profession often with great difficulties to create a critical mass, or to co-operate in order to fight for e.g. working conditions" (Female, Sweden);

Very competitive, gossip-maniac colleagues, collegiality decreases, people don't want you to add new language combinations because they think you will steal their job, they should dare to say it and not keep telling everyone instead bad and unfounded things about you, state regulation absolutely necessary in my view. (Female, Greece)

On the other hand, a few respondents fear that the idea would never work for several reasons: 1) governments have no money to spend on national competitions; 2) there would be state-certified interpreters, but agencies would continue to give interpreting assignments to the lowest price offers, just as is already happening in public service interpreting; 3) interpreting is a freelance profession and its members prefer to be autonomous. As one interpreter remarked, "the involvement of the

government has been prejudicial to our profession, as illustrated by the FTC rulings in the United States” (Female, USA). The respondent refers to the controversy AIIC vs. FTC on *pro bono* work, which forced AIIC to change Article 5 of its professional code of ethics.<sup>36</sup> More than half of respondents (52.5%, n = 423) believe that professional associations should do more to promote the profession. Some respondents believe that AIIC has kept fees at a standard acceptable level, whereas others criticise its approach and hold it responsible for having created a closed, niche market:

AIIC will maintain some decency in the latter, but the first will remain unpredictable because of the culture of competition and free market ideology (Male, Tunisia).

There is, however quite a difference between the day fee for AIIC interpreters and non- AIIC conference interpreters (like myself). We get less. Still not bad, compared to southern European countries, but not as high as AIIC, which I think is unfair, especially to people (like me) who have a Masters in conf. interpreting (Female, The Netherlands).

As the market is flooded with semi-trained people willing to work in any direction, and with agencies whose only criterion is price, and as technology improves, there will be more people chasing fewer jobs which are less well paid, and more reliance on things like Google translate which will also be used for speech recognition and interpretation. More and more people want just the gist. Also AIIC 's old-boy network approach of having "sponsors" harms the profession, as people get in through whom they know not necessarily how good they are. And many also continue to work well beyond their mental capacity to do so! (Female, Switzerland).

The last comment leads directly to the following question: should academic degrees be the only prerequisite to access the profession? 48% of respondents (n = 387) believe that the possession of a degree in interpreting should be the only criterion to be able to practice interpreting, although there is still a high number of respondents who are either undecided or against this statement. This means that interpreting has still a long way to go to become more aligned with other professions in terms of selection criteria, a question which has been expounded by the substantial body of literature published on aptitude testing for conference interpreters (Angelelli & Jacobson 2009; Pöchhacker & Liu 2014; Russo 2014).

The last question concerns the mass media. In the light of the results shown in paragraph 7, which showed that 62.7% of respondents believe that the interpreting profession is not represented in the media, interpreters were asked whether a higher presence of the profession in the media (including social media) is likely to have a more positive impact on how the general public perceives the profession. A great majority of respondents (51.9%, n = 418) believe that a better image of the profession portrayed by the media would do no harm. As certain respondents pointed out:

I think that professional associations should promote the profession through the media - including social networks - and also by attracting the best interpreters and helping talented younger interpreters get better training. I think this would stop any possible degradation of the profession (Female, Peru).

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<sup>36</sup> For more information on this topic, please click on the following link: [https://www.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cases/1997/03/aiicopn\\_0.pdf](https://www.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cases/1997/03/aiicopn_0.pdf)

National government regulation & promotion by professional associations: In theory both are good ideas, but how to keep the politics out of them. Similarly, some professional associations have lax membership requirements and very different ideas about conference interpreting qualifications” (Female, Spain).

In general, most interpreters believe that the joining of the forces of the professional associations and the social media, a method which is gaining ground among public service interpreters to raise awareness of the profession, could be a possible solution to avoid the decline of conference interpreting.



# 5. The Status of Public Service Interpreters. Analysis of the Second Questionnaire

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## Introduction

The present section will provide a breakdown of the 888 responses given by public service interpreters worldwide. As previously mentioned, the questionnaire structure comprises more sections than the first survey. For reasons of readability, they will be illustrated again below:

1. Demographics (sex, age, country of residence);
2. Professional identity (years of experience, professional associations, working settings, interpreting as a full time profession);
3. Opinions on conference interpreting;
4. Education and opinions on research in interpreting;
5. Remuneration;
6. Exposure of the interpreting profession in the media;
7. Self-perception of status;
8. Perceptions of prestige and the social value of interpreting;
9. Self-perception of role and role conflict;
10. Tasks other than interpreting;
11. Reflections on the future of the interpreting profession;
12. Reflections on the European Directive 2010/64/EU.

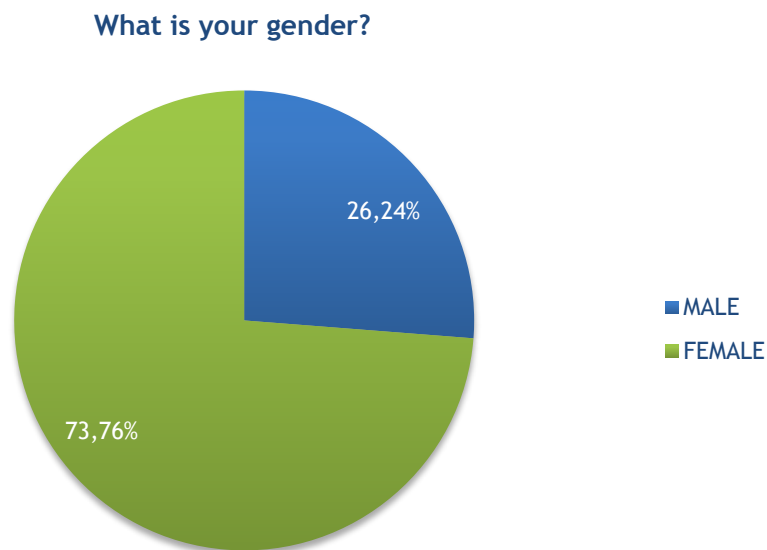
The independent variables chosen for the data analysis are: gender, age, country of residence, working settings and level of education. The variable “experience in conference settings” will be taken into account where relevant.

### 1. Demographics

In the first section, data will be illustrated according to the first three parameters providing information on the interpreters’ biographical data, namely the respondents’ gender, age and country of residence. The structure of the first section is specular to that of the previous survey.

#### 1.1 Gender

The first question of the survey collected information on the gender of the participants. The answers are as follows (figure 68):



**Figure 68:** gender of respondents.

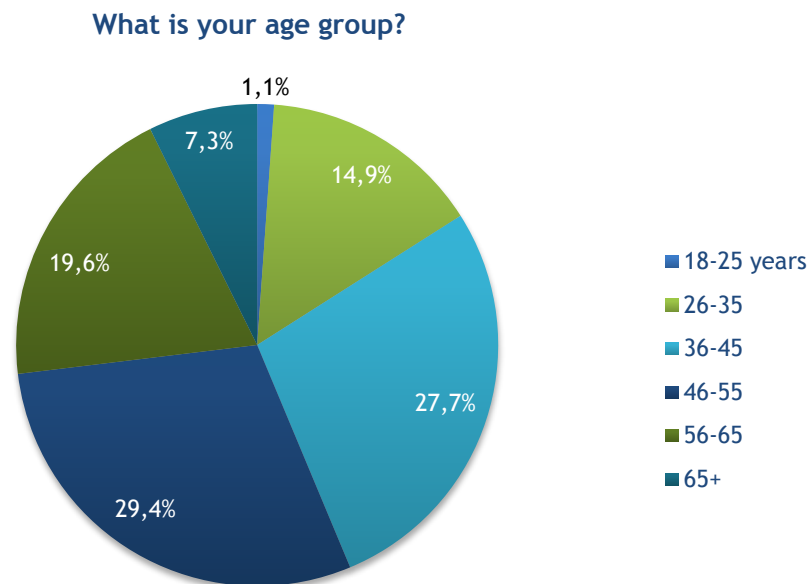
Out of a total of 888 respondents, 73.7% of respondents are women ( $n = 655$ ), whereas men account for 26.2% of the sample ( $n = 233$ ). Surprisingly enough, the proportion of women in the second questionnaire is slightly lower than that of the first survey; nevertheless, the outcome does not contradict the evidence gathered on the feminisation of interpreting, which appears to be a phenomenon cutting across the whole profession. In the light of the data collected by the two surveys, there is hardly any doubt that certain response and behavioural patterns, beliefs and attitudes of interpreters have to be studied in a gender perspective. The process of professionalisation of other occupations such as nursing has been boosted by a thorough scrutiny of the way the gender component affected professional performance, not to mention others’ perception of the occupation. In the case of nurses, a higher self-awareness of their role was achieved through



the process of socialisation, which empowered nurses and contributed to enhancing their autonomy through decision-making (Masters 2009). In the light of which, the importance of gender as an independent variable to gain insights into interpreters' self-perception of status is crucial for the analysis of the responses given by the population interviewed in the second survey.

## 1.2 Age

The second question aims to elicit information on respondents' age. The answers are shown below (figure 69):

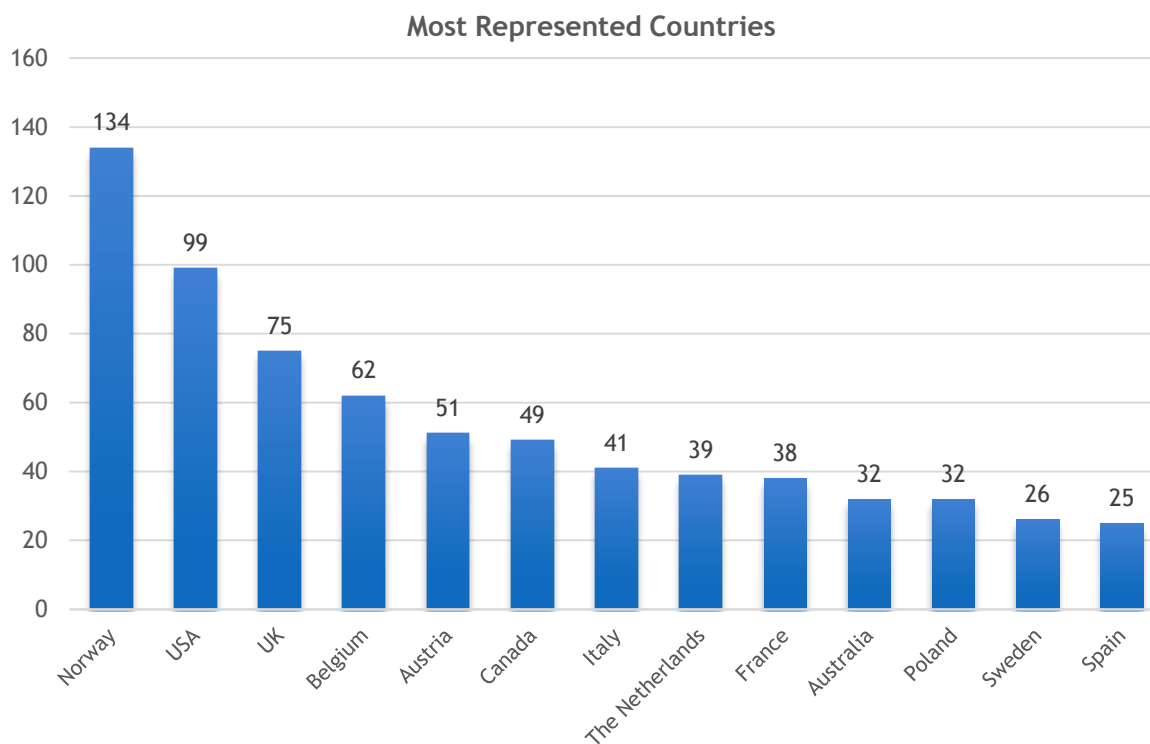


**Figure 69:** age of respondents.

As in the first survey, a small percentage of respondents aged between 18 and 25 years (1.1%,  $n = 10$ ) answered the questionnaire. The hypothesis is that interpreters in this age range are still attending university or are still being trained. What is surprising, however, is that 57.1% ( $n = 507$ ) of the population is between 36 and 55 years of age, showing that public service interpreters are on average younger than conference interpreters. 29.4% ( $n = 261$ ) of the population is between 46 and 55 years of age, which corresponds to the percentage obtained in the first survey. Respondents who are older than 56 (26.9%,  $n = 239$ ) are significantly lower in number compared to conference interpreters (38.9%,  $n = 313$ ), which means that the average age of respondents in the second sample is set around 36-45 years, against an average of 45-65 for the previous questionnaire. Like gender, "age" is a useful independent variable according to which the response patterns of other questions can be measured.

### 1.3 Country of Residence

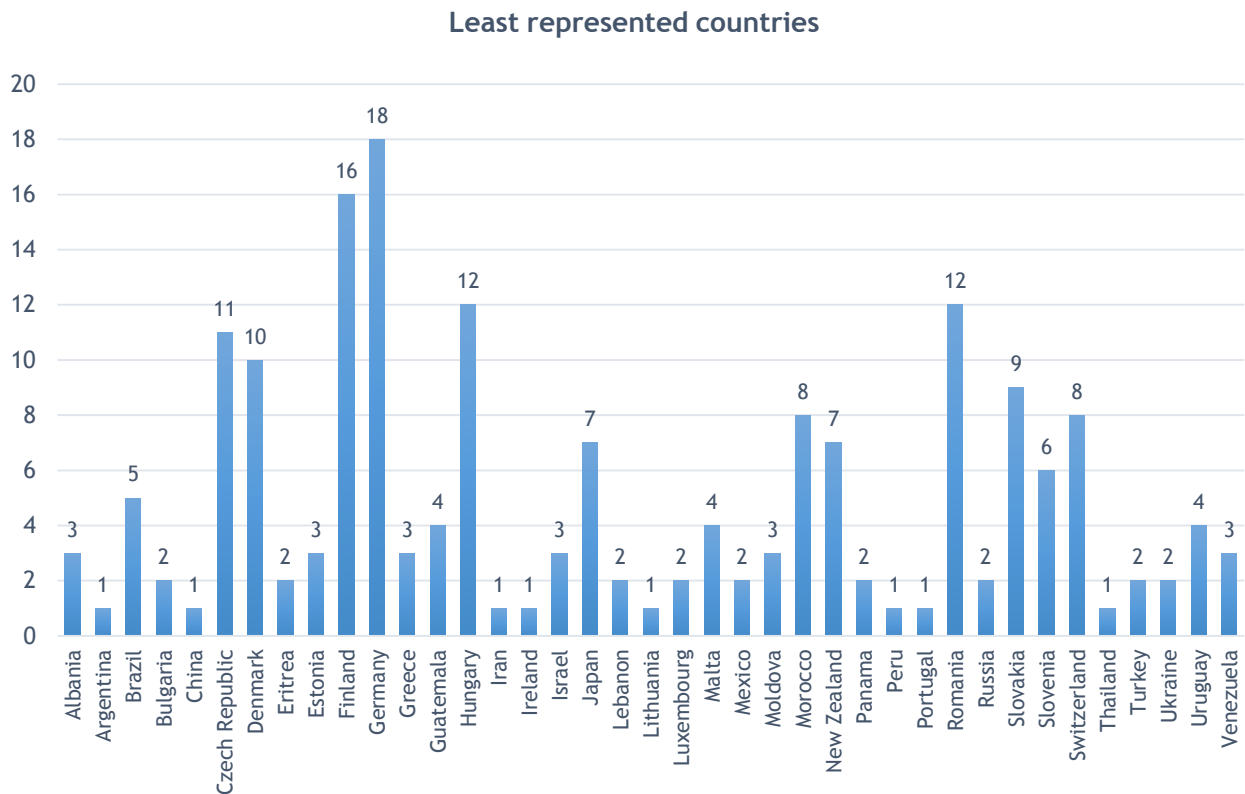
As in the first survey, the majority of respondents come from the European continent, although a high number of responses was obtained from other continents as well. The most frequently represented non-European countries are: Australia (n = 32), Canada (n= 49) and the USA (n = 99). The graph below illustrates a breakdown of the countries which obtained a high response rate (figure 70):



**Figure 70:** most represented countries in the questionnaire.

The graph reflects reality regarding the development of public service interpreting at a global level in the countries most represented. While in the first questionnaire a high number of responses came, among others, from countries like Belgium (n = 132) and Switzerland (n = 60), the second survey sees a high response rate from Norway (n = 134), which has an advanced system in the provision of public service interpreting thanks to the creation of a national accreditation scheme and a national register with several degrees of specialisation. Although it still does not have a unified system for certification at national level, the United States has long been an immigration country, which is why several professional associations of healthcare and legal interpreters are present on the territory. A high number of responses for this country could also be attributable to the network of associations affiliated with Critical Link International, which distributed the survey across North-American countries. A fair number of responses (n = 75) comes from the UK, a country with long tradition of

immigration and a national system of accreditation and certification (NRPSI).<sup>37</sup> Belgium is also well represented (n = 62), for it is a country which has implemented a certification system resulting from a “multi-stakeholder process that includes social interpreting providers, university interpreting colleges, social interpreting services users, and social interpreters” (Vermeiren, Van Gucht & De Bontridder 2009: 306). Recently, the Agency for Integration and Civic Integration (*Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering*) in Belgium has been very active in promoting a training and certification scheme for public service interpreters in Flanders. As far as Austria is concerned, although the training of public service interpreters appears to be “highly underdeveloped” (Ertl & Pöllbauer 2010), the majority of the responses come from the Austrian Association of Court Interpreters, which was very keen in completing and distributing the questionnaire. The other countries, less represented in the questionnaire, were (figure 71):



**Figure 71:** countries least represented in the questionnaire.

The majority of the respondents represented in the graph are of European origins. Countries include Germany (n = 18), whose number of respondents is significantly lower than that of the first survey (n = 32), Finland (n = 16), Hungary and Romania with 12 respondents. Even though the survey has reached a high number of countries, the response rate obtained from Asian countries (1.5%, n = 14)

<sup>37</sup> Recently, however, the UK has been experiencing a crisis in the sector (especially in the legal field) owing to national policies fostering the outsourcing of interpreting services to external for-profit agencies (Slaney 2012; Gentile P. *forthcoming*).

and the Russian Federation (n = 2) remains low. The portion of respondents from Central and South America (2.4 %, n = 22) is very small as well, although the number of responses from North-American countries (n = 148) is significantly higher compared to the first survey. Overall, 85% (n = 654) responses come from the European continent, 19% (n = 170) from the American Continent, 4.3% (n = 39) from Oceania, 1.5% (n = 15) from Asian countries and 1.1% (n = 10) from Africa. A high percentage of respondents from Europe, North-American countries and Oceania could be attributed to a significant development of the sector at academic and professional level. In other parts of the world, the low response rate stems from a lack of demand for such services. As one respondent wrote “unfortunately cases involving foreign nationals are not a common issue in Uruguay” (Male, Uruguay). Interpreters’ country of residence is also a pivotal variable in the analysis of the data.

## 2. Professional Identity

This section presents the results obtained from eight questions on the interpreters’ professional experience and working status. The data will be presented as follows: 1) working setting(s); 2) years of experience; 3) membership of professional associations; 4) working status; 5) volunteer work; 6) interpreting as a full-time profession; 7) jobs other than interpreting.

### 2.1 Working Settings

As already mentioned, a question concerning the settings in which interpreters work was included to enable a consistent breakdown of responses. Considering that public service interpreters are likely to work in more than one setting, the question template allowed the choice of more than one answer. The graph below illustrates the response patterns (figure 72):

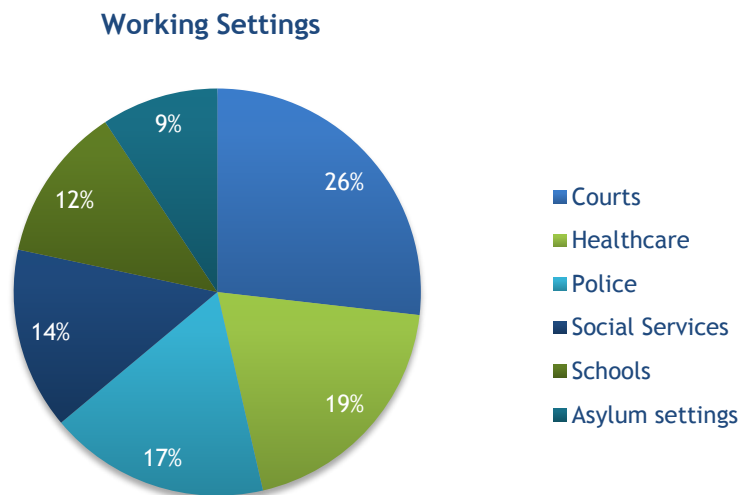


Figure 72: interpreters’ working settings.

Since the survey template allowed five options to be chosen for each row (first, second, third, fourth and fifth setting), the calculation was made by adding together the responses given only for the options “first settings” and “second setting”. The total number of responses obtained for the first two options was 1523. The results show that the highest percentage is made up of interpreters who work in courts (26%, n = 406 interpreters who ticked “courts” either as a first or second option), followed by healthcare settings (19%, n = 297), police (17%, n = 267), social services (14%, n = 225), schools and education centres (12%, n = 188) and, lastly, by asylum centres (9%, n = 140). The fact that a high number of respondents chose courts either as their first or second setting is not surprising, since court interpreting appears to be much more institutionalised than other public service settings, at least in some countries. Ozolins (2010), for example, distinguishes between “legalistic” countries, where priority was given to court interpreting for contestation or litigation reasons (one example of this is the U.S.), and “non-legalistic” countries, where court interpreting is less developed, although certified interpreters are required to carry out interpreting tasks (i.e. Austria).

At statistical level, differences were found between sexes. A chi-square test was performed for each question, revealing the frequency with which interpreters work in certain settings. The results will be shown in the following order: healthcare settings, courts, police, education, social services, immigration and asylum settings. First, the results will be shown for the healthcare sector (figure 73):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/Healthcare-frequency |                           |                      |        |       |       |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |                           | What is your gender? |        | Total |       |
|   |                           | MALE                 | FEMALE |       |       |
| Healthcare - Frequency                                      | Main setting (always)     | Count                | 44     | 113   | 157   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 40,9   | 116,1 | 157,0 |
|   | Second setting (often)    | Count                | 32     | 108   | 140   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 36,5   | 103,5 | 140,0 |
|   | Third setting (sometimes) | Count                | 39     | 106   | 145   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 37,8   | 107,2 | 145,0 |
|   | Fourth setting (rarely)   | Count                | 38     | 95    | 133   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 34,7   | 98,3  | 133,0 |
|   | Fifth setting (never)     | Count                | 14     | 52    | 66    |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 17,2   | 48,8  | 66,0  |
| Total   |                           | Count                | 167    | 474   | 641   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 167,0  | 474,0 | 641,0 |

**Figure 73:** contingency table showing the differences between sexes in the healthcare sector.

The chi-square ( $\chi^2 = 2.353$ ,  $DF = 4$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) indicates that there is hardly any difference between men and women in the healthcare sector. On the contrary, it seems that a slightly higher proportion

of men chose it as their first or second setting, declaring that they work “always” or “often” in this field. There is also a higher portion of female respondents who replied that they have “never” worked in healthcare settings, against a lower-than-expected number of men who declared the same. In general, both men and women seem to be equally employed in healthcare.

The second analysis concerns the legal settings, and courts in particular. The results were as follows (figure 74):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/Courts-frequency |                           |                      |        |       |       |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |                           | What is your gender? |        | Total |       |
|   |                           | MALE                 | FEMALE |       |       |
| Courts - Frequency                                      | Main setting (always)     | Count                | 59     | 132   | 191   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 49,7   | 141,3 | 191,0 |
|   | Second setting (often)    | Count                | 61     | 154   | 215   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 56,0   | 159,0 | 215,0 |
|   | Third setting (sometimes) | Count                | 40     | 148   | 188   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 49,0   | 139,0 | 188,0 |
|   | Fourth setting (rarely)   | Count                | 28     | 65    | 93    |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 24,2   | 68,8  | 93,0  |
|   | Fifth setting (never)     | Count                | 12     | 69    | 81    |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 21,1   | 59,9  | 81,0  |
| Total   |                           | Count                | 200    | 568   | 768   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 200,0  | 568,0 | 768,0 |

**Figure 74:** contingency table showing the differences between male and female interpreters working in the legal sector.

The result of the chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 11.253$ ,  $DF = 4$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) suggests that there is a significant difference between the two groups, which is confirmed by a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = -2458$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and by the means of female ( $n = 568$ ,  $M = 2.62$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ) and male interpreters ( $n = 200$ ,  $M = 2.36$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ). As can be seen in the first row, a higher number of male interpreters than expected work in the legal field. On the contrary, fewer women than expected declared that they work in courts. The same trend could be found in the second and in the last row, where more women than men answered that they have never worked in legal settings. The fact that more men than women are employed in the legal sector – which is more institutionalised than other public service settings – suggests that men tend to be employed in settings which are attributed a higher status.

As far as police ( $\chi^2 = 3.925$ ,  $DF = 4$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), educational ( $\chi^2 = .395$ ,  $DF = 4$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), and social services ( $\chi^2 = 4.572$ ,  $DF = 4$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) are concerned, no significant differences were found between men and women. The data obtained confutes the hypothesis that women are more widely

employed in the field of education and in social settings. Surprisingly, a striking difference between men and women was found in asylum settings (figure 75):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/Immigration and Asylum Centres-frequency |                           |                      |        |       |       |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |                           | What is your gender? |        | Total |       |
|   |                           | MALE                 | FEMALE |       |       |
| Immigration and asylum centres - Frequency                                      | Main setting (always)     | Count                | 20     | 25    | 45    |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 11,4   | 33,6  | 45,0  |
|   | Second setting (often)    | Count                | 29     | 66    | 95    |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 24,0   | 71,0  | 95,0  |
|   | Third setting (sometimes) | Count                | 26     | 88    | 114   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 28,8   | 85,2  | 114,0 |
|   | Fourth setting (rarely)   | Count                | 28     | 97    | 125   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 31,6   | 93,4  | 125,0 |
|   | Fifth setting (never)     | Count                | 35     | 132   | 167   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 42,2   | 124,8 | 167,0 |
| Total   |                           | Count                | 138    | 408   | 546   |
|   |                           | Expected count       | 138,0  | 408,0 | 546,0 |

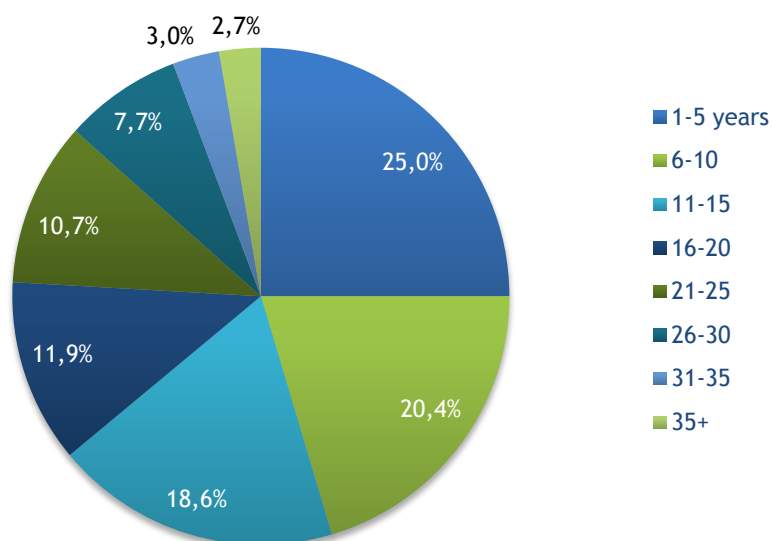
**Figure 75:** contingency table showing the differences between male and female interpreters working in the immigration and asylum settings.

As a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 12.705$ ,  $DF = 4$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and a Student's *t*-test ( $t = -3.057$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) point out, there is indeed a significant difference between men and women's answers. However, the contingency table shows that the presence of men in this sector is higher than that of women. The difference is more visible in the last column, where a significantly higher number of women than expected answered that they have never worked in the field. Although the findings are not generalisable, further research is needed to shed light on the field of interpreting in asylum settings (Pöllabauer 2004), with a special focus on gender issues.

## 2.2 Years of Experience

An important aspect shaping a professional's occupational identity is the experience gained over the years. In the analysis, a correlation between the results of this question and the age of respondents will be established. The answers are as follows (figure 76):

### How long have you been working in public services?



**Figure 76:** respondents' years of experience.

The result of the question is rather surprising, since it appears that a high number of respondents have been working in the field for less than 10 years (45.4%, n = 403). Hence, the data suggests two possible interpretations: either public service interpreters are, on average, younger than conference interpreters, or they start to work in public services later in life and they have gained little experience as yet. The first hypothesis was examined with a chi-square test comparing age and years of experience. The results were as follows: (figure 77):

| Contingency table How long have you been working in public services? * What is your age group? |           |                |                         |       |       |       |       |      |       |
|--|-----------|----------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
|  |           |                | What is your age group? |       |       |       |       |      | Total |
|  |           |                | 18-25 years             | 26-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | 65+  |       |
| How long have you been working in public services?   | 1-5 years | Count          | 8                       | 87    | 71    | 36    | 15    | 5    | 222   |
|  |           | Expected count | 2,5                     | 33,0  | 61,5  | 65,3  | 43,5  | 16,3 | 222,0 |
|  | 6-10      | Count          | 2                       | 36    | 70    | 43    | 24    | 6    | 181   |
|  |           | Expected count | 2,0                     | 26,9  | 50,1  | 53,2  | 35,5  | 13,2 | 181,0 |
|  | 11-15     | Count          | 0                       | 9     | 75    | 40    | 32    | 9    | 165   |
|  |           | Expected count | 1,9                     | 24,5  | 45,7  | 48,5  | 32,3  | 12,1 | 165,0 |



|       |                |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |
|-------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| 16-20 | Count          | 0    | 0     | 25    | 52    | 22    | 7    | 106   |
|       | Expected count | 1,2  | 15,8  | 29,4  | 31,2  | 20,8  | 7,8  | 106,0 |
| 21-25 | Count          | 0    | 0     | 3     | 55    | 28    | 9    | 95    |
|       | Expected count | 1,1  | 14,1  | 26,3  | 27,9  | 18,6  | 7,0  | 95,0  |
| 26-30 | Count          | 0    | 0     | 2     | 28    | 28    | 10   | 68    |
|       | Expected count | ,8   | 10,1  | 18,8  | 20,0  | 13,3  | 5,0  | 68,0  |
| 31-35 | Count          | 0    | 0     | 0     | 5     | 19    | 3    | 27    |
|       | Expected count | ,3   | 4,0   | 7,5   | 7,9   | 5,3   | 2,0  | 27,0  |
| 35+   | Count          | 0    | 0     | 0     | 2     | 6     | 16   | 24    |
|       | Expected count | ,3   | 3,6   | 6,6   | 7,1   | 4,7   | 1,8  | 24,0  |
| Total | Count          | 10   | 132   | 246   | 261   | 174   | 65   | 888   |
|       | Expected count | 10,0 | 132,0 | 246,0 | 261,0 | 174,0 | 65,0 | 888,0 |

**Figure 77:** contingency table showing the correlation between age and years of experience.

The results of the chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 523.195$ ,  $DF = 35$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) reveal that there is a close correlation between age and the interpreters' years of experience. Since 29.2% of the cells had an expected count lower than 5, a Fisher's exact test was performed ( $p = 0.00$ ), which confirmed the close association between the variables. Particularly, a variation of 54 points can be noted in the first row, which indicates that a significantly higher portion of respondents aged below 35 years work in public services. The same could be said for the second row (6-10 years of age). The statistical results appear to confirm the first hypothesis that public service interpreters are on average younger than conference interpreters. Apart from the data shown in the first column, a direct proportionality could be observed in the graph above, which indicates that the older the interpreter, the greater his/her professional experience.

### 2.3 Professional Associations

As specified in the previous chapter, being a member of a professional organisation is a sign of trustworthiness and accountability. It also indicates "the maturity of the professional project", as pointed out by Larson (1977: 5). Therefore, interpreters were asked if they were members of any professional association (figure 78):

Are you a member of any professional association?

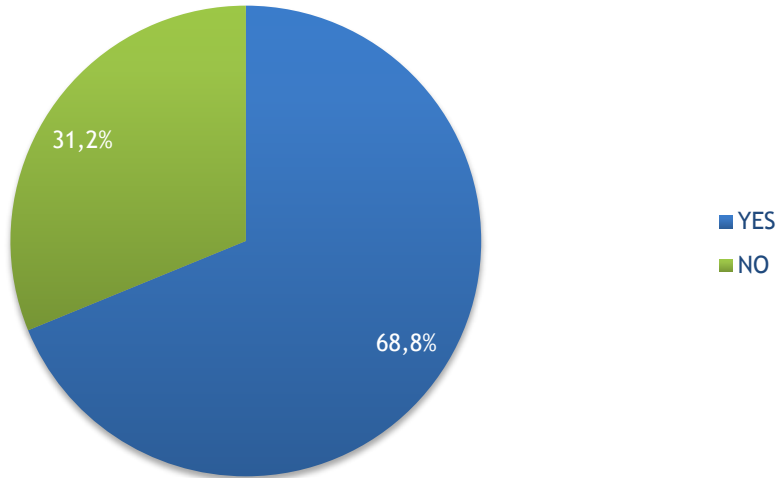


Figure 78: membership of professional organisations.

The graph shows that the majority of respondents (68.8%, n = 611) are members of a professional association, whereas a smaller though not insignificant percentage (31.2%, n = 277) do not belong to any professional network. For those who replied “yes”, the breakdown of the most represented associations is shown below (figure 79):

Most Represented Associations

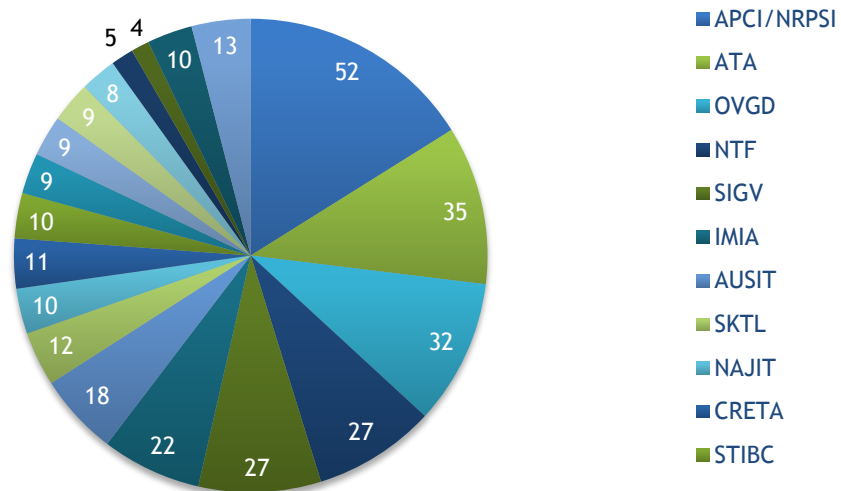


Figure 79: most represented professional organisations in the survey.

The graph shows that the most represented associations and organisations in the second survey are: the Association of Police and Court Interpreters (APCI, UK) and the National Register of Public

Service Interpreters (NRPSI, UK), followed by the American Translators' Association (ATA, USA) and by the Austrian Association of Certified Court Interpreters (Österreichischer Verband der allgemein beeideten und gerichtlich zertifizierten Dolmetscher, ÖVGD). Although a considerable number of responses came from the Norwegian National Register of Interpreters (Nasjonalt tolkeregister), few of them appear to be members of the Norwegian Association of Interpreters (Norsk Tolkeforening, NTF). The Dutch Institute for Court Interpreters and Translators (Stichting Instituut van Gerechtstolken en-Vertalers SIGV) was also very keen on answering and distributing the survey. A crucial contribution also came from the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) and by the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT).

A statistical analysis ( $\chi^2 = 2.886$ ,  $DF = 1$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) revealed that, on average, more women than men are members of professional associations (figure 80):

|   |                | What is your gender? |        | Total |       |
|---|----------------|----------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |                | MALE                 | FEMALE |       |       |
| Are you a member of any professional association? | YES            | Count                | 150    | 461   | 611   |
|   |                | Expected count       | 160,3  | 450,7 | 611,0 |
|   | NO             | Count                | 83     | 194   | 277   |
|   |                | Expected count       | 72,7   | 204,3 | 277,0 |
| Total   | Count          | 233                  | 655    | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count | 233,0                | 655,0  | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 80:** contingency table showing the correlation between gender and membership of a professional association.

As far as the age of participants is concerned, the contingency table showed the following results (figure 81):

|   |                | What is your age group? |       |       |       |       |       | Total |       |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |                | 18-25 years             | 26-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | 65+   |       |       |
| Are you a member of any professional association? | YES            | Count                   | 1     | 81    | 157   | 194   | 130   | 48    | 611   |
|   |                | Expected count          | 6,9   | 90,8  | 169,3 | 179,6 | 119,7 | 44,7  | 611,0 |
|   | NO             | Count                   | 9     | 51    | 89    | 67    | 44    | 17    | 277   |
|   |                | Expected count          | 3,1   | 41,2  | 76,7  | 81,4  | 54,3  | 20,3  | 277,0 |
| Total   | Count          | 10                      | 132   | 246   | 261   | 174   | 65    | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count | 10,0                    | 132,0 | 246,0 | 261,0 | 174,0 | 65,0  | 888,0 |       |

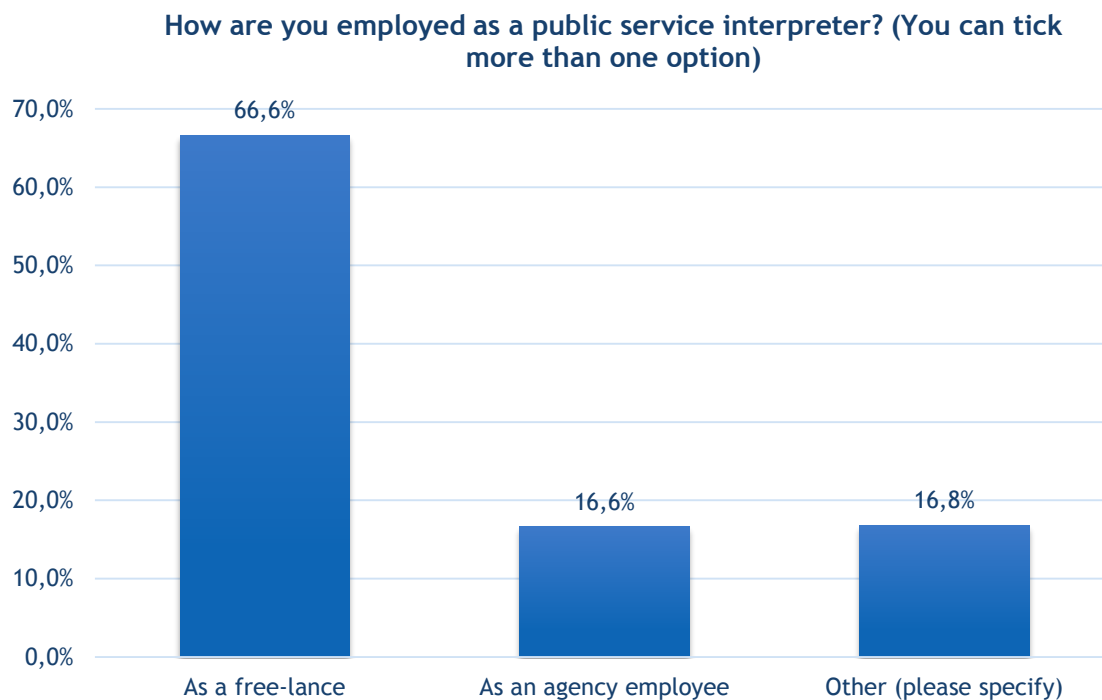
**Figure 81:** contingency table showing the correlation between age and membership of a professional association.

Both a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 29.674$ ,  $DF=5$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and the contingency table show that there is a significant difference between age and membership of a professional association. The results suggest that interpreters enter professional networks later in life, a pattern which has already emerged from the first survey on conference interpreters. Although certain interpreters may not want to enter a professional associations, the data obtained from the two questionnaires seems to confirm that

practitioners manage to meet the necessary entry requirements at a later stage of their professional career (in the case of public service interpreters, between 36 and 45 years of age). As Tseng remarked, in emerging professions (like public service interpreting), professional associations have to implement publicity measures through which “the association tries to convince the clientele and the public to accept its definition of the professional content of work and working conditions. In other words, the purpose is to achieve market control” (1992: 51). Only if these mechanisms are implemented will the association be able to lobby to secure the interests of the professional category. To achieve this goal, more young people would have to be placed in a position to defend their interests and those of their colleagues.

### 2.4 Working Status

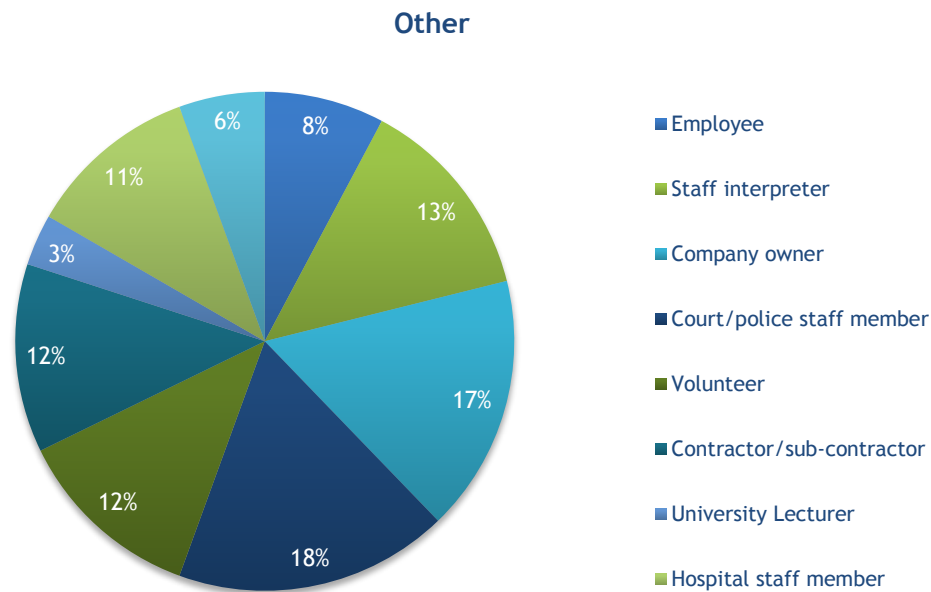
In the first questionnaire, the question on the interpreters’ working status asked whether respondents work as freelance or staff members at international organisations. In the second survey, the same question had to be slightly changed: the option “staff interpreter” was replaced by “agency employee” (figure 82):



**Figure 82:** respondents’ working status.

As the graph shows, 66.6% (n = 701) of respondents work on a freelance basis, a figure which is lower than that obtained for conference interpreters (86.6%, n = 697). 16.6% (n = 175) work full-time in a translation/interpreting agency. Since the question template allowed to choose more than

one option, 1053 responses were collected. In addition, the option “other” gathered 177 open comments. A few respondents appear to have answered in an illogical way (“no”; “freelance”; “I’m going to retire soon”). Nevertheless, the remaining 90 comments could be summarised as follows (figure 83):



**Figure 83:** respondents’ working status. Answers to the option “other”.

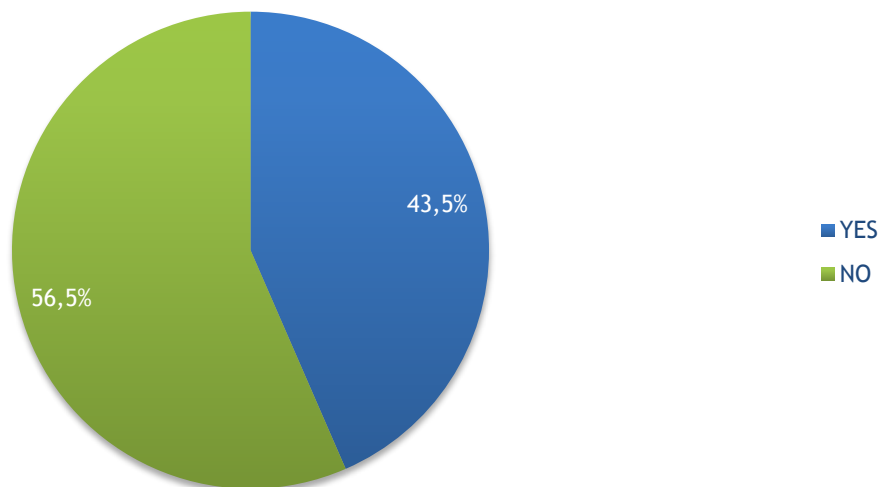
The picture illustrated by the graph is highly heterogeneous. 18% of respondents ( $n = 16$ ) wrote that they are employed as staff members in courts and at police headquarters. 17% of interpreters ( $n = 15$ ) replied that they are company owners, although they did not specify the type of company they possess. Although the option “staff interpreter” was removed, 13% of respondents ( $n = 12$ ) replied that they do work as in-house interpreters in courts, in hospitals and in university centres (“university staff interpreter”; “hospital staff interpreter”). 12% ( $n = 11$ ) said that they work as volunteer interpreters. The phenomenon of volunteering is widespread in public service interpreting, and research shows that several interpreters working in these settings (especially in countries where the field is not well-developed) are members of NGOs and other volunteer organisations (Valero-Garcés 2003). The same portion of respondents (12%,  $n = 11$ ) wrote “contractor” or “subcontractor”. A few of them gave more information about their employment status (“I work as independent contractor for local interpretation companies”; “I have my own private company and I work as a subcontractor, a freelancer without any benefits but many obligations...”), many others did not specify anything. The same could be said for the answer “employee” (8%,  $n = 7$ ). Some interpreters indicated which type of contract they have (“School Board employee”; “Government Agency employee”; “university employee”), others simply indicated whether they work as part-time or full-time employees without specifying the sector. 11% ( $n = 10$ )

wrote that they work in hospitals as employees. However, it is not clear whether they are healthcare staff (i.e. doctors or nurses) or whether they are employed as interpreters in hospitals (“I am a hospital employee”; “I work in a hospital”; “I am employed in a regional university hospital”). 6% of them (n = 5) wrote that they work as staff interpreters for the Ministry of the Interior; a detailed breakdown of respondents showed that the five respondents reside in Italy. Lastly, a very low percentage of respondents (3%, n = 3) said that they are also university lecturers. However, more information on the employment status of interpreters could be retrieved from the following question.

### 2.5 Interpreting As A Full-Time Profession

The main hypothesis of the present question was that, unlike conference interpreters, the second population does not carry out public service interpreting as a full-time profession, mainly because of low fees. Although a profession is defined as a life-long commitment to a career whose main driving force is motivation, the complexities characterising the professionalisation process of public service interpreting could prevent even the most dedicated practitioner from making a living out of it. These hindrances are also the main features distinguishing conference from public service interpreting: apart from the few countries where the sector is highly professionalised (i.e. Australia) and others where it is currently thriving (i.e. Norway), this kind of interpreting cannot ensure, at least as yet, a full-time career, which is why a much lower number of respondents working in public services full-time was expected compared to the first survey (figure 84):

#### Is interpreting your full-time profession?



**Figure 84:** answers given by public service interpreters as to whether interpreting is their full-time job.

The result presented in the graph above only partially confirm the initial hypothesis; although the proportion in the first survey was 71.3% YES and 28.7% NO, there is a substantial 43.5% (n = 386)

of respondents who declared that public service interpreting is their full-time occupation. However, the outcome has to be taken with caution for several reasons. The first could be that some of them also work in conference settings, a hypothesis confirmed by the fact that 37.6% of conference interpreters declared that they also work in public services (see paragraph 3, chapter 4). The second reason concerns the interpreter's country of residence, since in the countries where the profession has reached a high level of professionalisation, interpreters' rates are higher and might enable interpreters to earn a fair income. The first hypothesis was confirmed by a statistical test ( $t = -4.739$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). A chi-square test and a Student's  $t$  showed that full-time interpreters work both in conference and in public service settings. The results are shown in the contingency table below (figure 85):

|  |                | Is interpreting your full-time profession? |       | Total |       |
|--|----------------|--|-------|-------|-------|
|  |                | YES  | NO    |       |       |
| Have you ever worked in conference settings? | YES            | Count                                      | 244   | 238   | 482   |
|  |                | Expected count                             | 209,5 | 272,5 | 482,0 |
|  | NO             | Count                                      | 142   | 264   | 406   |
|  |                | Expected count                             | 176,5 | 229,5 | 406,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 386  | 502   | 888   |       |
|  | Expected count | 386,0                                      | 502,0 | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 85:** correlation between full-time interpreters and their employment in the field of conference interpreting.

The table shows that those who work full-time are also conference interpreters, whereas respondents who ticked the option "NO" when asked whether they work as interpreters full-time are not employed in the conference field. The outcome suggests that public service interpreting cannot yet be considered an occupation ensuring a comfortable living. Nevertheless, there may be differences among countries. For reasons of readability, the contingency table will only show the countries which obtained more than ten responses (figure 86):

|                                    |           | Is interpreting your full-time profession? |      | Total |      |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--|------|-------|------|
|                                    |           | YES  | NO   |       |      |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia | Count                                      | 11   | 21    | 32   |
|                                    |           | Expected count                             | 14,0 | 18,0  | 32,0 |
|                                    | Austria   | Count                                      | 21   | 30    | 51   |
|                                    |           | Expected count                             | 22,3 | 28,7  | 51,0 |

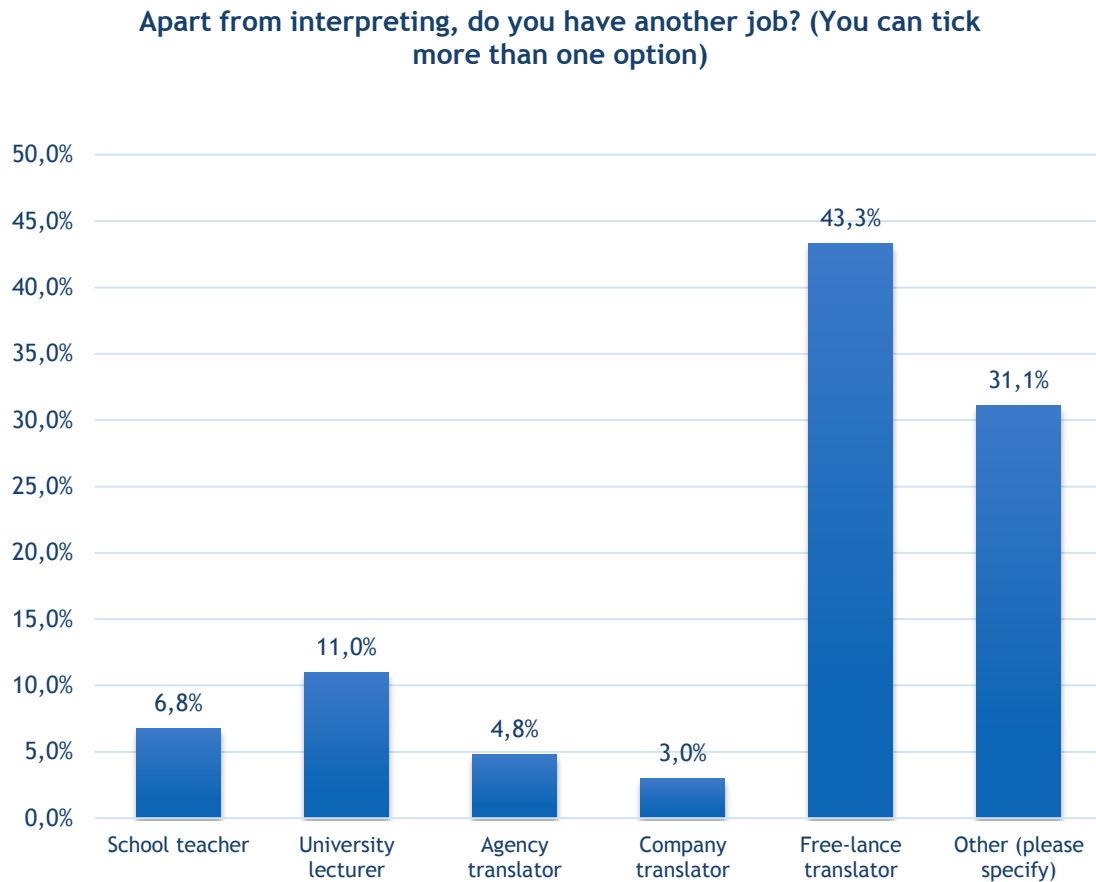
|                          |                |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Belgium                  | Count          | 21    | 41    | 62    |
|                          | Expected count | 27,1  | 34,9  | 62,0  |
| Canada                   | Count          | 26    | 23    | 49    |
|                          | Expected count | 21,4  | 27,6  | 49,0  |
| Czech Republic           | Count          | 3     | 8     | 11    |
|                          | Expected count | 4,8   | 6,2   | 11,0  |
| Denmark                  | Count          | 1     | 9     | 10    |
|                          | Expected count | 4,4   | 5,6   | 10,0  |
| Finland                  | Count          | 7     | 9     | 16    |
|                          | Expected count | 7,0   | 9,0   | 16,0  |
| France                   | Count          | 5     | 33    | 38    |
|                          | Expected count | 16,6  | 21,4  | 38,0  |
| Germany                  | Count          | 7     | 11    | 18    |
|                          | Expected count | 7,9   | 10,1  | 18,0  |
| Hungary                  | Count          | 4     | 8     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | 5,2   | 6,8   | 12,0  |
| Italy                    | Count          | 15    | 26    | 41    |
|                          | Expected count | 17,9  | 23,1  | 41,0  |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 19    | 20    | 39    |
|                          | Expected count | 17,1  | 21,9  | 39,0  |
| Norway                   | Count          | 42    | 92    | 134   |
|                          | Expected count | 58,6  | 75,4  | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 11    | 21    | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | 14,0  | 18,0  | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 3     | 9     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | 5,2   | 6,8   | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 10    | 15    | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | 10,9  | 14,1  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 18    | 8     | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | 11,4  | 14,6  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 52    | 23    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 32,8  | 42,2  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 66    | 33    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 43,3  | 55,7  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 342   | 440   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 342,0 | 440,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 86:** correlation between full-time interpreters and their countries of residence.

The table suggests that the countries where public service interpreting is more developed are also those where interpreters often work full-time (Canada, Sweden, the UK, the U.S.). The result of the chi-square confirms the difference ( $\chi^2= 87.029$ ,  $DF=18$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, Norway and Belgium appear to be an exception, since fewer respondents than expected answered that they work as

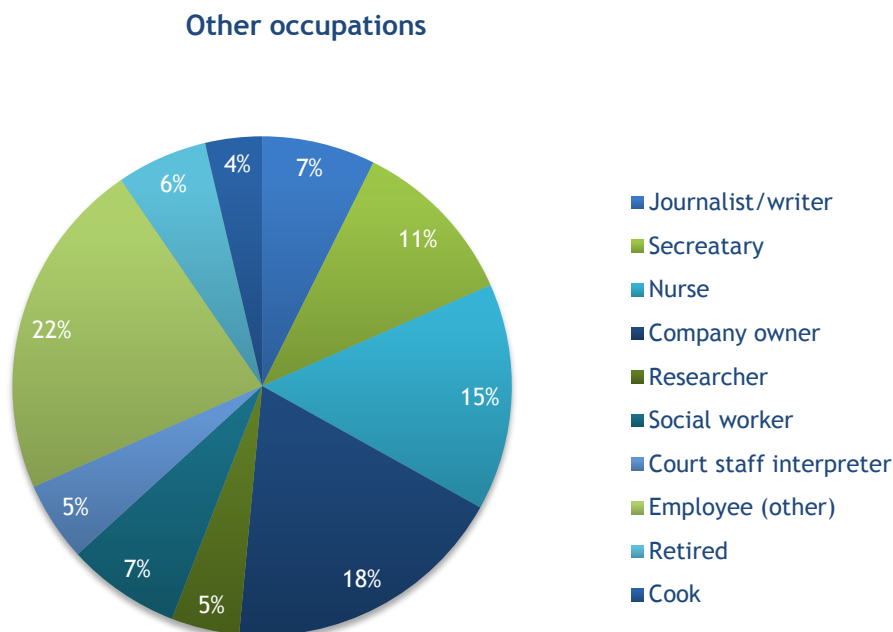


interpreters full-time. As far as the other countries are concerned, there is hardly any difference between the actual and the expected count. For those who answered NO, another question was asked (figure 87):



**Figure 87:** respondents' other occupation(s).

The response pattern is as follows: the majority of respondents (43.3%,  $n = 466$ ) also work as freelance translators, in a percentage not much different from that of conference interpreters (53.4%,  $n = 410$ ). The second most ticked option is “university lecturer” – 11%,  $n = 118$  – a slightly lower percentage than the first questionnaire (17.8,  $n = 137$ ), which shows, however, that a fairly high number of university lecturers work in public services, probably because they take the question to heart. The abundance of academic research carried out, the literature published and the conferences organised in the field of public service interpreting testify to this ever-growing interest. 6.8% ( $n = 73$ ) are school teachers, a higher percentage compared to conference interpreters (5.1%,  $n = 39$ ). 7.8% ( $n = 84$ ) of respondents replied that they work either as agency or company translators. 31.1% ( $n = 335$ ) chose the option “other”. Apart from repetitive or illogical comments (“I teach Spanish at school”, “no”, “I don’t have any other job”), the 130 most recurring answers are shown below (figure 88):

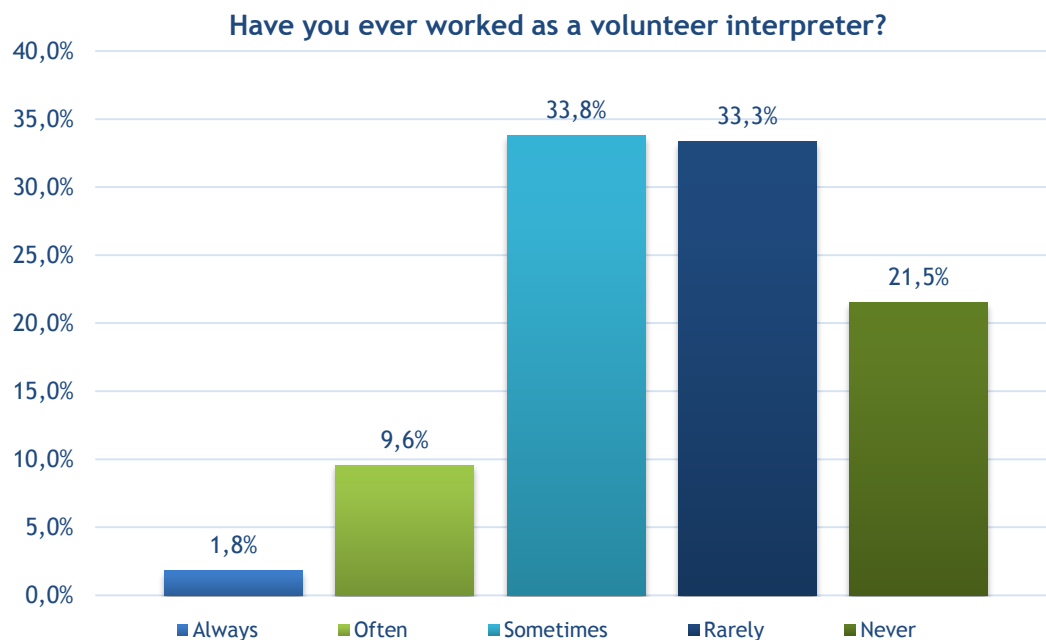


**Figure 88:** respondents' other occupations.

The majority of respondents to the last option of the question answered that they are employed as “employees” (22%, n = 30) in various sectors (“employment officer”, “shop assistant”, “Quality Control Engineer in private company specialized in fleet management solution systems for transport companies”, “staff member at a non-profit organization”, “I work in a city council”, etc.). Another significant percentage (18%, n = 25) of interpreters answered that they own a company, but only few of them specified what type of company. In many cases, however, they run translation/interpreting companies (“I own a small translation and interpreting company. I am a managing director, translator, and interpreter”; “Translator in my own private one-person company for direct customers and sometimes I work as a subcontractor for agencies”, “I own and manage an interpreting company”). 15% (n = 20) said that they work as nurses, 11% (n = 15) declared that they work as secretaries and 7% (n = 10) say that they are employed as social workers, three factors which have to be taken into consideration in the analysis of self-perception of status and prestige. Another 7% (n = 10) of public service interpreters say that they also work as journalists and/or writers, 6% (n = 8) wrote that they are retired and 5% (n = 7) said that they work as staff interpreters in courts. Interestingly, 4% (n = 5) work as cooks or pastry chefs, a tendency already found in the first questionnaire. Other answers include: “mother”, “student”, “odd jobs for extra money”, “Support services for people with disabilities/ behavioural counselling”, “front desk hotel”, “tour guide”, “Beautician + foot care”, “priest” and “farmer”. The varied picture illustrated by these answers suggests that public service interpreting is still far from becoming a full-time profession.

## 2.6 Experience as Volunteer Interpreters

This question was included to ascertain whether a trend often mentioned in the literature applies to the majority of public service interpreters. As already shown in paragraph 2.4 in this chapter, the literature (Carr 1997; Mesa 2000; Valero-Garcés 2003) in the field indicates that public service interpreters often work on a volunteer basis. According to Ortega Herráez, Abril Martí & Martín, “volunteer, ad hoc interpreters mostly in health and social services, tend to perceive their responsibility as being that of humanitarian workers, and not so much as quality professionals” (2009: 163). This assumption suggests that volunteer interpreters have a completely different self-perception of their role, which might have an impact on the way the profession is perceived by laypeople. Since a few respondents declared they have worked as volunteer interpreters, the question aimed to elicit information on the frequency with which they have carried out their interpreting tasks out of pure goodwill (figure 89):



**Figure 89:** respondents' experience as volunteer interpreters.

The graph shows that a small portion of respondents (11.4% n = 101) has often carried out interpreting tasks on a volunteer basis, though a significant percentage of them (33.8%, n = 300) declares they have worked as volunteers every now and then. However, since the majority of interpreters (54.8%, n = 487) have either “rarely” or “never” worked as volunteers, it could be maintained that the argument that most public service interpreters do volunteer work is only partially supported. A statistical analysis was carried out on the basis of gender, country of residence, working setting and educational level. A Student's *t*-test ( $t = -2.118$ ,  $DF = 886$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no significant difference between men and women, which proves that both groups have performed volunteer work in an equal proportion. As far as the country of residence is concerned, a

chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 153.696$ ,  $DF = 72$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) confirmed that there is a significant difference in the response pattern (figure 90):

|                                    |                          | Contingency table What is your country of residence? * Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter? |       |           |        |       | Total |     |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-----|
|                                    |                          | Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter?  |       |           |        |       |       |     |
|                                    |                          | Always  | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |     |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia                | Count   | 0     | 5         | 11     | 9     | 7     | 32  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,5  | 3,1   | 10,5      | 10,7   | 7,2   | 32,0  |     |
|                                    | Austria                  | Count   | 0     | 5         | 16     | 19    | 11    | 51  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,8  | 4,9   | 16,7      | 17,0   | 11,5  | 51,0  |     |
|                                    | Belgium                  | Count   | 5     | 12        | 28     | 9     | 8     | 62  |
|                                    | Expected count           | 1,0   | 5,9   | 20,3      | 20,7   | 14,0  | 62,0  |     |
|                                    | Canada                   | Count   | 1     | 4         | 21     | 15    | 8     | 49  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,8  | 4,7   | 16,0      | 16,4   | 11,1  | 49,0  |     |
|                                    | Czech Republic           | Count   | 0     | 1         | 3      | 3     | 4     | 11  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,2  | 1,1   | 3,6       | 3,7    | 2,5   | 11,0  |     |
|                                    | Denmark                  | Count   | 0     | 0         | 0      | 7     | 3     | 10  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,2  | 1,0   | 3,3       | 3,3    | 2,3   | 10,0  |     |
|                                    | Finland                  | Count   | 0     | 3         | 3      | 7     | 3     | 16  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,3  | 1,5   | 5,2       | 5,3    | 3,6   | 16,0  |     |
|                                    | France                   | Count   | 1     | 2         | 11     | 18    | 6     | 38  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,6  | 3,6   | 12,4      | 12,7   | 8,6   | 38,0  |     |
|                                    | Germany                  | Count   | 1     | 0         | 4      | 11    | 2     | 18  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,3  | 1,7   | 5,9       | 6,0    | 4,1   | 18,0  |     |
|                                    | Hungary                  | Count   | 0     | 0         | 6      | 4     | 2     | 12  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,2  | 1,2   | 3,9       | 4,0    | 2,7   | 12,0  |     |
|                                    | Italy                    | Count   | 1     | 7         | 13     | 14    | 6     | 41  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,7  | 3,9   | 13,4      | 13,7   | 9,3   | 41,0  |     |
|                                    | The Netherlands          | Count   | 0     | 0         | 10     | 19    | 10    | 39  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,6  | 3,7   | 12,8      | 13,0   | 8,8   | 39,0  |     |
|                                    | Norway                   | Count   | 2     | 10        | 33     | 47    | 42    | 134 |
|                                    | Expected count           | 2,2   | 12,9  | 43,9      | 44,7   | 30,3  | 134,0 |     |
|                                    | Poland                   | Count   | 0     | 0         | 9      | 9     | 14    | 32  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,5  | 3,1   | 10,5      | 10,7   | 7,2   | 32,0  |     |
|                                    | Romania                  | Count   | 0     | 0         | 7      | 4     | 1     | 12  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,2  | 1,2   | 3,9       | 4,0    | 2,7   | 12,0  |     |
|                                    | Spain                    | Count   | 0     | 2         | 14     | 2     | 7     | 25  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,4  | 2,4   | 8,2       | 8,3    | 5,7   | 25,0  |     |
|                                    | Sweden                   | Count   | 0     | 1         | 2      | 11    | 12    | 26  |
|                                    | Expected count           | ,4  | 2,5   | 8,5       | 8,7    | 5,9   | 26,0  |     |
|                                    | United Kingdom           | Count   | 1     | 5         | 21     | 24    | 24    | 75  |
|                                    | Expected count           | 1,2   | 7,2   | 24,6      | 25,0   | 17,0  | 75,0  |     |
|                                    | United States of America | Count   | 1     | 18        | 44     | 29    | 7     | 99  |
|                                    | Expected count           | 1,6   | 9,5   | 32,4      | 33,0   | 22,4  | 99,0  |     |
| Total                              |                          | Count   | 13    | 75        | 256    | 261   | 177   | 782 |

|                |      |      |       |       |       |       |
|----------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Expected count | 13,0 | 75,0 | 256,0 | 261,0 | 177,0 | 782,0 |
|----------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

**Figure 90:** respondents' experience as volunteer interpreters according to their country of residence.

The contingency table shows that, although few respondents in the majority of the countries listed ticked the first two options (“always” and “often”) apart from Belgium, a higher number of interpreters than expected chose the middling option (“sometimes”) to refer to their experience as volunteer professionals. Two remarkable cases of this trend are Canada and Spain. A higher number of respondents than expected chose the option “never”, especially in the UK and Norway, which suggests that interpreters are paid in the countries with a developed and harmonised system in the provision of public service interpreting. In the U.S., many respondents appear often to have worked as volunteers. One aspect which deserves to be investigated further regards the reasons driving interpreters to work as volunteers, for there is a difference between carrying out volunteer interpreting out of goodwill or to support a social cause and doing so because this kind of interpreting is not seen as a profession worth some sort of monetary compensation. For example, in countries such as Norway or the UK, all interpreters are paid for their services. On the contrary, in Spain or in Italy, where public service interpreting has a long way to go to achieve full professionalisation, interpreters are more likely to offer their linguistic skills on a volunteer basis. Another factor to be taken into account is the working setting: literature in the field (Valero-Garcés 2014b) shows that volunteer interpreters mostly work in healthcare settings. A chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 32.040$ ,  $DF = 16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) appears to support this assumption (figure 91):

|                        |                        |                | Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter? |       |           |        |       | Total |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
|                        |                        |                | Always   | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |
| Healthcare - Frequency | Main setting (always)  | Count          | 4  | 17    | 64        | 44     | 28    | 157   |
|                        |                        | Expected count | 2,4  | 16,2  | 52,9      | 53,6   | 31,8  | 157,0 |
|                        | Second setting (often) | Count          | 5  | 20    | 44        | 39     | 32    | 140   |
|                        |                        | Expected count | 2,2  | 14,4  | 47,2      | 47,8   | 28,4  | 140,0 |

**Figure 91:** respondents' experience as volunteer interpreters according to their working setting (healthcare).

A higher number of respondents whose main working sector is “healthcare” ticked the option “often” in the second row. On the contrary, in court and police settings the trend appears to be different (figure 92):

|                    |                        |                | Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter? |       |           |        |       | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|--|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
|                    |                        |                | Always   | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |
| Courts - Frequency | Main setting (always)  | Count          | 2  | 12    | 67        | 63     | 47    | 191   |
|                    |                        | Expected count | 3,0  | 15,9  | 60,7      | 68,1   | 43,3  | 191,0 |
|                    | Second setting (often) | Count          | 2  | 10    | 64        | 86     | 53    | 215   |
|                    |                        | Expected count | 3,4  | 17,9  | 68,3      | 76,7   | 48,7  | 215,0 |

**Figure 92:** respondents' experience as volunteer interpreters according to their working setting (courts).

A slightly lower portion of respondents ticked “often” compared to the expected count. In the second row, there is a variation of 7 points between the actual and the expected count of respondents. In police settings the difference is more evident (figure 93):

|                    |                        | Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter?/ Police-Frequency |       |           |        |       |       |       |
|--------------------|------------------------|--|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|                    |                        | Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter?                   |       |           |        |       | Total |       |
|                    |                        | Always   | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |       |
| Police - Frequency | Main setting (always)  | Count  | 1     | 9         | 40     | 24    | 32    | 106   |
|                    |                        | Expected count   | 1,4   | 9,2       | 34,6   | 37,3  | 23,5  | 106,0 |
|                    | Second setting (often) | Count  | 0     | 8         | 41     | 67    | 45    | 161   |
|                    |                        | Expected count   | 2,1   | 14,0      | 52,6   | 56,7  | 35,7  | 161,0 |

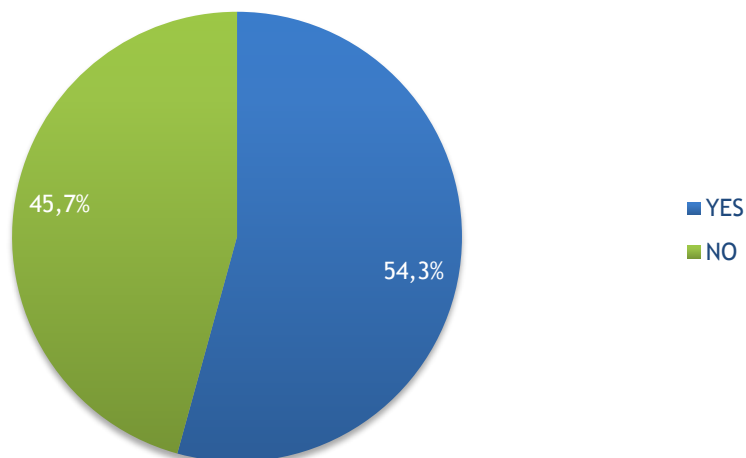
**Figure 93:** respondents’ experience as volunteer interpreters according to their working setting (police).

The three contingency tables show that interpreters working in the healthcare field are more likely to work as volunteers, while in court and police settings the number of respondents who chose the options “rarely” and “never” is significantly higher than the expected statistical count. Interestingly, in immigration and asylum settings, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 22.835$  DF = 16,  $p > 0.05$ ) points out that there is no significant difference between the actual and the expected count. The same, however, cannot be said for educational and social services, where the number of volunteers remains very high. As far as the educational level of respondents is concerned, there seems to be no significant difference between graduates and non-graduates ( $\chi^2 = 14.043$ , DF = 8,  $p > 0.05$ ), which means that both graduates and non-graduates in T&I carry out volunteer work.

### 3. Opinions on Conference Interpreting

The results presented in the present section will be analysed together with the outcome obtained in the first questionnaire (see chapter 6). First, however, a glance has to be cast at the answers given by the two groups individually. As far as public service interpreters are concerned, the hypothesis was that the majority of them had never worked as conference interpreters, mainly because they had not been trained for it. Nevertheless, several conference interpreters who were also certified as medical or legal interpreters asked to be allowed to complete this second questionnaire, making reference exclusively to their experience as public service interpreters. The replies were as follows (figure 94):

### Have you ever worked in conference settings?



**Figure 94:** breakdown of respondents working in conference settings.

In the light of the above results, the hypothesis has been confuted. Indeed, the majority of public service interpreters (54.3%,  $n = 482$ ) answered that they have worked (or are still working) in public services, against a smaller minority (45.7%,  $n = 406$ ) who said otherwise. The data suggests that, considering that the field of public service interpreting is very heterogeneous and that in several countries the professional qualification is still far from being legally recognised, conference interpreters – who have received formal training in interpreting – also work in public services. An exceptional case could be court interpreting, which has formal recognition in certain countries. To obtain a more detailed description of this outcome, statistical analyses were performed with the following independent variables: gender, country of residence and level of education. As regards gender, a Student's  $t$ -test ( $t = -1459$ ,  $DF = 886$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no statistical difference between men ( $n = 233$ ,  $M = 1.41$ ,  $SD = .49$ ) and women ( $n = 655$ ,  $M = 1.47$ ,  $SD = .019$ ). As far as the second variable is concerned, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 42.969$ ,  $DF = 18$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) showed that there is a significant difference among countries. For reasons of readability, the table presents the countries with a minimum of 10 responses (figure 95):

|                                    |                | Contingency table What is your country of residence? * Have you ever worked in conference settings? |      | Total |      |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|------|-------|------|
|                                    |                | Have you ever worked in conference settings?  |      |       |      |
|                                    |                | YES   | NO   |       |      |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia      | Count   | 15   | 17    | 32   |
|                                    |                | Expected count  | 16,9 | 15,1  | 32,0 |
|                                    | Austria        | Count   | 26   | 25    | 51   |
|                                    |                | Expected count  | 26,9 | 24,1  | 51,0 |
|                                    | Belgium        | Count   | 23   | 39    | 62   |
|                                    |                | Expected count  | 32,7 | 29,3  | 62,0 |
|                                    | Canada         | Count   | 29   | 20    | 49   |
|                                    |                | Expected count  | 25,8 | 23,2  | 49,0 |
|                                    | Czech Republic | Count   | 9    | 2     | 11   |

|                          |                |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | 5,8   | 5,2   | 11,0  |
| Denmark                  | Count          | 5     | 5     | 10    |
|                          | Expected count | 5,3   | 4,7   | 10,0  |
| Finland                  | Count          | 11    | 5     | 16    |
|                          | Expected count | 8,4   | 7,6   | 16,0  |
| France                   | Count          | 17    | 21    | 38    |
|                          | Expected count | 20,0  | 18,0  | 38,0  |
| Germany                  | Count          | 12    | 6     | 18    |
|                          | Expected count | 9,5   | 8,5   | 18,0  |
| Hungary                  | Count          | 10    | 2     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | 6,3   | 5,7   | 12,0  |
| Italy                    | Count          | 20    | 21    | 41    |
|                          | Expected count | 21,6  | 19,4  | 41,0  |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 20    | 19    | 39    |
|                          | Expected count | 20,5  | 18,5  | 39,0  |
| Norway                   | Count          | 54    | 80    | 134   |
|                          | Expected count | 70,6  | 63,4  | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 16    | 16    | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | 16,9  | 15,1  | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 7     | 5     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | 6,3   | 5,7   | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 17    | 8     | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | 13,2  | 11,8  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 20    | 6     | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | 13,7  | 12,3  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 37    | 38    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 39,5  | 35,5  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 64    | 35    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 52,2  | 46,8  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 412   | 370   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 412,0 | 370,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 95:** breakdown of respondents working in conference settings according to their country of residence.

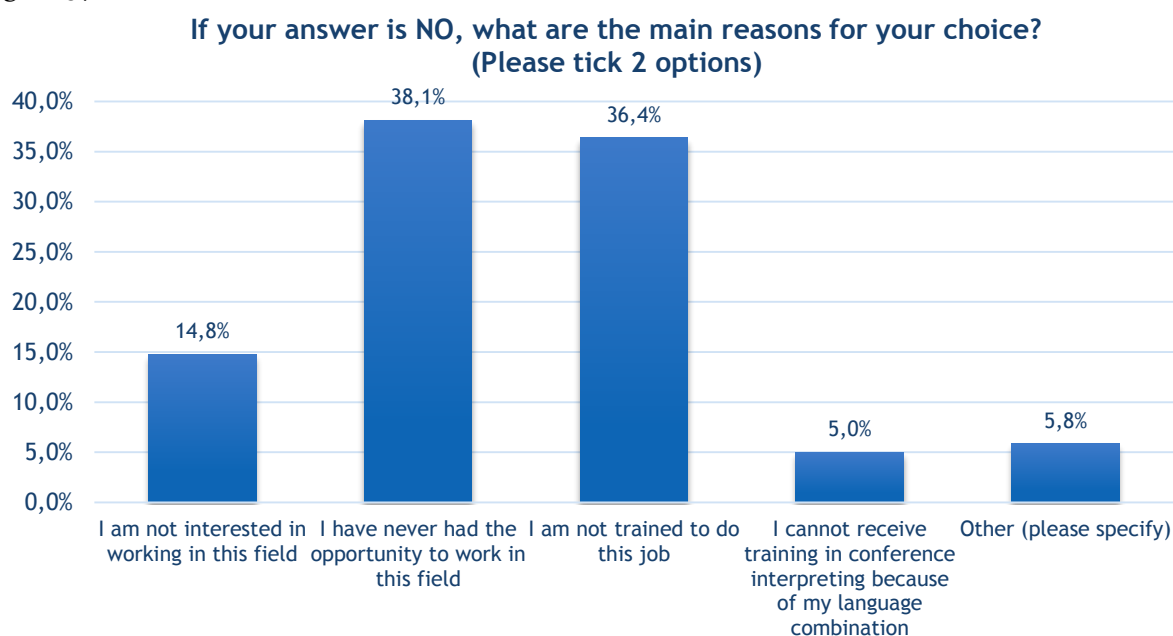
As the table shows, while for the majority of the countries shown in the table there is little variation between the actual and the expected count, a huge gap between the two calculations was found for countries such as Belgium, Norway and the US. In Belgium and Norway, fewer respondents than expected work in conference settings, whereas for the U.S. the opposite is true. One possible hypothesis could be that U.S. respondents regard court interpreting as akin to conference interpreting (Ozolins 2010) and have a postgraduate degree in T&I. Data from a second chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 17.484$ ,  $DF = 2$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) appears to confirm this assumption (figure 96):



| Contingency table Have you ever worked in conference settings?/ Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |                       |                |  |       |       |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|--|-------|-------|
|   |                       |                | Have you ever worked in conference settings? |       | Total |
|   |                       |                | YES  | NO    |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?   | YES                   | Count          | 172  | 93    | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 143,8  | 121,2 | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count          | 286  | 285   | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 309,9  | 261,1 | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count          | 24   | 28    | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count | 28,2   | 23,8  | 52,0  |
| Total   | Count                 | 482            | 406  | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count        | 482,0          | 406,0  | 888,0 |       |

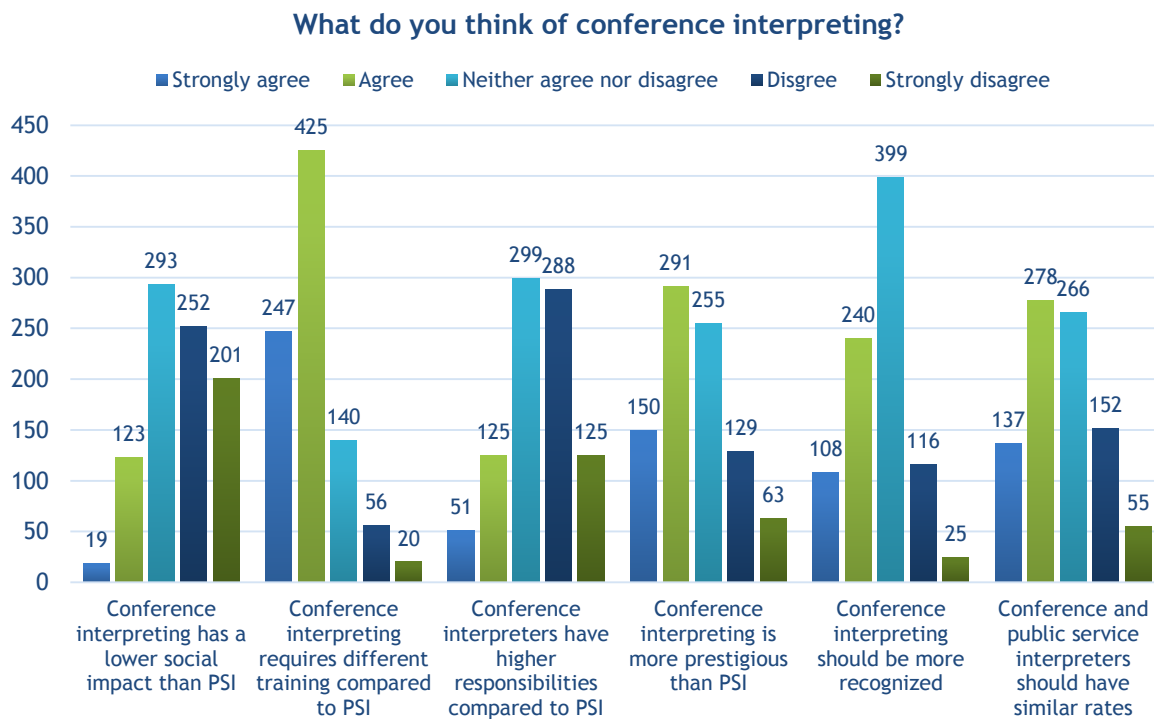
**Figure 96:** breakdown of respondents working in conference settings according to their level of education.

The test indeed confirms that respondents holding a postgraduate degree in T&I also work in conference settings. The phenomenon seems to be particularly widespread in Austria, Italy, Poland and Spain. As far as Austria is concerned, Pöchlhammer points out that, apart from the field of court interpreting, Austria resorts to ad-hoc interpreting on a highly informal basis: “the lack of training and assessment or accreditation schemes makes interpreting in Austrian health and social service settings a very low-level affair with regard to professional qualifications” (1997: 223). The same could be said for Italy and Spain (Ortega Herráez & Foulquié Rubio 2005; Rudvin & Spinzi 2015), where no unified accreditation system has been put in place as yet. Overall, the results point out that conference interpreters also work as public service interpreters, especially in those countries where their professional skills are required but interpreting is still seen as a non-professional service. The second question of this section aims to investigate the reasons why several respondents ticked “NO” (figure 97):



**Figure 97:** public service interpreters' main reasons for not working in conference settings.

38.1% (n = 222) of respondents answered that they have never had the opportunity to work in conference settings, an answer which suggests that they believe they are sufficiently trained to carry out interpreting tasks in public services, but have never been provided with the opportunity to work in the field. The second most ticked option (36.4%, n = 212) was “I am not trained to do this job”, whereby respondents acknowledge that conference interpreting requires a specific kind of training. 14.8% of respondents (n = 86) answered that they are not interested in working in conference settings, a lower percentage compared to the survey on conference interpreters (21.2%, n = 109). The option “it is a badly paid job” of the first survey was replaced with the alternative “I cannot receive training because of my language combination”, which obtained 5% (n = 29) of responses. Although the situation of training in languages less widely used is slightly improving (Balogh & Salaets 2015), there could be a higher number of aspiring public service interpreters who cannot access training because it is not provided in their language combination (“My English language is not good enough and it is often required” [Female, The Netherlands]; “I do it seldom because of my language combination (no English) [Female, Norway]”). The option “other”, which got 5.8% (n = 34) of responses, obtained 34 open comments. The main reason appears to be lack of time (“I want to start a family soon; lack of time/finances to pursue further education” [Female, USA]; “I am busy with my own work” [Female, UK]; “I am very busy with my work; I couldn't even if I wanted” [Male, UK]). Other interesting comments were: “I have done conference interpreting in the past, but I don't like it, I prefer health and community interpreting” (Female, UK) and “It seems like an elitist field and it gives me a feeling of rejection” (Female, Spain). The third question on this topic obtained the following results (figure 98):



**Figure 98:** public service interpreters’ opinions on conference interpreters.

Interestingly, a high number of respondents believe that conference interpreting has a high social value; the total number of negative responses whose labels were “strongly disagree” and “disagree” ( $n = 453$ ) is significantly higher than the number of positive responses ( $n = 227$ ) given in the first survey by conference interpreters to the question “public service interpreting has a greater social value than conference interpreting”. Although the two questions were formulated differently, the answers to this first question suggest that public service interpreters attach importance to conference interpreting, a recognition which was only partially reciprocated by conference interpreters in the first survey. However, the importance given to conference interpreting could be attributed to the fact that a large portion of respondents to the second questionnaire also work in conference settings.

In the second option of the question, a substantial number of respondents ( $n = 672$ ) agree that conference and public service interpreting require different training, a trend which was already observed in the first survey, with 476 conference interpreters supporting this view.

As far as the third option is concerned, 413 respondents do not believe that conference interpreting entails higher responsibilities than public service interpreting, which is close to the number of conference interpreters ( $n = 471$ ) who believe that the work of a public service interpreter is attributed a great responsibility. The result suggests that both groups of professionals acknowledge the social importance of public service interpreting.

In the fourth option, the majority of respondents ( $n = 441$ ) think that conference interpreting is more prestigious than public service interpreting, which is slightly lower than the number of conference interpreters who believe the same ( $n = 450$ ). Once again, the result shows that there is widespread agreement on certain aspects concerning the profession, especially from the point of view of public service interpreters.

The fifth alternative of the question presents a surprising outcome: a higher number of respondents ( $n = 348$ ) answered that the profession of conference interpreting deserves further recognition, against a lower portion of respondents ( $n = 141$ ) who think differently. Even though there is a substantial number of public service interpreters ( $n = 399$ ) who have not expressed a clear opinion, the fact that several public service interpreters encourage the professional development of conference interpreting points out that there is a high degree of solidarity between the two groups, further demonstrated by the considerable number of conference interpreters ( $n = 711$ ) who believe that the importance of public service interpreting deserves to be recognised.

Surprisingly, the question “conference and public service interpreters should have similar rates” has not obtained an overwhelming majority of positive responses: 415 interpreters ticked either “strongly agree” or “agree”, but the number of undecided ( $n = 266$ ) and of contrary participants ( $n = 207$ ) is higher. In the first survey, addressed to conference interpreters, the number of favourable responses was slightly higher ( $n = 498$ ) and that of the undecided ( $n = 206$ ) somewhat lower. The outcome suggests that there is a high awareness among conference interpreters of the

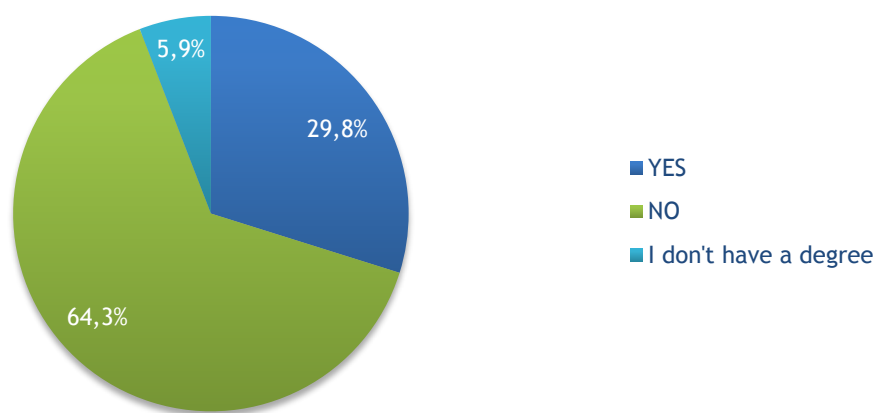
social significance of public service interpreting, which appears to be slightly lower amongst public service interpreters themselves.

#### 4. Training, Education and Research

As stated in the previous chapter, training is a topic which deserves special attention, especially in public service interpreting. Although the evolution of training in this field has been strewn with hindrances, the large and growing amount of literature on training, testing and certification in public service interpreting (Wadensjö, Englund Dimitrova & Nilsson 2007; Angelelli & Jacobson 2009; Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatrick 2009; Corsellis 2009; Fernández Pérez & Toledano Buendía 2011; Valero-Garcés 2011; Salaets 2012; Hlavac 2013; Mikkelson 2013; Hale & Ozolins 2014; Mikkelson 2014b; Ortega Herráez 2015; Wallace 2015) demonstrates the increasing awareness of the need for training and professional development in public service interpreting.

Nevertheless, the questions contained in this section seek to provide a snapshot of the state of the art of training in public service interpreting. Six questions are comprised in this section, which is roughly specular to that of the first survey. The only differences were that the question on interpreting theory was eliminated because it was not deemed relevant for the second questionnaire, and the question concerning the interpreters' self-perception of the importance of an MA in interpreting was replaced by a question asking them which level of education they consider appropriate to work as a public service interpreter. In the light of the long-standing debate on the type and the length of training in the field, the question was added to try and figure out how training courses could be organised and set up according to practitioners. The first two questions aim to gather information on the respondents' level of training. In the first question, interpreters are asked whether they have a postgraduate degree in T&I (figure 99):

**Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?**



**Figure 99:** respondents' level of education.

As the graph shows, the majority of respondents (64.3%, n = 571) do not have a degree in translation and interpreting and 5.9% (n = 52) do not have a degree at all. As mentioned in chapter 3, paragraph

2.1.2, few positive responses were expected from this question, which was kept in the second survey to enable specularity between the two questionnaires. To shed light on the results, a statistical analysis was carried out for the following variables: gender, age, country of residence, experience in conference settings and membership of a professional association.

As far as the first variable (gender) is concerned, no difference was found at statistical level ( $t = 1.798$ ,  $DF = 886$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), although the contingency table showed that there is a slight numerical difference between the groups (figure 100):

|                      |        | Contingency table What is your gender?/ Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |       |       | Total                 |       |
|----------------------|--------|---|-------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
|                      |        | Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?   |       |       |                       |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE   |   | YES   | NO    | I don't have a degree |       |
|                      |        | Count   | 56    | 164   | 13                    | 233   |
| Expected count       | 69,5   | 149,8   | 13,6  | 233,0 |                       |       |
|                      | FEMALE |   |       |       |                       |       |
|                      |        | Count   | 209   | 407   | 39                    | 655   |
| Expected count       | 195,5  | 421,2   | 38,4  | 655,0 |                       |       |
| Total                |        | Count   | 265   | 571   | 52                    | 888   |
|                      |        | Expected count  | 265,0 | 571,0 | 52,0                  | 888,0 |

**Figure 100:** contingency table showing the relationship between the gender of respondents and the possession of an MA in T&I.

The table shows that women have a higher level of education than men, whose scores in the “NO” column are significantly higher than those of female participants, an outcome which confirms that women with a higher academic education outnumber men. The second variable analysed the differences between age groups (figure 101):

|                         |             | Contingency table What is your age group?/ Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |       |       | Total                 |       |
|-------------------------|-------------|--|-------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
|                         |             | Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?  |       |       |                       |       |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 years |  | YES   | NO    | I don't have a degree |       |
|                         |             | Count  | 1     | 8     | 1                     | 10    |
| Expected count          | 3,0         | 6,4  | ,6    | 10,0  |                       |       |
|                         | 26-35       |  |       |       |                       |       |
|                         |             | Count  | 52    | 72    | 8                     | 132   |
| Expected count          | 39,4        | 84,9   | 7,7   | 132,0 |                       |       |
|                         | 36-45       |  |       |       |                       |       |
|                         |             | Count  | 81    | 152   | 13                    | 246   |
| Expected count          | 73,4        | 158,2  | 14,4  | 246,0 |                       |       |
|                         | 46-55       |  |       |       |                       |       |
|                         |             | Count  | 75    | 169   | 17                    | 261   |
| Expected count          | 77,9        | 167,8  | 15,3  | 261,0 |                       |       |
|                         | 56-65       |  |       |       |                       |       |
|                         |             | Count  | 40    | 127   | 7                     | 174   |
| Expected count          | 51,9        | 111,9  | 10,2  | 174,0 |                       |       |
|                         | 65+         |  |       |       |                       |       |
|                         |             | Count  | 16    | 43    | 6                     | 65    |
| Expected count          | 19,4        | 41,8   | 3,8   | 65,0  |                       |       |
| Total                   |             | Count  | 265   | 571   | 52                    | 888   |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 265,0 | 571,0 | 52,0                  | 888,0 |

**Figure 101:** contingency table showing the relationship between the age of respondents and the possession of an MA in T&I.

Once again, the table confirms the trend already present the first questionnaire: a higher portion of young interpreters have a postgraduate degree in translation and interpreting. The trend could either be attributed to the fact that degree-awarding institutions were less numerous in the past (see chapter 4, paragraph 4) or to a lack of training programmes in the field of public service interpreting. The sociological profile of respondents emerging from the analysis of the first two variables is that public service interpreters are mostly highly-educated women.

As far as the third variable (country of residence) is concerned, the countries which obtained ten responses answered as follows: (figure 102):

**Contingency table What is your country of residence? \* Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?**

|                                    |                | Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |      |                       | Total |    |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|------|-----------------------|-------|----|
|                                    |                | YES   | NO   | I don't have a degree |       |    |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia      | Count   | 8    | 21                    | 3     | 32 |
|                                    | Expected count | 9,4   | 20,8 | 1,8                   | 32,0  |    |
| Austria                            | Count          | 34  | 16   | 1                     | 51    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 14,9  | 33,1 | 2,9                   | 51,0  |    |
| Belgium                            | Count          | 19  | 40   | 3                     | 62    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 18,2  | 40,3 | 3,6                   | 62,0  |    |
| Canada                             | Count          | 2   | 38   | 9                     | 49    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 14,3  | 31,8 | 2,8                   | 49,0  |    |
| Czech Republic                     | Count          | 4   | 6    | 1                     | 11    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 3,2   | 7,1  | ,6                    | 11,0  |    |
| Denmark                            | Count          | 10  | 0    | 0                     | 10    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 2,9   | 6,5  | ,6                    | 10,0  |    |
| Finland                            | Count          | 6   | 9    | 1                     | 16    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 4,7   | 10,4 | ,9                    | 16,0  |    |
| France                             | Count          | 11  | 27   | 0                     | 38    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 11,1  | 24,7 | 2,2                   | 38,0  |    |
| Germany                            | Count          | 8   | 10   | 0                     | 18    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 5,3   | 11,7 | 1,0                   | 18,0  |    |
| Hungary                            | Count          | 6   | 6    | 0                     | 12    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 3,5   | 7,8  | ,7                    | 12,0  |    |
| Italy                              | Count          | 16  | 22   | 3                     | 41    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 12,0  | 26,6 | 2,4                   | 41,0  |    |
| The Netherlands                    | Count          | 13  | 23   | 3                     | 39    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 11,4  | 25,3 | 2,2                   | 39,0  |    |
| Norway                             | Count          | 14  | 110  | 10                    | 134   |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 39,2  | 87,0 | 7,7                   | 134,0 |    |
| Poland                             | Count          | 16  | 16   | 0                     | 32    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 9,4   | 20,8 | 1,8                   | 32,0  |    |
| Romania                            | Count          | 2   | 10   | 0                     | 12    |    |
|                                    | Expected count | 3,5   | 7,8  | ,7                    | 12,0  |    |
| Spain                              | Count          | 13  | 10   | 2                     | 25    |    |

|                          |                |       |       |      |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | 7,3   | 16,2  | 1,4  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 4     | 21    | 1    | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | 7,6   | 16,9  | 1,5  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 21    | 51    | 3    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 22,0  | 48,7  | 4,3  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 22    | 72    | 5    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 29,0  | 64,3  | 5,7  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 229   | 508   | 45   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 229,0 | 508,0 | 45,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 102:** contingency table showing the relationship between the country of residence and the possession of an MA in T&I.

A chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 142.866$ ,  $DF = 36$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) shows that there is a clear statistical difference between countries such as Canada, Norway, Sweden and, to a lesser extent, the U.S., where the number of interpreters who do not hold a postgraduate degree in interpreting is much higher than the portion of respondents possessing the qualification. On the other hand, in Austria and Italy, for example, more respondents than expected have a postgraduate degree in T&I. The results suggest that, in countries with an under-developed system of public service interpreting, professionals with a degree in conference interpreting also carry out other interpreting tasks in other settings. The hypothesis is confirmed by the analysis of the two following variables: experience in conference settings and membership of a professional association. As for the first variable, the results were as follows (figure 103):

|  |                | Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |       |                       | Total |       |
|--|----------------|---|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
|  |                | YES   | NO    | I don't have a degree |       |       |
| Have you ever worked in conference settings? | YES            | Count   | 172   | 286                   | 24    | 482   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 143,8 | 309,9                 | 28,2  | 482,0 |
|  | NO             | Count   | 93    | 285                   | 28    | 406   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 121,2 | 261,1                 | 23,8  | 406,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 265   | 571   | 52                    | 888   |       |
|  | Expected count | 265,0   | 571,0 | 52,0                  | 888,0 |       |

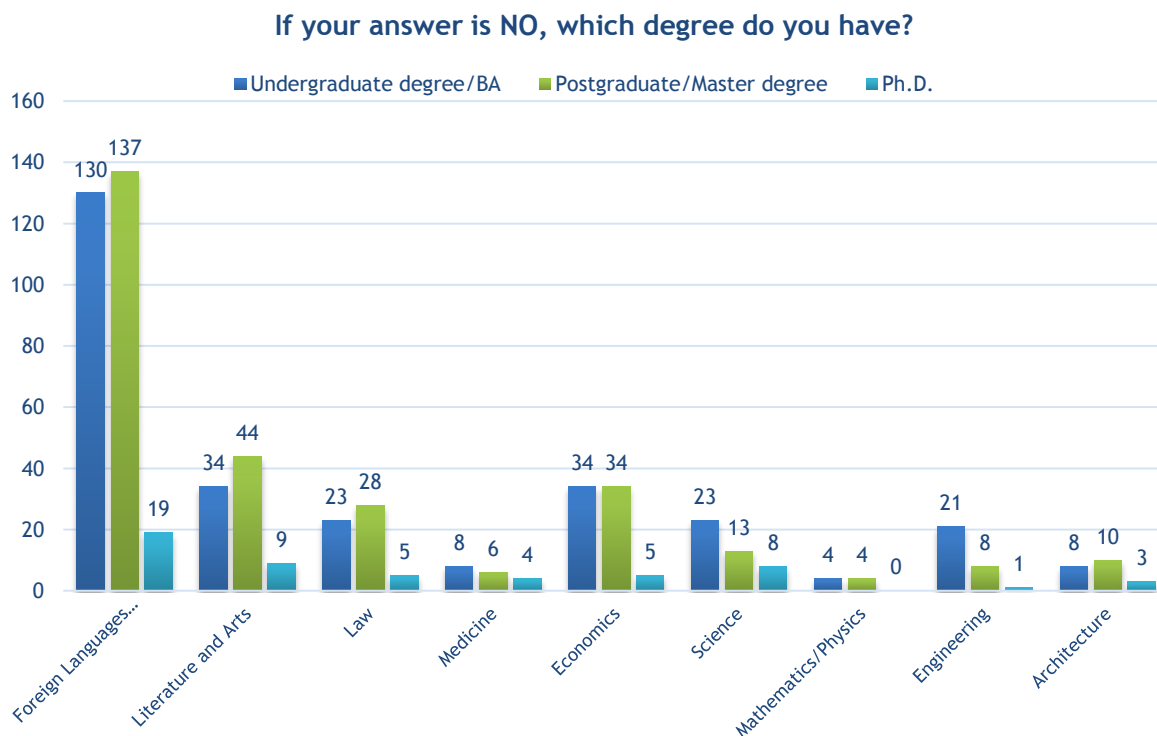
**Figure 103:** contingency table showing the relationship between respondents' experience in conference settings and the possession of an MA in T&I.

As a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 17.484$ ,  $DF = 2$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) shows, there is a relationship of direct proportionality between the working experience in conferences and the possession of an MA degree in translation and interpreting. The result indicates that highly-educated respondents are also those who work in conference settings. As far as the last variable is concerned, the response pattern was as follows (figure 104):

| Contingency table Are you a member of any professional association?/ Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |                |                |   |       |                       |       |
|--|----------------|----------------|---|-------|-----------------------|-------|
|  |                |                | Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? |       |                       | Total |
|  |                |                | YES   | NO    | I don't have a degree |       |
| Are you a member of any professional association?  | YES            | Count          | 204   | 378   | 29                    | 611   |
|  |                | Expected count | 182,3   | 392,9 | 35,8                  | 611,0 |
|  | NO             | Count          | 61  | 193   | 23                    | 277   |
|  |                | Expected count | 82,7  | 178,1 | 16,2                  | 277,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 265            | 571   | 52    | 888                   |       |
|  | Expected count | 265,0          | 571,0   | 52,0  | 888,0                 |       |

**Figure 104:** contingency table showing the relationship between respondents' membership to a professional association and the possession of an MA in T&I.

As the table shows and the results of the chi-square indicate ( $\chi^2 = 14.176$  DF = 2,  $p < 0.05$ ), there is a significant difference between the groups. Several respondents holding an MA degree in T&I are also members of professional associations, whereas those who are not members of any professional network are also those who have either a different level of education or a postgraduate degree in another subject. The question below seeks to shed light on this point. Since the number of respondents holding a degree other than translation and interpreting is much higher than that of the previous survey, the breakdown of answers was carried out as follows (figure 105):

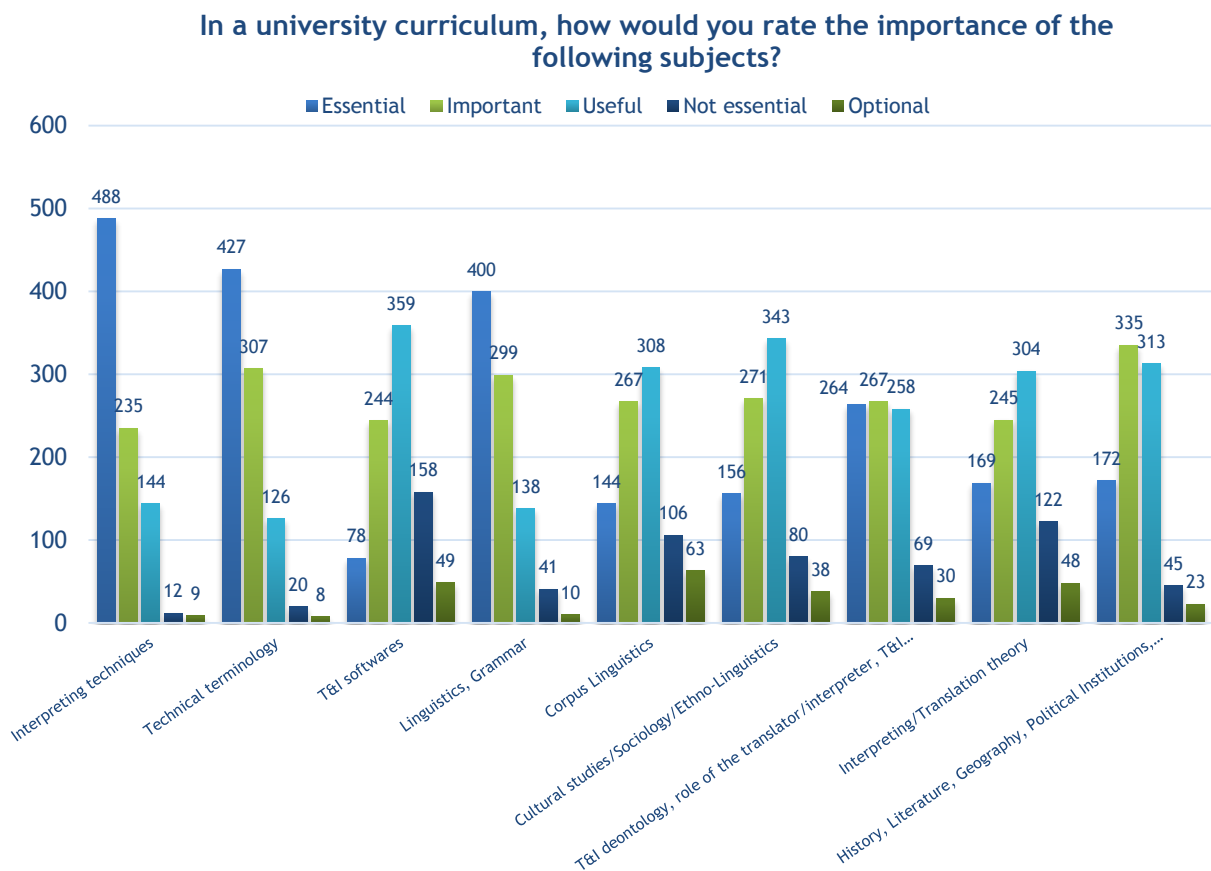


**Figure 105:** type of degree held by public service interpreters who do not have an MA in T&I.



The total number of responses for this question were 623 (more than one option could be chosen). As in the previous survey, the majority of respondents hold either a degree or a Ph.D. in foreign languages and literatures (46%, n = 286). The second most ticked options were “literature and arts” with 13% (n = 87) responses. The third and fourth most popular options were “Economics” (11%, n = 73) and “Law” (9%, n = 36). The results suggest that, although a lower percentage of respondents hold a degree in translation and interpreting, the population interviewed has a high educational level. The outcome of the contingency table comparing age and the kind of degree possessed suggests that the older the respondents, the greater the likelihood that they do not have a postgraduate degree in translation and interpreting.

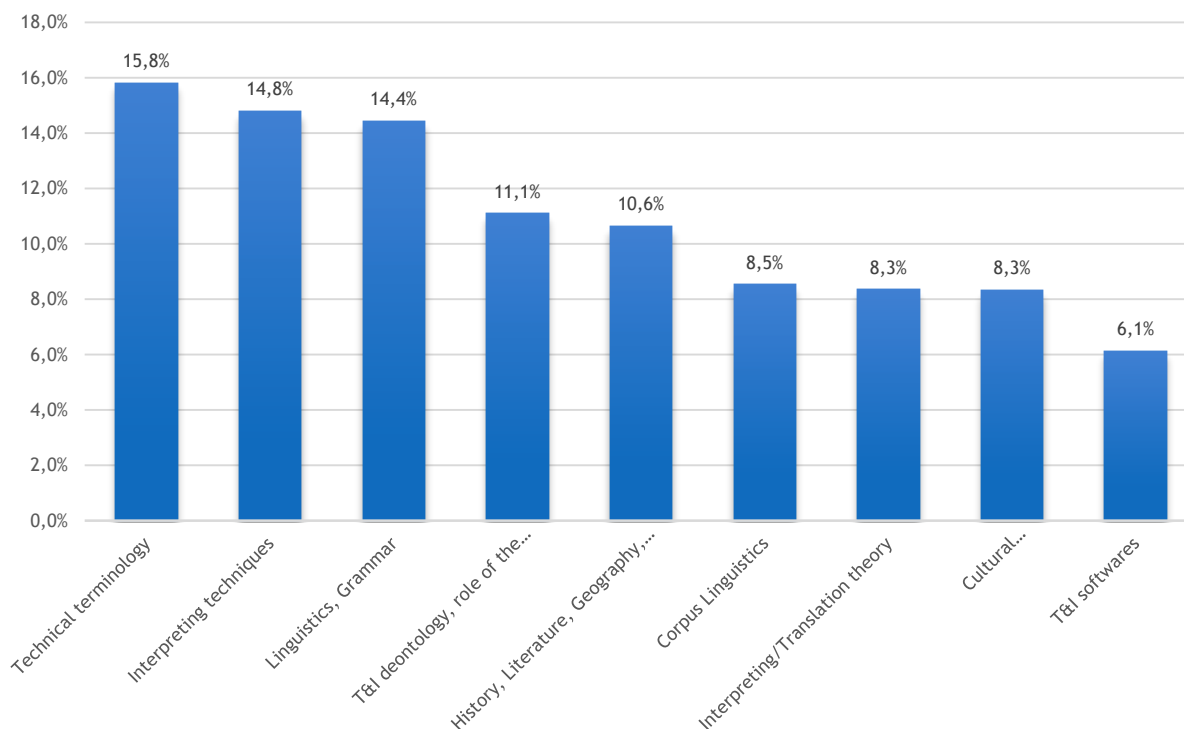
The third question of this section looks to investigate the extent to which interpreters consider given subjects relevant for their training (figure 106):



**Figure 106:** classification of the subjects deemed relevant in a university curriculum in public service interpreting.

The graph shows interesting results. Although the preference for interpreting techniques remains prominent, public service interpreters seem to attribute a greater importance to a different set of subjects, a trend better illustrated in the graph below (figure 107):

## Most relevant subjects for a university curriculum

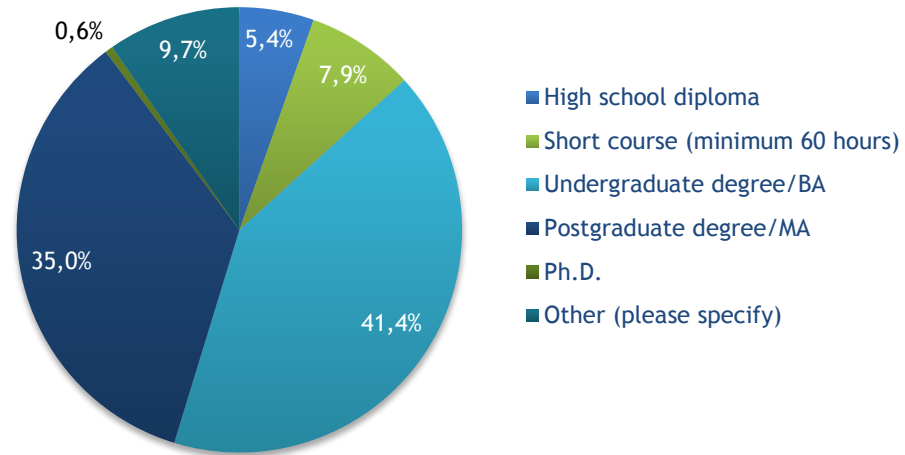


**Figure 107:** breakdown of the most relevant subjects for a university curriculum.

The results were calculated by summing up the scores obtained for the options “essential” and “important”. According to public service interpreters, the most important subject in a university curriculum is technical terminology (n = 734), followed by interpreting techniques (n = 723) and linguistics (n = 699). Considerable importance is also attributed to “deontology and the interpreter’s role” (n = 531). On the contrary, conference interpreters put “interpreting techniques” in the first place, followed by “history, literature, geography” and “deontology”. The data shows that public service interpreters assign a higher value to terminology and grammar, which occupied the fourth and fifth positions respectively in the breakdown of the results of the first questionnaire. Interestingly, the second group of interpreters tends to value “interpreting theory” more than the first interviewed population, which defined it as the least relevant subject for their training. The result suggests that public service interpreters are more eager to acquire the body of knowledge characterising the practice of interpreting. Moreover, literature in the field pays much attention to ethical and deontological matters, which incentivises practitioners to learn more about them.

The third question of the section on training seeks to gather information about the level of education interpreters deem appropriate to work in public services (figure 108):

In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter?



**Figure 108:** length of training public service interpreters deem appropriate to work in the field.

As the graph demonstrates, a large number of respondents (41.4%,  $n = 368$ ) believe that an undergraduate degree (bachelor of arts) is an adequate educational level to be able to work in public services. Another 35% ( $n = 311$ ) of respondents supports the need for interpreters to be trained at a post-graduate level. Fewer respondents (13.3%,  $n = 118$ ) think that a high school diploma and a short course could suffice. The option Ph.D. (0.6%,  $n = 5$ ) collected only 5 responses. Overall, there is widespread agreement among the interpreters interviewed that public service interpreting is a discipline whose practice requires training at university level. At statistical level, women ( $n = 655$ ,  $M = 2.9$ ,  $SD = .047$ ) believe in the value of higher education more than men ( $n = 233$ ,  $M = 2.7$ ,  $SD = .082$ ), which means that there is a huge difference between the groups ( $t = -2.101$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), as shown in the table below (figure 109):

|                      |                 | In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter? |                     |              |       |       |      | Total |     |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|---------------------|--------------|-------|-------|------|-------|-----|
|                      |                 | Other  | High school diploma | Short course | BA    | MA    | Ph.D |       |     |
| What is your gender? | M               | Count  | 23                  | 21           | 22    | 96    | 70   | 1     | 233 |
|                      | Expect ed count | 22,6   | 12,6                | 18,4         | 96,6  | 81,6  | 1,3  | 233,0 |     |
|                      | F               | Count  | 63                  | 27           | 48    | 272   | 241  | 4     | 655 |
|                      | Expect ed count | 63,4   | 35,4                | 51,6         | 271,4 | 229,4 | 3,7  | 655,0 |     |
| Total                | Count           | 86   | 48                  | 70           | 368   | 311   | 5    | 888   |     |

|                |      |      |      |       |       |     |       |
|----------------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Expected count | 86,0 | 48,0 | 70,0 | 368,0 | 311,0 | 5,0 | 888,0 |
|----------------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-----|-------|

**Figure 109:** contingency table showing the correlation between gender and the length of training public service interpreters deem appropriate to work in the field.

As the table shows, a higher number of women chose the option “MA” than men. One might, therefore, assume that, since the majority of public service interpreters are women, demands for highly-specialised training are more likely to be advanced and supported in the future. As far as age is concerned, the results were as follows (figure 110):

**Contingency table: What is your age group?/ In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter**

|                         |                | In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter? |                     |              |       |       |       | Total |     |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|---------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
|                         |                | Other  | High school diploma | Short course | BA    | MA    | Ph.D. |       |     |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 years    | Count  | 1                   | 2            | 3     | 4     | 0     | 0     | 10  |
|                         | Expected count | 1,0  | ,5                  | ,8           | 4,1   | 3,5   | ,1    | 10,0  |     |
|                         | 26-35          | Count  | 13                  | 3            | 6     | 64    | 44    | 2     | 132 |
|                         | Expected count | 12,8   | 7,1                 | 10,4         | 54,7  | 46,2  | ,7    | 132,0 |     |
|                         | 36-45          | Count  | 18                  | 7            | 22    | 105   | 94    | 0     | 246 |
|                         | Expected count | 23,8   | 13,3                | 19,4         | 101,9 | 86,2  | 1,4   | 246,0 |     |
|                         | 46-55          | Count  | 25                  | 21           | 23    | 100   | 91    | 1     | 261 |
|                         | Expected count | 25,3   | 14,1                | 20,6         | 108,2 | 91,4  | 1,5   | 261,0 |     |
|                         | 56-65          | Count  | 23                  | 9            | 10    | 72    | 59    | 1     | 174 |
|                         | Expected count | 16,9   | 9,4                 | 13,7         | 72,1  | 60,9  | 1,0   | 174,0 |     |
|                         | 65+            | Count  | 6                   | 6            | 6     | 23    | 23    | 1     | 65  |
|                         | Expected count | 6,3  | 3,5                 | 5,1          | 26,9  | 22,8  | ,4    | 65,0  |     |
| Total                   | Count          | 86   | 48                  | 70           | 368   | 311   | 5     | 888   |     |
|                         | Expected count | 86,0   | 48,0                | 70,0         | 368,0 | 311,0 | 5,0   | 888,0 |     |

**Figure 110:** contingency table showing the correlation between age and the length of training public service interpreters deem appropriate to work in the field.

Although a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 40.090$ ,  $DF = 25$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) reveals that there is a significant difference between age groups (confirmed by the fact that younger respondents tend to value a higher educational level more), roughly all respondents, regardless of age, believe in the importance of university training. Across the countries analysed, the difference is even more evident (figure 111):

**Contingency table What is your country of residence? \* In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter?**

|  |                        | In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter? |                               |  |                                |                               |           | Tot. |           |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|
|  |                        | Oth<br>er  | High<br>school<br>diplo<br>ma | Short<br>course<br>(minimu<br>m 60<br>hours) | Undergradu<br>ate<br>degree/BA | Postgradu<br>ate<br>degree/MA | Ph.<br>D. |      |           |
| What is<br>your<br>country<br>of<br>residenc<br>e? | Australia              | Count  | 3                             | 0  | 0                              | 17                            | 12        | 0    | 32        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 3,1                           | 1,9  | 2,5                            | 13,5                          | 10,8      | ,2   | 32,0      |
|  | Austria                | Count  | 3                             | 0  | 2                              | 12                            | 34        | 0    | 51        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 5,0                           | 3,0  | 4,0                            | 21,5                          | 17,3      | ,3   | 51,0      |
|  | Belgium                | Count  | 6                             | 7  | 9                              | 22                            | 17        | 1    | 62        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 6,0                           | 3,6  | 4,8                            | 26,1                          | 21,0      | ,4   | 62,0      |
|  | Canada                 | Count  | 7                             | 4  | 5                              | 30                            | 3         | 0    | 49        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 4,8                           | 2,9  | 3,8                            | 20,6                          | 16,6      | ,3   | 49,0      |
|  | Czech<br>Republic      | Count  | 0                             | 1  | 0                              | 3                             | 7         | 0    | 11        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 1,1                           | ,6   | ,9                             | 4,6                           | 3,7       | ,1   | 11,0      |
|  | Denmark                | Count  | 1                             | 0  | 0                              | 3                             | 6         | 0    | 10        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 1,0                           | ,6   | ,8                             | 4,2                           | 3,4       | ,1   | 10,0      |
|  | Finland                | Count  | 2                             | 1  | 0                              | 8                             | 5         | 0    | 16        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 1,6                           | ,9   | 1,2                            | 6,7                           | 5,4       | ,1   | 16,0      |
|  | France                 | Count  | 1                             | 2  | 1                              | 11                            | 23        | 0    | 38        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 3,7                           | 2,2  | 3,0                            | 16,0                          | 12,9      | ,2   | 38,0      |
|  | Germany                | Count  | 1                             | 0  | 1                              | 6                             | 10        | 0    | 18        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 1,7                           | 1,1  | 1,4                            | 7,6                           | 6,1       | ,1   | 18,0      |
|  | Hungary                | Count  | 1                             | 2  | 1                              | 2                             | 6         | 0    | 12        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 1,2                           | ,7   | ,9                             | 5,0                           | 4,1       | ,1   | 12,0      |
|  | Italy                  | Count  | 8                             | 2  | 1                              | 14                            | 15        | 1    | 41        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 4,0                           | 2,4  | 3,2                            | 17,2                          | 13,9      | ,3   | 41,0      |
|  | The<br>Netherlan<br>ds | Count  | 1                             | 1  | 1                              | 12                            | 24        | 0    | 39        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 3,8                           | 2,3  | 3,0                            | 16,4                          | 13,2      | ,2   | 39,0      |
|  | Norway                 | Count  | 13                            | 15   | 18                             | 64                            | 23        | 1    | 134       |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 13,0                          | 7,9  | 10,5                           | 56,4                          | 45,4      | ,9   | 134,<br>0 |
|  | Poland                 | Count  | 2                             | 0  | 0                              | 10                            | 20        | 0    | 32        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 3,1                           | 1,9  | 2,5                            | 13,5                          | 10,8      | ,2   | 32,0      |
|  | Romania                | Count  | 2                             | 0  | 1                              | 4                             | 4         | 1    | 12        |
|  |                        | Expect<br>ed<br>count  | 1,2                           | ,7   | ,9                             | 5,0                           | 4,1       | ,1   | 12,0      |

|                          |                |      |      |      |       |       |     |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Spain                    | Count          | 1    | 0    | 0    | 13    | 11    | 0   | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,4  | 1,5  | 2,0  | 10,5  | 8,5   | ,2  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 3    | 7    | 0    | 12    | 4     | 0   | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,5  | 1,5  | 2,0  | 10,9  | 8,8   | ,2  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 11   | 2    | 8    | 34    | 20    | 0   | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 7,3  | 4,4  | 5,9  | 31,6  | 25,4  | ,5  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 10   | 2    | 13   | 52    | 21    | 1   | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 9,6  | 5,8  | 7,7  | 41,7  | 33,5  | ,6  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 76   | 46   | 61   | 329   | 265   | 5   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 76,0 | 46,0 | 61,0 | 329,0 | 265,0 | 5,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 111:** contingency table showing the correlation between respondents' country of residence and the length of training public service interpreters deem appropriate to work in the field.

The table presents highly heterogeneous results ( $\chi^2 = 214.320$ ,  $DF = 90$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). On the one hand, there is agreement among several countries that a postgraduate degree is necessary to work in public services (particularly in countries such as Austria, France, The Netherlands and Poland). On the other hand, respondents in certain countries appear to privilege training at an undergraduate level (i.e. Canada, Norway and the U.S.). One possible hypothesis is that, considering the broader development of conference interpreting in European countries (and that some respondents coming from Europe work in conferences as well), respondents would be more inclined to think that the same level of training as conference interpreting is needed. However, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 9.364$ ,  $DF = 5$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that interpreters working in conference settings presented the same response pattern as their colleagues who work exclusively in public services.

Another assumption is that the response pattern greatly depends on the settings respondents work in. For instance, a chi-square test showed that many respondents who work mainly in healthcare settings answered that a BA is an adequate level of training, whereas those working in legal settings (especially courts) believe that a higher level of education is necessary (figure 112):

| Contingency table In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter?/Working settings |                                 |                | Healthcare            | Courts                |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   |                                 |                | Main setting (always) | Main setting (always) |
| In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter?                                    | Other (please specify)          | Count          | 15                    | 15                    |
|   |                                 | Expected count | 15,0                  | 15,9                  |
|   | High school diploma             | Count          | 9                     | 9                     |
|   |                                 | Expected count | 7,8                   | 8,6                   |
|   | Short course (minimum 60 hours) | Count          | 21                    | 7                     |
|   |                                 | Expected count | 12,9                  | 12,5                  |

|                         |                |      |      |
|-------------------------|----------------|------|------|
| Undergraduate degree/BA | Count          | 74   | 59   |
|                         | Expected count | 59,4 | 67,6 |
| Postgraduate degree/MA  | Count          | 18   | 68   |
|                         | Expected count | 42,1 | 53,5 |
| Ph.D.                   | Count          | 1    | 1    |
|                         | Expected count | ,8   | ,8   |

**Figure 112:** contingency table showing the correlation between respondents' working settings and the length of training public service interpreters deem appropriate to work in the field.

The contingency table confirms the initial hypothesis: interpreters working in the legal field believe that a higher educational level is needed. The reason for the difference between the two groups could be attached to the importance attributed to training and certification in the legal field in some countries (like, for example, the U.S.). In her Ph.D. thesis, Abril Martí (2006) carried out a comparative analysis of the training models for public service interpreters in 17 countries and distinguished between two types of training solutions (formal and informal) adopted by each of them; 88 training initiatives were studied and compared (45 of informal and 43 of formal training). First of all, she noted that, at least at an early stage, the role of NGOs, universities and public authorities is crucial not only for setting up training courses, but also for raising awareness of the importance of using professionals instead of *ad-hoc* interpreters/bilinguals. In the comparative investigation, the breakdown of the data was carried out according to certain criteria such as: type of promoter/responsible for training, length of the course, field of specialisation, contents, languages and selection of candidates. Drawing on Ozolins' classification (2000), the countries under scrutiny were divided into four categories: 1) countries adopting *ad-hoc* solutions (Italy, Spain, Belgium, Germany and Austria); 2) countries with generic language services (The Netherlands, France, UK, Norway, Finland, Canada); 3) countries which adopted the "legalistic" approach (Denmark, Malaysia, the USA, South Africa);<sup>38</sup> 4) countries with fully-developed training systems (Australia and Sweden). The work by Abril Martí also provides a general overview of the academic and non-academic courses in public service interpreting and suggests that the differences between training systems and the significance assigned to them is to be found in the initial promoters of such training: in the medical sector, NGOs and voluntary associations spearheaded its development, whereas in the legal field, the intervention of the institutions greatly contributed to a growing prominence of formal training in the sector.

Despite its relevance, all the information should be taken with caution, as, in the span of ten years, many things have changed and much more progress has been made in the field of training and accreditation. For example, the master in public service interpreting organised by the University of Alcalá de Henares, which in 2006 was still in its infancy, has now become a concrete example showing not only the viability, but also the success of academic courses in this field. The same could

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Ozolins (2010).

be said for Norway, which has developed a very advanced system of certification, although much needs to be done in the field of training. In Belgium, for instance, huge steps forward have been taken, propelled by a great deal of research and conferences leading to a heightened awareness of the importance of training and accreditation.

Another variable deemed interesting for the statistical analysis of this question was the interpreters' level of education. The results are as follows (figure 113):

**Contingency table Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?/ In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter?**

|   |                       |                | In your opinion, what level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter? |                     |              |       |       |       | Tot   |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|--|---------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |                       |                | Other  | High school diploma | Short course | BA    | MA    | Ph. D |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES                   | Count          | 16   | 5                   | 8            | 74    | 158   | 4     | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 25,7   | 14,3                | 20,9         | 109,8 | 92,8  | 1,5   | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count          | 62   | 36                  | 54           | 273   | 145   | 1     | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 55,3   | 30,9                | 45,0         | 236,6 | 200,0 | 3,2   | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count          | 8  | 7                   | 8            | 21    | 8     | 0     | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count | 5,0  | 2,8                 | 4,1          | 21,5  | 18,2  | ,3    | 52,0  |
| Tot.  | Count                 | 86             | 48   | 70                  | 368          | 311   | 5     | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count        | 86,0           | 48,0   | 70,0                | 368,0        | 311,0 | 5,0   | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 113:** contingency table showing the correlation between respondents' level of education and the length of training public service interpreters deem appropriate to work in the field.

The chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 122.776$ ,  $DF = 10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) shows that there is a relation of direct proportionality between a higher level of education and a response pattern suggesting that public service interpreters complete a postgraduate course in order to be able to practice the profession. A total of 84 open comments were collected for the option “other”, and several of them indicate that a high level of education is the key to becoming a good interpreter and that interpreters need to be trained for the less widespread languages.<sup>39</sup> Some are worth mentioning here:

I think we need entry level competencies that can be acquired through a variety of means. 60 hours is a very elementary level of training but most PSI's don't have access to BAs, much less MAs or Ph.Ds. We need reliable ways to assess for language proficiency, interpreting skills (modes), and ethics/standards, terminology that cover both the most common languages and the less common

<sup>39</sup> In this regard, progress has been recently made. The TraiLLD project (JUST/2013/JPEN/AG/4594, Training for Languages of Lesser Diffusion) seeks to improve training for legal interpreters with less widespread languages (Balogh & Salaets 2015). Further information can be found at: [https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg\\_interpreting\\_studies/research-projects/trailld/index](https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg_interpreting_studies/research-projects/trailld/index)



languages. We especially need strategies for not excluding interpreters of less common languages from entering the field, which means we need to both keep on pushing for higher competency standards while at the same time piloting innovative training techniques to help low literacy and numeracy interpreters of less common languages to acquire competency as well (Female, U.S.).

Specific training on public service interpreting, no matter the degree, but definitely more than 60 hours (Male, Finland).

At least an undergraduate degree on anything and short course on interpretation (Female, Panama).

All of the above, except a PHD. Definitely NOT solely a short course. A lot of lifetime education goes into being an excellent interpreter. I think that the higher your educational exposure, the better an interpreter you are (Female, U.S.).

A degree in languages or interpreting school is needed, plus specific training according to the field(s) of specialisation (Female, Italy).

Ad-hoc training (specialized course). (Male, Italy).

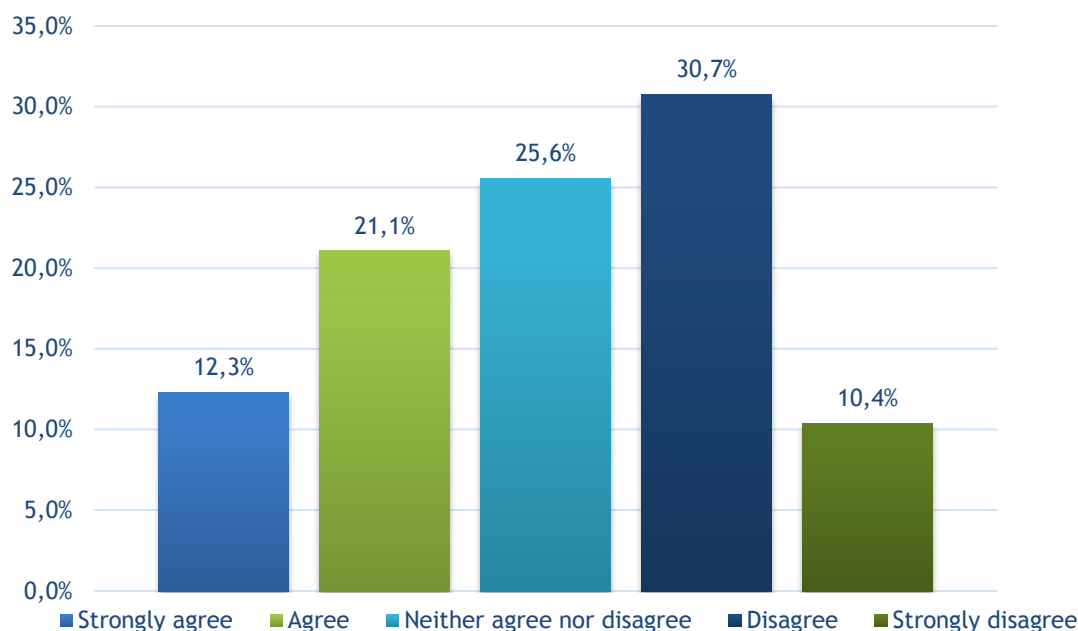
A good command of languages and empathy are just as important as a degree (Male, Austria).

Nevertheless, the use of untrained, non-qualified and ad-hoc interpreters is still frequent. In some cases, certain language combinations are rare and providing a qualified interpreter in a short span of time is very difficult, if not impossible. Even in countries where national registers are available, certified interpreters are not always used, be it for logistic reasons and/or time constraints. One possible reason for this trend could be that not all interpreters included in a registry have the same level of qualification. As De Pedro Ricoy underlines:

Although a National Register for Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) does exist in the UK, the attainment of full membership is not only contingent on tests and qualifications, but also on proof of PSI work in the UK to the tune of 400 hours (or 100 hours in the case of rare languages) (see NRPSI criteria for entry). This implies that a substantial number of interpreters only have an 'interim status' of membership (for which no practical experience is required) or have not yet achieved 'full status' (2010: 101).

The same could be said for other countries which have set up a national register (for example, the Norwegian register has five different types of qualifications). Overall, the need for academic, highly specialised training is deeply felt among the majority of respondents. However, do they believe that laypeople think the same? Is the importance of a degree to carry out public service interpreting regarded as essential by laypeople? The results are illustrated in the graph below (figure 114):

**People outside the profession think that a master degree in translation/interpreting is essential to work as an interpreter.**

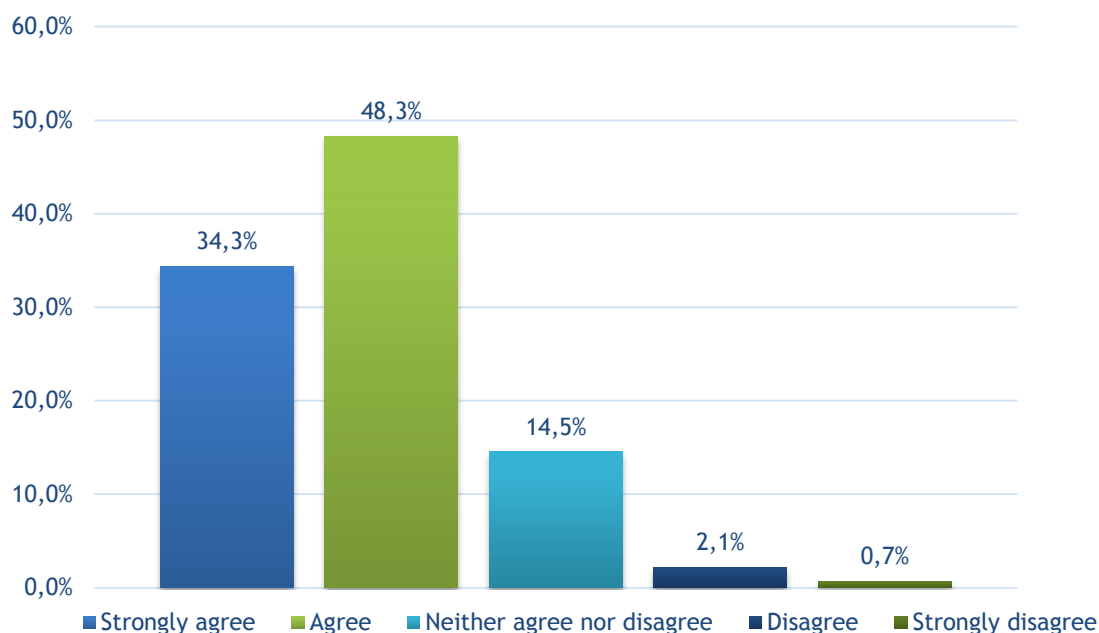


**Figure 114:** level of education of public service interpreters as perceived by laypeople.

A total of 33.4% (n = 296) of respondents answered positively, a significantly higher portion compared to the previous questionnaire (18.5%, n = 149). The result shows that there is a higher level of confidence among the respondents of the second group. Nevertheless, the majority of public service interpreters (41.1%, n = 365) still believe that laypeople do not regard the profession as one deserving a high level of training. There is an inextricable link between training and accreditation, the two pillars of the professionalisation process. Consistently with the theories postulated by the sociologists of the professions, Pöchhacker points out that: “for a practice or an occupation to be acknowledged as a profession, it must be perceived to rest on a complex body of knowledge and skills, mastery of which can only be acquired with professional training” (2004: 166). The outcome of this question suggests that there is still a long way to go before public service interpreting becomes a fully recognised profession.

The last question of the section on training concerns the importance respondents attach to academic research. Considering the large and growing amount of literature published in the field of public service interpreting, the main hypothesis was that respondents believe that research is fundamental because it helps give a greater visibility to the challenges interpreters face in mediated interactions, their ethical dilemmas, the stress and emotional impact they suffer and the institutional constraints preventing its professional development. The results were as follows (figure 115):

### Research in interpreting is useful for the profession.



**Figure 115:** interpreters' views on research in interpreting.

The hypothesis formulated above could be said to be fully confirmed: 82.6% of respondents ( $n = 734$ ) highly valued academic research and regarded it as an asset to advance the professionalisation of public service interpreting. The response pattern is evenly distributed among sexes ( $t = .532, p > 0.05$ ) and age groups ( $\chi^2 = 21.882, DF = 20, p > 0.05$ ), although younger generations tend to respond more positively. As in the previous survey, respondents holding a postgraduate degree in T&I tend to value academic research less than their colleagues, as illustrated in the table below (figure 116):

|   |                       | Research in interpreting is useful for the profession. |       |                            |          |                   | Total |       |
|---|-----------------------|--|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|-------|
|   |                       | Strongly agree   | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |       |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES                   | Count  | 78    | 104                        | 36       | 21                | 26    | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count   | 80,3  | 114,9                      | 37,6     | 16,4              | 15,8  | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count  | 178   | 260                        | 78       | 32                | 23    | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count   | 173,0 | 247,6                      | 81,0     | 35,4              | 34,1  | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count  | 13    | 21                         | 12       | 2                 | 4     | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count   | 15,8  | 22,5                       | 7,4      | 3,2               | 3,1   | 52,0  |
| Total   |                       | Count  | 269   | 385                        | 126      | 55                | 53    | 888   |
|   |                       | Expected count   | 269,0 | 385,0                      | 126,0    | 55,0              | 53,0  | 888,0 |

**Figure 116:** contingency table indicating the relationship between educational level and the value attributed to academic research.

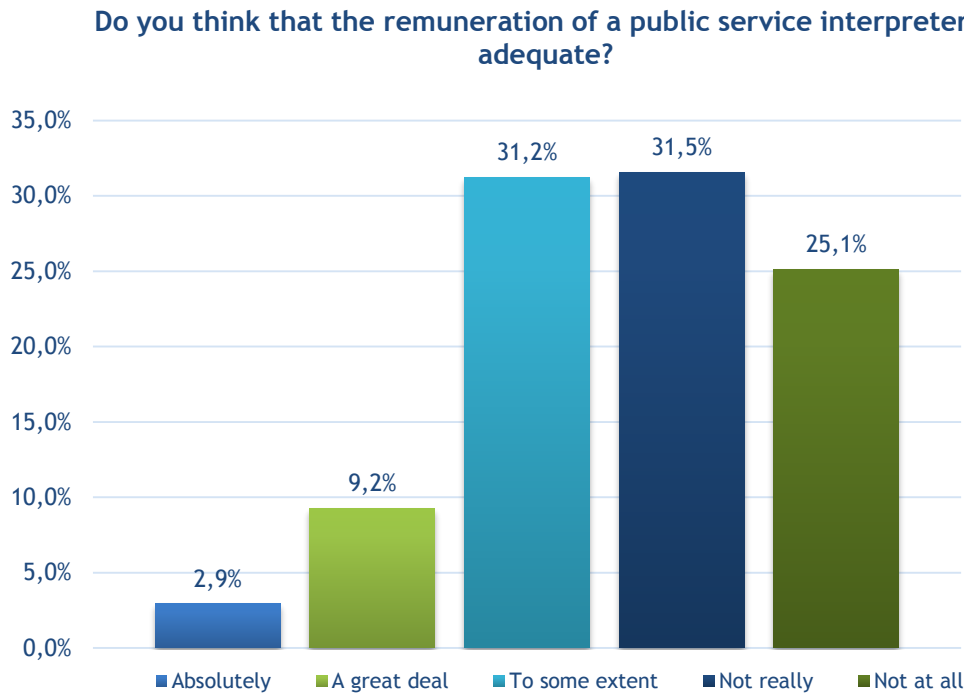
As the table shows, more respondents than expected in the “NO” column chose the option “agree” compared to those in the “YES” column. As mentioned in the previous questionnaire (chapter 4, paragraph 4), this response pattern could be attributed to the fact that highly-trained interpreters are more interested in practicing the profession than theorising it. Nevertheless, the great importance attached to research in the field testifies to the growing interest in advancing the professionalisation process of public service interpreting, which passes through the dissemination of knowledge and awareness-raising of its related issues and challenges.

### 5. Income

Remuneration has always been seen as a crucial factor preventing the full professionalisation process of public service interpreting. Literature abounds in references to the low income of interpreters working in this field, and the relationship between low remuneration, low professionalisation and, in most cases, low-quality interpreting has been effectively illustrated by Niska in his definition of community interpreting:

‘Community interpreting’, in the form of linguistic assistance for communication between members of different ethnic communities, has thus been around for thousands of years. It has mostly been done for at best very modest remuneration. This familiar combination of trivial, everyday activity and an accepted practice of unpaid linguistic help to fellow community members has hindered efforts to professionalise community interpreting (2002: 136).

Similarly, in their speculations on quality in interpreting, Ozolins and Hale underline that working conditions and remuneration levels are “generally not commensurate with the high level skills and the vast knowledge necessary for quality interpreting” (2009: 3). In the survey carried out by Salaets and van Gucht (2008), the majority of the interpreters interviewed pleaded for better remuneration, indicated as one of the main sources of concern with a high potential to impinge on the public recognition of the profession. In the light of the crucial link between remuneration, quality and professionalisation, public service interpreters were asked to answer a question on the adequacy of their remuneration. The main hypothesis was that the income of the second group of interpreters would be significantly lower than that of conference interpreters. As in the first survey, the question was formulated in such a way as to prevent respondents from leaving the questionnaire; to that end, no respondents were not asked to provide numerical information (figure 117):



**Figure 117:** interpreters' opinions on remuneration.

The results confirm the above assumption: only 12.1% ( $n = 108$ ) of respondents believe that public service interpreting is either “absolutely” or “a great deal” financially rewarding. 56.6% ( $n = 503$ ) of public service interpreters are not satisfied with their income, though there is a not insignificant percentage (31.2%,  $n = 277$ ) who are somewhat satisfied with their income. At statistical level, a Student's  $t$ -test ( $t = -1.97, p > 0.05$ ) revealed no statistical differences between men ( $n = 233, M = 3.52, SD = .96$ ) and women ( $n = 655, M = 3.67, SD = 1.01$ ) This result confirms that men and women have the same opinion about the remuneration of public service interpreting. The same could be said for different age groups, where no difference was found across the board ( $\chi^2 = 14.894, DF = 20, p > 0.05$ ), which suggests that younger and older generations are equally (dis)satisfied with their income. An interesting result emerged from the analysis of the countries, whose contingency table will only take into account the countries which obtained a minimum of ten responses. The answers were as follows (figure 118):

|                                    |                | Do you think that the remuneration of a public service interpreter is adequate? |              |                |            |            | Total |    |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|----|
|                                    |                | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |    |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia      | Count   | 0            | 1              | 6          | 14         | 11    | 32 |
|                                    | Expected count | ,9  | 2,9          | 9,5            | 10,2       | 8,5        | 32,0  |    |
|                                    | Austria        | Count   | 0            | 2              | 15         | 20         | 14    | 51 |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,5   | 4,6          | 15,1           | 16,3       | 13,5       | 51,0  |    |
|                                    | Belgium        | Count   | 2            | 8              | 19         | 21         | 12    | 62 |

|                          |                |      |      |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | 1,8  | 5,5  | 18,4  | 19,8  | 16,4  | 62,0  |
| Canada                   | Count          | 2    | 3    | 18    | 19    | 7     | 49    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,4  | 4,4  | 14,5  | 15,7  | 13,0  | 49,0  |
| Czech Republic           | Count          | 0    | 2    | 1     | 5     | 3     | 11    |
|                          | Expected count | ,3   | 1,0  | 3,3   | 3,5   | 2,9   | 11,0  |
| Denmark                  | Count          | 0    | 0    | 5     | 2     | 3     | 10    |
|                          | Expected count | ,3   | ,9   | 3,0   | 3,2   | 2,6   | 10,0  |
| Finland                  | Count          | 0    | 0    | 5     | 9     | 2     | 16    |
|                          | Expected count | ,5   | 1,4  | 4,7   | 5,1   | 4,2   | 16,0  |
| France                   | Count          | 0    | 5    | 10    | 14    | 9     | 38    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,1  | 3,4  | 11,3  | 12,1  | 10,1  | 38,0  |
| Germany                  | Count          | 0    | 1    | 6     | 3     | 8     | 18    |
|                          | Expected count | ,5   | 1,6  | 5,3   | 5,8   | 4,8   | 18,0  |
| Hungary                  | Count          | 0    | 3    | 3     | 3     | 3     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,4   | 1,1  | 3,6   | 3,8   | 3,2   | 12,0  |
| Italy                    | Count          | 1    | 1    | 7     | 14    | 18    | 41    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,2  | 3,7  | 12,2  | 13,1  | 10,9  | 41,0  |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 0    | 5    | 5     | 15    | 14    | 39    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,1  | 3,5  | 11,6  | 12,5  | 10,3  | 39,0  |
| Norway                   | Count          | 7    | 24   | 64    | 23    | 16    | 134   |
|                          | Expected count | 3,9  | 12,0 | 39,8  | 42,8  | 35,5  | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 0    | 0    | 5     | 16    | 11    | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | ,9   | 2,9  | 9,5   | 10,2  | 8,5   | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 2    | 0    | 5     | 2     | 3     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,4   | 1,1  | 3,6   | 3,8   | 3,2   | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 0    | 1    | 2     | 4     | 18    | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | ,7   | 2,2  | 7,4   | 8,0   | 6,6   | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 2    | 3    | 11    | 8     | 2     | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | ,8   | 2,3  | 7,7   | 8,3   | 6,9   | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 1    | 2    | 12    | 27    | 33    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,2  | 6,7  | 22,3  | 24,0  | 19,9  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 6    | 9    | 33    | 31    | 20    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,9  | 8,9  | 29,4  | 31,6  | 26,2  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 23   | 70   | 232   | 250   | 207   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 23,0 | 70,0 | 232,0 | 250,0 | 207,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 118:** contingency table analysing interpreters' remuneration depending on the country of residence.

As the table shows, there is general dissatisfaction across all countries concerning interpreters' remuneration. The only exception appears to be Norway, where more interpreters than expected say they are "a great deal" satisfied with their income. One possible reason for this high degree of satisfaction could be found in the recent positive developments that have taken place in this country as far as certification and recognition of the profession are concerned (IMDI report 2014). On the other hand, the UK has seen considerable discontent with the current state of the profession, due to the recent political measures adopted by the British government aiming to outsource court

interpreting services to private agencies. According to Slaney (2012), “outsourcing has proven to be detrimental to the sustainability and development of the public service profession, to the supply of qualified interpreters and translators, and to the delivery of justice. Unless remedial action is taken soon, it will take several years to restore the quality of interpreting services for the courts in the UK”. In this regard, one respondent commented that

In the UK, currently, the minimum level of qualification for interpreters is set at level 6 of the QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework): University Degree, BA, BSc. The real problem, and the most serious danger is represented by unscrupulous agencies that, for reasons both practical and economic, tend to use unqualified personnel, even in the most complex and delicate situations, like, for example, legal interpreting in Courts and Tribunals. This legal vacuum needs to be filled as soon as possible (Female, UK).

Apart from the situation in the UK, other comments referring to the fees interpreters are paid in other countries are illustrated below:

As a Czech & Slovak (and English of course) interpreter in Ireland I think that we are not paid what we should be paid to evaluate that we are pretty much working 24/7 and 365 days a year ...as my colleague said: "we are paid peanuts" for what should be paid ...working hours are unbelievable and the time on road isn't paid at all (at least here in Ireland) ...so, I can spend 4 hours (or sometimes more than that ...) on the road and the only remuneration I get is the mileage, which in the case of courts is not adequate for our effort and time spent on the road ...the other, quite interesting fact is, that in Ireland one cannot obtain a qualification in PSI, the only University which was providing this course is not teaching this profession anymore. I asked them why and their reply was: "Interpreters who did this course didn't find it any valuable for getting more work", because, anybody who speaks two languages can be an PSI in Ireland, even when you are a member of professional body (ITIA) it doesn't bring you more work...so, the closest course I can do to enhance my skills is in the UK or Northern Ireland (Female, Ireland).

I work in the injured worker industry, primarily, and it is fraught with legal regulations that tie provision of services and reimbursement thereof to the status of the case (denied, accepted, medical treatment authorized, etc.). It makes it a challenge for interpreters to be fairly remunerated for services rendered. In my opinion, interpreting services should be divorced from the facts and outcome of the case, much like legal interpreters get compensated whether the "criminal" is found guilty or innocent (Female, U.S.).

Non-conference interpreting is highly dependent upon government budgets; this is a major factor in its poor remuneration; this means it does not have a relationship to a market but to a bureaucracy, and all government funding is constantly under threat. A second major factor that affects standards and recognition is the constantly growing number of languages required, leading to newcomers to the field in small and emerging languages who have little professional socialisation and who are unlikely to receive adequate training (Male, Australia).

The above comments illustrate the problematic situation of interpreters, struggling to receive fair compensation for the services rendered. As the first respondent remarked, in Ireland (as in several other countries) the problem of compensation is intertwined with that of training: since students who attended courses of public service interpreting did not succeed in finding a job providing them

with adequate remuneration, training courses are no longer being offered. The second interpreter points out that, in the United States, the remuneration of an interpreter is closely dependent on the outcome of legal cases, which suggests that an interpreter’s rate can oscillate according to certain variables of the case. The last comments explain the issue of interpreters’ payment very clearly: on the one hand, public service interpreting is not linked to the private sector but on government budgets, which is why interpreters’ daily rates are usually lower than those of conference interpreters. On the other hand, the increasing number of the diverse languages required could hamper the provision of adequate training. Overall, what emerges from the data is that remuneration remains an issue to be dealt with in all countries, regardless of the progress made for the full recognition of the profession, a notion confirmed by statistical data on satisfaction with remuneration according to working settings. In this respect, no difference was found between healthcare, court, police and the other settings under scrutiny.

As far as the last variable is concerned, no statistical difference was found between interpreters with and without a degree in T&I, although a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 13.060$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and its related contingency table showed that respondents holding a postgraduate degree in T&I tend to be slightly more pessimistic than their colleagues (figure 119):

**Contingency table Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?/ Do you think that the remuneration of a public service interpreter is adequate?**

|   |                       |                | Do you think that the remuneration of a public service interpreter is adequate? |              |                |            |            | Total |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|
|   |                       |                | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES                   | Count          | 4   | 18           | 75             | 101        | 67         | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 6,6   | 25,1         | 84,5           | 90,1       | 58,8       | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count          | 15  | 61           | 187            | 188        | 120        | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 14,1  | 54,0         | 182,0          | 194,2      | 126,7      | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count          | 3   | 5            | 21             | 13         | 10         | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count | 1,3   | 4,9          | 16,6           | 17,7       | 11,5       | 52,0  |
| Total   | Count                 | 22             | 84  | 283          | 302            | 197        | 888        |       |
|   | Expected count        | 22,0           | 84,0  | 283,0        | 302,0          | 197,0      | 888,0      |       |

**Figure 119:** contingency table analysing interpreters’ remuneration depending on their level of education.

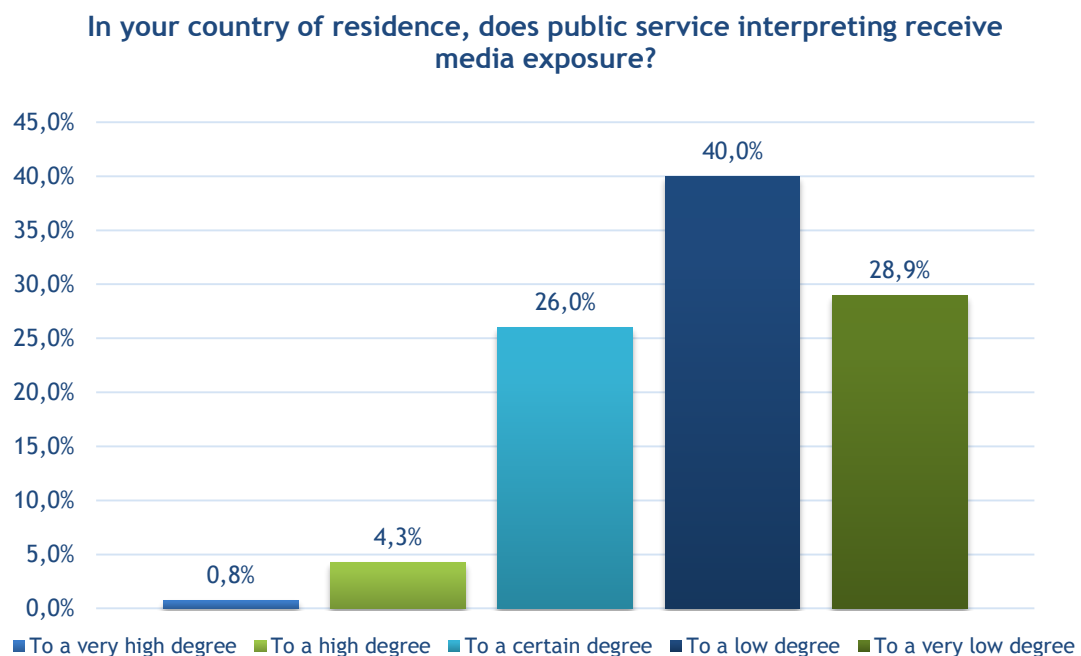
As the table shows, a higher number of respondents with no degree in translation and interpreting answered that they are “a great deal” satisfied with their income compared to the expected statistical count. One possible reason for the response pattern – which was present in the previous survey as well – is that interpreters holding a specialised degree have higher expectations for certain professional aspects, such as remuneration and working conditions. In general, the results obtained from the analysis of the section on income confirm the hypothesis formulated initially, i.e. that the remuneration of public service interpreting is still far from reflecting their amount of work,



dedication, competence and stress, which is why they are increasingly advocating fair remuneration, one fundamental step towards the full acknowledgement of the profession.

## 6. The Representation of Interpreting in the Mass Media

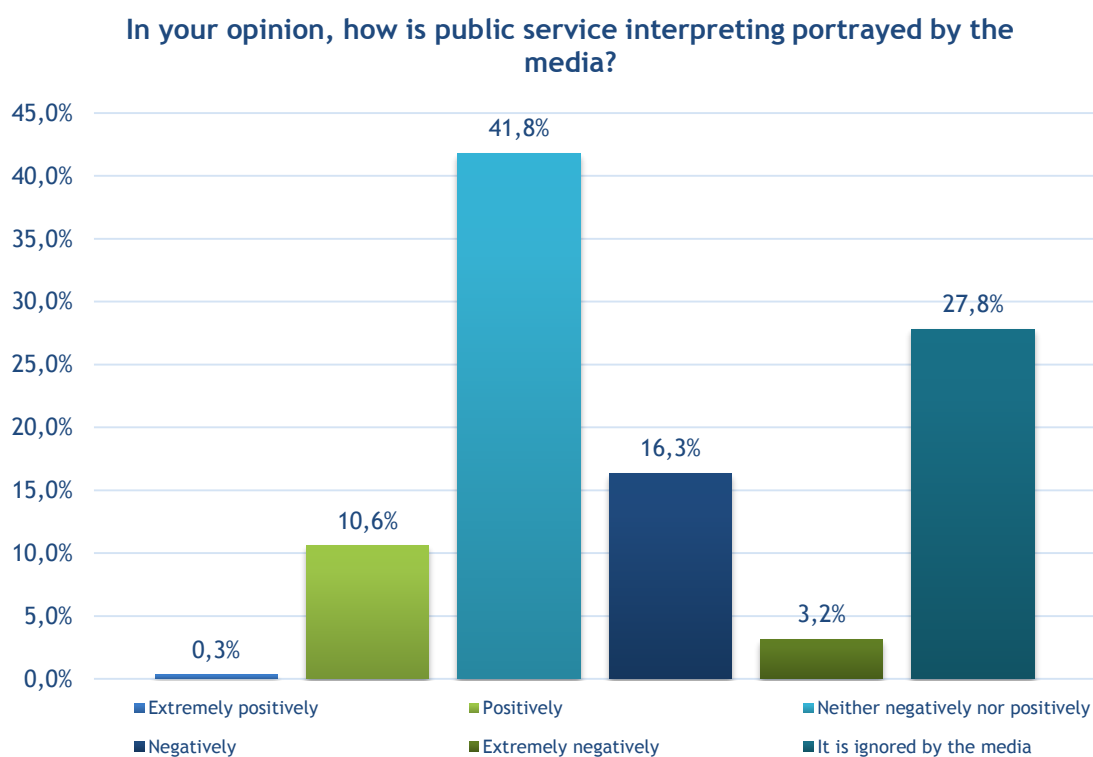
As in the field of conference interpreting, the way interpreters are portrayed in the mass media has rarely been an object of study. Yet, sociological literature has vastly investigated the ways in which the media refer to other professions, such as medicine and law (see chapter 4, paragraph 6). In the case of a semi-profession like nursing – with which public service interpreting has been compared (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011) – the sociological investigation of its representation in the mass media has proven fruitful to enhance the public image of the profession, thus prompting its professionalisation process. As sociologists Lewenson and Truglio-Londrigan argue, “since research shows that the media has such a strong influence on public understanding of nursing and health care in general, it is vital to nursing and public health that nurses improve their media image” (2008: 113). The results of their study show that the media offer a stereotyped image of nurses, which stems from deep-rooted gender biases; it is no accident that, a few years earlier, Lewenson coined the expression *nursism* to indicate a form of sexism referring to the caring role of women in society, which is why Buresh and Gordon (2006) suggest that nurses are harnessing the power of the social media to break the silence and come out of their invisibility, which is a path public service interpreters might have to follow to give a greater visibility to the profession. Hence, in order to shed some light on whether and how interpreters believe they are represented in the mass media, they were asked whether they believe that the profession receives media exposure in their country of residence (figure 120):



**Figure 120:** interpreters' considerations over the exposure of the profession in the mass media.

As the graph shows, only 5.1% of respondents (n = 45) believe that interpreting is represented in the media to a “very high” or to a “high” degree. A larger portion of respondents (26%, n = 231) answered “to a certain degree”, a smaller number of interpreters compared to the previous questionnaire. 68.9% (n = 612) of the interpreters interviewed answered negatively, as did conference interpreters in the first survey (62.7%, n = 505). A statistical analysis revealed no significant differences across the variables of gender ( $t = .570, p > 0.05$ ), age ( $\chi^2 = 17.909, DF = 25, p > 0.05$ ) and the two main working settings (healthcare  $\chi^2 = 22.307, DF = 20, p > 0.05$ ; courts  $\chi^2 = 19.906, DF = 20, p > 0.05$ ). As for the country of residence, certain interesting differences among countries were noted, which were confirmed by the results of the chi-square test indicating a huge difference in this respect ( $\chi^2 = 561.437, DF = 255, p < 0.05$ ). The countries in which the visibility of the profession in the mass media appears to be rather high are Norway and the UK. In the second case, the recent scandal caused by the outsourcing of interpreting services (especially in the legal field) has had a certain media resonance (Gentile P. *forthcoming*). Overall, the response pattern suggests that there is general agreement among interpreters that their media image is almost non-existent. In the analysis of this questionnaire section, the statistical analysis of the variables “level of education” and “experience in conference interpreting” was not deemed relevant.

The second question aimed to elicit information on the way interpreters believe that the profession is represented in the media. The answers were as follows (figure 121):



**Figure 121:** interpreters’ opinions on how the profession is represented in the media.

As the graph illustrates, only 10.9% ( $n = 97$ ) of respondents have a positive opinion on how the profession is represented in the media, a lower portion compared to the first survey (19.9%,  $n = 160$ ). The number of undecided respondents (41.8%,  $n = 371$ ) roughly corresponds to that of the previous questionnaire (46.8%,  $n = 377$ ). Nevertheless, 19.5% ( $n = 173$ ) of interpreters think that the profession is represented either “negatively” or “extremely negatively” by the media and a substantial number of them (27.8%,  $n = 247$ ) answered that the profession is utterly ignored. The last option was maintained to allow consistency between the two surveys. At statistical level, the observed difference between the responses given by men and women is significant ( $t = -.691, p < 0.05$ ) and shows that women are more pessimistic than men, as the table illustrates (figure 122):

|                      |                | Contingency table What is your gender?/ In your opinion, how is public service interpreting portrayed by the media? |            |                                   |            |                      |                            | Total |       |
|----------------------|----------------|---|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|
|                      |                | In your opinion, how is public service interpreting portrayed by the media?   |            |                                   |            |                      |                            |       |       |
|                      |                | Extremely positively  | Positively | Neither negatively nor positively | Negatively | Extremely negatively | It is ignored by the media |       |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE           | Count   | 1          | 44                                | 98         | 29                   | 6                          | 55    | 233   |
|                      |                | Expected count  | 1,0        | 31,2                              | 96,0       | 44,3                 | 6,3                        | 54,1  |       |
|                      | FEMALE         | Count   | 3          | 75                                | 268        | 140                  | 18                         | 151   | 655   |
|                      |                | Expected count  | 3,0        | 87,8                              | 270,0      | 124,7                | 17,7                       | 151,9 | 655,0 |
| Total                | Count          | 4   | 119        | 366                               | 169        | 24                   | 206                        | 888   |       |
|                      | Expected count | 4,0   | 119,0      | 366,0                             | 169,0      | 24,0                 | 206,0                      | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 122:** contingency table comparing the opinions of male and female interpreters on how the profession is represented in the media.

The trend shown in the table is consistent with that of the first survey, which showed that female interpreters tended to be more downhearted than men. As for the variables of age ( $\chi^2 = 18.970, DF = 25, p > 0.05$ ) and level of education ( $\chi^2 = 4.549, DF = 10, p > 0.05$ ), no significant differences were found. A significant difference was, however, found among countries (figure 123):

|                         |           | Contingency table What is your country of residence? * In your opinion, how is public service interpreting portrayed by the media? |            |                                   |            |                      |                            | Tot. |      |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------|------|
|                         |           | In your opinion, how is public service interpreting portrayed by the media?  |            |                                   |            |                      |                            |      |      |
|                         |           | Extremely positively   | Positively | Neither negatively nor positively | Negatively | Extremely negatively | It is ignored by the media |      |      |
| What is your country of | Australia | Count  | 0          | 4                                 | 14         | 2                    | 0                          | 12   | 32   |
|                         |           | Expected count   | ,0         | 3,2                               | 13,0       | 5,8                  | 1,1                        | 8,9  | 32,0 |
|                         | Austria   | Count  | 0          | 3                                 | 16         | 13                   | 1                          | 18   | 51   |

## The Status of Public Service Interpreters

|                 |                |    |      |      |      |     |      |       |
|-----------------|----------------|----|------|------|------|-----|------|-------|
| residence?      | Expected count | ,1 | 5,1  | 20,7 | 9,2  | 1,8 | 14,2 | 51,0  |
| Belgium         | Count          | 0  | 12   | 21   | 3    | 1   | 25   | 62    |
|                 | Expected count | ,1 | 6,2  | 25,2 | 11,2 | 2,1 | 17,2 | 62,0  |
| Canada          | Count          | 0  | 10   | 23   | 1    | 1   | 14   | 49    |
|                 | Expected count | ,1 | 4,9  | 19,9 | 8,8  | 1,7 | 13,6 | 49,0  |
| Czech Republic  | Count          | 0  | 3    | 4    | 0    | 0   | 4    | 11    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 1,1  | 4,5  | 2,0  | ,4  | 3,1  | 11,0  |
| Denmark         | Count          | 0  | 0    | 5    | 3    | 0   | 2    | 10    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 1,0  | 4,1  | 1,8  | ,3  | 2,8  | 10,0  |
| Finland         | Count          | 0  | 2    | 7    | 4    | 0   | 3    | 16    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 1,6  | 6,5  | 2,9  | ,6  | 4,4  | 16,0  |
| France          | Count          | 0  | 2    | 17   | 3    | 0   | 16   | 38    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 3,8  | 15,5 | 6,9  | 1,3 | 10,5 | 38,0  |
| Germany         | Count          | 0  | 2    | 7    | 2    | 0   | 7    | 18    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 1,8  | 7,3  | 3,2  | ,6  | 5,0  | 18,0  |
| Hungary         | Count          | 0  | 1    | 5    | 0    | 0   | 6    | 12    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 1,2  | 4,9  | 2,2  | ,4  | 3,3  | 12,0  |
| Italy           | Count          | 0  | 4    | 15   | 2    | 0   | 20   | 41    |
|                 | Expected count | ,1 | 4,1  | 16,7 | 7,4  | 1,4 | 11,4 | 41,0  |
| The Netherlands | Count          | 0  | 1    | 20   | 2    | 1   | 15   | 39    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 3,9  | 15,9 | 7,0  | 1,3 | 10,8 | 39,0  |
| Norway          | Count          | 0  | 8    | 53   | 53   | 6   | 14   | 134   |
|                 | Expected count | ,2 | 13,4 | 54,5 | 24,2 | 4,6 | 37,2 | 134,0 |
| Poland          | Count          | 0  | 0    | 14   | 1    | 0   | 17   | 32    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 3,2  | 13,0 | 5,8  | 1,1 | 8,9  | 32,0  |
| Romania         | Count          | 0  | 1    | 5    | 1    | 0   | 5    | 12    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 1,2  | 4,9  | 2,2  | ,4  | 3,3  | 12,0  |
| Spain           | Count          | 0  | 2    | 6    | 8    | 3   | 6    | 25    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 2,5  | 10,2 | 4,5  | ,9  | 6,9  | 25,0  |
| Sweden          | Count          | 0  | 3    | 15   | 7    | 0   | 1    | 26    |
|                 | Expected count | ,0 | 2,6  | 10,6 | 4,7  | ,9  | 7,2  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom  | Count          | 0  | 3    | 23   | 27   | 13  | 9    | 75    |
|                 | Expected count | ,1 | 7,5  | 30,5 | 13,5 | 2,6 | 20,8 | 75,0  |

|                          |                |     |      |       |       |      |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| United States of America | Count          | 1   | 17   | 48    | 9     | 1    | 23    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | ,1  | 9,9  | 40,3  | 17,9  | 3,4  | 27,5  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 1   | 78   | 318   | 141   | 27   | 217   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 1,0 | 78,0 | 318,0 | 141,0 | 27,0 | 217,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 123:** contingency table comparing the opinions of male and female interpreters on how the profession is represented in the media.

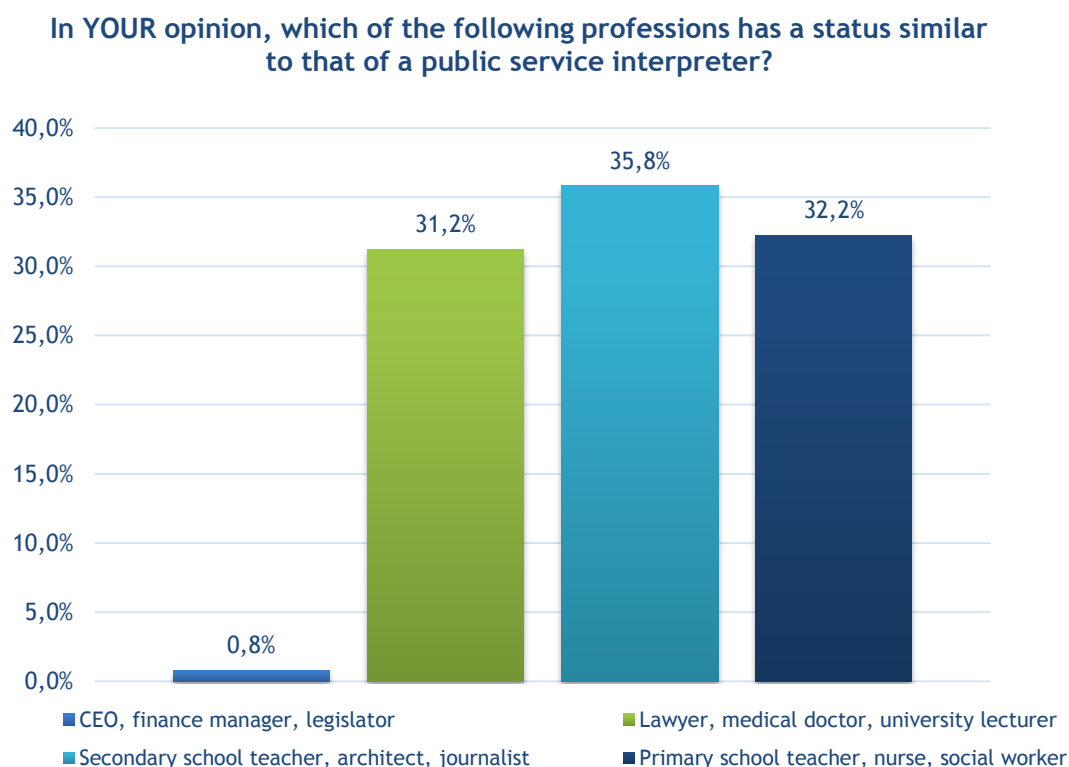
The table shows that Belgium and Canada are the countries where the profession appears to enjoy a positive media image, whereas the most pessimistic countries are the UK and, perhaps surprisingly, Norway. The results of the two questions indicate that several similarities can be found between conference and public service interpreters, in that both groups answered that the interpreting profession is not much represented in the media and, where it is, it suffers from a negative popular image. However, studies on the nursing profession revealed that, recently, filmmakers have started to see nurses as passionate, intelligent and educated professionals, and that this may have repercussions on the way nurses see themselves (Ross-Kerr & Wood 2014). Likewise, several raising-awareness campaigns on the importance of public service interpreters have been organised. For example, the academic staff of the Glendon Master in Conference Interpreting, Canada – a country which appears to be optimistic about its media representation – released videos on the importance of a professional healthcare interpreter entitled “A Clear Voice for Those in Need”.<sup>40</sup> In addition, for some years now, the Master in Public Service Interpreting of the University of Alcalá de Henares has been organising the “Global E-Party en TISP” on the social media, a three-day online debate about the importance of interpreting in public services and its related issues and ethical dilemmas (Cedillo Corrochano, *forthcoming*). These are just a few examples bearing witness to the interpreters’ greater awareness of the impact that a positive media image can have on the enhancement of the profession. The importance of communicating through the social media has been advanced by Fraser who, in his book *The Nurse’s Social Media Advantage: How Making Connections and Sharing Ideas can Enhance your Nursing Career* (2011), underlines that, by virtue of the supposed subservience and invisibility generally attributed to nurses, this professional category has tended to shy away from the media, a gap which has been filled by other professionals. The same could be said to have happened for interpreters, which is why constructing a positive media image could help raise awareness on the important social function of the interpreting profession.

## 7. Status

As in the first survey, the analysis of interpreters’ self-perception of status will be carried out through the lens of the symbolic-interactionist theoretical framework (Brym & Lie 2006). The main objective of this approach is to assess the extent to which public service interpreters perceive

<sup>40</sup> The videos are available at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hF2UiQREWD0&list=PLJ6k51ufRtUGenJv2wKOrWQrs\\_VPAc6r0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hF2UiQREWD0&list=PLJ6k51ufRtUGenJv2wKOrWQrs_VPAc6r0)

themselves as highly-esteemed professionals. The results of the first questionnaire showed that there is a certain degree of status discrepancy between the way conference interpreters perceive themselves and the way they believe others see them; while, on the one hand, conference interpreters attributed themselves the same status as medical doctors and university lecturers (56.5%, n = 455), on the other they thought that this view was not widespread in society at large, which is why 59.5% of respondents (n = 479) answered that the general population saw them as belonging to the same category as secondary school teachers and journalists, two controversial professions whose full professionalism has long been discussed by sociologists (see chapter 2). Nevertheless, as research has shown that public service interpreters do not enjoy high status, one possible hypothesis was that the second group would give more consistent answers, thus presenting a lower degree of status discrepancy. For the sake of consistency, the groups of professions drawn from the ISCO Classification of Occupations were used. The results are as follows (figure 124):



**Figure 124:** public service interpreters' self-perception of status.

The table presents a result confirming only partially the initial hypothesis. Unsurprisingly, 0.8% (n = 7) of respondents chose the first option, which was largely ignored in the first survey as well (1.5%, n = 12). A not insignificant number of respondents (31.2%, n= 277) answered that the professional status of public service interpreters is comparable to that of fully-fledged professionals, such as lawyers, medical doctors and university lecturers. One possible reason for this response pattern is these respondents also work in the conference sector. 35.8% (n = 318) of respondents

compared themselves to secondary school teachers, architects and journalists, an encouraging signal indicating growing awareness of the enormous potential of public service interpreting. Moreover, the result is not much different from that obtained from the first survey for the same parameter (39.3%,  $n = 316$ ). However, there is still a large portion of respondents (32.2%,  $n = 286$ ) who believe that their status is akin to that of semi-professions such as nursing and social work, an answer which is consistent with the theories postulated by Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger (2011). To elucidate the above response pattern, a statistical analysis was carried out on the basis of six independent variables (gender, age, country of residence, level of education, experience in conference interpreting and working settings). The analysis of the first variable goes against the trend of the first survey (figure 125):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/ In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |                |   |   |   |  |       |       |
|---|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|   |                | In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|   |                | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| What is your gender?  | MALE           | Count   | 3   | 58  | 78   | 94    | 233   |
|   |                | Expected count  | 2,1   | 64,3  | 81,1   | 85,5  | 233,0 |
|   | FEMALE         | Count   | 5   | 187   | 231  | 232   | 655   |
|   |                | Expected count  | 5,9   | 180,7   | 227,9  | 240,5 | 655,0 |
| Total   | Count          | 8   | 245   | 309   | 326  | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count | 8,0   | 245,0                                       | 309,0   | 326,0  | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 125:** contingency table showing the relationship between gender and self-perception of status.

Although the result of the chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 2.650$ ,  $DF = 3$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and a Student's  $t$ -test ( $t = 1.203$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) shows that there is no significant difference between the variables, the contingency table shows that women are slightly more optimistic than men, which indicates an inverted trend compared to the first survey, where women displayed a higher degree of pessimism. As far as the variable "age" is concerned, certain differences were found among age groups ( $\chi^2 = 25.598$ ,  $DF = 15$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) (figure 126):

| Contingency table What is your age group?/ In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |             |   |   |   |  |       |       |
|--|-------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|  |             | In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|  |             | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| What is your age group?  | 18-25 years | Count   | 1   | 3   | 5  | 1     | 10    |
|  |             | Expected count  | ,1  | 2,8   | 3,5  | 3,7   | 10,0  |
|  | 26-35       | Count   | 0   | 43  | 52   | 37    | 132   |
|  |             | Expected count  | 1,2   | 36,4  | 45,9   | 48,5  | 132,0 |
|  | 36-45       | Count   | 2   | 74  | 84   | 86    | 246   |

|       |                |     |       |       |       |       |
|-------|----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|       | Expected count | 2,2 | 67,9  | 85,6  | 90,3  | 246,0 |
| 46-55 | Count          | 2   | 70    | 79    | 110   | 261   |
|       | Expected count | 2,4 | 72,0  | 90,8  | 95,8  | 261,0 |
| 56-65 | Count          | 2   | 42    | 63    | 67    | 174   |
|       | Expected count | 1,6 | 48,0  | 60,5  | 63,9  | 174,0 |
| 65+   | Count          | 1   | 13    | 26    | 25    | 65    |
|       | Expected count | ,6  | 17,9  | 22,6  | 23,9  | 65,0  |
| Total | Count          | 8   | 245   | 309   | 326   | 888   |
|       | Expected count | 8,0 | 245,0 | 309,0 | 326,0 | 888,0 |

**Figure 126:** contingency table showing the relationship between age and self-perception of status.

The results confirm the trend which already emerged in the first survey: younger generations tend to attribute a higher professional status to public service interpreting. The difference indicated by the chi-square test is statistically significant but, considering that 37.5% of the cells had an expected count lower than 5, a Fisher's exact test was performed. The test confirmed the difference among the cells, which means that the greater awareness raised by the ever-growing body of literature published on the questions related to public service interpreting has led to a greater understanding of the topicality of the profession in T&I students. The third variable analysed is "country of residence", whose investigation aims to determine whether perceptions of status change from country to country. A chi-square test showed a significant difference between the countries ( $\chi^2 = 76.304$ ,  $DF = 54$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), as can be seen in the contingency table (figure 127):

| Contingency table What is your country of residence? * In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |                |   |   |   |  |       |
|--|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|
| What is your country of residence?   |                | In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |
|  |                | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
| Australia  | Count          | 0   | 10  | 10  | 12   | 32    |
|  | Expected count | ,3  | 9,6   | 11,5  | 10,7   | 32,0  |
| Austria  | Count          | 0   | 19  | 15  | 17   | 51    |
|  | Expected count | ,5  | 15,3  | 18,3  | 17,0   | 51,0  |
| Belgium  | Count          | 0   | 9   | 26  | 27   | 62    |
|  | Expected count | ,6  | 18,6  | 22,2  | 20,7   | 62,0  |
| Canada   | Count          | 0   | 8   | 16  | 25   | 49    |
|  | Expected count | ,4  | 14,7  | 17,5  | 16,4   | 49,0  |
| Czech Republic   | Count          | 0   | 3   | 6   | 2  | 11    |
|  | Expected count | ,1  | 3,3   | 3,9   | 3,7  | 11,0  |
| Denmark  | Count          | 0   | 4   | 2   | 4  | 10    |
|  | Expected count | ,1  | 3,0   | 3,6   | 3,3  | 10,0  |
| Finland  | Count          | 0   | 3   | 6   | 7  | 16    |
|  | Expected count | ,1  | 4,8   | 5,7   | 5,3  | 16,0  |
| France   | Count          | 1   | 15  | 16  | 6  | 38    |



|                          |                |     |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | ,3  | 11,4  | 13,6  | 12,7  | 38,0  |
| Germany                  | Count          | 0   | 5     | 8     | 5     | 18    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 5,4   | 6,4   | 6,0   | 18,0  |
| Hungary                  | Count          | 0   | 3     | 7     | 2     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,1  | 3,6   | 4,3   | 4,0   | 12,0  |
| Italy                    | Count          | 1   | 11    | 12    | 17    | 41    |
|                          | Expected count | ,4  | 12,3  | 14,7  | 13,7  | 41,0  |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 0   | 13    | 18    | 8     | 39    |
|                          | Expected count | ,3  | 11,7  | 14,0  | 13,0  | 39,0  |
| Norway                   | Count          | 2   | 30    | 51    | 51    | 134   |
|                          | Expected count | 1,2 | 40,1  | 48,0  | 44,7  | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 1   | 17    | 12    | 2     | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | ,3  | 9,6   | 11,5  | 10,7  | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 0   | 7     | 3     | 2     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,1  | 3,6   | 4,3   | 4,0   | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 0   | 5     | 1     | 19    | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 6,7   | 8,4   | 9,7   | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 0   | 6     | 12    | 8     | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 7,8   | 9,3   | 8,7   | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 1   | 19    | 25    | 30    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | ,7  | 22,4  | 26,9  | 25,0  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 1   | 41    | 30    | 27    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | ,9  | 29,6  | 35,4  | 33,0  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 7   | 234   | 280   | 261   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 7,0 | 234,0 | 280,0 | 261,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 127:** contingency table showing the relationship between country of residence and self-perception of status.

Differences between countries may be attributed to the level of professionalisation achieved in different parts of the world. The most optimistic respondents who believe that interpreting enjoys high status come from Austria, France, Poland and the United States. On the other hand, the countries whose responses oscillate between the third and the fourth option are Belgium, Canada, Norway and the United Kingdom, a response pattern suggesting that, in these countries, the status of interpreters moves from low to middling, and, therefore, follows a growing curve. In other countries, such as Italy and Spain, the responses concentrated in the lowest option, which indicates that the two countries still have a long way to go to improve the status of public service interpreting. The trend of the last two countries is also confirmed by recent publications (Sandrelli 2011; Valero-Garcés 2014a; 2014b) underlining that the degree of professionalisation of all the working settings of public service interpreting is still low. It is true even in the legal field, which is well developed in other countries.

As far as the variable “level of education” is concerned, the hypothesis was that respondents with a postgraduate degree in translation and interpreting attribute to themselves a higher status than their colleagues. The answers were as follows (figure 128):

| Contingency table Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?/ In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |                       |   |                                  |   |   |  |       |
|--|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--|-------|
|  |                       | In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |                                  |   |   | Total  |       |
|  |                       |   | CEO, finance manager, legislator | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?  | YES                   | Count   | 0                                | 86  | 88  | 91   | 265   |
|  |                       | Expected count  | 2,4                              | 73,1  | 92,2  | 97,3   | 265,0 |
|  | NO                    | Count   | 7                                | 147   | 200   | 217  | 571   |
|  |                       | Expected count  | 5,1                              | 157,5                                       | 198,7   | 209,6  | 571,0 |
|  | I don't have a degree | Count   | 1                                | 12  | 21  | 18   | 52    |
|  |                       | Expected count  | ,5                               | 14,3  | 18,1  | 19,1   | 52,0  |
| Total  | Count                 | 8   | 245                              | 309   | 326   | 888  |       |
|  | Expected count        | 8,0   | 245,0                            | 309,0                                       | 326,0   | 888,0  |       |

**Figure 128:** contingency table showing the relationship between interpreters’ level of education and self-perception of status.

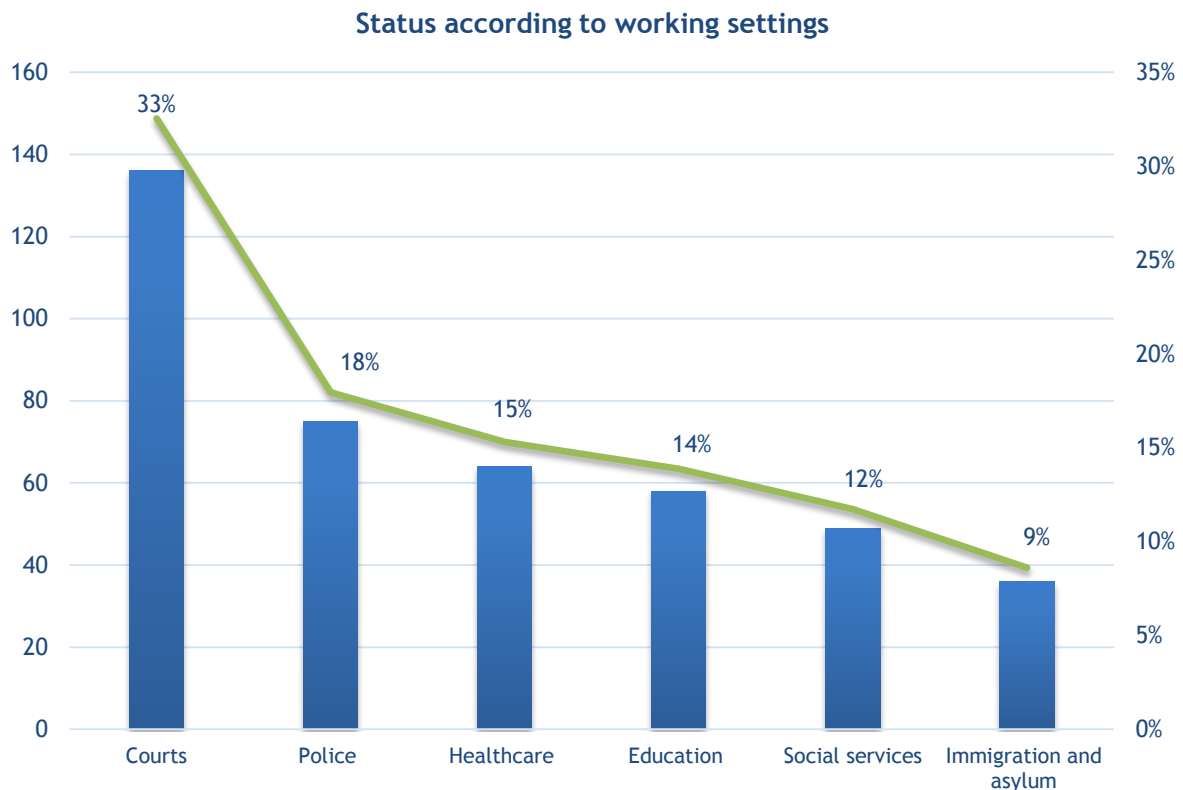
The hypothesis appears to be confirmed. The chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 8.416$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) shows that the difference is not significant, although respondents with a postgraduate degree in translation and interpreting appear to be more self-confident. The results indicate that higher education in this field leads to greater self-awareness of interpreters in terms of self-perception of status. Another possible driving force behind the response trend could be that several interpreters also work in conference settings, as shown in the table below (figure 129):

| Contingency table Have you ever worked in conference settings?/ In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |       |   |                                  |   |   |  |       |
|---|-------|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--|-------|
|   |       | In YOUR opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |                                  |   |   | Total  |       |
|   |       |   | CEO, finance manager, legislator | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
| Have you ever worked in conference settings?  | YES   | Count   | 1                                | 146   | 166   | 169  | 482   |
|   |       | Expected count  | 4,3                              | 133,0                                       | 167,7   | 177,0  | 482,0 |
|   | NO    | Count   | 7                                | 99  | 143   | 157  | 406   |
|   |       | Expected count  | 3,7                              | 112,0                                       | 141,3   | 149,0  | 406,0 |
|   | Total | Count   | 8                                | 245   | 309   | 326  | 888   |
|   |       | Expected count  | 8,0                              | 245,0                                       | 309,0   | 326,0  | 888,0 |

**Figure 129:** contingency table showing the relationship between interpreters’ experience in conference settings and self-perception of status.

In this case, a chi-square test revealed that the relationship between the variables is statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 9.233$ ,  $DF = 3$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), which indicates that interpreters working in both sectors

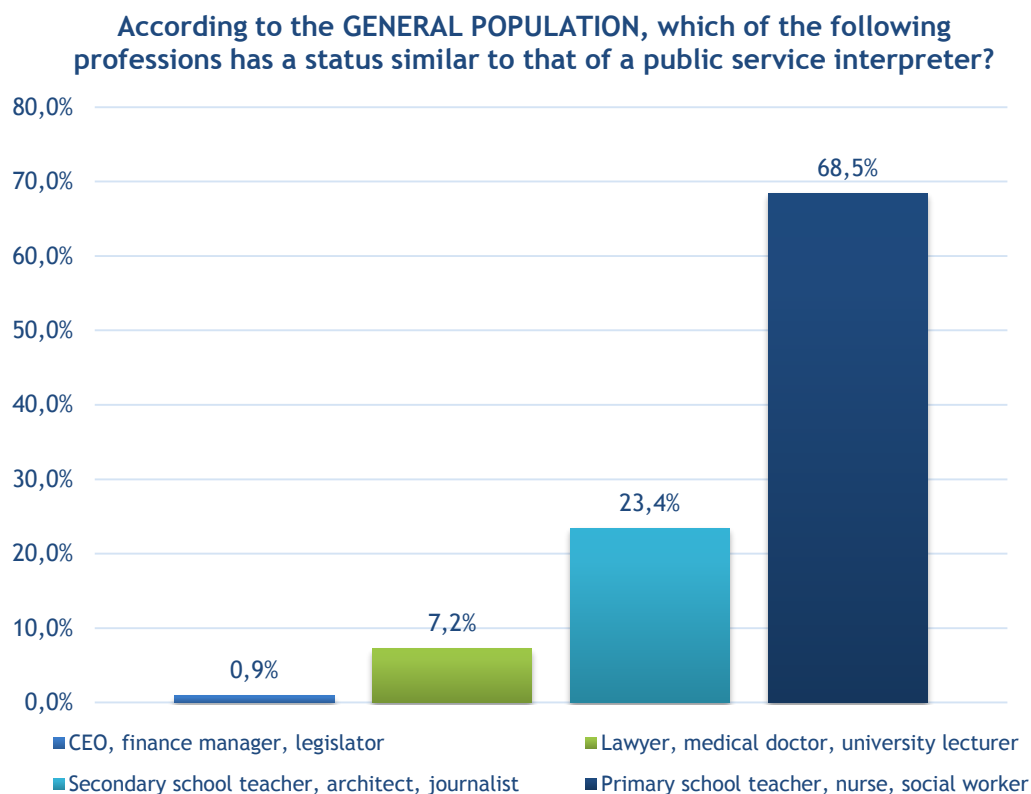
are more self-confident and attribute to themselves a higher status. The hypothesis could be said to be confirmed. Another possible hypothesis of this question was that self-perception of status also depends on the settings in which public service interpreters work. Data shows that there is a huge difference between healthcare interpreters and court interpreters, with the latter attributing themselves a higher status, as the graph shows (figure 130):



**Figure 130:** public service interpreters' self-perception of status depending on the settings in which they work.

The graph was created by summing the mean scores of respondents who declared they work in each of the above settings either as “first” or “second” contexts. The data shows that interpreters working mainly in legal settings (courts and police) see themselves as high-status professionals. However, despite the high current relevance of professional interpreters in asylum settings (Maryns 2016), this group appears not to enjoy a high status. Overall, the results of the first question on status indicate that women, younger generations, respondents with a postgraduate degree in T&I and those who also work in conference settings are more confident in their self-perception of status. A higher percentage of court interpreters regards its status as fairly high, although the results highly depend on the interpreters' country of residence.

The second question on status aims to elicit information on the way public service interpreters believe that others see them, i.e. the *looking-glass self*. The results were as follows (figure 131):



**Figure 131:** public service interpreters’ opinions on how they believe society sees them.

The graph confirms the initial assumption that the general public sees interpreters as low-status professionals. Indeed, although interpreters tend to perceive themselves as practitioners with an average status, 68.5% (n= 608) respondents are aware that society does not fully acknowledge their professionalism. The data is also consistent with the assumptions put forward by Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger (2011), who compare public service interpreters with nurses (see also chapter 2, paragraph 3.3), which means that the sociological features making them full professionals are not fully developed. This is confirmed by the data obtained in the sections on training (which is still underdeveloped or lacking altogether in certain countries) and remuneration, which confirmed that respondents are highly dissatisfied with their income in the field of public service interpreting. At statistical level, non-significant differences were found between men (n = 233, M = 3.46, SD = .79) and women (n = 655, M = 3.55, SD = .77) according to a *t*-test ( $t = -1.497, p > 0.05$ ), although men appear to be slightly more self-assured than women, as shown in the table below (figure 132):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/ According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |   |   |  |       |
|---|---|---|--|-------|
| According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter?   |   |   |  | Total |
| CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
|   |   |   |  |       |

|                      |                |                |      |       |       |       |       |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| What is your gender? | MALE           | Count          | 3    | 26    | 61    | 143   | 233   |
|                      |                | Expected count | 2,1  | 16,8  | 54,6  | 159,5 | 233,0 |
|                      | FEMALE         | Count          | 5    | 38    | 147   | 465   | 655   |
|                      |                | Expected count | 5,9  | 47,2  | 153,4 | 448,5 | 655,0 |
| Total                | Count          | 8              | 64   | 208   | 608   | 888   |       |
|                      | Expected count | 8,0            | 64,0 | 208,0 | 608,0 | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 132:** contingency table showing the differences in men and women's considerations of external status.

As the table shows, men tend to be more confident about their status as perceived by society at large, a trend which is also present in the first survey. As for age ( $\chi^2 = 23.738$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), no statistical difference was found. As far as the country of residence is concerned, the answers were as follows (figure 133):

|                                    |                 | Contingency table What is your country of residence? * According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |   |   |  |      | Total |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--|---|---|--|------|-------|
|                                    |                 | According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter?  |   |   |  |      |       |
|                                    |                 | CEO, finance manager, legislator   | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |      |       |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia       | Count  | 0   | 0   | 3  | 29   | 32    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,2  | 2,0   | 6,8  | 23,0 | 32,0  |
|                                    | Austria         | Count  | 1   | 1   | 14   | 35   | 51    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,4  | 3,3   | 10,8   | 36,6 | 51,0  |
|                                    | Belgium         | Count  | 0   | 2   | 14   | 46   | 62    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,5  | 4,0   | 13,1   | 44,5 | 62,0  |
|                                    | Canada          | Count  | 0   | 4   | 6  | 39   | 49    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,4  | 3,1   | 10,3   | 35,2 | 49,0  |
|                                    | Czech Republic  | Count  | 0   | 3   | 5  | 3    | 11    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,1  | ,7  | 2,3  | 7,9  | 11,0  |
|                                    | Denmark         | Count  | 0   | 0   | 3  | 7    | 10    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,1  | ,6  | 2,1  | 7,2  | 10,0  |
|                                    | Finland         | Count  | 0   | 0   | 4  | 12   | 16    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,1  | 1,0   | 3,4  | 11,5 | 16,0  |
|                                    | France          | Count  | 0   | 8   | 7  | 23   | 38    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,3  | 2,4   | 8,0  | 27,3 | 38,0  |
|                                    | Germany         | Count  | 0   | 1   | 4  | 13   | 18    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,1  | 1,2   | 3,8  | 12,9 | 18,0  |
|                                    | Hungary         | Count  | 0   | 1   | 6  | 5    | 12    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,1  | ,8  | 2,5  | 8,6  | 12,0  |
|                                    | Italy           | Count  | 2   | 1   | 8  | 30   | 41    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,3  | 2,6   | 8,7  | 29,4 | 41,0  |
|                                    | The Netherlands | Count  | 0   | 0   | 12   | 27   | 39    |
|                                    |                 | Expected count   | ,3  | 2,5   | 8,2  | 28,0 | 39,0  |
|                                    | Norway          | Count  | 1   | 0   | 29   | 104  | 134   |

|                          |                |     |      |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | 1,0 | 8,6  | 28,3  | 96,1  | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 1   | 9    | 13    | 9     | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 2,0  | 6,8   | 23,0  | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 0   | 4    | 3     | 5     | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,1  | ,8   | 2,5   | 8,6   | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 0   | 3    | 1     | 21    | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 1,6  | 5,3   | 17,9  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 0   | 0    | 3     | 23    | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | ,2  | 1,7  | 5,5   | 18,7  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 0   | 7    | 12    | 56    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | ,6  | 4,8  | 15,8  | 53,8  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 1   | 6    | 18    | 74    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | ,8  | 6,3  | 20,9  | 71,0  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 6   | 50   | 165   | 561   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 6,0 | 50,0 | 165,0 | 561,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 133:** contingency table showing the distribution of responses on status in the selected countries.

The chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 142.534$ ,  $DF = 54$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) showed that there is a significant difference among countries, although the response pattern seems to be rather evenly distributed with the exception of Poland and Romania, where the trend seems to go upwards, and Norway. Nevertheless, in most countries, the fact that responses tend to concentrate in the third option as well is a sign indicating the rising status of the profession, especially in Austria, Belgium, Romania and The Netherlands. The comments below might help understand some of the reasons why public service interpreting still lacks appreciation. The first and the second comments coming from Norway<sup>41</sup> reveal that there is a problem of unfair competition in the country, which comes from interpreters behaving unethically, and advocate the need for a greater recognition not only of an interpreter's training, but also of his/her fields of specialisation. The last comment explains the problem of outsourcing more in detail and underlines that one of the most common issues in public service interpreting is not only related to a lack of training in all languages, but also to the conditions in which interpreters work.

Since most interpreters are freelancers, interpreters compete with each other. The unethical behavior of some interpreters towards other interpreters does not enhance the status of the profession, and the competitive nature of the profession makes the professional associations less effective. People who work as interpreters and who may regard certain candidates as competitors, should not be allowed to arrange examinations. The importance of an interpreter's academic qualifications other than those acquired through courses in interpretation (such as knowledge of law, medicine, accounting, etc.) must be acknowledged. Lists of interpreters (used by courts and found on the internet) ought to state each interpreter's special qualifications (Female, Norway).

<sup>41</sup> The data obtained from this question show that, although Norway has made substantial progress in the professionalisation of public service interpreting, much needs to be done to enhance the social recognition of the profession.

I love my job, but the interpreter's status is extremely low in Norway. In order to be an interpreter you don't need any studies or training, so I'm competing with people that have no moral and ethical standards, let alone qualifications. We do have a national certification process and as a certified interpreter my title is protected by law. I hope the future will bring more awareness (Female, Norway).

Unfortunately the powers that be are not in the least concerned about enhancing the status of public service interpreters. Cost cutting is the name of the game (Female, UK).

The biggest problem, perhaps, is the lack of educated interpreters in all languages, the use of uneducated immigrants and so called two markets - the requirement of creating one's own private company but leaving the rates at the level of employed freelancers. Big companies do not appreciate their subcontractors and as business owners, nobody protects your rights. With rare languages there might be only 1-10 hours of work in a month, even less, but still one must have his own company in order to work. Such company does not last very long time. Many public interpreters have another job but then it is hard to be available for interpreting assignments. Often the interpreters are chosen by the place they live, not by professionalism. The travelling costs easily rise above the interpreting fee (Female, Finland).

The comments underline the crucial importance of acquiring more detailed information on the interpreter's level of training (figure 134):

| Contingency table Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?/According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |     |   |                                  |   |   |  |       |
|---|-----|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--|-------|
|   |     | According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |                                  |   |   | Total  |       |
|   |     |   | CEO, finance manager, legislator | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?   | YES | Count   | 0                                | 20  | 73  | 172  | 265   |
|   |     | Expected count  | 2,4                              | 19,1  | 62,1  | 181,4  | 265,0 |
|   | NO  | Count   | 7                                | 42  | 115   | 407  | 571   |
|   |     | Expected count  | 5,1                              | 41,2  | 133,7   | 391,0  | 571,0 |
| I don't have a degree   |     | Count   | 1                                | 2   | 20  | 29   | 52    |
|   |     | Expected count  | ,5                               | 3,7   | 12,2  | 35,6   | 52,0  |
| Total   |     | Count   | 8                                | 64  | 208   | 608  | 888   |
|   |     | Expected count  | 8,0                              | 64,0  | 208,0   | 608,0  | 888,0 |

**Figure 134:** contingency table showing the differences between respondents with and without an MA degree as regards their external perception of status.

Although few respondents ticked the highest status option, a higher number of respondents with an MA in translation and interpreting chose the average status option, which indicates that a higher level of education leads to a greater self-assurance not only in the way interpreters see themselves, but also in the way they think society views them. Indeed, the chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 16.482$ , DF = 6,

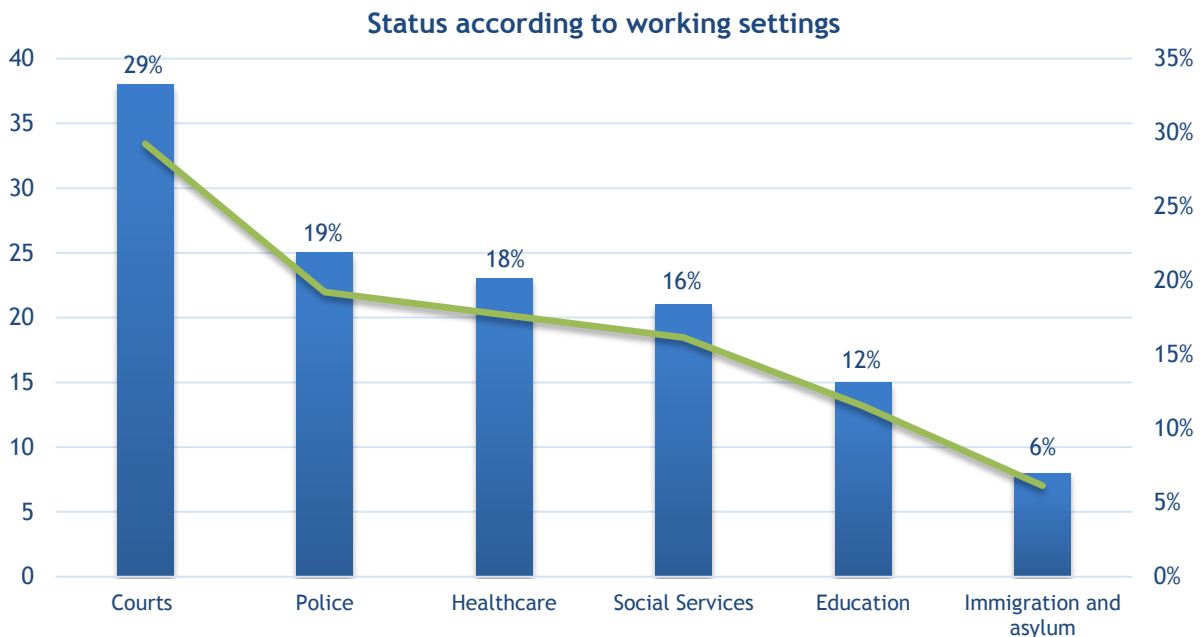
$p < 0.05$ ) reveals that there is a substantial difference between the groups. Since several respondents with an MA in translation and interpreting also work in conference settings, another variable worth analysing is related to their experience as conference interpreters (figure 135):

**Contingency table Have you ever worked in conference settings?/ According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter?**

|  |                | According to the GENERAL POPULATION, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter? |   |   |  | Total |       |
|--|----------------|---|---|---|--|-------|-------|
|  |                | CEO, finance manager, legislator  | Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer | Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist | Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker |       |       |
| Have you ever worked in conference settings? | YES            | Count   | 3   | 32  | 117  | 330   | 482   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 4,3   | 34,7  | 112,9  | 330,0 | 482,0 |
|  | NO             | Count   | 5   | 32  | 91   | 278   | 406   |
|  |                | Expected count  | 3,7   | 29,3  | 95,1   | 278,0 | 406,0 |
| Total  | Count          | 8   | 64  | 208   | 608  | 888   |       |
|  | Expected count | 8,0   | 64,0  | 208,0   | 608,0  | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 135:** contingency table showing the differences according to interpreters’ experience in conference settings.

A chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 1.705$ ,  $DF = 3$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no statistical difference between the two groups, which suggests that, although interpreters have a high consideration of their own status regardless of the setting in which they work, they believe that society still fails to acknowledge its importance. The distribution of positive responses according to working settings – which put together the responses obtained for the highest status option – is shown in detail in the graph below (figure 136):



**Figure 136:** public service interpreters’ external perception of status depending on the settings in which they work.



As in the previous graph on interpreters' self-perception of status, interpreters working in the legal field are the respondents with a greater self-assurance as regards both their internal and their external perception of status. The number of high status responses decreases as the setting becomes of a caring nature, which is consistent with the hypothesis of the comparability of the status of public service interpreters with that of other semi-professions.

## 8. Prestige and Desirability of the Profession

The section on prestige in this second questionnaire was structured in a different way than in the first survey. The initial assumption guiding this section was that, unlike conference interpreting, public service interpreting does not enjoy societal prestige, which is why asking the same questions as the first survey seemed redundant, for it would have led to predictable results. An approach for the analysis of the status and prestige of public service interpreters was drawn by Prunč and Gentile A., Ozolins and Vasilakakos (1996), who, in their analysis of the development of the interpreting profession, pointed out that the high professional status of conference interpreters derives, among other things, from the high social status of the clients they served (see chapter 1, paragraph 2.1):

As a medium and allies of the “winners of globalisation”, conference interpreters could not only acquire economic capital in the field of interpreting, but also profit from the (social) status of their clients and the high status of their working languages [...]. Conference interpreters were, as mentioned above, on the winning side of globalisation, while community interpreters were, to use the words of the Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2004), left to deal with the wasted lives and the outcasts of modernity (Prunč 2012: 3-4).

This view is confirmed by sociological investigations, which have analysed the developments of other professions and come to a similar conclusion:

The socioeconomic status of the client not only influences the quality of the service, or the nature of the use-value, that a professional provides; it also influences the professional's own status and ranking, most especially in the personal professions (Larson 1977: 221).

Professions also gain and lose status from their clients. The classic professions of law and medicine clearly benefitted from their historical association with aristocratic patrons. On the other hand, the failure of occupations like teaching and social work to professionalize during the twentieth century may be partly a result of their association with low-status clients (Abel 1988: 18).

The last comment highlights that this assumption seems to be particularly true for semi-professions, like teaching and social work, to which public service interpreters compare themselves. Hence, the main hypothesis of the question on prestige aimed to assess whether interpreters believe that their low status is somehow determined by that of their clients (figure 137):

In one of his papers, Prunč argues that public service interpreting is not a prestigious job also because interpreters deal with "the wasted lives and the outcasts of modernity" (2012: 4). Do you agree with this statement?

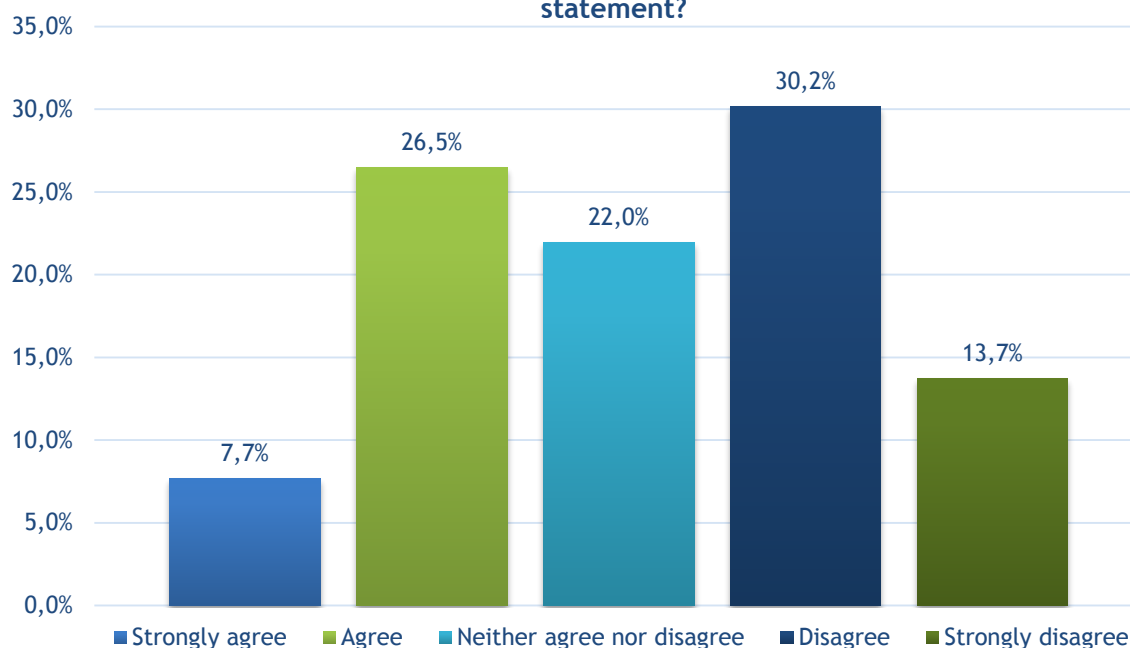


Figure 137: interpreters' opinions on prestige.

For reasons of space, the statement made by Prunč was summarised in the survey platform. As the graph shows, this question obtained a heterogeneous pattern of responses. 34.2% (n = 303) of respondents agree with the statement, whereas a higher number (43.9%, n = 390) expressed a contrary opinion. There is, however, a not insignificant portion of interpreters (22%, n = 195) who did not express a clear opinion. At statistical level, there is no significant difference between men (n = 233, M = 3.06, SD = 1.18) and women (n = 655, M = 3.19, SD = 1.18), as shown by a *t*-test ( $t = -1.420, p > 0.05$ ). Nevertheless, men tended to agree more with Prunč's statement (figure 138):

|                      |        | Contingency table  |       |                            |          |                   |       |       |
|----------------------|--------|--|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|-------|
|                      |        | In one of his papers, Prunč argues that public service interpreting is not a prestigious job also because interpreters deal with "the wasted lives and the outcasts of modernity" (2012: 4). Do you agree with this statement? |       |                            |          |                   | Total |       |
|                      |        | Strongly agree   | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |       |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE   | Count  | 21    | 67                         | 47       | 72                | 26    | 233   |
|                      |        | Expected count   | 17,8  | 61,7                       | 51,2     | 70,3              | 32,0  | 233,0 |
|                      | FEMALE | Count  | 47    | 168                        | 148      | 196               | 96    | 655   |
|                      |        | Expected count   | 50,2  | 173,3                      | 143,8    | 197,7             | 90,0  | 655,0 |
| Total                |        | Count  | 68    | 235                        | 195      | 268               | 122   | 888   |
|                      |        | Expected count   | 68,0  | 235,0                      | 195,0    | 268,0             | 122,0 | 888,0 |

Figure 138: contingency table comparing men and women's considerations on prestige.

The numbers in bold indicate that women do not attribute the low social esteem of the profession to the low status of their clients. The result is remarkable because it shows that women have a different view of the profession. As far as age is concerned, no statistical difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 21.792$ ,  $DF = 20$   $p > 0.05$ ), whereas a substantial difference was found among countries (figure 139):

|                                    |                | Contingency table  |             |                            |          |                   | Total |      |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--|-------------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|------|
|                                    |                | In one of his papers, Prunč argues that public service interpreting is not a prestigious job also because interpreters deal with "the wasted lives and the outcasts of modernity" (2012: 4). Do you agree with this statement? |             |                            |          |                   |       |      |
|                                    |                | Strongly agree   | Agree       | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |       |      |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia      | Count  | 3           | 11                         | 9        | 5                 | 4     | 32   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 2,6         | 8,8                        | 6,8      | 9,5               | 4,4   | 32,0 |
|                                    | Austria        | Count  | 0           | <b>18</b>                  | 10       | 17                | 6     | 51   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 4,2         | <b>14,0</b>                | 10,8     | 15,1              | 7,0   | 51,0 |
|                                    | Belgium        | Count  | 2           | 19                         | 13       | 24                | 4     | 62   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 5,1         | 17,0                       | 13,2     | 18,3              | 8,5   | 62,0 |
|                                    | Canada         | Count  | 3           | 13                         | 7        | 18                | 8     | 49   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 4,0         | 13,4                       | 10,4     | 14,5              | 6,7   | 49,0 |
|                                    | Czech Republic | Count  | 0           | 1                          | 4        | 4                 | 2     | 11   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | ,9          | 3,0                        | 2,3      | 3,2               | 1,5   | 11,0 |
|                                    | Denmark        | Count  | 1           | 3                          | 4        | 1                 | 1     | 10   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | ,8          | 2,7                        | 2,1      | 3,0               | 1,4   | 10,0 |
|                                    | Finland        | Count  | 3           | 4                          | 5        | 1                 | 3     | 16   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 1,3         | 4,4                        | 3,4      | 4,7               | 2,2   | 16,0 |
|                                    | France         | Count  | 2           | 5                          | 13       | 15                | 3     | 38   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 3,1         | 10,4                       | 8,1      | 11,2              | 5,2   | 38,0 |
|                                    | Germany        | Count  | 1           | 5                          | 4        | 3                 | 5     | 18   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 1,5         | 4,9                        | 3,8      | 5,3               | 2,5   | 18,0 |
|                                    | Hungary        | Count  | 0           | 3                          | 2        | 6                 | 1     | 12   |
|                                    |                | Expected count   | 1,0         | 3,3                        | 2,5      | 3,5               | 1,6   | 12,0 |
| Italy                              | Count          | 2  | 12          | 8                          | 13       | 6                 | 41    |      |
|                                    | Expected count | 3,4  | 11,2        | 8,7                        | 12,1     | 5,6               | 41,0  |      |
| The Netherlands                    | Count          | 4  | 7           | 5                          | 17       | 6                 | 39    |      |
|                                    | Expected count | 3,2  | 10,7        | 8,3                        | 11,5     | 5,3               | 39,0  |      |
| Norway                             | Count          | <b>10</b>  | <b>40</b>   | 38                         | 35       | 11                | 134   |      |
|                                    | Expected count | <b>11,0</b>  | <b>36,7</b> | 28,4                       | 39,6     | <b>18,3</b>       | 134,0 |      |
| Poland                             | Count          | 1  | 2           | 8                          | 14       | 7                 | 32    |      |
|                                    | Expected count | 2,6  | 8,8         | 6,8                        | 9,5      | 4,4               | 32,0  |      |
| Romania                            | Count          | 2  | 1           | 0                          | 5        | 4                 | 12    |      |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,0  | 3,3         | 2,5                        | 3,5      | 1,6               | 12,0  |      |
| Spain                              | Count          | 0  | 9           | 5                          | 4        | 7                 | 25    |      |

|                          |                |      |       |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | 2,0  | 6,8   | 5,3   | 7,4   | 3,4   | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 5    | 10    | 3     | 8     | 0     | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,1  | 7,1   | 5,5   | 7,7   | 3,6   | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 16   | 16    | 15    | 13    | 15    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 6,1  | 20,5  | 15,9  | 22,2  | 10,3  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 9    | 35    | 13    | 28    | 14    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 8,1  | 27,1  | 21,0  | 29,2  | 13,5  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 64   | 214   | 166   | 231   | 107   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 64,0 | 214,0 | 166,0 | 231,0 | 107,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 139:** contingency table comparing interpreters' considerations on prestige according to their country of residence.

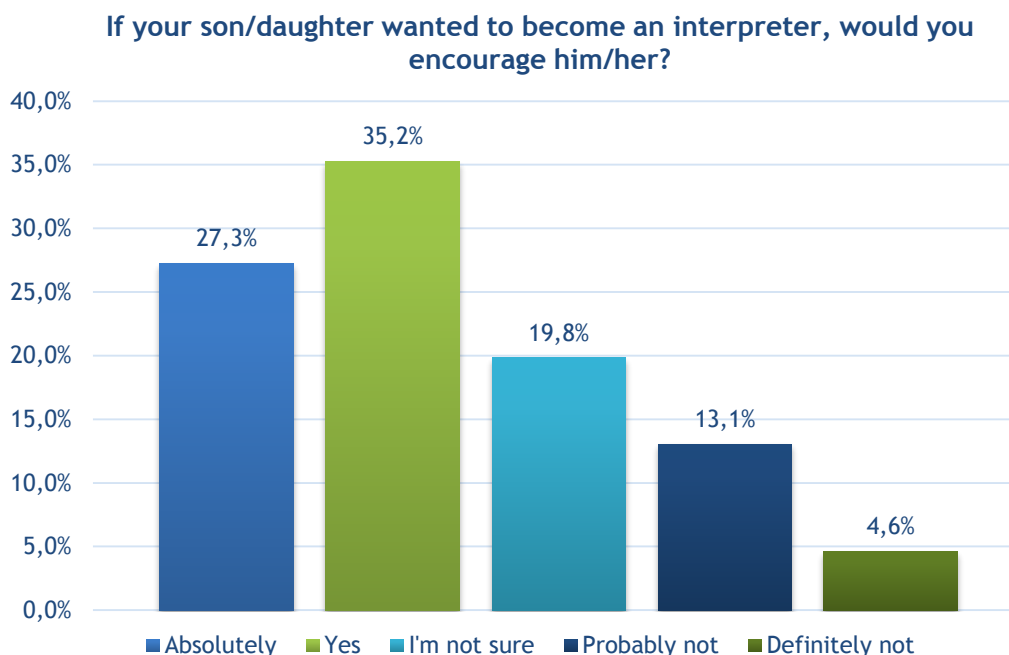
The table indicates that answers tended to concentrate either at the top or at the bottom of the Likert scale, which suggests that respondents tended either to agree or to disagree altogether. Interestingly, Australia, Norway, the UK and the U.S. answered to the question positively, although a high number of Norwegian respondents disagreed altogether. No difference was found according to the interpreters' level of education ( $\chi^2 = 6.076$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and between respondents who work ( $n = 482$ ,  $M = 3.10$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) and do not work ( $n = 406$ ,  $M = 3.21$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ) in conferences ( $t = -1.398$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The same is also true for PSI working settings, where no significant differences were found at statistical level. Some interesting open comments indicated a certain level of agreement with the statement made by Prunč.<sup>42</sup> Another respondent totally disagrees with it<sup>43</sup> whereas a Norwegian interpreter makes a comparison with other professionals dealing with the outcasts of society (lawyers and doctors), whose prestige is not affected.<sup>44</sup> However, an aspect worth mentioning in this regard is that the difference between the above-mentioned professionals and public service interpreters lies in the greater degree of in education and professionalisation achieved by fully-fledged professionals, which ties in nicely with the sociological theories expounded in chapter 2. The second question of this section aims to assess the desirability of the profession. To allow comparability, the second group was asked the same question as the first group (figure 140):

<sup>42</sup> "I am a CMI (Certified Medical Interpreter) Vietnamese and truly believe that my role is essential to ensuring patient's well-being. As a PSI- public service interpreter, we are often marginalized due to the social status of our clientele but without good interpreters these people would not be able to access essential services guaranteed by law. Interpreters, conference or PSI, provide services that are essential in the everyday operation and function of people's daily lives" (Female, USA).

"Because public service interpreters are mainly immigrants, in my country it is generally seen as an "immigrant job" and ascribed similar status as that of cleaning staff, or other such unqualified labor. This perception negatively affects our remuneration, even though there is a critical shortage of skilled public service interpreters, creating a vicious circle in which few of those who take up the job at all are committed to professionalism...which in turn feeds the perception of interpreters as unskilled laborers" (Male, Sweden).

<sup>43</sup> Those who think this way must have limited understanding of life and humanity (Male, Canada).

<sup>44</sup> I agree to some extent, but it doesn't explain everything. Some lawyers work only with cases of refuge and immigrations - it doesn't make their status any lower. Doctors from Red Cross who work in Africa in poor districts have no lesser status than others. I think good quality professionalisation and formal EDUCATION are key here! (Female, Norway).



**Figure 140:** degree of desirability of the interpreting profession.

The answers given to this question underline the high level of dedication, passion and commitment that public service interpreters have for their profession. Despite the low remuneration, the lack of recognition and societal appreciation and governmental policies promoting cuts and privatisation in public services, 62.5% (n = 555) of respondents would recommend the profession to their children, against 44.7% (n = 360) of conference interpreters. A statistical analysis reveals that there is no statistical difference between men and women ( $t = .212, p > 0.05$ ). On the other hand, interesting differences are found in the comparison with the variable “age” (figure 141):

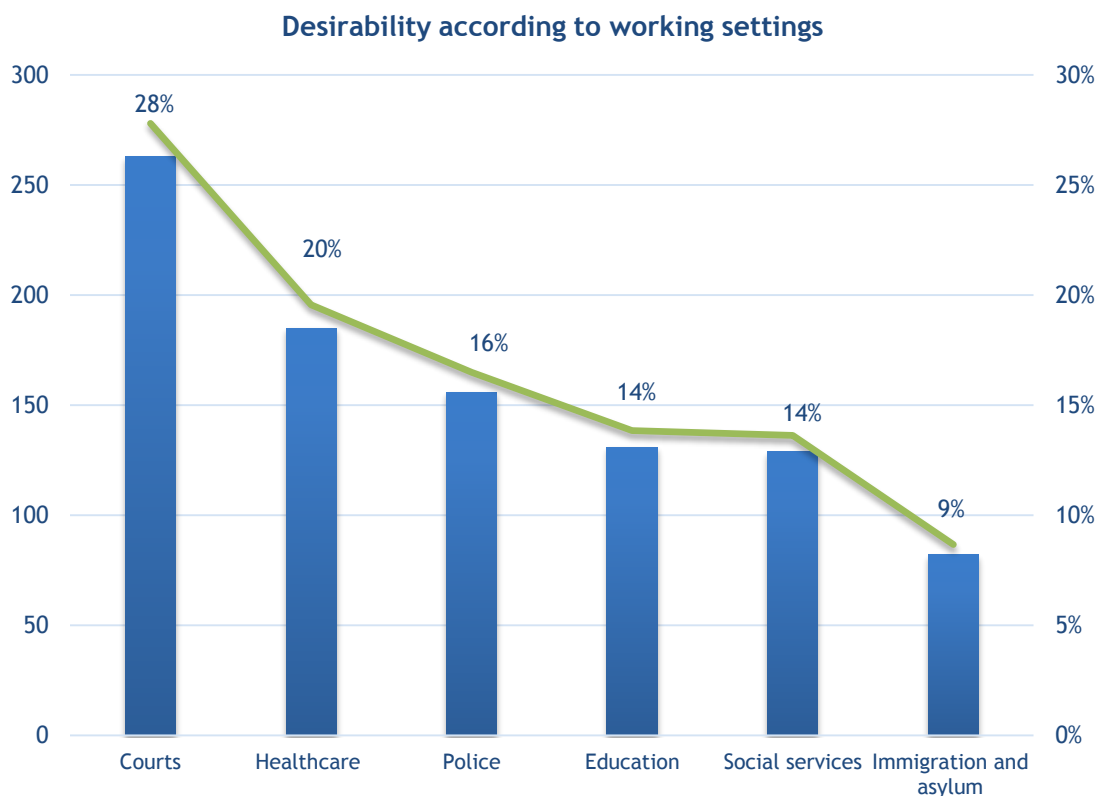
**Contingency table What is your age group?/ If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her?**

|                         |                | If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her? |      |              |              |                | Total |    |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|------|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------|----|
|                         |                | Absolutely   | Yes  | I'm not sure | Probably not | Definitely not |       |    |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 years    | Count  | 4    | 3            | 3            | 0              | 0     | 10 |
|                         | Expected count | 2,7  | 3,5  | 2,0          | 1,3          | ,5             | 10,0  |    |
| 26-35                   | Count          | 52   | 42   | 25           | 13           | 0              | 132   |    |
|                         | Expected count | 36,0   | 46,5 | 26,2         | 17,2         | 6,1            | 132,0 |    |
| 36-45                   | Count          | 80   | 77   | 47           | 35           | 7              | 246   |    |
|                         | Expected count | 67,0   | 86,7 | 48,8         | 32,1         | 11,4           | 246,0 |    |
| 46-55                   | Count          | 66   | 102  | 53           | 29           | 11             | 261   |    |
|                         | Expected count | 71,1   | 92,0 | 51,7         | 34,1         | 12,1           | 261,0 |    |
| 56-65                   | Count          | 30   | 58   | 34           | 32           | 20             | 174   |    |
|                         | Expected count | 47,4   | 61,3 | 34,5         | 22,7         | 8,0            | 174,0 |    |
| 65+                     | Count          | 10   | 31   | 14           | 7            | 3              | 65    |    |
|                         | Expected count | 17,7   | 22,9 | 12,9         | 8,5          | 3,0            | 65,0  |    |

|       |                |       |       |       |       |      |       |
|-------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Total | Count          | 242   | 313   | 176   | 116   | 41   | 888   |
|       | Expected count | 242,0 | 313,0 | 176,0 | 116,0 | 41,0 | 888,0 |

**Figure 141:** desirability of the interpreting profession as seen by younger and older interpreters.

The table shows that younger respondents have high confidence in the profession and would recommend it to their children, whereas older generations do not share the same view, and the chi-square test reveals a huge difference between the groups ( $\chi^2 = 60.426$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). One possible interpretation is that the results indicate that, as age rises, a progressive disillusionment with the profession takes over. Another way to read the data could be that younger generations have seen (and are still seeing) the strides forward made by the profession in the last few years, which is why they are more enthusiastic than their older colleagues. No significant difference was found according to the level of education ( $\chi^2 = 9.079$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Similar results were found for the variable “experience in conference interpreting” ( $t = .538$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The breakdown of responses according to working settings is found below (figure 142):



**Figure 142:** public service interpreters’ desirability of the profession depending on the settings in which they work.

The graph shows that court and healthcare interpreters would be more eager to support their children in their possible pursuit of a career in interpreting.

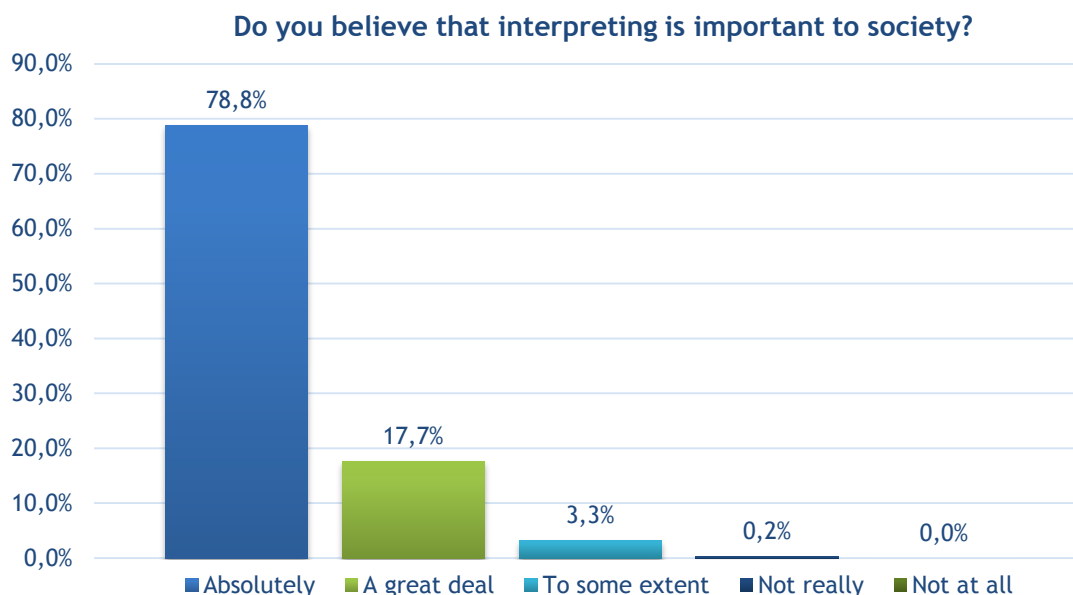
## 9. Social Value

The social value of public service interpreting has been underlined by several studies in the field (see chapter 1, paragraph 3.2). In the light of which, public service interpreting has to be framed as a human rights profession, a conceptualisation which has implications on the way it is conceived, practiced and, above all, perceived. The values represented by public service interpreting are the protection of language rights and, consequently, the enhancement of social justice, a concept which is consistent with the ideal of social service attributed to the professions in a sociological perspective. The idea of PSI being associated with human rights work might prove fruitful to speed up the process of professionalisation, just as it happened in the last few decades with other human service professions such as social work and nursing. Historically, none of these professions were viewed as such until the members of professional associations began to promote the values underpinning the tasks they performed. According to Ife (2012), identifying a core value position for a profession is essential. In the case of social work, professionals “have consistently emphasised the importance of this value base; social work is not seen as a neutral, objective and value-free activity, but rather as a work which is grounded in values” (*ibid.*: 13).

Several studies (Angelelli 2004; Clifford 2004; Valero\_Garcés & Martin 2008) have pointed out that interpreters not only play a crucial linguistic role within the interaction, but their role is above all a social one. As Clifford remarks, “there may be a linguistic component in the role that interpreters play, but that role is inherently a social one. The ethical principles we present to interpreters must reflect this reality” (2004: 111).

Nevertheless, research in community interpreting shows that the profession is generally misunderstood and that the social role of interpreters is underrated and lacks proper acknowledgement. As Clifford argues, “most of the interpreters interviewed complained that the value of their work was not generally recognized. Some of the interpreters could recall instances when they had been in a hospital or clinic and heard a page over the public address system asking for anyone who spoke a particular language to report to a certain department” (*ibid.*: 104). Hale also reports that “the misconception that interpreters ‘just translate’ from one language to another by swapping individual words from language A to language B in a mechanical, uncomplicated way, is still prevalent among some legal professionals” (2015: 163).

In the light of these premises, interpreters were asked to evaluate the extent to which they attribute social value to the profession and whether they think that the social importance of public service interpreting is acknowledged by the general population. The statistical breakdown of the data was carried out according to six variables (gender, age, country of residence, level of education experience in conference settings and working settings). The main hypotheses were that interpreters attribute great value to the profession but they do not think that society recognises its social importance (figure 143):



**Figure 143:** interpreters’ opinions on the social value they attribute to their work.

The graph shows that 96.5% (n = 857) of respondents attribute a great social importance to the profession, whereas 79.6% (n = 641) of conference interpreters answered in the same way. The second group of respondents is therefore more aware of the social importance of the profession than conference interpreters. At statistical level, a significant difference was found between men (n = 233, M = 1.42, SD = .85) and women (n = 655, M = 1.58, SD = .99), as shown in the results of a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = -2.125$ ,  $DF = 886$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and in the table below (figure 144):

|                      |        | Do you believe that interpreting is important to society? |              |                |            |            | Total |       |
|----------------------|--------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|
|                      |        | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |       |
| What is your gender? | MALE   | Count   | 172          | 35             | 17         | 5          | 4     | 233   |
|                      |        | Expected count  | 160,3        | 38,8           | 18,1       | 11,3       | 4,5   | 233,0 |
|                      | FEMALE | Count   | 439          | 113            | 52         | 38         | 13    | 655   |
|                      |        | Expected count  | 450,7        | 109,2          | 50,9       | 31,7       | 12,5  | 655,0 |
| Total                |        | Count   | 611          | 148            | 69         | 43         | 17    | 888   |
|                      |        | Expected count  | 611,0        | 148,0          | 69,0       | 43,0       | 17,0  | 888,0 |

**Figure 144:** men and women’s opinions on the social value of interpreting.

Surprisingly, male respondents appear to be more aware of the social importance of public service interpreting, although the results obtained from the questions about status revealed that men attach a lower status to the profession than women do. As far as age is concerned, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 18.983$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no statistical difference between the groups. On the contrary, a huge difference was found among the countries which obtained at least 10 responses ( $\chi^2 = 139.694$ ,  $DF = 54$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), as shown in the table below (figure 145):



| Contingency table What is your country of residence? * Do you believe that interpreting is important to society? |                          |   |              |                |            |       |       |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|-------|-------|
|  |                          | Do you believe that interpreting is important to society? |              |                |            | Total |       |
|  |                          | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really |       |       |
| What is your country of residence?   | Australia                | Count   | 27           | 5              | 0          | 0     | 32    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 25,4         | 5,6            | ,9         | ,1    | 32,0  |
|  | Austria                  | Count   | 36           | 13             | 2          | 0     | 51    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 40,5         | 8,9            | 1,5        | ,1    | 51,0  |
|  | Belgium                  | Count   | 47           | 15             | 0          | 0     | 62    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 49,2         | 10,8           | 1,8        | ,2    | 62,0  |
|  | Canada                   | Count   | 42           | 4              | 2          | 1     | 49    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 38,9         | 8,5            | 1,4        | ,1    | 49,0  |
|  | Czech Republic           | Count   | 7            | 2              | 2          | 0     | 11    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 8,7          | 1,9            | ,3         | ,0    | 11,0  |
|  | Denmark                  | Count   | 8            | 2              | 0          | 0     | 10    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 7,9          | 1,7            | ,3         | ,0    | 10,0  |
|  | Finland                  | Count   | 14           | 2              | 0          | 0     | 16    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 12,7         | 2,8            | ,5         | ,0    | 16,0  |
|  | France                   | Count   | 29           | 8              | 1          | 0     | 38    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 30,2         | 6,6            | 1,1        | ,1    | 38,0  |
|  | Germany                  | Count   | 16           | 2              | 0          | 0     | 18    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 14,3         | 3,1            | ,5         | ,0    | 18,0  |
|  | Hungary                  | Count   | 11           | 1              | 0          | 0     | 12    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 9,5          | 2,1            | ,4         | ,0    | 12,0  |
|  | Italy                    | Count   | 28           | 13             | 0          | 0     | 41    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 32,6         | 7,1            | 1,2        | ,1    | 41,0  |
|  | The Netherlands          | Count   | 29           | 9              | 1          | 0     | 39    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 31,0         | 6,8            | 1,1        | ,1    | 39,0  |
|  | Norway                   | Count   | 116          | 15             | 3          | 0     | 134   |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 106,4        | 23,3           | 3,9        | ,3    | 134,0 |
|  | Poland                   | Count   | 10           | 14             | 8          | 0     | 32    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 25,4         | 5,6            | ,9         | ,1    | 32,0  |
|  | Romania                  | Count   | 8            | 2              | 2          | 0     | 12    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 9,5          | 2,1            | ,4         | ,0    | 12,0  |
|  | Spain                    | Count   | 21           | 4              | 0          | 0     | 25    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 19,9         | 4,3            | ,7         | ,1    | 25,0  |
|  | Sweden                   | Count   | 23           | 3              | 0          | 0     | 26    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 20,6         | 4,5            | ,8         | ,1    | 26,0  |
|  | United Kingdom           | Count   | 59           | 14             | 1          | 1     | 75    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 59,6         | 13,0           | 2,2        | ,2    | 75,0  |
|  | United States of America | Count   | 90           | 8              | 1          | 0     | 99    |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 78,6         | 17,2           | 2,9        | ,3    | 99,0  |
| Total  |                          | Count   | 621          | 136            | 23         | 2     | 782   |
|  |                          | Expected count  | 621,0        | 136,0          | 23,0       | 2,0   | 782,0 |

Figure 145: Interpreters' considerations on the social value of the profession according to the country of residence.

As the table illustrates, the highest scores were found for Canada, Norway and the U.S., although in all the countries under scrutiny most answers were concentrated in the two highest parameters (“absolutely” and “a great deal”). The higher scores of these three countries indicate that a higher level of awareness has been reached as regards the recognition of the profession. Interesting results were obtained when considering the level of education (figure 146):

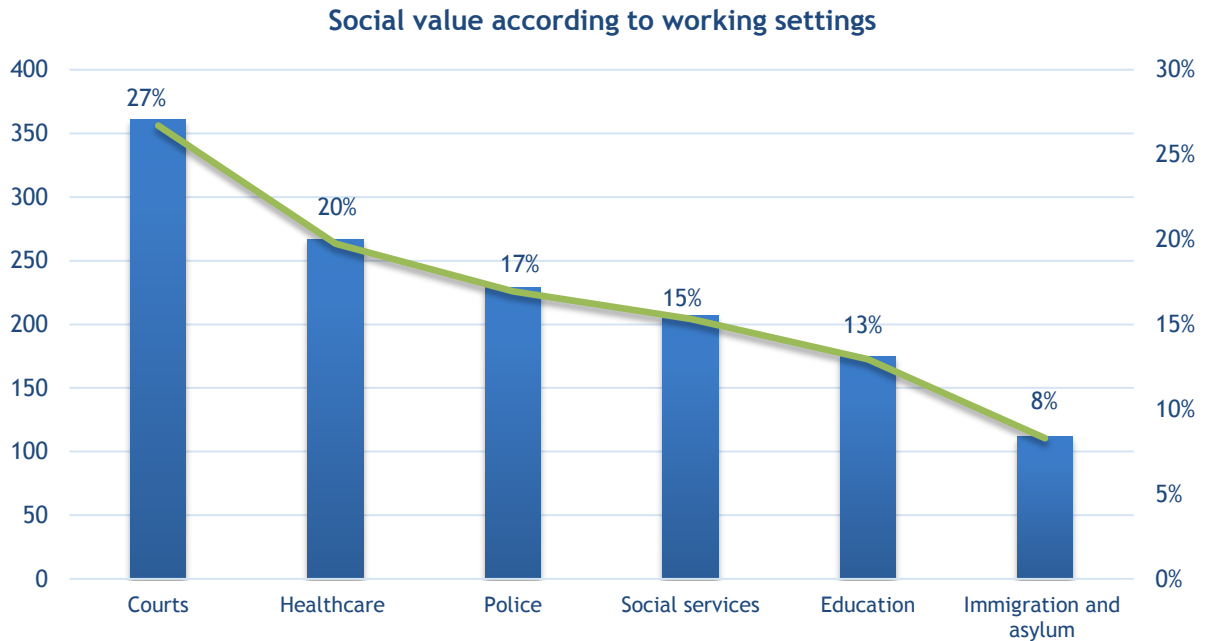
**Contingency table Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?/ Do you believe that interpreting is important to society?**

|   |                       |                | Do you believe that interpreting is important to society? |              |                |            |            | Total |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|
|   |                       |                | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES                   | Count          | 171   | 42           | 23             | 19         | 10         | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 182,3   | 44,2         | 20,6           | 12,8       | 5,1        | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count          | 403   | 100          | 41             | 20         | 7          | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 392,9   | 95,2         | 44,4           | 27,6       | 10,9       | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count          | 37  | 6            | 5              | 4          | 0          | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count | 35,8  | 8,7          | 4,0            | 2,5        | 1,0        | 52,0  |
| Total   | Count                 | 611            | 148   | 69           | 43             | 17         | 888        |       |
|   | Expected count        | 611,0          | 148,0   | 69,0         | 43,0           | 17,0       | 888,0      |       |

**Figure 146:** considerations on the social value of public service interpreting as perceived by interpreters with and without an MA in interpreting.

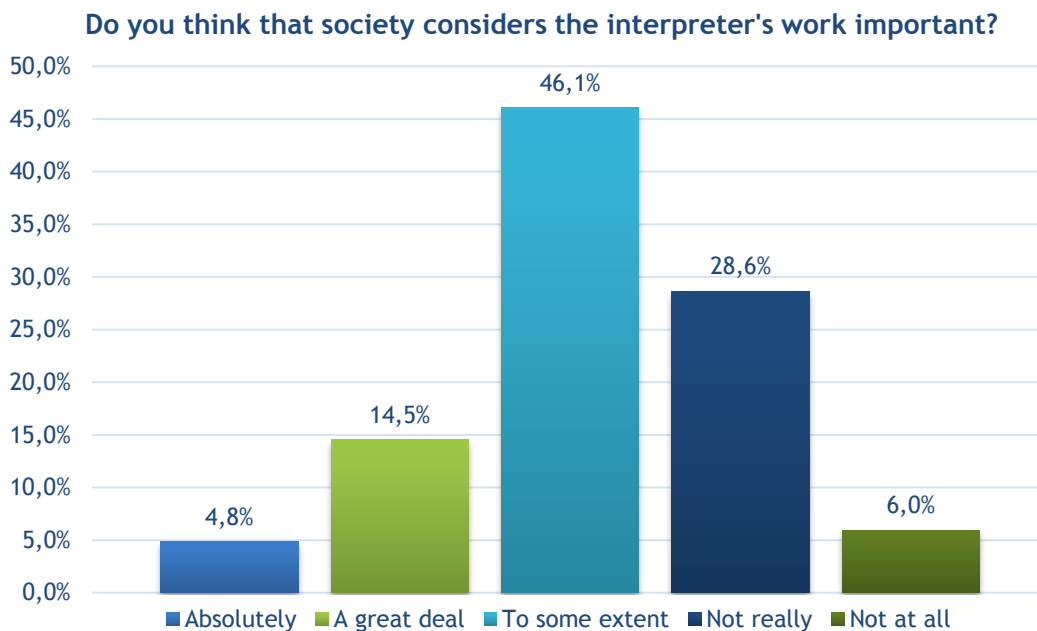
The table reveals that there is a considerable difference between the groups: consistently with the response pattern of the first survey, respondents with a degree in translation and interpreting tend to attribute a lower social value to the profession. As mentioned in the previous chapter (see chapter 4, paragraph 9), this outcome seems to be particularly negative because interpreters who received specialised and high-level training in interpreting are supposed to grasp and appreciate better the significance of the profession. As sociological studies on the education of nurses showed, “educational programs have social value in response to the societal needs [...]. University graduates are individuals who are prepared to meet the needs of current society and to ‘think well’” (Chinn & Watson 1994: 146).

As far as the variable “experience in conference interpreting” is concerned, a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = .759, p > 0.05$ ) revealed that there is no significant difference between respondents who have worked in conference settings ( $n = 482, M = 1.56, SD = .99$ ) and those who have only worked in public services ( $n = 406, M = 1.51, SD = .92$ ). These results are in contrast with the previous survey, in which a significantly higher portion of conference interpreters who were also employed in public services attached a greater value to the profession. Data from the various working settings show that court interpreting is still the setting in which the importance of public service interpreting seems to be more widely recognised (figure 147):



**Figure 147:** public service interpreters' opinions about the social value of the profession depending on the settings in which they work.

As the graph shows, court and healthcare interpreting are the settings in which the profession is more highly valued. Nevertheless, the settings of education, healthcare and social services presented a variation of 10 points or more between the actual and the expected response count, which means that more respondents than expected ticked either “absolutely” or “a great deal” important. Overall, the results indicate that public service interpreters are fully aware of the importance of the profession. However, the second question on social value shows a different outcome (figure 148):



**Figure 148:** public service interpreters' opinions on the social value they believe society attributes to their work.

The results of the graph are very similar to those of the previous questionnaire: 19.3% (n = 172) answered the question positively, whereas 28.6% (n = 307) of public service interpreters are less optimistic, just like conference interpreters (30.2%, n = 243). The majority of respondents, however, opted for the middling option (46.1%, n = 409). The results of this second survey confirm that the interpreting profession, be it performed in conferences or in public services, does not have the attention and the social esteem it deserves, notably because of the way interpreters perceive themselves, as stressed by certain open comments. As one respondent points out, public service interpreters have the tendency to consider themselves helpers rather than professionals like other practitioners. The situation is compounded by the untrained bilinguals who are not certified. In turn, service providers and other users of interpreting services do not see interpreters as professionals, but as necessary evils, hereby underestimating the added value offered by their services.<sup>45</sup> Another factor which is hampering the full recognition of the profession and its social value is mentioned in another comment, which underlines the attitude several politicians have to label interpreting services as non-necessary; recently, this phenomenon has been particularly prominent in the UK, a country in which translation and interpreting have been referred to by certain politicians as “a very expensive and poor use of taxpayers’ money” (*The Telegraph online* 2013).<sup>46</sup> At statistical level, a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = -2.473, p < 0.05$ ) revealed a significant difference between men (n = 233, M = 2.89, SD = .92) and women (n = 655, M = 3.07, SD = .97), with men being far more optimistic than women (figure 149):

| What is your gender? |                | Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important? |              |                |            |            | Total |
|----------------------|----------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|
|                      |                | Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important? |              |                |            |            |       |
|                      |                | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |
| MALE                 | Count          | 18  | 42           | 108            | 57         | 8          | 233   |
|                      | Expected count | 11,3  | 33,8         | 107,3          | 66,6       | 13,9       | 233,0 |
| FEMALE               | Count          | 25  | 87           | 301            | 197        | 45         | 655   |
|                      | Expected count | 31,7  | 95,2         | 301,7          | 187,4      | 39,1       | 655,0 |
| Total                | Count          | 43  | 129          | 409            | 254        | 53         | 888   |
|                      | Expected count | 43,0  | 129,0        | 409,0          | 254,0      | 53,0       | 888,0 |

**Figure 149:** contingency table showing how male and female interpreters describe their work as perceived by others.

Once again, the results of the contingency table show that a higher portion of male interpreters believe that the interpreting profession is appreciated by society. Sociology shows that this trend is

<sup>45</sup> “Interpreters themselves damage their status by thinking of themselves as “helpers” (often of the “underdog”) rather than “professionals” (in that they are also voices of attorneys, judges, doctors and other professionals) and this is, to a large extent, because that’s what many practicing “interpreters” (read “untrained bilinguals”) are when they do not try to obtain certification and professional training. In addition the users of PSIs often consider them as a “necessary evil” rather than a professional on equal footing with them. They have no idea of the time and effort it takes to prepare for and pass exams such as the Federal Court Interpreters Certification exams in the US, which has a pass rate of only 4%. Thousands of attorneys pass the bar exams each year, whereas only a handful of interpreters can pass the USCCI exams, but the courts, attorneys and administrators do not recognize this huge discrepancy in terms of our pay and working conditions. One of the reasons is that many think they can employ any bilingual person to interpret and get the same results” (Female, USA).

<sup>46</sup> As one respondent remarked: “We are underrated, under paid, receive bad press, are made out that we are paid fortunes and we are not really needed as “they should learn to speak English” (Male, UK).

widespread in all professional fields, revealing that, even though women earn higher grades than men, they report they have lower self-esteem (Paludi 2008). A more detailed discussion of the discrepancies between men and women will be discussed in detail in chapter 6.

As far as age is concerned, no significant differences were found among respondents ( $\chi^2 = 25.560$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), though younger generations tend to attach a higher value to the profession than their older colleagues. A substantial discrepancy was found among the countries which obtained a minimum of ten responses ( $\chi^2 = 150.133$ ,  $DF = 72$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), as shown in the contingency table below (figure 150):

|                                    |                 | Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important? |              |                |            |            | Total |      |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|------|
|                                    |                 | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |      |
|                                    |                 |   |              |                |            |            |       |      |
| What is your country of residence? | Australia       | Count   | 0            | 2              | 16         | 13         | 1     | 32   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 1,4          | 4,7            | 14,2       | 9,5        | 2,1   | 32,0 |
|                                    | Austria         | Count   | 1            | 12             | 15         | 21         | 2     | 51   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 2,3          | 7,4            | 22,7       | 15,2       | 3,4   | 51,0 |
|                                    | Belgium         | Count   | 2            | 8              | 33         | 15         | 4     | 62   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 2,8          | 9,0            | 27,6       | 18,5       | 4,1   | 62,0 |
|                                    | Canada          | Count   | 5            | 12             | 19         | 13         | 0     | 49   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 2,2          | 7,1            | 21,8       | 14,6       | 3,3   | 49,0 |
|                                    | Czech Republic  | Count   | 1            | 4              | 5          | 1          | 0     | 11   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | ,5           | 1,6            | 4,9        | 3,3        | ,7    | 11,0 |
|                                    | Denmark         | Count   | 0            | 0              | 3          | 6          | 1     | 10   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | ,4           | 1,5            | 4,5        | 3,0        | ,7    | 10,0 |
|                                    | Finland         | Count   | 0            | 2              | 9          | 4          | 1     | 16   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | ,7           | 2,3            | 7,1        | 4,8        | 1,1   | 16,0 |
|                                    | France          | Count   | 0            | 3              | 19         | 12         | 4     | 38   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 1,7          | 5,5            | 16,9       | 11,3       | 2,5   | 38,0 |
|                                    | Germany         | Count   | 2            | 1              | 6          | 7          | 2     | 18   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | ,8           | 2,6            | 8,0        | 5,4        | 1,2   | 18,0 |
|                                    | Hungary         | Count   | 0            | 5              | 3          | 4          | 0     | 12   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | ,5           | 1,7            | 5,3        | 3,6        | ,8    | 12,0 |
|                                    | Italy           | Count   | 1            | 3              | 20         | 12         | 5     | 41   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 1,8          | 6,0            | 18,2       | 12,2       | 2,7   | 41,0 |
|                                    | The Netherlands | Count   | 0            | 1              | 22         | 13         | 3     | 39   |
|                                    |                 | Expected count  | 1,7          | 5,7            | 17,4       | 11,6       | 2,6   | 39,0 |
|                                    | Norway          | Count   | 11           | 29             | 63         | 25         | 6     | 134  |

|                          |                |      |       |       |       |      |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
|                          | Expected count | 6,0  | 19,5  | 59,6  | 39,9  | 8,9  | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 1    | 5     | 16    | 8     | 2    | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,4  | 4,7   | 14,2  | 9,5   | 2,1  | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 1    | 1     | 4     | 5     | 1    | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,5   | 1,7   | 5,3   | 3,6   | ,8   | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 0    | 3     | 1     | 12    | 9    | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,1  | 3,6   | 11,1  | 7,4   | 1,7  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 1    | 6     | 11    | 8     | 0    | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,2  | 3,8   | 11,6  | 7,7   | 1,7  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 1    | 5     | 32    | 29    | 8    | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 3,4  | 10,9  | 33,4  | 22,3  | 5,0  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 8    | 12    | 51    | 25    | 3    | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 4,4  | 14,4  | 44,1  | 29,5  | 6,6  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 35   | 114   | 348   | 233   | 52   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 35,0 | 114,0 | 348,0 | 233,0 | 52,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 150:** contingency table showing how respondents from different countries interpreters describe their work as perceived by others.

As in the previous question, the result obtained from Canada and Norway are highly positive, which means that the profession is somehow more appreciated in these countries. The first respondent from Canada points out that the job is highly respected there, mostly because of the integration policies implemented at national level.<sup>47</sup> The second respondent illustrates the way public service interpreting is managed in Norway, where agencies are run by the government and interpreters can charge higher fees.<sup>48</sup> However, the results obtained from interpreters with different levels of education show that respondents with an MA in translation and interpreting scored lower than their colleagues (figure 151):

|   |     | Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important? |              |                |            |            | Total |       |
|---|-----|---|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|
|   |     | Absolutely  | A great deal | To some extent | Not really | Not at all |       |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES | Count   | 4            | 33             | 109        | 98         | 21    | 265   |
|   |     | Expected count  | 12,8         | 38,5           | 122,1      | 75,8       | 15,8  | 265,0 |

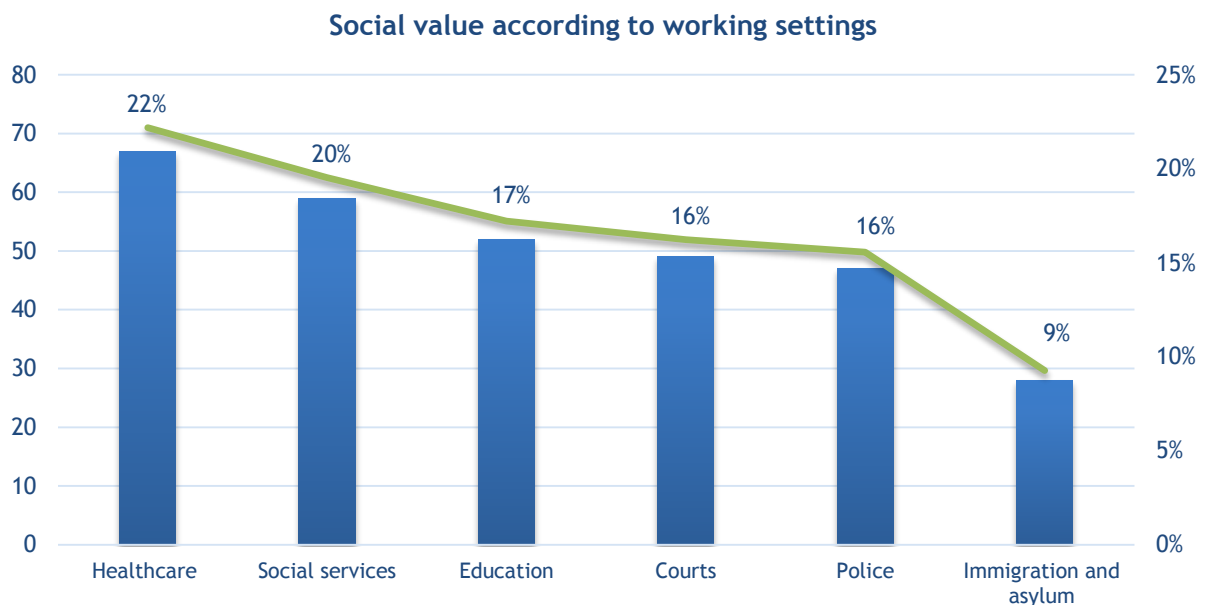
<sup>47</sup> "I'm proud of my work. Canada is a great place to work. We are working on becoming a more accessible country" (Female, Canada).

<sup>48</sup> "Interpretation services should never be the subject of tender competitions. Access to qualification/education for interpreters should increase. Agencies should comply with public regulations in the field, preferably be run by the government and they should not be allowed to charge from the interpreters' salary. (which is the case in my country, Norway)" (Female, Norway).

|                       |                |      |       |       |       |      |       |
|-----------------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| NO                    | Count          | 35   | 87    | 275   | 142   | 32   | 571   |
|                       | Expected count | 27,6 | 82,9  | 263,0 | 163,3 | 34,1 | 571,0 |
| I don't have a degree | Count          | 4    | 9     | 25    | 14    | 0    | 52    |
|                       | Expected count | 2,5  | 7,6   | 24,0  | 14,9  | 3,1  | 52,0  |
| Total                 | Count          | 43   | 129   | 409   | 254   | 53   | 888   |
|                       | Expected count | 43,0 | 129,0 | 409,0 | 254,0 | 53,0 | 888,0 |

**Figure 151:** contingency table showing how respondents with and without an MA in translation and interpreting describe their work as perceived by others.

As the table and the chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 26.423$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) show, respondents with an MA in translation and interpreting do not believe that the general public fully acknowledges the importance of the interpreting profession. On the other hand, respondents with a different degree or with no degree in T&I are slightly more confident than their colleagues. The results obtained from the two questionnaires show that interpreters with an MA in T&I are far less motivated and confident than other respondents, regardless of the settings in which they work. As already mentioned, the most plausible assumption is that graduates in T&I cherish higher expectations in the profession, which appear not to be fulfilled by the current situation of the labour market. However, no statistical difference was found between interpreters who also work in conference settings and those who do not ( $t = .905$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The statistical analysis of the different working settings revealed an interesting result (figure 152):



**Figure 152:** public service interpreters' opinions about the social value of the profession as perceived by society.

Unlike the previous analyses, the results show that the sectors in which the services of interpreters appear to be better appreciated by service providers are healthcare, social services and education. Overall, despite the negative response patterns, some interpreters remarked:

I enjoy my work and find it very satisfactory, but I have worked consistently over the years to provide a service of a very high standard. I believe my performance and that of my colleagues has helped both professionals and migrants understand the role of the public service interpreter. Our public image has improved greatly since I started working in this field, some 25 years ago. However, there is still a long way to go (Female, Australia).

Public institutions have already admitted that interpreters are useful "creatures", most of the population regards them to be like any other craftsmen who should render services; people open their eyes widely, when they are informed about legal regulations, social background and cultural differences which affect the interpreter's job and how tough it could be (Female, Poland).

The comments show that the professionalism and commitment of interpreters have contributed to the improvement of the image of the interpreter and that a few steps forward have been taken in the last few years. The slightly greater awareness shown by public institutions towards the importance of public service interpreters demonstrates that the visibility and public perception of the profession have progressively improved. Nevertheless, caution is required, because the responses exclusively reflect the subjective opinions of public service interpreters.

### 10. Role

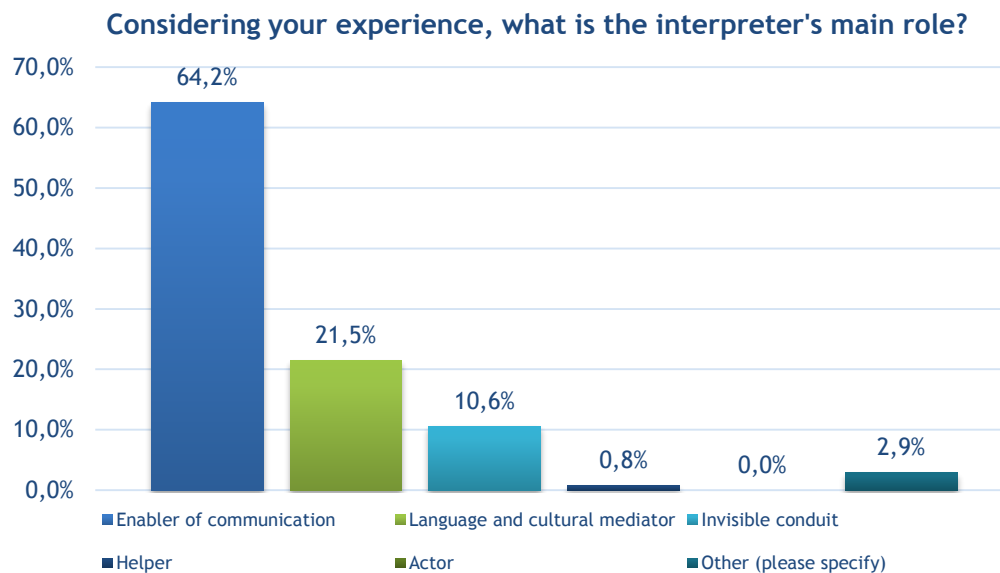
This section will focus on the relationship between role and status in public service interpreting. As already mentioned in chapter 2, status has a considerable impact on the way the role of a professional is perceived. As certain sociologists underline (Abbott & Meerabeau 1998; Beckett & Maynard 2005), if the status of a professional is not clearly defined by the professional category and by service providers, the practitioner may experience role confusion and role conflict. Data gathered from the previous questions on status has revealed that 32.2% of public service interpreters perceive themselves as comparable to primary school teachers, social workers and nurses and 68.5% believe that society perceives them as such. In this respect, Schwab and Gelfman argue that semi-professionals such as nurses experience role confusion and ambiguity, as a result of a variety of factors, including "a lack of clear, appropriate and agreed upon role expectations and role conflict" (2005: 34). Moreover, they add that role confusion derives from the inconsistencies resulting from "the nurses' own inability adequately to perceive their role (*ibid.*: 34). The hypothesis was that, in the light of the results on status, the role of public service interpreters would be less clear-cut than that of conference interpreters, whose self-representation is that of an impartial person in the middle, although data from the first survey showed that the picture seems to be more multi-faceted than was supposed (see chapter 4, paragraph 10). Hence, the issue of role was given special attention in the second questionnaire, which is why the section is made up of three questions:

- ↳ In the first question, interpreters were asked to choose which of the options proposed corresponded to their self-perceived role. The hypothesis is that a higher percentage of



- informants would compare themselves to cultural mediators, considering the blurred line between public service interpreting and cultural mediation in several countries;<sup>49</sup>
- ↳ In the second question, interpreters were asked to report if, and to what extent, their role goes beyond that of “just interpreting” (Wadensjö 1998). A series of other tasks were proposed in the options, which aimed to determine the degree to which interpreters are regarded by service providers as such or as social workers with knowledge of languages.
  - ↳ In the third question, interpreters were asked to describe their attitudes and self-perceptions in concrete situations. In this set of questions, special attention was paid to the emotional impact interpreters experience during their work. As Valero-Garcés (2015a) points out, public service interpreters often assist people who have been through very traumatic events, such as violence, torture, war and detention; moreover, psychological studies have shown that interpreters working in these settings showed the symptoms of emotional stress and even depression. As Talbot *et al.* (2015) point out, this experience can be particularly shocking for all parties during asylum hearings: “The interpreter must gain the trust of two very different people: the practitioner, who might not be used to working with an interpreter, and who may feel reticent or uncomfortable about it, and the client, who may in the past have been let down by a poor quality or inaccurate interpreting service”.

The results of the first question are shown in the graph below (figure 153):



**Figure 153:** interpreters' self-perception of role.

<sup>49</sup>As Baraldi and Gavioli point out, cultural mediators “actively intervene in conversation distributing opportunities to speak, giving the parties space to introduce and deal with particular issues, reinforcing particular roles and identities and promoting successful outcomes” (2011: 208). According to Rilof & Buisse (2015), this definition clearly goes beyond the concept of interpreting. Although the survey was mainly distributed to professional associations, the complexity of the professional landscape of public service interpreting made it difficult to distinguish between professional categories, especially in those countries where the boundaries between interpreters and cultural mediators appear to be still blurred (cf. Spinzi 2015).

The graph shows that the first hypothesis is partly rejected, as 64.2% (n = 570) believe that their role is to enable communication. The option “language and cultural mediator” obtained a 21.5% (n = 191) of responses, a higher percentage compared to conference interpreters (15.9%, n = 128) but far lower than expected. Surprisingly, 10.6% (n = 94) of the interpreters interviewed answered that they perceive themselves as an invisible conduit, a percentage which is higher than that obtained from conference interpreters (5.2%, n = 42). A lower percentage (0.8%, n = 7) described their role as “helper” and another 2.9% (n = 26) ticked the option “other”. The most remarkable comments indicate that the interpreter is supposed to play three roles, one of which coincides with that of helper.<sup>50</sup> Another respondent suggests that describing the profession with metaphors is detrimental to the professionalisation process, since no other profession appears to confuse ethics with metaphorical images.<sup>51</sup> Although this relationship needs to be investigated further, the constant search for a clear definition of role in interpreting research could divert attention from the real objective pursued by the professional category, which is establishing clear-cut ethical norms. Another comment points out that the interpreter’s role depends on the context, an assumption which suggests that interpreters have to adapt their role to the situation.<sup>52</sup> Overall, the results of the first question indicate that the respondents to this second questionnaire are very much aware of their role, at least in theory. At statistical level, interesting differences emerged: although a Student’s *t*-test ( $t = .393, p > =0.05$ ) revealed that there is no difference between men (n = 233, M = 1.43, SD = .78) and women (n = 655, M = 1.41, SD = .73), the contingency table showed that the two groups tended to differ in the answers given (figure 154):

| Contingency table What is your gender?/ Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? |        |   |                          |                                |                   |        |       |       |
|---|--------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |        | Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? |                          |                                |                   |        | Total |       |
|   |        | Other   | Enabler of communication | Language and cultural mediator | Invisible conduit | Helper |       |       |
| What is your gender?  | MALE   | Count   | 4                        | 158                            | 40                | 27     | 4     | 233   |
|   |        | Expected count  | 6,8                      | 149,6                          | 50,1              | 24,7   | 1,8   | 233,0 |
|   | FEMALE | Count   | 22                       | 412                            | 151               | 67     | 3     | 655   |
|   |        | Expected count  | 19,2                     | 420,4                          | 140,9             | 69,3   | 5,2   | 655,0 |
| Total   |        | Count   | 26                       | 570                            | 191               | 94     | 7     | 888   |
|   |        | Expected count  | 26,0                     | 570,0                          | 191,0             | 94,0   | 7,0   | 888,0 |

Figure 154: contingency table showing the differences in role self-perception of male and female respondents.

<sup>50</sup> “Sometimes a great help, more than often simply a great help” (Female, Norway).

<sup>51</sup> “I don't use metaphors to describe what interpreters do. No other profession does this. Part of the reason we are not seen on par with other professions. We conceive of ethics using metaphors and not normative ethical terms” (Female, USA).

<sup>52</sup> “I think role is context specific and at any given time we would rate any of those roles as the main one” (Female, USA).

The table shows that men tend to perceive themselves more as enablers of communication, whereas women see themselves more as cultural mediators, which suggests that women bring a higher sense of empathy to the interpreted mediation, an aspect also shown by the above comments. This attitude appears to be cross-sectional, as a roughly uniform number of respondents is equally employed in almost all settings. As far as age is concerned, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 6.549$ ,  $DF = 20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) indicates that there is no significant difference among age groups, although the response pattern suggests that younger informants tend to respond in a slightly different way than their older colleagues, as shown in the table below (figure 155):

|                         |             | Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? |                          |                                |                   |        | Total |       |
|-------------------------|-------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|                         |             | Other   | Enabler of communication | Language and cultural mediator | Invisible conduit | Helper |       |       |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 years | Count   | 0                        | 8                              | 2                 | 0      | 0     | 10    |
|                         |             | Expected count  | ,3                       | 6,4                            | 2,2               | 1,1    | ,1    | 10,0  |
|                         | 26-35       | Count   | 5                        | 79                             | 35                | 12     | 1     | 132   |
|                         |             | Expected count  | 3,9                      | 84,7                           | 28,4              | 14,0   | 1,0   | 132,0 |
|                         | 36-45       | Count   | 4                        | 154                            | 60                | 27     | 1     | 246   |
|                         |             | Expected count  | 7,2                      | 157,9                          | 52,9              | 26,0   | 1,9   | 246,0 |
|                         | 46-55       | Count   | 11                       | 174                            | 52                | 23     | 1     | 261   |
|                         |             | Expected count  | 7,6                      | 167,5                          | 56,1              | 27,6   | 2,1   | 261,0 |
|                         | 56-65       | Count   | 4                        | 111                            | 35                | 21     | 3     | 174   |
|                         |             | Expected count  | 5,1                      | 111,7                          | 37,4              | 18,4   | 1,4   | 174,0 |
|                         | 65+         | Count   | 2                        | 44                             | 7                 | 11     | 1     | 65    |
|                         |             | Expected count  | 1,9                      | 41,7                           | 14,0              | 6,9    | ,5    | 65,0  |
| Total                   |             | Count   | 26                       | 570                            | 191               | 94     | 7     | 888   |
|                         |             | Expected count  | 26,0                     | 570,0                          | 191,0             | 94,0   | 7,0   | 888,0 |

**Figure 155:** contingency table showing the differences in role self-perception of different age groups of respondents.

The figure illustrates that younger respondents better rate their function as cultural mediators, whereas older generations tend to privilege their role as enablers of communication. Considering that demographic figures indicate that younger respondents are more educated than their older colleagues, this response pattern could be attributed to the fact that, because of their specialised education, younger respondents have a more complex view of their role than older informants do. Another hypothesis could be that younger interpreters have not fully interiorised their role owing to lack of professional experience. The second option seems to be more plausible in the light of the data obtained from statistical analysis of the variable “possession of MA in T&I”, which confirms that respondents with a specialised degree in translation and interpreting see themselves in a clearer-cut way (figure 156):

**Contingency table Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting?/ Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?**

|   |                       | Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? |                          |                                |                   |        | Tot.  |       |
|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |                       | Other   | Enabler of communication | Language and cultural mediator | Invisible conduit | Helper |       |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES                   | Count   | 9                        | 182                            | 51                | 20     | 3     | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count  | 7,8                      | 170,1                          | 57,0              | 28,1   | 2,1   | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count   | 14                       | 361                            | 127               | 66     | 3     | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count  | 16,7                     | 366,5                          | 122,8             | 60,4   | 4,5   | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count   | 3                        | 27                             | 13                | 8      | 1     | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count  | 1,5                      | 33,4                           | 11,2              | 5,5    | ,4    | 52,0  |
| Total   | Count                 | 26  | 570                      | 191                            | 94                | 7      | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count        | 26,0  | 570,0                    | 191,0                          | 94,0              | 7,0    | 888,0 |       |

**Figure 156:** contingency table showing the differences of role self-perception of interpreters with different levels of education.

The table illustrates that respondents with specialised training tend in T&I to see themselves more as “enablers of communication” and slightly less as “cultural mediators”, whereas a slightly higher number of informants without a degree in translation and interpreting preferred the option “cultural mediator”. It is also worth noting that fewer graduates in translation and interpreting chose the option “invisible conduit”, which confirms the results obtained by Angelelli (2004) concerning the interpreter’s role visibility. The result shows that the majority of public service interpreters no longer see themselves as invisible figures, and that education greatly contributes to influencing this self-awareness. The chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 10.978$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) revealed a lack of statistical significance for the two variables. Interesting findings were drawn from a statistical analysis of the variable “country of residence”; Norway appears to be the country in which interpreters answered that they perceive their role as that of invisible conduits (20 actual versus 14 expected responses). This remarkable result is consistent with those obtained by Salaets and Balogh in the Co-Minor/IN/QUEST survey (2015c), in which the majority of respondents coming from Norway declared that the interpreter is supposed to act as a totally neutral agent, a self-evident outcome which deserves further investigation. As for the variable “experience in conference interpreting”, the results were as follows (figure 157):

**Contingency table Have you ever worked in conference settings? \* Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?**

|  |  | Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? |                          |                                |                   |        | Total |
|--|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|
|  |  | Other   | Enabler of communication | Language and cultural mediator | Invisible conduit | Helper |       |

|  |     |                |      |       |       |      |     |       |
|--|-----|----------------|------|-------|-------|------|-----|-------|
| Have you ever worked in conference settings? | YES | Count          | 21   | 320   | 95    | 44   | 2   | 482   |
|  |     | Expected count | 14,1 | 309,4 | 103,7 | 51,0 | 3,8 | 482,0 |
|  | NO  | Count          | 5    | 250   | 96    | 50   | 5   | 406   |
|  |     | Expected count | 11,9 | 260,6 | 87,3  | 43,0 | 3,2 | 406,0 |
| Total  |     | Count          | 26   | 570   | 191   | 94   | 7   | 888   |
|  |     | Expected count | 26,0 | 570,0 | 191,0 | 94,0 | 7,0 | 888,0 |

**Figure 157:** contingency table showing the differences of role self-perception of interpreters according to their experience in conference settings.

As the figure indicates, respondents with experience in conference settings chose the option “enabler of communication” rather than “cultural mediator” and “invisible conduit”, whereas those who have never worked as conference interpreters see themselves more as cultural mediators and invisible elements in the mediation process. A statistical analysis revealed that the concept of the interpreter’s invisibility is more deeply rooted in the field of court interpreting than in all the other settings under scrutiny. As far as the country of residence is concerned, a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 123.838$ ,  $DF = 72$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) showed that, in some countries, interpreters perceive themselves more as cultural mediators (figure 158):

| What is your country of residence? |                | Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? |                          |                                |                   |        | Tot. |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|------|
|                                    |                | Other   | Enabler of communication | Language and cultural mediator | Invisible conduit | Helper |      |
|                                    |                | Count   | Count                    | Count                          | Count             | Count  |      |
| Australia                          | Count          | 1   | 22                       | 7                              | 2                 | 0      | 32   |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,0   | 20,7                     | 6,5                            | 3,5               | ,3     | 32,0 |
| Austria                            | Count          | 1   | 32                       | 13                             | 3                 | 2      | 51   |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,6   | 33,0                     | 10,3                           | 5,6               | ,5     | 51,0 |
| Belgium                            | Count          | 0   | 43                       | 12                             | 5                 | 2      | 62   |
|                                    | Expected count | 2,0   | 40,1                     | 12,5                           | 6,8               | ,6     | 62,0 |
| Canada                             | Count          | 2   | 21                       | 19                             | 7                 | 0      | 49   |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,6   | 31,7                     | 9,9                            | 5,4               | ,4     | 49,0 |
| Czech Republic                     | Count          | 0   | 8                        | 2                              | 1                 | 0      | 11   |
|                                    | Expected count | ,4  | 7,1                      | 2,2                            | 1,2               | ,1     | 11,0 |
| Denmark                            | Count          | 0   | 7                        | 2                              | 1                 | 0      | 10   |
|                                    | Expected count | ,3  | 6,5                      | 2,0                            | 1,1               | ,1     | 10,0 |
| Finland                            | Count          | 3   | 12                       | 1                              | 0                 | 0      | 16   |
|                                    | Expected count | ,5  | 10,4                     | 3,2                            | 1,8               | ,1     | 16,0 |
| France                             | Count          | 0   | 18                       | 12                             | 8                 | 0      | 38   |
|                                    | Expected count | 1,2   | 24,6                     | 7,7                            | 4,2               | ,3     | 38,0 |
| Germany                            | Count          | 1   | 9                        | 4                              | 4                 | 0      | 18   |
|                                    | Expected count |   |                          |                                |                   |        |      |

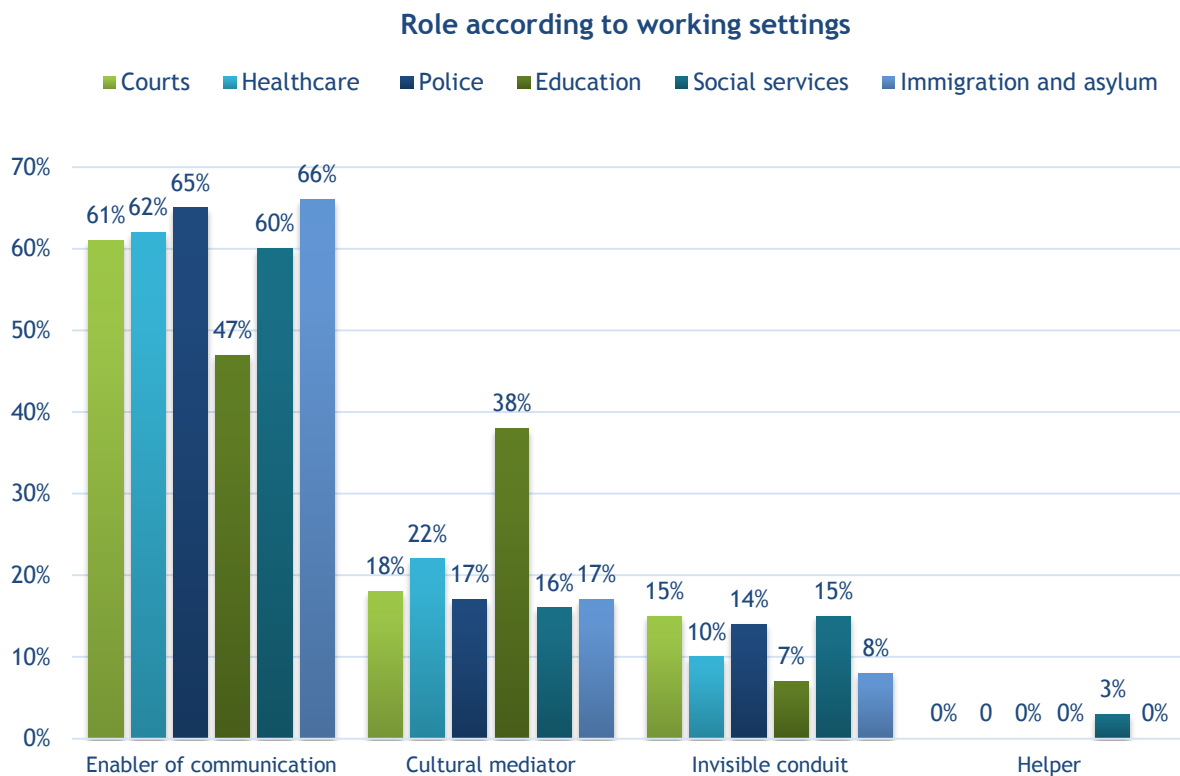
|                          |                |      |       |       |      |     |       |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|------|-----|-------|
|                          | Expected count | ,6   | 11,6  | 3,6   | 2,0  | ,2  | 18,0  |
| Hungary                  | Count          | 0    | 6     | 6     | 0    | 0   | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,4   | 7,8   | 2,4   | 1,3  | ,1  | 12,0  |
| Italy                    | Count          | 2    | 20    | 14    | 5    | 0   | 41    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,3  | 26,5  | 8,3   | 4,5  | ,4  | 41,0  |
| The Netherlands          | Count          | 2    | 29    | 4     | 3    | 1   | 39    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,2  | 25,2  | 7,9   | 4,3  | ,3  | 39,0  |
| Norway                   | Count          | 1    | 102   | 10    | 20   | 1   | 134   |
|                          | Expected count | 4,3  | 86,7  | 27,1  | 14,7 | 1,2 | 134,0 |
| Poland                   | Count          | 1    | 24    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 32    |
|                          | Expected count | 1,0  | 20,7  | 6,5   | 3,5  | ,3  | 32,0  |
| Romania                  | Count          | 0    | 7     | 4     | 1    | 0   | 12    |
|                          | Expected count | ,4   | 7,8   | 2,4   | 1,3  | ,1  | 12,0  |
| Spain                    | Count          | 2    | 13    | 9     | 1    | 0   | 25    |
|                          | Expected count | ,8   | 16,2  | 5,1   | 2,7  | ,2  | 25,0  |
| Sweden                   | Count          | 0    | 24    | 0     | 2    | 0   | 26    |
|                          | Expected count | ,8   | 16,8  | 5,3   | 2,9  | ,2  | 26,0  |
| United Kingdom           | Count          | 3    | 53    | 13    | 6    | 0   | 75    |
|                          | Expected count | 2,4  | 48,5  | 15,2  | 8,2  | ,7  | 75,0  |
| United States of America | Count          | 6    | 56    | 23    | 14   | 0   | 99    |
|                          | Expected count | 3,2  | 64,1  | 20,0  | 10,9 | ,9  | 99,0  |
| Total                    | Count          | 25   | 506   | 158   | 86   | 7   | 782   |
|                          | Expected count | 25,0 | 506,0 | 158,0 | 86,0 | 7,0 | 782,0 |

**Figure 158:** contingency table showing the differences of role self-perception of interpreters according to their countries of residence.

The table shows the differences between the countries which have developed, over the years, a kind of official recognition of the profession (through the implementation of political measures or with the setting up of national registers) and those in which this process is still ongoing. For example, Sweden and Norway differ significantly in their response patterns compared to Italy and Spain, two countries in which interpreters are often referred to as cultural mediators, and in which the cultural mediator is the only professional figure coming close to that of the public service interpreter.

The results confirm the assumptions already made by Bancroft (2015: 215), who stated that professionals in the U.K., Canada and Sweden are more likely to limit their role to interpreting, whereas for interpreters working in Spain and Italy the boundaries between the two professions are more blurred. Nevertheless, a large number of responses to the option “enabler of communication” was registered in these two countries as well.

The analysis of the results according to working settings confirms that interpreters tend to see themselves as cultural mediators in the social service sector and in the field of education more than in legal settings. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents remain convinced that their role is to facilitate communication. Detailed results are shown in the graph below (figure 160):



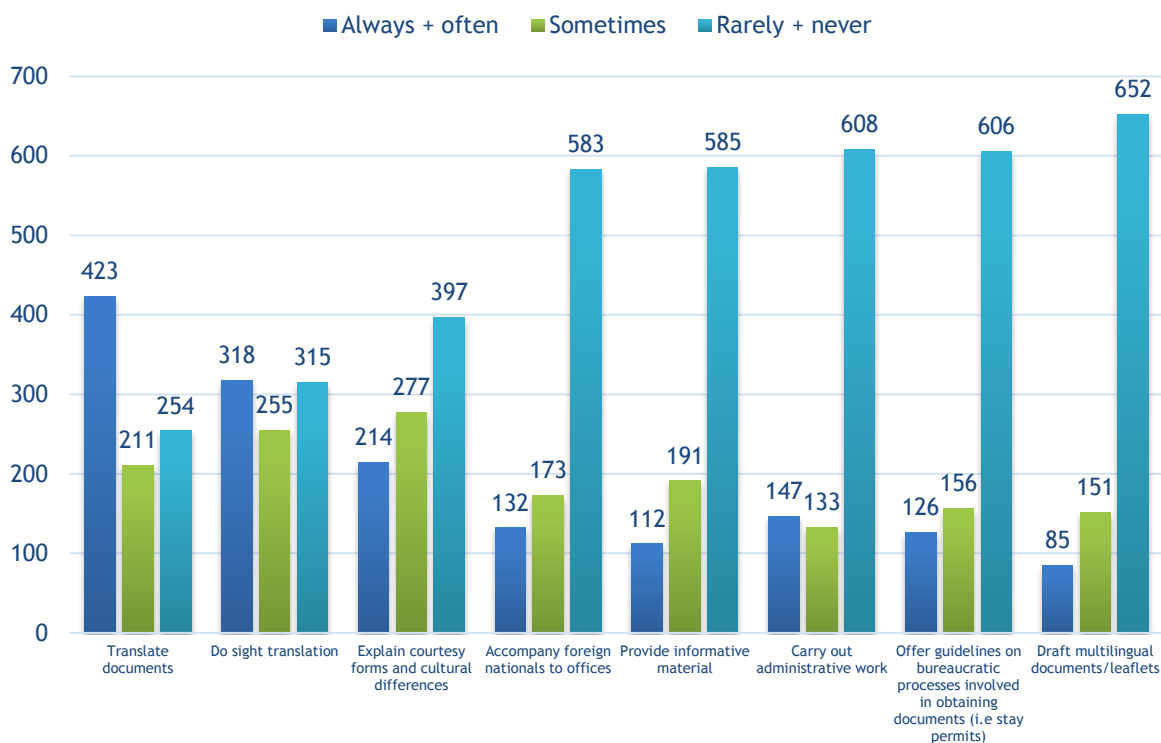
**Figure 160:** interpreters' perception of role according to working settings.

As the graph shows, the setting in which most interpreters see that their role is to serve as cultural brokers is “education”, followed by the healthcare sector. Surprisingly, respondents of the social service sector think of themselves as “invisible conduits”, as do those working in legal settings. The very low response rate for the last option “helper” could be interpreted as a sign that the profession is abandoning its exclusively voluntary nature and moving towards a different concept of professionalism which, far from excluding its empathic character, allows interpreters not to be confused with other professional figures. As Roy points out, in the 1960s there was no difference between an interpreter and a helper, owing to “comparatively rigid professional standards of behaviour and expectations of events, which derive from views built on monologic, public situations where the flow of the message is basically one-way and the receiver is seen as passive” (2002: 349).

This trend is confirmed by the responses given to the second question on role, which asked interpreters to indicate if and how frequently they carry out tasks which go beyond interpreting. Sociological studies carried out on nurses (McKenna & Slevin 2008) reveal that the nursing profession is becoming increasingly diverse and that the dividing line between professional and para-professional practices is blurred. The phenomenon has been defined as “expanded role”, which has evolved to meet the changing needs of patients and the profession and sometimes comprises a series of other functions previously performed by other professionals. Hence, McKenna & Slevin advocate a reconsideration of role boundaries for nurses, which entails “long-term continuing development” (*ibid.*: 91). A similar phenomenon appears in the field of public service interpreting,

especially in those countries in which the profession has not yet been acknowledged at political level with the implementation of certification procedures and national registers. In these countries, the boundaries between interpreters and cultural mediators, whose tasks are broader than that of an interpreter, are less clear-cut (cf. A. Gentile *et al.* 1996). Therefore, the second question aims to assess the degree of role confusion and role expansion (figure 161):

**Please consider all the occasions in which you have worked as an interpreter. How often do you also perform the following tasks?**



**Figure 161:** public service interpreters' tasks which go beyond interpreting.

As the graph shows, a considerable number of respondents appears to carry out tasks which fall within the field of translation and interpreting, such as document translation and sight translation. An interesting portion of informants (n = 214) reveal that they have quite often explained cultural differences, which corresponds to the role of the interpreter as a mediator described by Pöchhacker:

Sometimes mediation goes further than overcoming cultural differences, but includes explanatory additions, selective omissions, persuasive elaboration or the mitigation of face-threatening acts, all of which give the interpreter's mediation a conciliatory orientation, which means intervening to reduce differences and promote understanding. A mediator is a third party called upon to resolve a conflict (2008: 14).

Apart from the first three options, the interpreters interviewed appear to have a rather defined role, which indicates that progress has been made in raising awareness of the tasks pertaining to the interpreter's professional figure. A statistical analysis revealed that there is a positive correlation between those who define themselves as cultural mediators and the tasks they perform; indeed, a



higher number of respondents who chose this option declared that they have carried out administrative tasks and accompanied the foreign speakers to offices. Differences were also found among countries for the remaining five variables. For example, Norway appears to be the country in which the interpreters' role is more clearly defined, as shown by the excerpts of the following contingency tables (figure 162):

| <b>Contingency table What is your country of residence?/ Accompany foreign nationals to offices</b> |        |  |       |           |        |       |       |       |
|---|--------|--|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |        | Accompany foreign nationals to offices |       |           |        |       | Total |       |
|   |        | Always                                 | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |       |
| What is your country of residence?  | Norway | Count                                  | 3     | 4         | 11     | 33    | 83    | 134   |
|   |        | Expected count                         | 3,9   | 13,2      | 24,5   | 33,4  | 58,9  | 134,0 |

| <b>Contingency table Provide informative material/ What is your country of residence?</b> |        |                              |       |           |        |       |       |       |
|---|--------|------------------------------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |        | Provide informative material |       |           |        |       | Total |       |
|   |        | Always                       | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |       |
| What is your country of residence?  | Norway | Count                        | 1     | 3         | 16     | 27    | 87    | 134   |
|   |        | Expected count               | 3,3   | 12,2      | 28,1   | 31,5  | 58,9  | 134,0 |

| <b>Contingency table Carry out administrative work/ What is your country of residence?</b> |        |                               |       |           |        |       |       |       |
|--|--------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|  |        | Carry out administrative work |       |           |        |       | Total |       |
|  |        | Always                        | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |       |
| What is your country of residence?   | Norway | Count                         | 3     | 3         | 13     | 23    | 92    | 134   |
|  |        | Expected count                | 5,7   | 14,8      | 19,8   | 27,1  | 66,7  | 134,0 |

| <b>Contingency table Offer guidelines on bureaucratic processes involved in obtaining documents (i.e stay permit)/ What is your country of residence?</b> |        |  |       |           |        |       |       |       |
|---|--------|--|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |        | Offer guidelines on bureaucratic processes involved in obtaining documents (i.e stay permit) |       |           |        |       | Total |       |
|   |        | Always   | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |       |
| What is your country of residence?  | Norway | Count  | 3     | 4         | 12     | 24    | 91    | 134   |
|   |        | Expected count   | 3,9   | 13,2      | 21,8   | 25,4  | 69,7  | 134,0 |

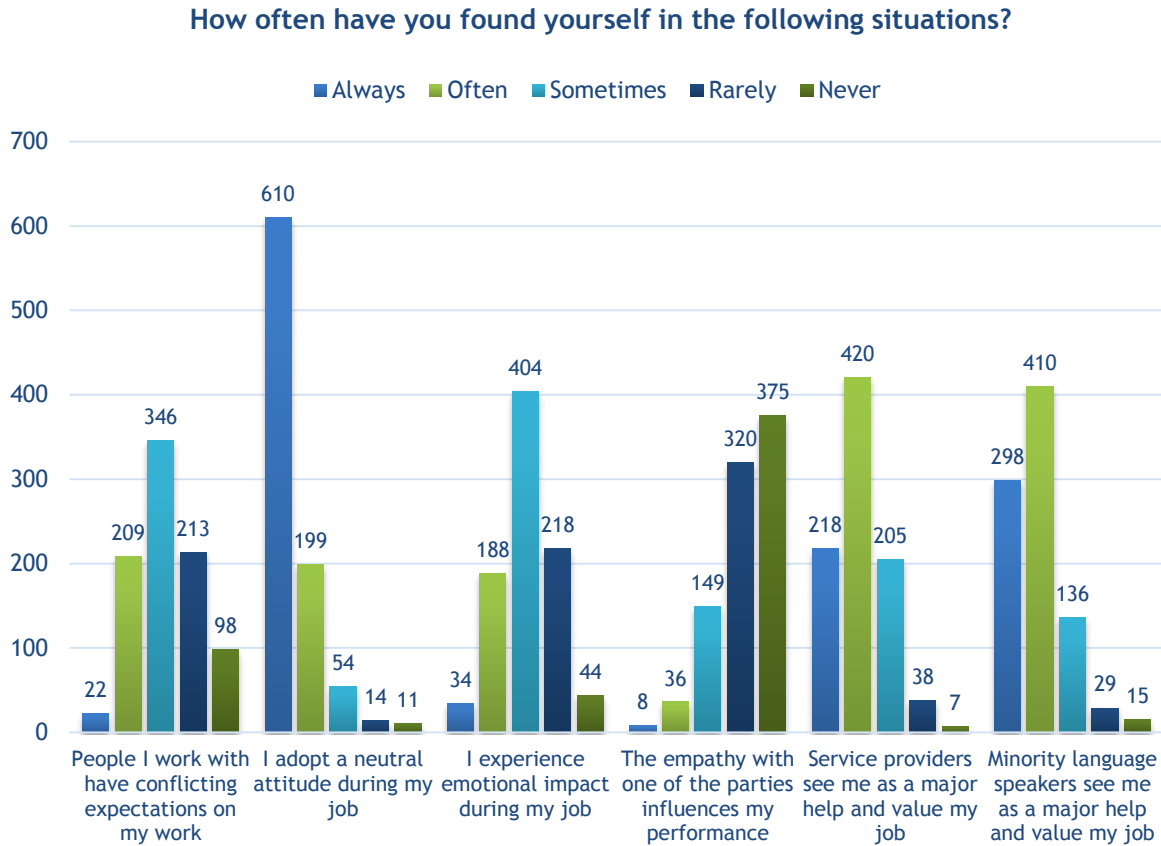
  

| <b>Contingency table Draft multilingual documents/leaflets/ What is your country of residence?</b> |        |                                       |       |           |        |       |       |       |
|--|--------|---------------------------------------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|  |        | Draft multilingual documents/leaflets |       |           |        |       | Total |       |
|  |        | Always                                | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |       |
| What is your country of residence?   | Norway | Count                                 | 1     | 3         | 12     | 25    | 93    | 134   |
|  |        | Expected count                        | 3,6   | 7,4       | 21,1   | 26,6  | 75,2  | 134,0 |

**Figure 162:** Norwegian interpreters' tasks which go beyond interpreting.

Norway seems to be the country in which respondents fully respond to the definition of the public service interpreter, one who rarely performs other tasks than those closely linked to the interpreting (and translating) profession. This case is the most representative not only because a high number of responses was collected from this country ( $n = 134$ ), but also because Norway has made huge progress in the recognition of the profession, with the creation of a national register and a rigorous system of accreditation. Countries such as Australia, Canada, Sweden and the U.S. present a similar

response pattern, which differs completely from that of Italy and Spain. As far as other variables are concerned, no statistical differences were found. The third question on role aims to investigate the degree to which interpreters experience role conflict, understood as the divergence between the role expectations among peers and colleagues, discussed in chapter 2. Interpreters were asked to indicate if and how often they have found themselves in a series of situations (figure 163):



**Figure 163:** public service interpreters’ degree of role conflict.

The six options provided focus on certain aspects related to role conflict: the first regards the contrasting expectations that interpreting users and colleagues have towards the interpreter. The results show that a considerable number of respondents (n = 577) have found themselves in situations in which conflicting demands were placed upon them with a frequency going to “always” to “sometimes”. The statistical differences deemed relevant for the analysis of the question were: level of education and working settings. The first was chosen to assess whether the way interpreters behave during their performances and the way they are regarded by the parties involved in the mediation depend on their level of education. The second variable was chosen to determine whether the interpreters’ actions and self-perception depend on the setting(s) in which they work. A graph containing the response patterns of all the answers collected will be shown at the end of the paragraph.

As far as the first option is concerned, the main hypothesis was that, if the interpreters' degree of education was high, their role would be clearer to service providers, who would, in turn, hold less conflicting expectations of them. A chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 13,523$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed that there is no significant difference between the variables, which means that all interpreters experience role conflict regardless of the degree they have. However, a slightly higher number of respondents who work as cultural mediators (who perform a series of other tasks) report having experienced role conflict, as the table below shows (figure 164):

|   |                                | Contingency table Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?/ People I work with have conflicting expectations on my work |       |           |        |       |      | Total |
|---|--------------------------------|--|-------|-----------|--------|-------|------|-------|
|   |                                | People I work with have conflicting expectations on my work  |       |           |        |       |      |       |
|   |                                | Always   | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |      |       |
| Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role? | Other (please specify)         | Count  | 1     | 8         | 11     | 4     | 2    | 26    |
|   |                                | Expected count   | ,6    | 6,1       | 10,1   | 6,2   | 2,9  | 26,0  |
|   | Enabler of communication       | Count  | 12    | 129       | 228    | 140   | 61   | 570   |
|   |                                | Expected count   | 14,1  | 134,2     | 222,1  | 136,7 | 62,9 | 570,0 |
|   | Language and cultural mediator | Count  | 6     | 49        | 71     | 47    | 18   | 191   |
|   |                                | Expected count   | 4,7   | 45,0      | 74,4   | 45,8  | 21,1 | 191,0 |
|   | Invisible conduit              | Count  | 3     | 23        | 33     | 21    | 14   | 94    |
|   |                                | Expected count   | 2,3   | 22,1      | 36,6   | 22,5  | 10,4 | 94,0  |
|   | Helper                         | Count  | 0     | 0         | 3      | 1     | 3    | 7     |
|   |                                | Expected count   | ,2    | 1,6       | 2,7    | 1,7   | ,8   | 7,0   |
|   | Total                          | Count  | 22    | 209       | 346    | 213   | 98   | 888   |
|   |                                | Expected count   | 22,0  | 209,0     | 346,0  | 213,0 | 98,0 | 888,0 |

**Figure 164:** contingency table showing the role conflict experience by public service interpreters.

The results, therefore, confirm the theories postulated by sociological literature equating a lack of defined status with an increased role conflict and ambiguity. The second option collected responses on the interpreters' degree of neutrality. Unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents ( $n = 610$ ) answered that they always adopt a neutral attitude while performing their job. This attitude is taken by all respondents regardless of their level of education ( $\chi^2 = 10.054$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), which indicates that neutrality and impartiality are concepts assumed to be the rule of thumb of the profession. The third option aimed to gain greater insights into the emotional stress interpreters (Baistow 1999; Valero-Garcés 2006; 2014a; 2015a) which may have to cope with during and after their performance. The results show that a high number of public service interpreters have experienced emotional impact either "always", "often" or "sometimes", thus confirming the theories

postulated in the literature. In this case, too, there is no difference between interpreters with and without a degree in translation and interpreting ( $\chi^2 = 4.670$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). However, a high number of public service interpreters asserted that this emotional empathy with one of the speakers does not influence their performance. Surprisingly, a slightly higher number of interpreters with a degree in translation and interpreting answered that their performance is somehow influenced by their sympathy towards one of the parties, and the difference is statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 17.431$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The results are shown in the contingency table (figure 165):

|   |                       |                | The empathy with one of the parties influences my performance |       |           |        |       | Total |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|---|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
|   |                       |                | Always  | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES                   | Count          | 1   | 19    | 46        | 100    | 99    | 265   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 2,4   | 10,7  | 44,5      | 95,5   | 111,9 | 265,0 |
|   | NO                    | Count          | 6   | 14    | 93        | 208    | 250   | 571   |
|   |                       | Expected count | 5,1   | 23,1  | 95,8      | 205,8  | 241,1 | 571,0 |
|   | I don't have a degree | Count          | 1   | 3     | 10        | 12     | 26    | 52    |
|   |                       | Expected count | ,5  | 2,1   | 8,7       | 18,7   | 22,0  | 52,0  |
| Total   | Count                 | 8              | 36  | 149   | 320       | 375    | 888   |       |
|   | Expected count        | 8,0            | 36,0  | 149,0 | 320,0     | 375,0  | 888,0 |       |

Figure 165: extent to which public service interpreters suffer emotional stress depending on their level of education.

The table indicates that a higher number of respondents with a degree in translation and interpreting answered that they often suffer emotional stress during the interpreted event. The results suggest that, although a specialised degree in translation and interpreting gives students the professional tools to cope with vicarious trauma, they do experience stress.

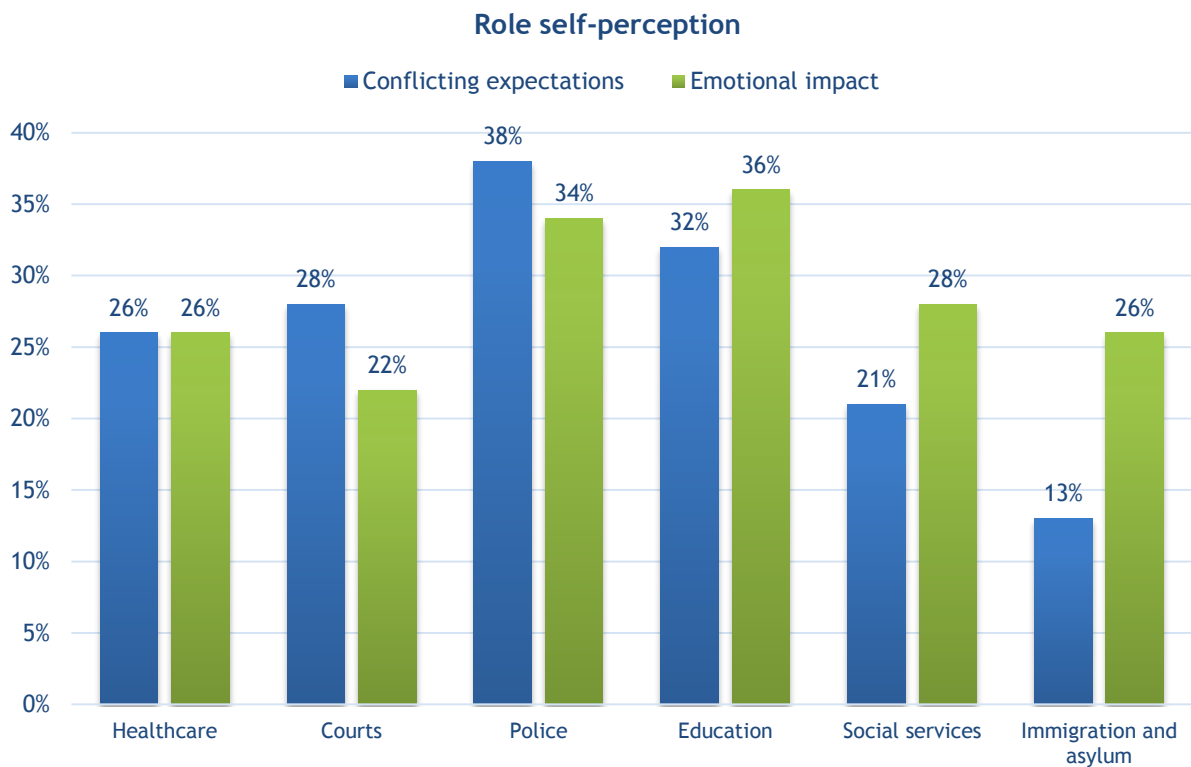
The responses given to the last two options suggest that interpreters believe there is quite a high degree of appreciation for their work, although some discrepancies were found between interpreters with and without a degree in interpreting (figure 166):

|   |     |                | Service providers see me as a major help and value my job |       |           |        |       | Tot.  |    |
|---|-----|----------------|---|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|----|
|   |     |                | Always  | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |       |    |
| Do you have an Master degree in translation/interpreting? | YES | Count          | 60  | 119   | 70        | 13     | 3     | 265   |    |
|   |     | Expected count | 65,1  | 125,3 | 61,2      | 11,3   | 2,1   | 265,0 |    |
|   | NO  | Count          | 142   | 269   | 132       | 25     | 3     | 571   |    |
|   |     | Expected count | 140,2   | 270,1 | 131,8     | 24,4   | 4,5   | 571,0 |    |
|   |     |                | Count   | 16    | 32        | 3      | 0     | 1     | 52 |

|       |                       |                |       |       |      |     |       |      |
|-------|-----------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|-----|-------|------|
|       | I don't have a degree | Expected count | 12,8  | 24,6  | 12,0 | 2,2 | ,4    | 52,0 |
| Total | Count                 | Count          | 420   | 205   | 38   | 7   | 888   |      |
|       | Expected count        | Expected count | 420,0 | 205,0 | 38,0 | 7,0 | 888,0 |      |

**Figure 166:** extent to which public service interpreters perceive their work as appreciated depending on their level of education.

The table shows that there is a significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 16.046$ ,  $DF = 8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between respondents with different levels of education. Respondents with a specialised degree in T&I are less self-confident than others, as has been shown in several instances in both surveys, which is why the trend requires further investigation. The data concerning the way public service interpreters are seen by society at large shows a certain degree of improvement compared to previous surveys on self-perception of role (Salaets & Van Gucht 2008; Martin & Abril Martí 2008). However, since the data reflects interpreters' subjective opinions on role, the trend shown in the response patterns may not represent the opinions of the whole professional category. The parameters in which the most striking differences between the groups were found are: conflicting expectations and emotional impact (figure 167):



**Figure 167:** interpreters' self-perception of role conflict and emotional stress.

The graph reveals that the sectors in which respondents experience role conflict are police and education. The data corroborates the results obtained from the survey carried out by Perez and Wilson (2007), on Scottish police officers' perceptions of the interpreter's role. Their outcome revealed that several police officers questioned the interpreter's skills and knowledge by claiming that, in certain cases, interpreters deviated from their role and became too much involved or behaved like lawyers. The potential stressful situations in which interpreters find themselves in this setting have the potential to impact on the way they are perceived by police authorities, as shown in the comment of these respondents:

Some professionals aren't patient and I personally feel they don't value the service provided. Even some clients don't seem appreciative because they expect more than just interpretation. Clients feel that interpreter is not doing a good job and is taking the professionals side (Female, Canada).

Service providers need more training and understanding of our role. Sometimes they don't appreciate how challenging this job is and how to cooperate with us (Female, Canada):

The comments of the two interpreters contribute to corroborating the wrong perception that certain interpreters' clients have, although the empirical results show that the situation is progressively changing. As far as education is concerned, the results obtained for the setting of education suggest that further research needs to be done on this topic, which has been so far overlooked in Interpreting Studies. Overall, the trends shown in the responses given to the three questions on role reveal that interpreters act as neutral participants and that their performance is seldom influenced by a sense of empathy with one of the two parties in the conversation. Certain comments contribute to strengthening the notion of high professionalism interpreters show when they find themselves in emotionally stressful situations.<sup>53</sup> Another respondent pointed out that she intervenes in cases of unacceptable behaviour.<sup>54</sup> Although the comment does not clearly specify what kinds of bad behaviour the respondent deems reprehensible, the survey by Ortega Herráez and Folquié Rubio (2008) revealed that interpreters take no action if one of the parties shows superiority or racism. Rather, they simply omit the information, thus changing the course of the interview and dispelling the myth of neutrality. Despite the negative response patterns showing a lack of appreciation of the interpreter's role, a positive trend is emerging and is strengthened by the way some respondents

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<sup>53</sup> Although I may be impacted by what I hear in sex abuse, sexual harassment cases, or crimes against humanity, I know the importance of remaining neutral and not judge the person speaking. It's important for the others in the room to hear what that person has to say (Female, USA).

"An interpreter should not let himself/herself emotional impact during work, but sometimes this happens when working with people who find themselves in a highly stressful life situation. I am always aware of this and try not let it impact my work" (Female, Finland).

"I sincerely HOPE that I always act as, and am perceived as, a neutral party who is not biased and who seeks to objectively resolve any linguistic difficulties that arise (and faithfully reproduce what the parties themselves are saying, even in the most difficult situations)" (Female, Denmark).

"I suffer a lot when I work with victims of human trafficking resulting in sexual exploitation. I hoped that I could deal with it over time, but it increasingly affects me" (Female, Spain).

<sup>54</sup> "I always clarify what my role is way ahead of the event. However, I don't equate neutrality with not reacting to unacceptable speaker behaviour" (Female, Poland).

believe that both service providers and minority language speakers see their contribution as useful and appreciate their job. As some respondents remarked:

When people experience professional interpreting with a competent, trained interpreter who stays within professional role boundaries, it is often a revelatory experience. Once they see the positive impact good interpreting has for their communication, they will pay to bring you back, even in social service agencies with limited budgets (Female, USA).

The more we work with service providers, the more they know and appreciate our functions and skills (Female, Spain).

Overall, the data reveals that, although progress has been made on certain aspects of the spectrum of the interpreters' role self-perception, the link between the rather low status interpreters attribute to themselves and role conflict has been confirmed by empirical data.

## 11. The Future of the Profession

The penultimate part of the survey focuses on the way interpreters think that the profession will evolve in the future. As in the first survey, the present section contains three questions, which gathered quite a few open comments. The first question was slightly changed compared to the first survey, as in the literature the status of public service interpreting is described as much lower than that of conference interpreting. In the second questionnaire, interpreters were asked whether they believe that the status of public service interpreting will improve in the next few years (figure 168):

### Do you think that the status of public service interpreters will improve in the future?

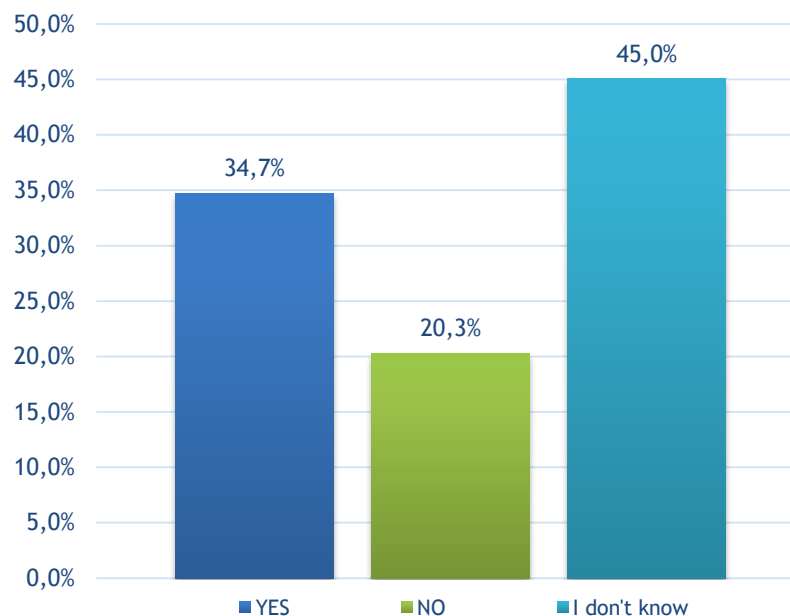
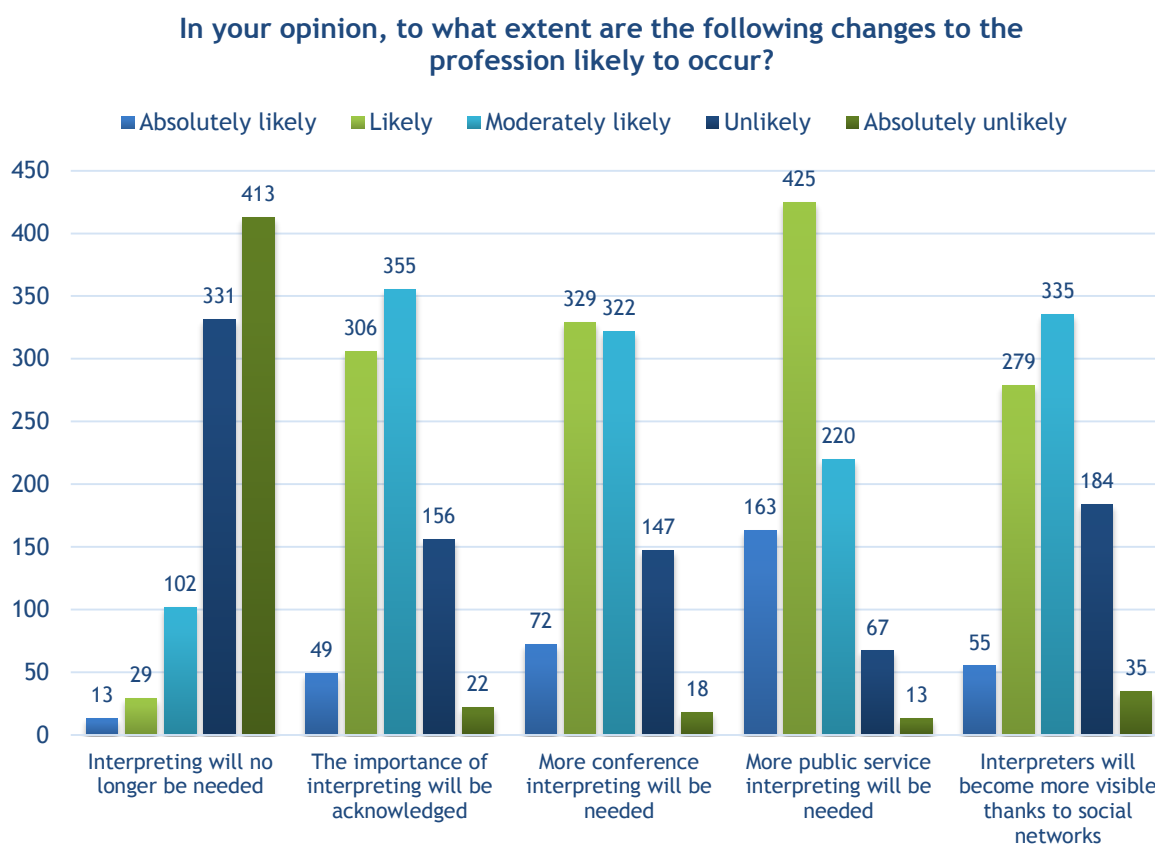


Figure 168: public service interpreters' opinions on the future of the interpreting profession.

34.7% (n = 308) are confident that the status of the profession will change for the better and a lower portion of interpreters (20.3%, n = 180) answered negatively. The majority of responses chose the option “I don’t know” (45%, n = 400). The comments show that the interpreters’ expectations for the future are clearly divided between two extremes (highly negative and highly positive). On the one hand, respondents said that the profession is unlikely to change due to national policies and to a lack of strict criteria of certification;<sup>55</sup> on the other, the developments in training and research, together with the increasing migration flows appear to have enhanced the interpreters’ confidence, as they sincerely hope for a better future.<sup>56</sup> The second question describes how the profession is expected to change (figure 169):



**Figure 169:** interpreters’ opinions on the future changes of the profession.

<sup>55</sup> “We are being repudiated, replaced and phased out in many different way. A sunset industry to me, thus the discouragement to my child to get into my profession” (Male, Canada).

“There needs to be a major lawsuit for incompetence to change things” (Female, Canada).

“Until we come together to elevate this profession by creating national standards for criteria, training and credentialing, this profession will continue to be diluted by untrained and incompetent PSI who drag the rest of us down” (Female, USA).

“It depends which political party wins the election, certainly not under this government” (Female, UK).

<sup>56</sup> “As more research and education become more common, the status will rise” (Female, Australia).

“I hope it will thanks to improvements in the education of public service interpreters (may raise the status of the profession) and lobbying work by professional organisations” (Female, Finland).

“PSI and the research on is having its momentum, of which your study is a proof” (Female, Japan).

“Over time, yes, as the profession matures and more countries adopt formal legislation that promotes language access. This will happen because worldwide migration continues to increase and to spread through all parts of the world. In addition, in many parts of the world people are increasingly using human rights charters as a basis for arguing for the right to access to services through a language bridge” (Female, USA).



The opinions on the future of the profession expressed by public service interpreters appear to be slightly more optimistic than those given by conference interpreters. Only a small minority of respondents ( $n = 42$ ) believe that the profession will no longer be needed in the future, a far lower portion compared to the first survey ( $n = 108$ ). The attitude shown in the previous question is confirmed by the responses given to the second option, where 355 public service interpreters are highly confident that the profession is going to be acknowledged in the future (only 80 conference interpreters expressed the same opinion). A high number of respondents think that more conference interpreting will be needed ( $n = 401$ ), against 101 conference interpreters who chose the same option. On the other hand, there are few doubts that the demand for public service interpreting will rise in the years to come, as the response patterns of both questionnaires confirm ( $n = 442$  for the first survey and  $n = 588$  for the second survey). The second group appears to be more confident about the role that the social networks are playing to enhance the visibility of the profession, as 334 respondents expressed a very favourable opinion in this regard.

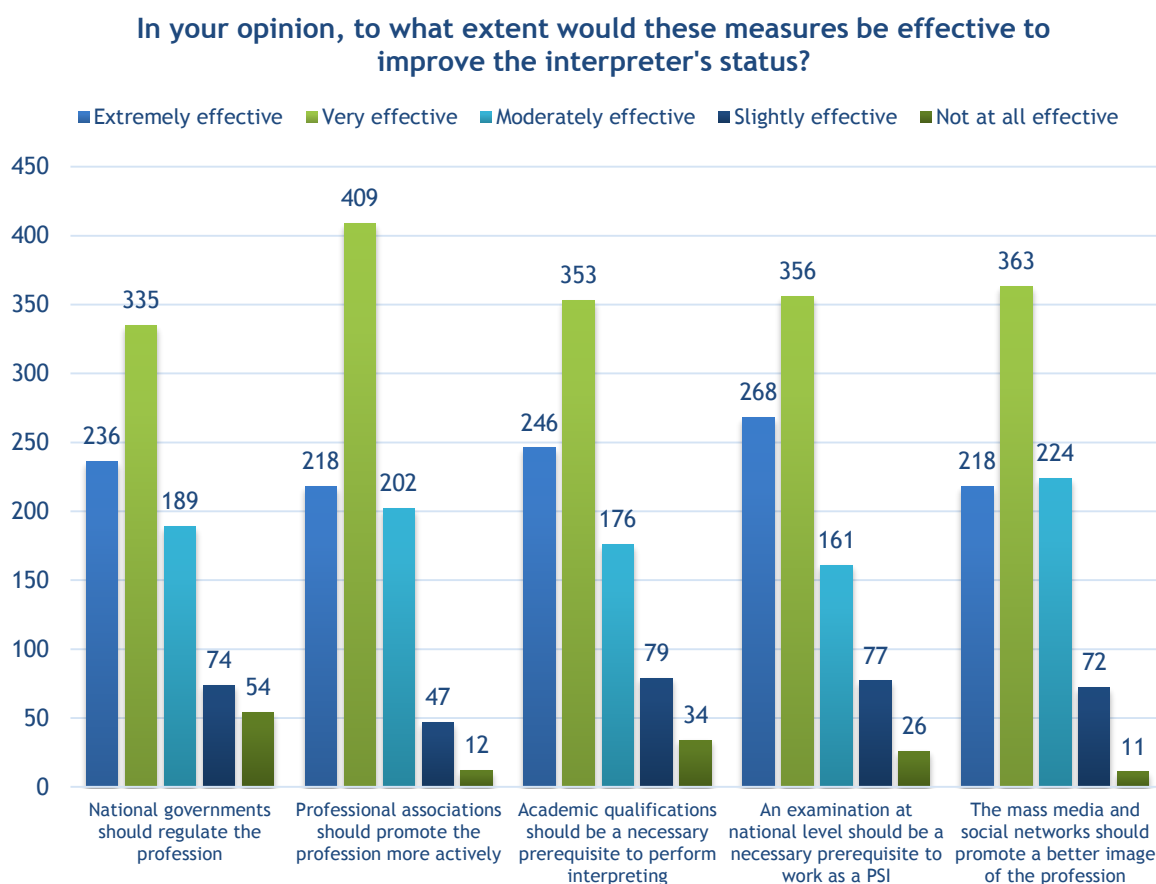
At statistical level, differences were found between sexes, with a tendency of men to be generally more self-confident than women. As far as age is concerned, younger generations tend to be more optimistic than older generations, especially when they express their beliefs on the acknowledgement of the profession (figure 170):

|                         |             | Contingency table What is your age group?/ The importance of interpreting will be acknowledged |        |                   |          |                     | Total |       |
|-------------------------|-------------|--|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|-------|-------|
|                         |             | The importance of interpreting will be acknowledged  |        |                   |          |                     |       |       |
|                         |             | Absolutely likely  | Likely | Moderately likely | Unlikely | Absolutely unlikely |       |       |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 years | Count  | 0      | 4                 | 4        | 2                   | 0     | 10    |
|                         |             | Expected count   | ,6     | 3,4               | 4,0      | 1,8                 | ,2    | 10,0  |
|                         | 26-35       | Count  | 5      | 52                | 50       | 24                  | 1     | 132   |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 7,3    | 45,5              | 52,8     | 23,2                | 3,3   | 132,0 |
|                         | 36-45       | Count  | 13     | 86                | 98       | 45                  | 4     | 246   |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 13,6   | 84,8              | 98,3     | 43,2                | 6,1   | 246,0 |
|                         | 46-55       | Count  | 16     | 88                | 106      | 42                  | 9     | 261   |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 14,4   | 89,9              | 104,3    | 45,9                | 6,5   | 261,0 |
|                         | 56-65       | Count  | 11     | 51                | 71       | 34                  | 7     | 174   |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 9,6    | 60,0              | 69,6     | 30,6                | 4,3   | 174,0 |
|                         | 65+         | Count  | 4      | 25                | 26       | 9                   | 1     | 65    |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 3,6    | 22,4              | 26,0     | 11,4                | 1,6   | 65,0  |
| Total                   |             | Count  | 22     | 49                | 306      | 156                 | 22    | 888   |
|                         |             | Expected count   | 22,0   | 49,0              | 306,0    | 156,0               | 22,0  | 888,0 |

**Figure 170:** correlations between interpreters' age groups and their prospects for the future.

No significant differences were found for responses given to the other three variables (country of residence, level of education and experience in conference interpreting), which suggests that most

interpreters answered consistently. Amongst the countries surveyed, the most optimistic seems to be Norway, as one of the open comments shows: “There has been work done in Norway to improve the status of interpreters, in regards of studies, registration and evaluation of interpreters. For example the Courts in Norway are obliged to choose Interpreters holding a certain Level of education” (Female, Norway). On the other hand, the most pessimistic country appears to be the UK, owing to the current difficult political situation, as this respondent to the question confirmed: “PSI is undermined by the current UK government who see it as an easy cost cutting target and because of the general immigration debate at present.” (Female, UK). The third question proposes to evaluate possible solutions to improve the status of the profession as a whole. The answers are shown below (figure 171):



**Figure 171:** solutions proposed to raise the status of the profession.

As the table shows, the most popular solution was that professional associations have to play a more active role for the promotion of the profession, with 627 interpreters choosing the first two positive options. The second solution in order of importance was that “an examination at national level should be a necessary prerequisite to work as a public service interpreter” (n = 624). Consistently with this response trend, the third most ticked option was that academic qualifications have to be a condition *sine qua non* to work as interpreters (n = 599). The lack of recognition of academic titles

is considered by many one of the major obstacles hampering the full professionalisation of the profession, as the comments below demonstrate:

I do agree that the status of interpreters needs to be improved, regulations and certification would be a step in the right direction. In this way, proficient interpreters would continue to be able to provide services, whereas interpreters who don't have the necessary skill or language/cultural proficiency would not pass certification and thus not be able to provide this service until they met the requirements. This would also insure that with only qualified interpreters in the profession, the profession's status. The only certification available for interpretation is a translation exam, the two services are quite different and thus this exam is not appropriate. The courses/training are quite expensive compared to the potential income, many of my colleagues decide not to attend. Recently, I completed some courses, however they cost approximately 3-4 months of my income earned through interpreting (Female, Canada).

In the UK we had a national register of interpreters appropriately qualified since 2000, however in 2012 the government outsourced legal interpreting to an exploitative agency. The profession has been completely destroyed and professional interpreters are now leaving the profession en masse. There is no future for public service interpreting in the UK, soon there will only be amateur bilinguals working as interpreters, the professionals are going (Female, UK).

A higher visibility of the profession in the mass media (n = 581) is the fourth priority in terms of importance, followed by state regulation (n = 571), which is in contradiction with the high scores obtained by the response concerning the national accreditation system. In general, the response pattern shows a high degree of consistency, as a bottom-up approach is proposed, with the work of professional associations in the promotion of the profession being seen as crucial. In the case of public service interpreting, academic qualifications are seen as one of the most significant solutions to rule out unskilled interpreters from the profession:

The interpreting profession needs to be recognised, regulated and protected. There needs to be three levels requiring a national qualification: community interpreter (level 3) public service interpreter (level 6 = Ba) conference interpreter (also level 6). To achieve this, a National Curriculum needs to be established, accredited and regulated by a single National body to train both the interpreters and the trainers. A National data base, like the NRPSI also needs to be maintained. A National Code of Conduct needs to be established, adhered to and policed by the above-mentioned body (Male, UK).

The NRPSI, for example, does not require post-graduate level qualification. There're more & more lesser & lesser trained people flooding into the profession in the UK. I also think that your questions 25/26 do not reflect any reality. Currently we're viewed at a lower status as any teachers, maybe bus drivers have the same status, or higher (Female, UK).

In general, although general pessimism is still (and perhaps understandably) widespread, there is the general impression that the morale of public service interpreters is being slowly lifted, a trend which is visible not only in the purposeful behaviour displayed in the response pattern, but also in the high number of optimistic open comments placed at the end of the questionnaire. As one interpreter points out: "I love my job and whether it is appreciated by society or not, I feel very useful and proud of my work" (Female, The Netherlands).

## 12. The European Directive 2010/64/EU

The last section of the second questionnaire focuses on the implementation of the European Directive 2010/64/EU on the Right to Translation and Interpreting in Criminal Proceedings. Its relevance is historic, not only because it aims to enshrine the right of foreign citizens involved in a criminal proceeding to make themselves understood and to understand the charges against them, but also because it has put forward the issue of quality interpretation, which could only be dealt with by providing qualified interpreters. The need to adopt such a directive was spurred by the increasing mobility, within the European borders, of citizens who may find themselves in a difficult legal situation in another European Member State, which is why there has been an increasing need for cooperation for the creation of a common European space of criminal justice. Among its main objectives there are: the establishment of national registers of qualified interpreters, the distinction of the professional profiles of “interpreter” and “translator” and the establishment of harmonised systems of accreditation and certification for interpreters, which allow only qualified interpreters to work in the legal field. The Directive had to be transposed in all Member States by 27 October 2013. Recent research (Ballardini 2014; Falbo & Viezzi 2014; Hertog 2015; Blasco Mayor & Del Pozo Triviño 2015) has shown that there is a high level of heterogeneity among the legislative initiatives taken by the Member States effectively to transpose the Directive. As Katschinka points out:

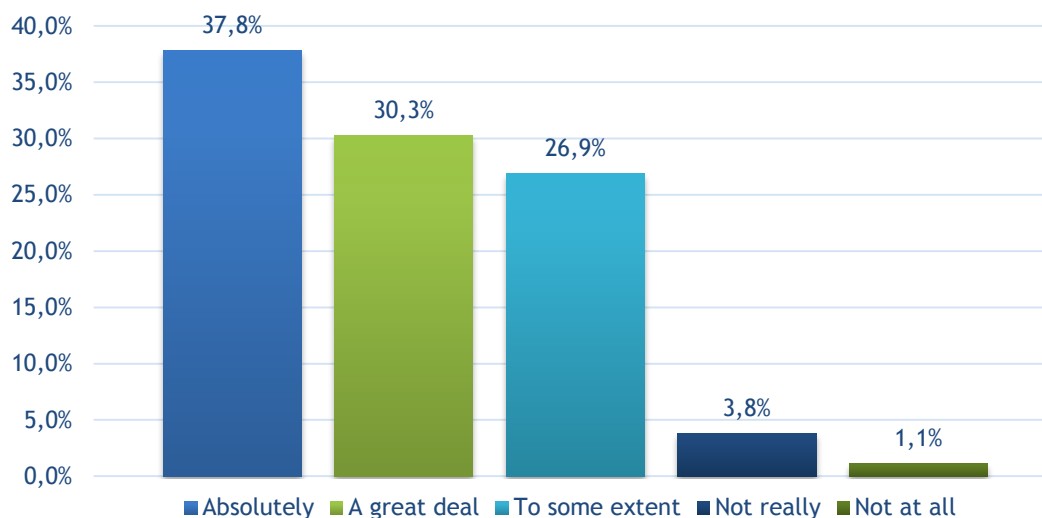
On account of the fact that Directive 2010/64/EU is very general in its provisions [...] it is quite obvious that governments will try to transpose only a minimum of the requirements stipulated in Directive 2010/64/EU, especially under the present economic circumstances and the current budget constraints (2014: 110).

In the light of the above notion, there are reasons to believe that the Directive has not been effectively implemented, and that significant differences exist among countries. As the latest report of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) showed:

There are only a few European countries where, in order to be selected as an interpreter, an exam is mandatory and a quality check has been established. The title and the function of court interpreters are not protected in all European countries and it is also not a European standard to give to courts the responsibility to select their own interpreters; thus the Ministry of Justice usually plays an important role in the process of selection of interpreters (2014: 461).

Since the survey was launched at the end of 2014, the extent to which interpreters thought of the Directive as a driving force that would keep the momentum of professionalisation going had to be analysed. The public service interpreters interviewed in the survey were asked the following question: “The European Directive 2010/64/EU on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings proposes the establishment of a register of interpreters who must be “appropriately qualified” Art. 5 (2). Do you think that the implementation of this or similar measures will contribute to enhancing the status of public service interpreters? The answers were as follows (figure 172):

**The European Directive 2010/64/EU on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal [...]. Do you think that the implementation of this or similar measures will contribute to enhancing the status of public service interpreters?**



**Figure 172:** interpreters' opinions on the European Directive 2010/64/EU.

The responses reflect the great deal of enthusiasm generated by the transposition of the Directive in 2013. 68.1% of respondents (n = 605) are either “absolutely” or “a great deal” confident that the Directive and other similar measures (such as the Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare) will lead to a significant improvement of the situation, at least in the EU. Nevertheless, a not insignificant number of informants (26.9%, n = 239) are satisfied with the results achieved by the Directive only “to some extent”, as the comments below demonstrate:

To be on the National Register of interpreters in Criminal Proceedings one has to agree to ridiculously low hourly rates approved by the Government. The Directive proved to be ineffective in improving the status of public service interpreters in Bulgaria (Female, Bulgaria).

In The Netherlands we have a register, which is controlled by the government: it pulls all the strings and uses them to its own benefit, yet complying with the Directive! Tendering public service interpreting and translation assignment has further devalued our profession (lit. and fig.) It enhances people to think the word is easy: if paid so little, it can't be much (Female, The Netherlands).

In the UK, in theory, the profession is already regulated; a National Register has already been established (NRPSI), it is highly respected and very efficient; interpreters must be properly qualified (DPSI, level 6); the European Directive 2010/64/EU, apparently, has not yet been implemented. The real problem lies somewhere else: the power of the agencies and their influence on the Government (Female, UK).

I'm not very optimist because we hoped that the implementation of the Directive 2010/64/EU, which was adopted in Italy with the Legislative Decree nr. 32 of 4 March 2014 and of Directive 2012/13/EU on the right to information in criminal proceedings (adopted in Italy with the

Legislative Decree nr. 101 of 1 July 2014) would create a national register of professional legal interpreters, whereby only certified and qualified interpreters would be able to translate, swear translations and interpret in criminal proceedings. However, these changes have not been implemented as yet, which is why anyone can certify a translation, provided that (s)he takes on this responsibility. Our professionalism is therefore devalued and, together with it, every fair recognition of our work (Female, Italy).

A similar Directive is needed for other important fields as well, such as healthcare and education (Female, Spain).

The comments show that, despite the initial enthusiasm and the heightened awareness in academic research with regard to the Directive – which nonetheless has to be seen as a huge step forward towards the full professionalisation of public service interpreting – some interpreters are convinced that much needs to be done to improve the status of this professional category. A similar measure that includes a section on the right to interpretation and translation is the Directive 2012/29/EU, which establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime and constituted the basis of the recently-concluded European project Co-Minor IN/QUEST (Salaets & Balogh 2015a, 2016). The project, which included six partner institutions, aimed to improve interpreter-mediated child interviews in pre-trial settings; its results revealed that much more training is needed to raise awareness about interviewing techniques. By the same token, the Directive 2011/24/EU is moving towards a greater awareness of the importance of cross-border healthcare (cf. Angelelli 2015). As Roat and Crezee argue:

Infectious disease does not recognize language or social class. In an era in which antibiotic-resistant staff infections (MRSA), bird flu, antibiotic-resistant tuberculosis, measles and other infectious diseases have started to appear and reappear, systematically limiting any specific populations' access to health care by limiting their access to interpreters puts the entire population at risk (2015: 241).

Nevertheless, the lack of specialised training in the field, the growing need for rare languages, the absence of the professional figure in the mass media, the self-perceived low status and a certain degree of role conflict – which are compounded by national policies aiming to cut costs or to dispose of language services altogether – are only some of the hindrances currently working against the well-deserved recognition of the profession. However, on the other hand, the general picture emerging therefrom is that of a young, hopeful and highly-educated cohort of interpreters which, despite lack of economic and societal appreciation, deeply believes in the added value of their job by showing a proactive attitude and a genuine willingness to strive for a better future for the profession. As one respondent argued: “the future of the profession lies in the hands of the new generations of highly-trained professional interpreters who, building on the experience of the previous generations, are fighting today to improve the profession of tomorrow” (Female, Italy).

# 6. Summary of the Results

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## Introduction

After having analysed the two questionnaires individually and having commented on the most interesting results obtained from data processing, the present chapter seeks to summarise, compare and discuss the findings of the two world surveys. The analysis will be structured as follows: each questionnaire section will be scrutinised with a special focus on the most significant differences found in the two populations surveyed. Since status, prestige, social value and role are the dependent variables of the present study, their relationship with the main independent variables (gender, age, country of residence and education) will be expounded. Other independent variables, such as working status (freelance or staff interpreter), experience in public service interpreting (for conference interpreters) and working settings (for public service interpreters) will be taken into consideration when relevant.

## 1. Demographics

As in previous investigations on the status of the translation professions (Kurz 1986a; Ozolins 2004; Dam & Zethsen 2013), the two surveys of the present work confirmed that women constitute the majority of the professionals working in the field of interpreting (75.7% in the first and 73.6% in the second survey). In the light of which, this study confirms that, just like translation (cf. Pym 2012), interpreting is a feminised profession, a change which was already foreseen by Baigorri-Jalón (2004) in his description of the future sociological profile of interpreters (see chapter 1, paragraph 3.1).

As far as the age of informants is concerned, public service interpreters were shown to be younger than conference interpreters. Although the structure of the questions on age in the two surveys did not allow an accurate calculation of the average age of respondents, data showed that,

in the first population, the average age was between 46 and 65 years, with a higher number of respondents between 46 and 55 years of age. In the second population, the average dropped to 36-45.

Although the aim of the two surveys was to obtain a global picture of the current state of profession, the majority of responses came from the European continent. This is particularly true for the first survey, whose most represented countries were Belgium (n = 132), Italy (n = 131) and Switzerland (n = 60). In the second survey, the countries which obtained the largest number of responses were Norway (n = 134), the USA (n = 99) and the UK (n = 75). The second questionnaire gathered a higher number of responses outside Europe; the most represented non-European countries – after the USA – were Australia (n = 32) and Canada (n = 49). Despite a few notable *absentees* (such as China and The Russian Federation), both surveys provided a clear picture of the countries in which the two professions are more developed (Belgium and Switzerland for conference interpreting) or are undergoing considerable development (Norway and the USA for public service interpreting).

## 2. Professional Identity

A comparison of the two surveys revealed that conference interpreters have been working in the field longer than public service interpreters; 59.3% (n = 477) of conference interpreters have been working for more than 21 years against a total of 10.7% (n = 95) of public service interpreters who declared as much. Indeed, the average working experience of public service interpreters was set between five and ten years (45.4%, n = 403), a finding which confirms the close relationship between the age of participants and their working experience.

As far as the membership of a professional association is concerned, a higher number of conference interpreters stated that they are members of at least one association (90.4%, n = 728) against a total of 68.8% (n = 611) of public service interpreters. In the light of the importance attached to professional associations in their regulation of the profession (see chapter 2, paragraph 3.1), the outcome suggests that the former is more professionalised than the latter although, in several cases, the professionalism of the public service interpreters interviewed in the survey is certified by their inclusion in an official register.

With regard to working status, the majority of respondents in both surveys declared that they work as free-lance professionals (86.6%, n = 697 of conference interpreters and 66.6%, n = 701 of public service interpreters). Moreover, a considerable number of respondents in both surveys declared that – apart from working as interpreters – they are self-employed freelance translators, although the percentage was much higher for conference interpreters (70.1%, n = 394) than for the second group (43.3%, n = 466). The outcome confirms the results obtained from the previous surveys on the status of the translation (Pym 2012) and interpreting professions (Ozolins 2004; AIIC 2005), which underline that language professionals are mostly freelance professionals. This condition has advantages and disadvantages: on the one hand, being self-employed confers upon



the professional a high degree of autonomy and independence, two of the main features of advanced professionalisation. On the other hand, it might lead to job insecurity, especially when the profession is not formally recognised by state regulation or some other kind of controlled entry (see chapter 4, paragraph 2.3).

### 3. Opinions on Conference and Public Service Interpreting

The inter-group comparison between conference and public service interpreters revealed that conference interpreters have rarely worked in public services, whereas public service interpreters declared they also work (or have worked) in conference settings. A glance at the response pattern showed that:

- ✎ The majority of conference interpreters answered that public service interpreting is less prestigious and requires different training, but they also confirmed that the profession deserves a greater social recognition and that their remuneration has to be much higher than it is today. However, the majority of them did not agree that PSI has a higher social value than conference interpreting, and that the view according to which public service interpreters have higher responsibilities than conference interpreters is not tenable;
- ✎ The majority of public service interpreters agreed that the two professions require different training and that conference interpreting is more prestigious, although a considerable number of them stated that conference interpreting deserves a higher social esteem. In contrast with conference interpreters, this second group of respondents declared that public service interpreting entails higher responsibilities than conference interpreting. However, the majority of public service interpreters attributed the same social importance to conference and public service interpreters and many of them were not fully convinced that their remuneration should be the same as that of conference interpreters.

Overall, the comparison between the two groups suggests that, while conference interpreters declared that public service interpreting deserves higher remuneration and social esteem, they have a tendency to distance themselves from them and to see themselves as more prestigious professionals. On the other hand, although public service interpreters believe that their responsibilities are higher and that their job is less prestigious than conference interpreting, they tend to see the two professions as equally important to society and equally worthy of societal (but not necessarily financial) recognition.

### 4. Training, Education and Research

At sociological level, education has always been regarded as one of the most important indicators of professional status, which draws a line between professionals and *amateurs* and gives information about the degree of professionalisation of an occupation (see chapter 2, paragraph 2). The results of the two questionnaires revealed that a significant (though not huge) number of conference interpreters have a degree which is relevant to the practice the profession: 61.7% (n = 497) of them

hold an MA in translation and interpreting. On the other hand – although a considerable number of public service interpreters are highly educated – only 29.8% (n = 265) of them have a postgraduate degree in T&I. Hence, the outcome confirms that conference interpreting is (at least formally) more professionalised than public service interpreting.

Nevertheless, the response patterns revealed that none of the two groups appeared to be fully convinced that a highly specialised degree is a necessary precondition to working as an interpreter; only 43.1% (n = 347) of conference interpreters and 35% (n = 311) of public service answered that a postgraduate degree is the main prerequisite to practice the profession and a fundamental starting point to make claims for a higher societal recognition. These results provide food for thought, because they stress a glaring contradiction between respondents' concept of interpreting as a fully-fledged profession and what they believe is required to become fully professionalised. This incongruence stems perhaps from the long-standing opinion – mainly supported by older conference interpreters – that interpreting requires more talent than education and that certain professional skills cannot be learnt at school. On the other hand, a chi-square test revealed that younger generations of conference interpreters are not only highly educated, but they also attach a great importance to education (see chapter 4, paragraph 4, table 25).

With regard to public service interpreters, several respondents underlined that they would be willing to attend academic courses, but they answered that either they are not available in their country of residence or, where they are, they are not provided in their language combination.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the second group has shown a slightly more positive attitude towards the importance of research to enhance the professionalisation of interpreting (82.6%, n = 734 of public service interpreters against 65%, n = 523 of conference interpreters).

### 5. Income

The results obtained from this questionnaire section revealed that there is a huge income difference between conference and public service interpreters: 51.2% (n = 412) of respondents answered that conference interpreting is either “absolutely” or “a great deal” remunerated, whereas a far smaller number of public service interpreters (12.1%, n = 108) were satisfied with their income. Nevertheless, a rather high percentage of conference interpreters (41.4%, n = 333) answered that their income is only somewhat satisfactory, a result corroborated by a flurry of open comments lamenting the considerable decrease in fees, which is mainly attributed to increasing competition.<sup>58</sup> As far as public service interpreting is concerned, differences emerged between countries, since Belgium, Canada, Norway and the USA scored slightly higher than other countries.

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<sup>57</sup> “I live in California where the court interpreters have been respected and acknowledged for years. This was mostly due to the active work of interpreters themselves. In other parts of the US interpreters struggle to be acknowledged and respected. I agree that working interpreters should have advanced education. I know that in Europe a Masters is necessary. That has not been the case in the US. In fact, I truly feel sorry for those interpreters/translators who spend thousands of dollars to acquire a higher degree and find themselves unable to find work. I do think that eventually this profession (like many others) will require an MA. However, we have to remember that the government only acknowledges those individuals who have taken a test and passed in order to work in the state and federal courts. It doesn't matter how much general knowledge you have of the field. Specific legal knowledge is essential” (Female, UK).

<sup>58</sup> “The excessive surplus of interpreters has led to the decline of fees and prestige” (Male, Italy, conference interpreter).

## 6. The Representation of Interpreting in the Mass Media

Drawing on the sociological literature establishing a connection between enhanced professional social esteem and positive media portrayals (Gordon 2006; Lupton 2012; Clifford 2015), this questionnaire section sought to investigate the extent to which and how the interpreting profession is represented in the mass media (such as newspapers, television and the internet). As far as conference interpreting is concerned, the socio-historical analysis of the evolution of the interpreters' professional status showed that conference interpreters were depicted as extraordinary phenomena, an image which has always surrounded them with an aura of prestige (see chapter 1, paragraph 2.3). On the other hand, public service interpreting has seldom been portrayed in the media. The results of the two surveys showed that:

- ✎ A low percentage of conference interpreters (4.3%, n = 34) replied that the mass media pay attention to conference interpreting, and only 18.9% of the whole population believed that the profession is portrayed by the media in a positive way. This assumption is shared by all interpreters with no significant statistical differences between the variables. Slight differences were found among countries: Brazil, Belgium and Switzerland obtained high scores for the second question;
- ✎ As far as public service interpreting is concerned, a slightly higher portion of respondents (5.1%, n = 45) answered that the profession receives media attention, but an even lower number of them compared to the first survey (10%, n = 97) thought that they are represented in a positive light. In this second question, slight differences were found between men and women (with men showing a more positive attitude than women) and countries of residence; only Belgian and Canadian respondents thought that the media produce a positive media image of interpreters.

A qualitative analysis of the open comments collected by the two questionnaires revealed that the two groups have different attitudes towards the scarce presence and negative image of the profession in the media: conference interpreters believe that negative portrayals could damage the reputation of the professional category, whereas public service interpreters seem to be more frustrated with the consequences that an insufficient awareness of the importance of the profession could have not only for the profession, but also for society at large. In general, the scarce and perhaps negative representation of the profession in the mass media can be said to be an additional factor contributing to interpreters' low self-esteem.

## 7. Status

One of the main objectives of the questions of this section was to determine whether the interpreters' self-perception of status coincided with the sociological assumption of the trait theory and social stratification (Ganzeboom & Treiman 1996), which classifies occupations on the basis of education and income. Hence, interpreters had to specify in which professional group they believe society

places them: four groups of professions were provided, divided into the categories issued by the Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) drawn up by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In both surveys, a significant degree of *status discrepancy* was found, in that respondents attributed themselves a higher status than they believe society attaches to them. For example, 56.5% (n = 455) of conference interpreters related their status to that of medical doctors and university lecturers, but only 22.9% (n = 184) of them answered that society compares them to the above-mentioned professionals (see chapter 4, paragraph 7). The same pattern was found in the second group (see chapter 5, paragraph 7): 31.2% (n = 277) of respondents answered that their status could be compared to that of physicians, lawyers and university lecturers, but, in the second question, this percentage dropped to 7.2% (n = 64). The statistical breakdown of the responses revealed that:

- ↳ In the first survey, no significant differences were found between men and women's considerations of status; however, in the second survey women tended to have a higher self-perception of status than men. In both groups, however, women have shown themselves to be less self-confident in the way they think society sees the profession;
- ↳ Significant differences were found across age ranges particularly the second survey, which showed that younger generations of public service interpreters are more self-confident about their status;
- ↳ Certain differences, though not particularly significant, were noticed across the continents. In the first survey, Asian conference interpreters appeared to enjoy a significantly higher status compared to their European colleagues, who obtained the lowest scores on the same parameters. The scores became less polarised in the second question, which showed that all interpreters, regardless of the country they live in, believe that the status of interpreting does not enjoy the consideration it deserves. In the second survey, certain differences were found among countries. In line with the notions illustrated by Ozolins (2000) – who outlines how countries respond to interpreting needs differently – the status of public service interpreters considerably depends on the country in which they reside;
- ↳ Surprisingly, staff interpreters appeared to be less confident of their self-perceived status compared to freelancers (even though they obtained the highest scores in terms of education and remuneration). The finding helps debunk the myth that staff interpreters are the “stars of the translation profession” and confirms the results gathered by Dam & Zethsen (2013). In the second question, staff interpreters believe that society holds them in higher esteem compared to freelancers, perhaps by virtue of the prestigious image enjoyed by conference interpreters working at international organisations;
- ↳ In the second survey, the analysis of the working settings – which appeared more relevant for the purpose of the study – revealed that respondents who mainly work in legal settings (and, particularly, in the field of court interpreting) see their status

as higher than informants working in healthcare and social settings. The data seems to confirm that the countries with a “legalistic” approach (Ozolins 2010) have succeeded in advancing the profession in this field;

- ↳ In the first survey, no significant differences were highlighted between respondents holding a postgraduate degree in interpreting and respondents who have another kind of degree, although respondents with an MA in T&I tended to be slightly more pessimistic in their internal and external perception of status. In the second survey, the trend is reversed, since respondents holding an MA in T&I tended to respond more positively to both questions on status.

As far as the first questionnaire is concerned, the results suggested that the status of conference interpreters could be compared with that of journalists and secondary school teachers for a series of reasons. The first is that this view coincides with the place assigned to conference interpreters in the ISCO-08 classification of occupations (indeed, 59.5% (n = 479) of conference interpreters thought that society sees them as akin to journalists), which places them among the professionals who possess only some of the features of fully-fledged professions. Considering the answers given for the parameters of education and income, conference interpreting could be objectively regarded as a profession (see chapter 2, paragraph 3), but it still has to make progress to acquire the traits that distinguish it from other semi-professions. As recently postulated by Rudvin (2015), the missing traits that interpreting needs to professionalise are: exclusive monopoly, a form of legal protection of the title and stricter control of those who enter the profession, which would, in the long run, contribute to regulating the T&I market.

Other reasons explaining this result could be attributable to the socio-economic changes that have taken place in the last few years. The postmodern era characterised by changes of the T&I market, technological developments and the increasing use of English as a Lingua Franca (even at the European Institutions) – which gives clients the impression that they have a good command of the English language and that, therefore, they could do without the services offered by a professional interpreter – is making the professionalisation process increasingly cumbersome. With regard to the second group, 68.5% (n = 608) of public service interpreters answered that non-interpreters compare their status to that of nurses and social workers, which confirms the assumptions postulated by Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger (2011).

## 8. Prestige

The theoretical assumption of this section – which hinges on the symbolic-interactionist approach – is that prestige indicates the degree of social esteem enjoyed by a profession (see chapter 2, paragraph 4.1). Hence, the questions of the present section aimed to ascertain the level of social esteem and respect interpreters attribute to the profession and the degree to which they think that their job is regarded as prestigious by society. The questions on prestige were structured differently for the first and the second questionnaire: in the first survey, conference interpreters were asked to assess whether they (still) see their job as highly prestigious; the hypothesis was that the prestige of

conference interpreters has declined over the years, as pointed out by the recent study carried out by Dam and Zethsen (2013). The result was confirmed by 67.8% (n = 546) of conference interpreters in the present survey who revealed that the social appreciation of the profession has suffered a substantial decline over the years.

As was the case for the question on status, a discrepancy between internal and external perception of prestige was found: 50.2% (n = 404) of conference interpreters answered that they believe that conference interpreting is either “absolutely” or “a great deal” prestigious, whereas when they were asked to evaluate the degree of social appreciation, only 30% (n = 242) of the interviewed answered that laypeople regard the profession as prestigious. As far as the second survey is concerned, public service interpreting has never been considered a prestigious occupation in a socio-economic perspective. Therefore, drawing on the sociological theories postulating that the prestige of an occupation derives, among other things, from the social status of the clients the professionals serve (an assumption which appears to be particularly true for semi-professions), interpreters were asked whether they believe that the lack of prestige of public service interpreting could be attributable to their clients being mostly low-status persons. Although the responses followed a diverse pattern, a high number of respondents (43.9%, n = 390) did not agree with this statement. At statistical level, the response patterns were as follows:

- ✎ In the first group, no significant difference between men and women were found, though women were slightly more pessimistic than their male colleagues. On the other hand, a higher number of women in the second group did not agree that public service interpreting is less prestigious because of the status of the clients they serve. The outcome suggested that, although women have a low self-esteem, they tend to cherish more the profession and the values it embodies.
- ✎ No remarkable differences were found among age groups;
- ✎ In the first questionnaire, high scores of self-perceived prestige were found in Asia and America, but they were not confirmed by the second question on society’s view of prestige. In the second survey, a high number of Australian, Norwegian, British and American respondents were convinced that the low status of their clients has an impact on their social appreciation;
- ✎ In the first survey, no significant differences were found between freelance and staff interpreters;
- ✎ In both surveys, no statistical differences were noted between graduates and non-graduates in T&I.

Alongside the questions on prestige, both groups were asked to assess the extent to which they would advise their children to pursue a career in interpreting. Interestingly, a rather high number of public service interpreters (62.5%, n = 555) answered that they would recommend the profession to their sons/daughters. The percentage was only 44.7% (n = 360) in the first survey.

## 9. Social Value

Together with status and prestige, the questionnaires aimed to analyse the degree to which interpreting is a profession which plays an important social function. Despite its significance for the advancement of professionalisation, the parameter “social value” has rarely been included in the analysis of interpreters’ self-perception of status, with the exception of the study by Dam & Zethsen (2013) and, to a lesser extent, the questionnaire by Zwischenberger (2011). Hence, the questions on social value aimed to gather information about the extent to which the social function of the profession is appreciated by society and, most importantly, if the social value of interpreting is grasped by respondents themselves.

Once again, the answers suggest that interpreters’ self-perceived value of the profession is much higher than that they think society attributes to them. In the first survey, 79.6% (n = 641) of conference interpreters attached great importance to the profession, but in the second question concerning societal appreciation, the percentage decreased to 17.8% (n = 143). In the second survey, a higher number of respondents (96.5% n = 857) appeared to attribute a significant social function to interpreting, but in the second answer, only 19.3% (n = 172) informants answered that the social function of their job is appreciated by society. At statistical level, the analysis revealed significant differences across the variables:

- ↳ In the first survey, no difference was found for the variable “gender” in the question on interpreters’ self-perception of social value. On the other hand, female public service interpreters showed a higher degree of conviction that the profession is socially relevant. As regards the second question on society’s perception, in both surveys women were shown to be less confident in how society perceives the social value of the profession;
- ↳ As for age, a few slight differences were found in both questionnaires, with interpreters becoming increasingly pessimistic as they grow older;
- ↳ In the first questionnaire, no particular differences were found among countries. On the other hand, the second questionnaire showed that differences among countries do exist, in that the countries which obtained the highest scores (such as Canada and Norway) were those which have taken significant steps forward for the certification and institutionalisation of the profession;
- ↳ In the first survey, freelance and staff interpreters obtained homogeneous scores in both questions;
- ↳ As far as working settings are concerned, interesting differences were found between the first and the second questions: in the first, a higher number of court and healthcare interpreters answered that their job is crucial for the wellbeing of society. In the second, interpreters declared that they feel more appreciated in settings such as healthcare, social services and education, which appear to be the fields in which the interpreters’ work is not only more visible (Angelelli 2004), but also probably more personally rewarding.



- ↳ A significant difference between those who have an MA and respondents holding a different kind of degree (or no degree at all) was found. In the first inquiry, a higher portion of interpreters with an MA in T&I attributed a lower value to the profession compared to the second group. Similar scores were obtained from the second questionnaire in both questions. The data suggests that, although interpreters with an MA in T&I believe they enjoy high status, they, nevertheless, do not think that their job plays a valuable social role.
- ↳ Interestingly, in the first survey, a substantial number of conference interpreters who declared that they also work in public services appeared to attribute greater importance to the social role of the profession (see chapter 4, paragraph 9, figure 60).

Overall, the results indicated that the symbolic value of interpreters is neither well understood by laypeople, nor by interpreters themselves. On a brighter note, the picture emerging from the data is that young and educated women who work in highly sensitive sectors (such as healthcare and social services) are more committed and convinced about the fundamental social function they serve.

## 10. Role

The main purpose of the section on role was to assess whether a relationship between interpreters' self-perception of status and role could be found and, more specifically, if the way interpreters conceive their status influences their self-perception of role. As mentioned in chapter 2 (see paragraph 4.3.2), sociological theories have revealed that once an individual's professional status is widely acknowledged, roles become internalised patterns of behaviours constantly repeated in daily practices. According to this view, status determines role, especially in the professional field. In well-established professions, whose status is clearly defined, there is no role inconsistency, a phenomenon which was noticed in semi-professions such as nursing (see chapter 2, paragraph 4.3.2). The breakdown of responses suggests that:

- ↳ Interpreters in both surveys mainly see themselves as “enablers of communication” (75.5%, n = 608 in the first and 64.2%, n = 570 in the second survey). A higher number of respondents in the second group (21.5%, n = 191) answered that they perceive their role as that of cultural mediators. Interestingly, a higher number of informants in the second group answered that they act as “invisible conduits” (10.6%, n = 94). The percentage was 5.2% (n = 42) in the first questionnaire.
- ↳ At statistical level, no statistical difference was found between sexes, although in the second survey a higher number of women answered that they act as cultural mediators;
- ↳ As far as age is concerned, a higher number of younger respondents in both questionnaires chose the option “cultural mediator”;
- ↳ A detailed statistical scrutiny showed that several Norwegian interpreters in the second questionnaire answered that they see themselves as “invisible conduits”. The noteworthy



- result obtained from Norway was highlighted by a recent survey by Salaets (2015b), carried out in the field of the project CO-Minor-IN/QUEST;
- ✎ In the first questionnaire, no statistical difference was found between freelance and staff interpreters, which suggests that even interpreters working mostly in the simultaneous mode do not regard themselves as invisible professionals;
  - ✎ In the second survey, the educational setting was the only working field which registered a high percentage of respondents choosing the option “cultural mediator”. No significant difference were found in the other settings;
  - ✎ In both surveys, a slightly higher portion of respondents who do not have a specialised degree in T&I chose the option “cultural mediator” and “invisible conduit”.

In order to determine whether role conflict takes place (see chapter 2 paragraph 4.3.3), the second survey presented two additional questions. The first aimed to ascertain whether interpreters performed tasks which went beyond their prescribed role of interpreting (and translating). In this respect, a significant number of respondents who answered that they perform the role of cultural mediators also carry out a number of tasks which do not include interpreting, such as carrying out administrative work and offering guidelines to obtain official documents, a finding which is consistent with the literature providing a definition of the profile of cultural mediators (Baraldi & Gavioli 2007; Rudvin & Spinzi 2015). In the second question on status, several respondents answered that they are exposed to conflicting expectations from their clients, regardless of their level of education. Interestingly, however, the legal settings (police) and the sector of education are those in which interpreters declared that they experience role conflict more often compared to other settings (see chapter five, paragraph 10, figure 167). Another interesting correlation pointed out by the statistical analysis was that a higher number of public service interpreters whose self-perceived role was that of “cultural mediators” answered that they were either “always” or “often” exposed to conflicting expectations coming from their clients.

Overall, the findings of the two questionnaires indicate that, as regards conference interpreters, a clearer-cut status and a higher awareness of their role (which is translated into a lower number of interpreters perceiving themselves as invisible conduits), together with the mostly monologic nature of their work, render them less likely to experience role conflict. On the other hand, a less defined professional status and the dialogic nature of their work leads public service interpreters to experience role conflict more often. Recent studies (Valero-Garcés 2015a; 2015b) have shown that role perception is more complex when interpreters have to deal with emotionally stressful situations, such as torture and gender-based violence.

## 11. The Future of the Profession

The last section of the two questionnaires sought to gather interpreters’ opinions on what the profession will look like in the future. The sum of the options “absolutely likely” and “likely” provided for the questions showed huge discrepancies between the two groups:

- ↳ A higher number of conference interpreters answered that interpreting will no longer be needed (n = 108), whereas the number of public service interpreters who replied as much was much lower (n = 65). The finding shows therefore that the second group is slightly more optimistic than the first;
- ↳ More than half of conference interpreters (n = 483) replied that the profession is unlikely to be officially recognised in the future, whereas this view is shared only by 211 public service interpreters. Once again, conference interpreters foresee a somewhat grimmer future than their colleagues working in public services;
- ↳ The difference is further marked in the third option to the question: 509 conference interpreters agreed that their services will no longer be required in the future, whereas only 223 public service interpreters think that the profession of conference interpreting is bound to disappear;
- ↳ On the other hand, there seems to be widespread agreement by both parties that more public service interpreting will be needed in the future, since 442 conference interpreters and 790 public service interpreters chose the options “absolutely likely” and “likely”;
- ↳ As far as the enhanced visibility of interpreters is concerned, 132 conference interpreters answered that the social networks will contribute to raising the visibility of the profession against a far higher number (334) of public service interpreters who agreed with this option.

Overall, the results stress not only conference interpreters’ widespread discontent with the profession, but also their disillusionment for the future. The most widely bemoaned threats to the profession emerging from several open comments are: the increasing use of technology, a decrease in fees, a shrinking market with increasingly bad working conditions, cuts to language services at the international institutions and, above all, the use of English as a Lingua Franca (cf. Cogo & Jenkins 2010; Reithofer 2013; Albl-Mikasa 2014).<sup>59</sup> The results therefore confirm the assumptions several interpreters – especially in conference settings – fear that technology will be, in the long run, not at all beneficial for the profession (see chapter 1, paragraph 2.2). The third question of the present section sought to propose a series of possible solutions which might help enhance the status of the profession. The two groups were shown to have different opinions:

- ↳ For respondents to the first questionnaire:
  - Professional associations were seen as the key players able to promote the profession more actively (n = 423);
  - The mass media will have to portray a better image of the profession (n = 418);
  - Academic qualifications were regarded as the main criterion to practice the profession and rule out *amateurs* (n = 387);

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<sup>59</sup> “English has become the lingua franca allegedly spoken by very many people and this caused the impoverishment of knowledge, skills and ability to express oneself fully” (Male, Italy, conference interpreter).

“Between English becoming the lingua franca (due to globalization) and the universal push to lower costs at all levels, mediocre interpretation is hastening the profession’s decline. There will be far less demand for interpreters and more current users will turn to speaking pigeon English rather than pay for what they consider a ‘luxury’. The many unqualified or poor interpreters are a nail in the coffin of the profession” (Female, Canada, conference interpreter).

- A national regulation of the profession was not seen as a priority, since only 287 conference interpreters were in favour of it.
- A state examination was seen as a priority, though a rather high portion of the interviewed answered that this would ultimately become the most sensible solution, which would enable the profession to withstand competition.

↳ For respondents to the second questionnaire:

- Professional associations will have to play a more active role in promoting the profession (n = 627);
- A legal recognition of the profession was seen as the second most likely solution (n = 624), since they strongly advocate a national accreditation system comprising an exam.
- Academic qualifications were regarded as necessary to draw the dividing line between professionals and amateurs (n = 599);
- The contribution of mass media and social networks will help raise awareness on the importance of interpreters' work (n = 581);
- A national certification system was regarded as the minimum requirement to practice the profession (n = 571).

Overall, the findings suggest that, owing to a lack of general understanding of the complexity of the profession, a lack of homogeneous selection criteria, a lack of entrepreneurship of the professional category and a low consideration of the esteem and respect that interpreters enjoy in society, the status of interpreters is not as high as was expected. This situation is compounded by a potential vicious circle in which clients are willing to pay less than before for language services; in turn, agencies, to be more competitive on the market, are forced to lower the prices and pay interpreters less. In turn, if low fees are required, members of professional associations (and national registers in the case of public service interpreters) are excluded from this process.<sup>60</sup>

Although the two professions have developed differently and serve different clients, the data gives the general impression that the pessimism shown by conference interpreters derives from the fact that they have long considered themselves to be the only professional category able to provide this kind of service, which is why they seem to have been caught unprepared by the swift changes of the T&I market over the last few years. Hence, they sometimes have the tendency to blame the spread of academic institutions for producing increasing competition<sup>61</sup> – though academisation is the most crucial factor that has led to its greater professionalisation – rather than the absence of

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<sup>60</sup> “As the market is flooded with semi-trained people willing to work in any direction, and with agencies whose only criterion is price, and as technology improves, there will be more people casing fewer jobs which are less well paid, and more reliance on things like Google translate which will also be used for speech recognition and interpretation. More and more people want just the gist. Also AIIc's old-boy network approach of having “sponsors” harms the profession, as people get in through whom they know, not necessarily how good they are. And many also continue to work well beyond their mental capacity to do so!” (Female, Switzerland, conference interpreter).

<sup>61</sup> As one respondent argued: “only good interpreters should be in the profession, that is key to good practice and recognition. Today there are far too many degrees which are good for nothing[;] the market needs good professionals only (Female, Spain, conference interpreter)”.

stricter access criteria to the profession. In this case, conference interpreters may fail to acknowledge that talented and mediocre interpreters (just like in any other profession) will always be present irrespective of training, and that those who have talent will stand out anyway. The distinction would have to be made not between graduates and non-graduates, but – as in several fully-fledged professions they compare themselves to – between *good* and *bad* T&I graduates. In line with the proposal advanced by Ozolins (2004),<sup>62</sup> professional associations could play the role of gatekeepers and carry out official examinations addressed *exclusively* to T&I graduates wishing to become members.

On the other hand, public service interpreting – which has developed from a voluntary ad-hoc activity performed by relatives and/or bilinguals to a professionalising occupation – has made progress (and is still developing) thanks to the lively interest it has raised in the academia, to the flurry of recently-implemented binding regulations (such as European Directives and the International Standard ISO 13611:2014(E) issuing guidelines for community interpreting) and to the pro-active attitude of its practitioners. In several countries, the profession is state-regulated and those wishing to become interpreters have the opportunity to take an exam and become registered, and, if many other countries follow suit in the coming years, the interpreters' status will be significantly enhanced.

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<sup>62</sup> In his survey on the professional status of interpreters in Australia, Ozolins advanced the hypothesis that only graduates from T&I university programmes should register as professional interpreters and translators. Drawing on the study carried out by Ko (1999), Ozolins argued that this method would “definitely ensure the quality of interpreting and translating services and, more importantly, an industrially recognised profession for I/T. Otherwise, I/T will continue to be underpaid, undervalued and regarded merely as cheap and ancillary skills” (2004: 4).

## 7. The Way Forward

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Despite being limited to the interpreters' self-perception of the profession, the present work may be conducive to a more systematic study of all the aspects related to the interpreter's status, prestige and role, with a view to constructing a sociology of the interpreting profession. Giving voice to the interpreters' opinions on the present and to their hopes and concerns for the future of the profession may be regarded as a first step in this direction. The results of the two questionnaires under scrutiny have brought to light several interesting aspects related to the status and professionalisation of interpreters which are worth being investigated further. The increasing feminisation of the interpreting profession is, for example, a reality already confirmed by several previous studies on the translation professions (Kurz 1986a; Ozolins 2004; AIIC 2005; Pym 2012; Dam & Zethsen 2013). However, the response patterns emerging from the data analysis indicate that female interpreters – especially in conference settings – display pessimism and a clear tendency to underestimate themselves, a result which suggests that, more than status, female interpreters lack self-confidence. In the light of which, the relationship between feminisation as a sociological phenomenon in the interpreting profession, low self-esteem and the extent to which these two aspects affect (or will affect) interpreters' claims for higher professionalisation might be explored in future research. A review of the existing sociological literature on the status of feminised occupations such as teaching (Saha & Dworkin 2009) or “feminising” professions like medicine (Bolton & Muzio 2008; Phillips & Austin 2009) could provide solid theoretical foundations which can contribute to gaining further insights into the topic.

Throughout the present study, the response patterns of the two questionnaires showed a significant discrepancy between the way interpreters see themselves and the degree of social recognition they believe the profession has in the eyes of society; in general, interpreters have the

impression that laypeople do not regard them as high-status professionals, above all because the social function of their work does not seem to be fully understood. However plausible, these assumptions lack empirical evidence, because hardly any sociological study has been carried out so far to investigate the general public's opinions on the interpreting profession (see chapter 2, paragraph 4.2). Hence, another possible avenue for further research lies in the assessment of the truthfulness of the interpreters' statements about the way society perceives their status and profession. A survey addressed to a sampled population may well strengthen the impressions gained from the findings or, on the contrary, could hold positive surprises, potentially bolstering the interpreters' morale.

Research is also needed to study the role played by the mass media in the representation of the profession. The interpreters interviewed declared that the media hardly represent interpreters and, where they do, they do not portray them and the profession in general in a positive light. To verify this assumption, a diachronic analysis of newspaper articles and television programmes in certain countries in a specific timeframe could be carried out. A similar kind of study has been conducted by Hargreaves *et al.* (2007) in their evaluation of the status of teachers in the UK, which added substantially to the current understanding of the status attributed by the media to this professional category.

As far as the market situation is concerned, several challenges need to be met to avoid the decline of the profession. Decreasing fees, the spread of English as a lingua franca, the pervasiveness of technology and an unorganised market are just some of the hurdles interpreters – whether alone or organised in professional networks – are called upon to overcome. In the two questionnaires, respondents gave their opinion on a series of solutions which could boost the professionalisation process and enhance their status. However, a comprehensive and empirical study of the socio-economic situation of the T&I market is needed now more than ever before, for it may propose concrete and feasible ways to regulate it.

The first part of the study has also shown that interpreting does not develop in a social or, above all, political vacuum, which is why a closer look could be taken at the political dynamics which could shift – for better or for worse – the fragile balance characterising the profession. An EU language regime slowly moving towards a linguistic oligarchy (Gazzola 2013; 2014) and national governments implementing cuts in interpreting services – as shown by the recent events unfolding in the UK (Slaney 2012) – are only a few examples which demonstrate that the impact of political measures should not be underestimated when it comes to foreseeing possible developments in the profession.

The results of the present work also illustrate that the features which render interpreting a profession correspond only partially to those set forth by the classical form of professionalisation outlined by the trait theory, which is why interpreters would have to find other ways to construct their own discourse of professionalisation. In an age characterised by an increasingly complex market organisation, sociologists have begun to suggest alternative ways to achieve professionalisation, which are comprised in the concept of *postmodern professionalism* (Hargreaves & Goodson 2003; Cochran 2014). It is defined as a process of professional empowerment which is guided by a moral and socio-political concept of the purpose which professionalism has to serve,

whereby professionals embrace moral and social values, adopt a collaborative approach with their peers and the communities they serve and are increasingly aware of their commitment to continuous learning. Only time will tell if the present and future generations of interpreters have been guided by these principles in their journey towards professionalisation.





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# Appendix I

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## 1. Questionnaire on the Status of Conference Interpreters

Dear participant,

I am a Ph.D. student in Interpreting Studies at the University of Trieste (Italy).

I would like to ask for your help with my research project, which investigates interpreters' self-perception of their status. Your responses will be fundamental, because they can contribute to raising awareness of the social relevance of interpreting, and they will help to provide a snapshot of how our profession will change in the future.

My study will consist of two questionnaires: one for conference interpreters and one for public service interpreters. This first questionnaire is addressed ONLY to CONFERENCE INTERPRETERS, so if you are a professional conference interpreter you are kindly invited to participate in this survey, which should take approximately 5 minutes to fill in. All of the responses in the survey will be recorded anonymously.

All the comment boxes are OPTIONAL, so don't feel obliged to comment.

Should you have any queries, please contact me at the following address: [paola.gentile@phd.units.it](mailto:paola.gentile@phd.units.it).

Your participation is a valuable contribution to interpreting research. I therefore thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please also pass this on to as many colleagues as you can.

Thank you!

Paola Gentile

### Section 1. Demographics

#### 1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

**2. What is your age group?**

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 65+

**3. What is your country of residence?**

**4. How long have you been working professionally in the field?**

- 1-5 years
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 35+

**Section 2. Working status and Opinions on Public Service Interpreting**

**5. Are you a member of any professional association?**

- Yes
- No

**6. If your answer is YES, which one?**

**7. Do you work as a free-lance or as a staff interpreter?**

- Freelance
- Staff

**8. Is interpreting your full-time profession?**

- Yes
- No

**9. Apart from interpreting, do you have another job? (You can tick more than one option)**

- School teacher
- University lecturer
- Agency translator



Company translator  
 Free-lance translator  
 Other (please specify)

**10. Have you ever worked in public services (courts, hospitals, immigration offices, police stations)?**

Yes  
 No

**11. If NOT, what are the main reasons for your choice? (Please tick 2 options)**

I am not interested in working in this field  
 I have never had the opportunity to work in this field  
 It is a badly-paid job  
 I am not trained to do this job  
 Other (please specify)

**12. What do you think of public service interpreting? (hereinafter PSI)**

|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| PSI has a greater social value compared to conference interpreting                                   |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| PSI requires different training compared to conference interpreting                                  |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Public service interpreters have higher responsibilities compared to conference interpreters         |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| The importance of PSI should be recognised   |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| The importance of PSI should be recognised   |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| The remuneration of public service interpreters should be similar to that of conference interpreters |                |       |                            |          |                   |

**Section 3. Education and Remuneration**

**13. Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?**

Yes  
 No

**14. If your answer is NO, what university degree do you have?**

**15. An MA in translation/interpreting is a necessary precondition to perform interpreting.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**16. People outside the profession think that an MA in translation/interpreting is essential to work as a professional interpreter.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**17. In a university curriculum, how would you rate the importance of the following subjects?**

|   | Optional | Not essential | Useful | Important | Essential |
|---|----------|---------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Interpreting techniques   |          |               |        |           |           |
| Technical terminology   |          |               |        |           |           |
| T&I softwares   |          |               |        |           |           |
| Linguistics, Grammar  |          |               |        |           |           |
| Corpus Linguistics  |          |               |        |           |           |
| Cultural studies/Sociology/Ethno-Linguistics                            |          |               |        |           |           |
| T&I deontology, role of translator/interpreter, T&I market              |          |               |        |           |           |
| Interpreting/Translation theory   |          |               |        |           |           |
| History, Literature, Geography, Political Institutions, Current Affairs |          |               |        |           |           |

**18. Interpreting theory is fundamental to interpreters' training.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**19. Research in Interpreting is Useful for the Profession**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**20. Do you think that a conference interpreter's remuneration is adequate?**

Absolutely  
 A great deal  
 To some extent  
 Not really  
 Not at all

#### Section 4. Media visibility, perception of status and prestige

**21. In your country of residence, does the interpreting profession receive media exposure?**

To a very high degree  
 To a high degree  
 To a certain degree  
 To a low degree  
 To a very low degree

**22. In your opinion, how is the interpreting profession portrayed by the media?**

Extremely positively  
 Positively  
 Neither negatively nor positively  
 Negatively  
 Extremely negatively  
 It is ignored by the media

**23. In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a conference interpreter?**

CEO, finance manager, legislator  
 Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer  
 Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist  
 Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker

**24. According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter?**

CEO, finance manager, legislator  
 Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer  
 Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist  
 Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker

**25. In your view, is interpreting a prestigious job?**

Absolutely  
 A great deal  
 To some extent

Not really  
Not at all

**26. In society's view, is interpreting a prestigious job?**

Absolutely  
A great deal  
To some extent  
Not really  
Not at all

**27. The interpreter's prestige has declined over the years.**

Yes  
No  
I don't know

**28. Do you believe that your job is important to society?**

Absolutely  
A great deal  
To some extent  
Not really  
Not at all

**29. Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important?**

Absolutely  
A great deal  
To some extent  
Not really  
Not at all

**30. If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her?**

Absolutely  
A great deal  
To some extent  
Not really  
Not at all

**Section 5. The interpreter's role and future developments of the profession**

**31. Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?**

Enabler of communication  
Language and cultural mediator  
Invisible conduit

Helper  
 Actor  
 Other (please specify)

**32. Do you think that the interpreting profession will change in the next few years?**

Yes  
 No  
 I don't know

**33. In your opinion, to what extent are the following changes likely to occur?**

|  | Asolutely likely | Likely | Moderately likely | Unlikely | Absolutely unlikely |
|--|------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|
| Interpreting will no longer be needed  |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| The importance of interpreting will be acknowledged                          |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| More conference interpreting will be needed                                  |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| More public service interpreting will be needed                              |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| Interpreters will become visible thanks to the media and the social networks |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| Fees will progressively decrease   |                  |        |                   |          |                     |

**34. In your opinion, to what extent would these measures be effective to improve the interpreter's status?**

|  | Asolutely likely | Likely | Moderately likely | Unlikely | Absolutely unlikely |
|--|------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|
| National governments should regulate the profession                                |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| Professional associations should promote the profession more actively              |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| Academic qualifications should be a necessary prerequisite to perform interpreting |                  |        |                   |          |                     |
| The mass media and social networks should promote a better image of the profession |                  |        |                   |          |                     |

**35. Any other comments about your experience or the interpreting profession are greatly appreciated. Thank you!**

## 2. Questionnaire on the Status of Public Service Interpreters

Dear participant,

I am a Ph.D. student in Interpreting Studies at the University of Trieste (Italy).

I am writing to request your help with my research project, which aims to investigate interpreters' self-perception of their status. Your responses will be fundamental, as they can contribute to raising awareness on the social relevance of interpreting, and will help to provide a snapshot of how our profession will change in the future.

My study consists of two questionnaires: one addressed to conference interpreters and one to public service interpreters. The first questionnaire – which has already been designed and distributed – was completed by more than 800 conference interpreters and is providing interesting insights into the current state of the interpreting profession.

This second questionnaire is addressed only to public service interpreters. Hence, if you work as an interpreter in hospitals, social service settings, emergency services, education, police and courts you are kindly invited to participate in this survey, which should take approximately 10 minutes to fill in. All of the responses of the survey will be recorded anonymously.

All the comment boxes are optional, so don't feel obliged to comment.

Should you have any queries, please contact me at the following address: [paola.gentile@phd.units.it](mailto:paola.gentile@phd.units.it)

Your participation constitutes a valuable contribution to interpreting research: I therefore thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please try to pass the survey on to as many colleagues as you can.

Paola Gentile

### Section 1. Demographics

**1. What is your gender?**

Male  
Female

**2. What is your age group?**

18-25  
26-35  
36-45  
46-55  
56-65  
65+

**3. What is your country of residence?**

**4. In which setting/settings do you usually work? Please tick the options corresponding to 2 of the settings in which you work more frequently**

Healthcare  
Courts  
Police  
Education  
Social services  
Immigration centres

**5. How long have you been working in public service settings?**

1-5 years  
6-10  
11-15  
16-20  
21-25  
26-30  
31-35  
35 +

**6. Are you a member of any professional association?**

YES  
NO

**7. If your answer is YES, which one?**

**8. Do you work as a free-lance interpreter, a contract-based employee or as an agency employee?**

Free-lance  
Contract-based employee  
Agency employee

**Section 2. Working status and Opinions on Conference Interpreting**

**9. Have you ever worked as a volunteer interpreter?**

Always  
Often  
Sometimes  
Rarely  
Never

**10. Is interpreting your full-time profession?**

Yes  
No

**11. Apart from interpreting, do you have another job?**

School teacher

- University lecturer
- Agency translator
- Company translator
- Free-lance translator
- Other (please specify)

**12. Have you ever worked in conference settings?**

- Yes
- No

**13. If your answer is NO, what are the main reasons for your choice? (Please tick two options)**

- I am not interested in working in this field
- I have never had the opportunity to work in this field
- I am not trained to do this job
- I cannot receive training in conference interpreting because of my language combination
- Other (please specify)

**14. What do you think of conference interpreting? (hereinafter PSI)**

|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Conference interpreting has a lower social impact than PSI           |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Conference interpreting requires different training compared to PSI  |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Conference interpreters have higher responsibilities compared to PSI |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Conference interpreting is more prestigious than PSI                 |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Conference interpreting should be more recognised                    |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Conference and public service interpreters should have similar rates |                |       |                            |          |                   |

**Section 2. Education and Research**

**15. Do you have an MA in translation/interpreting?**

- YES
- NO

**16. If your answer is NO, which is the highest level of education you have completed?**



|                                   | BA | MA | Ph.D. |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|-------|
| Foreign Languages and Literatures |    |    |       |
| Literature and Arts               |    |    |       |
| Law                               |    |    |       |
| Médecine                          |    |    |       |
| Economics                         |    |    |       |
| Science                           |    |    |       |
| Mathematics/Physics               |    |    |       |
| Engineering                       |    |    |       |
| Architecture                      |    |    |       |

**17. In your opinion, which level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter?**

- High school diploma
- BA
- MA
- Ph.D.
- Post-graduate course
- Short course

**18. People outside the profession think that an academic MA in translation/interpreting is essential to work as an interpreter.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**19. In a university curriculum, how would you rate the importance of the following subjects?**

|   | Optional | Not essential | Useful | Important | Essential |
|---|----------|---------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Interpreting techniques   |          |               |        |           |           |
| Technical terminology   |          |               |        |           |           |
| T&I softwares   |          |               |        |           |           |
| Linguistics, Grammar  |          |               |        |           |           |
| Corpus Linguistics  |          |               |        |           |           |
| Cultural studies/Sociology/Ethno-Linguistics                            |          |               |        |           |           |
| T&I deontology, role of translator/interpreter, T&I market              |          |               |        |           |           |
| Interpreting/Translation theory   |          |               |        |           |           |
| History, Literature, Geography, Political Institutions, Current Affairs |          |               |        |           |           |

**20. Research in interpreting is useful for the profession**

Strongly agree  
Agree  
Neither agree nor disagree  
Disagree  
Strongly disagree

**21. Do you think that a public service interpreter's remuneration is adequate?**

Absolutely  
A great deal  
To some extent  
Not really  
Not at all

**22. In your country of residence, does the interpreting profession receive media exposure?**

To a very high degree  
To a high degree  
To a certain degree  
To a low degree  
To a very low degree

#### **Section 4. Media visibility, perception of status and prestige**

**23. In your opinion, how is public service interpreting portrayed by the media?**

Extremely positively  
Positively  
Neither negatively nor positively  
Negatively  
Extremely negatively  
It is ignored by the media

**24. In your opinion, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter?**

CEO, finance manager, legislator  
Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer  
Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist  
Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker

**25. According to the general population, which of the following professions has a status similar to that of a public service interpreter?**

CEO, finance manager, legislator  
Lawyer, medical doctor, university lecturer  
Secondary school teacher, architect, journalist  
Primary school teacher, nurse, social worker

26. In one of his papers, Prunč argues that public service interpreting is not a prestigious job also because interpreters deal with "the outcasts of modernity" (2012: 4). Do you agree with this statement?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

27. Do you believe that your job is important to society?

- Absolutely
- A great deal
- To some extent
- Not really
- Not at all

28. Do you think that society considers the interpreter's work important?

- Absolutely
- A great deal
- To some extent
- Not really
- Not at all

29. If your son/daughter wanted to become an interpreter, would you encourage him/her?

- Absolutely
- A great deal
- To some extent
- Not really
- Not at all

#### Section 5. The interpreter's role and future developments of the profession

30. Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?

- Enabler of communication
- Language and cultural mediator
- Invisible conduit
- Helper
- Actor
- Other (please specify)

31. Please consider all the occasions in which you have worked as an interpreter. How often do you also perform the following tasks?

|                      | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|----------------------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Translate documents  |        |       |           |        |       |
| Do sight translation |        |       |           |        |       |

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Explain courtesy forms and cultural differences  
 Accompany foreign nationals to offices  
 Provide informative material  
 Carry out administrative work  
 Offer guidelines on bureaucratic processes involved in obtaining documents (i.e stay permits).  
 Draft multilingual documents/leaflets

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**32. How often have you found yourself in the following situations?**

|   | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| People I work with hold conflicting expectations on my work       |        |       |           |        |       |
| I adopt a neutral attitude during my job                          |        |       |           |        |       |
| I experience emotional impact during my job                       |        |       |           |        |       |
| The empathy with one of the parties influences my performance     |        |       |           |        |       |
| Service providers see me as a necessity and value my job          |        |       |           |        |       |
| Minority language speakers see me as a necessity and value my job |        |       |           |        |       |
| Any comments?   |        |       |           |        |       |

**33. Do you think that the interpreting profession will change in the next few years?**

YES  
 NO  
 I don't know

**34. In your opinion, to what extent are the following changes likely to occur?**

|  | Absolutely likely | Likely | Moderately likely | Unlikely | Absolutely unlikely |
|--|-------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|
| Interpreting will no longer be needed  |                   |        |                   |          |                     |
| The importance of interpreting will be acknowledged                          |                   |        |                   |          |                     |
| More conference interpreting will be needed                                  |                   |        |                   |          |                     |
| More public service interpreting will be needed                              |                   |        |                   |          |                     |
| Interpreters will become visible thanks to the media and the social networks |                   |        |                   |          |                     |
| Fees will progressively decrease   |                   |        |                   |          |                     |

**35. In your opinion, to what extent would these measures be effective to improve the interpreter's status?**

|  | Absolutely likely | Likely | Moderately likely | Unlikely | Absolutely unlikely |
|--|-------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|
|  |                   |        |                   |          |                     |

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National governments should regulate the profession  
Professional associations should promote the profession more actively  
Academic qualifications should be a necessary prerequisite to perform interpreting  
The mass media and social networks should promote a better image of the profession

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**36. The European Union Directive 64/2010 on the Right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings proposes the establishment of a register or registers of interpreters and translators who must be “appropriately qualified” Art. 5 (2). Do you think that the implementation of the Directive in EU Member States will contribute to enhancing the status of public service interpreters?**

Absolutely  
A great deal  
To some extent  
Not really  
Not at all

**37. Any other comments about your experience or the interpreting profession are greatly appreciated. Thank you!**

### Le statut professionnel de l'interprète (français)

Cher/ère participant/e,

Je suis une doctorante en Sciences de la traduction et de l'interprétation à l'Ecole pour Interprètes et Traducteurs de l'Université de Trieste.

Je me permets de vous contacter pour vous demander de m'aider dans mon projet de recherche consistant en une enquête sociologique à propos du statut professionnel de l'interprète dans la société contemporaine. Votre contribution est fondamentale pour la recherche en interprétation, puisque elle pourrait aider à fournir une vue d'ensemble à propos du statut actuel de notre profession et des changements possibles dans l'avenir.

Mon projet de recherche comporte deux questionnaires, envoyés respectivement à des interprètes de conférence et à des interprètes qui travaillent dans les services publics. Les résultats du premier questionnaire envoyé aux interprètes de conférence, auquel déjà 800 personnes ont répondu, permettent d'alimenter une réflexion très intéressante sur l'état de notre profession.

Ce deuxième questionnaire est réservé EXCLUSIVEMENT aux INTERPRETES qui travaillent pour les SERVICES PUBLIQUES. Si vous travaillez en tant qu'interprète dans les hôpitaux, les tribunaux, les postes de police, les services sociaux, en situation d'urgence et/ou dans le domaine de l'éducation, vous êtes invité(e) à prendre part à l'enquête. Le temps moyen nécessaire pour remplir le questionnaire est de cinq minutes et les données fournies dans ce questionnaire seront traitées de manière anonyme.

Tous les espaces réservés aux commentaires sont OPTIONNELS. Voilà pourquoi vous ne devez pas vous sentir obligé de commenter si vous ne le souhaitez pas.

Pour tout complément d'informations, questions ou doutes, veuillez me contacter à l'adresse suivante : [paola.gentile@phd.units.it](mailto:paola.gentile@phd.units.it).

Votre participation à cette enquête représente une importante contribution à la recherche en interprétation, pour laquelle je vous remercie à l'avance. Veuillez distribuer le lien vers le questionnaire également à vos collègues.

Merci pour votre coopération!

Paola Gentile

#### 1. Informations personnelles

##### 1. Quel est votre sexe ?

Masculin

Féminin

##### 2. Quel est votre âge ?

18-25 ans

26-35

36-45

46-55

56-65

65+

##### 3. Quel est votre pays de résidence ?

##### 4. Dans quel(s) domaine(s) travaillez-vous ?

Domaine de la santé

Tribunaux

Police

Ecoles  
Services sociaux  
Centres d'accueil/expulsion

**5. Depuis combien de temps travaillez-vous en tant qu'interprète dans les services publics ?**

1-5 ans  
6-10  
11-15  
16-20  
21-25  
26-30  
31-35  
35+

**6. Etes-vous membre d'une association professionnelle ?**

Oui  
Non

**7. En cas de réponse AFFIRMATIVE, laquelle ?**

**8. Quel est votre type d'emploi ?**

Interprète free-lance  
Interprète embauché par une agence de traduction/interprétation  
Autre (veuillez préciser)

**9. Avez-vous déjà travaillé en tant qu'interprète comme bénévole ?**

Toujours  
Souvent  
Quelques fois  
Rarement  
Jamais

**2. Tâches de l'interprète et avis sur les interprètes de conférence**

**10. Travaillez-vous en tant qu'interprète à temps plein ?**

Oui  
Non

**11. En plus de travailler comme interprète, avez-vous une autre activité professionnelle?**

Enseignant(e) dans des écoles  
Professeur d'université  
Traducteur(-trice) pour une agence  
Traducteur(-trice) in-house pour une exploitation  
Traducteur(-trice) free-lance  
Autre (veuillez préciser)

12. Avez-vous déjà travaillé en tant qu'interprète de conférence ?

- Oui
- Non

13. En cas de réponse NEGATIVE, pourriez-vous en expliquer la raison ? (Veuillez choisir deux options)

- Je ne suis pas intéressé(e) à travailler dans ce domaine
- Je n'ai jamais eu l'opportunité de travailler en tant qu'interprète de conférence
- Je n'ai pas la préparation adéquate
- Il n'y a pas de cours de formation pour ma combinaison linguistique
- Autre (veuillez préciser)

14. Que pensez-vous de l'interprétation de conférence ? (ci-après IC)

|  | Totalement<br>d'accord | D'accord | Ni d'accord,<br>ni en<br>désaccord | En<br>désaccord | Totalement<br>en désaccord |
|--|------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| L'IC a une importance sociale inférieure par rapport à l'interprétation dans les services publics                        |                        |          |                                    |                 |                            |
| L'IC requiert une préparation différente que l'interprétation dans les services publics                                  |                        |          |                                    |                 |                            |
| Les interprètes de conférence ont plus de responsabilités que les interprètes dans les services sociaux                  |                        |          |                                    |                 |                            |
| L'IC est plus prestigieuse que l'interprétation dans les services publics  |                        |          |                                    |                 |                            |
| L'IC devrait être reconnue davantage   |                        |          |                                    |                 |                            |
| Les interprètes de conférence et les interprètes dans les services publics devraient recevoir une rémunération similaire |                        |          |                                    |                 |                            |

3. Education et rémunération

15. Etes-vous en possession d'un master en traduction/interprétation ?

- Oui
- Non
- Je ne suis pas diplômé(e)

16. En cas de réponse NEGATIVE, quel est votre niveau d'instruction ?

| Licence | Master | Doctorat |
|---------|--------|----------|
|---------|--------|----------|



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Langues et littératures  
étrangères  
Sciences humaines  
(littérature, philosophie,  
histoire de l'art)  
Droit  
Médecine  
Economie  
Sciences (biologies,  
pharmacie, etc.)  
Mathématiques/Physique  
Ingénierie  
Architecture

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**17. Combien sont les disciplines suivantes utiles pour votre formation ?**

|  | Facultatif | Non<br>fondamental | Utile | Important | Fondamental |
|--|------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|-------------|
| Techniques d'interprétation  |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Terminologie technique   |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Logiciels de traduction  |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Linguistique, grammaire  |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Linguistique des corpus  |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Sociologie, ethnolinguistique  |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Déontologie, rôle de l'interprète, marché<br>du travail              |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Théorie de la traduction et de<br>l'interprétation                   |            |                    |       |           |             |
| Histoire, littérature, géographie,<br>institutions politiques, droit |            |                    |       |           |             |

**18. Quel est, d'après vous, le niveau d'éducation adéquat pour travailler comme interprète dans les services publics ?**

Baccalauréat  
Cours de formation (60 heures minimum)  
Licence  
Master  
Doctorat de recherche  
Autre (veuillez préciser)

**19. La société estime qu'un master est une condition nécessaire pour travailler en tant qu'interprète dans les services publics. Etes-vous**

Totalement d'accord  
D'accord  
Ni en accord, ni en désaccord  
En désaccord  
Totalement en désaccord

**20. La recherche en interprétation est utile à la profession**

Totalement d'accord  
D'accord  
Ni en accord, ni en désaccord  
En désaccord  
Totalement en désaccord

**21. Pensez-vous que la rétribution d'un interprète qui travaille dans les services publics est adéquate ?**

Oui, absolument  
Oui  
Moyennement  
Non  
Non, pas du tout

**4. Visibilité dans les médias, perception du statut et prestige**

**22. Est-ce que la profession d'interprète pour les services publics fait l'objet de l'intérêt des médias dans votre pays ?**

Oui, absolument  
Oui  
Moyennement  
Non  
Non, pas du tout

**23. Comment la profession de l'interprète est-t-elle présentée, d'après vous, dans les services publics par les médias ?**

Très positivement  
Positivement  
Ni négativement, ni positivement  
Négativement  
Très négativement  
Elle est ignorée par les médias

**24. Quelle est, d'après VOUS, dans la liste suivante, la profession qui possède un statut similaire à celui d'un interprète pour les services publics ?**

Manager, directeur général, parlementaire  
Avocat, médecin, professeur universitaire  
Professeur dans l'enseignement supérieur, architecte, journaliste  
Instituteur/-trice dans l'école primaire, infirmier/ère, assistant(e) sociale

**25. Quelle est, d'après la SOCIETE en général, dans la liste suivante, la profession qui possède un statut similaire à celui d'un interprète pour les services publics ?**

Manager, directeur général, parlementaire  
Avocat, médecin, professeur universitaire  
Professeur dans l'enseignement supérieur, architecte, journaliste  
Instituteur/-trice dans l'école primaire, infirmier/ère, assistant(e) sociale

**26. Dans une de sus études, Prunč soutient que l'interprétation dans les services publics n'est pas considérée comme prestigieuse non pas parce qu'elle n'est pas bien rétribuée, mais car les interprètes travaillent avec des immigrés et "des personnes exclues" (2012: 4). Etes-vous d'accord avec cette affirmation ?**

- Totalment d'accord
- D'accord
- Ni en accord, ni en désaccord
- En désaccord
- Totalment en désaccord
- Commentaires?

**27. Pensez-vous que la profession de l'interprète soit utile pour la société ?**

- Oui, absolument
- Oui
- Moyennement
- Non
- Non, absolument

**28. Pensez-vous que la société attribue de l'importance à la profession d'interprète ?**

- Oui, absolument
- Oui
- Moyennement
- Non
- Non, pas du tout

**29. Si votre enfant voulait devenir interprète, l'encourageriez-vous dans son choix ?**

- Oui, absolument
- Oui
- Moyennement
- Non
- Non, pas du tout

#### **5. Le rôle de l'interprète et les évolutions futures pour la profession**

**30. D'après votre expérience, quel est le rôle principal de l'interprète ?**

- Facilitateur de la communication
- Médiateur linguistique et culturel
- Intermédiaire invisible
- Assistant
- Acteur
- Autre (veuillez préciser)

**31. Veuillez prendre en considération toutes les occasions dans lesquelles vous avez travaillé en tant qu'interprète. A quelle fréquence vous êtes-vous aussi acquitté des tâches suivantes ?**

|   | Toujours | Souvent | Parfois | Rarement | Jamais |
|---|----------|---------|---------|----------|--------|
| Traduction écrite de documents  |          |         |         |          |        |
| Traduction à vue  |          |         |         |          |        |
| Explication d'expressions de politesse et de différences culturelles                        |          |         |         |          |        |
| Accompagner le interlocuteur étranger à des bureaux/services                                |          |         |         |          |        |
| Fournir du matériel d'information   |          |         |         |          |        |
| Effectuer des tâches administratives  |          |         |         |          |        |
| Expliquer des procédures bureaucratiques (par exemple, comment obtenir un permis de séjour) |          |         |         |          |        |
| Rédiger des feuilles d'information en plusieurs langues                                     |          |         |         |          |        |
| Autre (veuillez préciser)   |          |         |         |          |        |

**32. Quelle est la fréquence avec laquelle vous vous êtes retrouvé(e) dans les situations suivantes ?**

|   | Toujours | Souvent | Parfois | Rarement | Jamais |
|---|----------|---------|---------|----------|--------|
| Les gens avec lesquelles je travaille ont des attentes contradictoires à propos de mon travail                      |          |         |         |          |        |
| J'adopte une attitude neutre quand je fais mon travail  |          |         |         |          |        |
| Il m'arrive de ressentir un fort impact émotionnel quand je travaille   |          |         |         |          |        |
| L'empathie envers l'interlocuteur influence ma prestation   |          |         |         |          |        |
| Les prestataires de services (médecins, juges, etc.) me considèrent comme une grande aide et apprécient mon travail |          |         |         |          |        |
| Les interlocuteurs étrangers me considèrent comme une grande aide et apprécient mon travail                         |          |         |         |          |        |
| Commentaires ?  |          |         |         |          |        |

**33. Pensez-vous que le statut des interprètes dans les services publics sera meilleur dans l'avenir ?**

- Oui
- Non
- Je ne sais pas
- Commentaires ?

**34. D'après vous, quels changements y-aura-t-il dans la profession ?**

|   | Tout à fait probable | Probable | Moyennement probable | Improbable | Très improbable |
|---|----------------------|----------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Il n'y aura plus besoin d'interprètes         |                      |          |                      |            |                 |
| L'importance de la profession sera reconnue   |                      |          |                      |            |                 |
| On demandera plus d'interprètes de conférence |                      |          |                      |            |                 |

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On demandera plus  
d'interprètes dans les services  
publiques  
Les interprètes auront plus de  
visibilité, grâce aux réseaux  
sociaux  
Commentaires ?

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**35. D'après vous, de quelle façon les mesures suivantes pourraient-elles améliorer le statut des interprètes dans les services publics ?**

|   | Absolument<br>inefficace | Inefficace | Moyennement<br>efficace | Efficace | Très<br>efficace |
|---|--------------------------|------------|-------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Les gouvernements nationaux devraient régler la profession                                  |                          |            |                         |          |                  |
| Les associations professionnelles devraient promouvoir de façon plus active la profession   |                          |            |                         |          |                  |
| Une formation académique devrait être une condition nécessaire pour exercer la profession   |                          |            |                         |          |                  |
| Un examen national devrait être requis pour exercer la profession                           |                          |            |                         |          |                  |
| Les médias et les réseaux sociaux devraient promouvoir une meilleure image de la profession |                          |            |                         |          |                  |

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**36. La directive européenne 2010/61/UE sur le droit à l'interprétation et à la traduction dans le cadre des procédures pénales propose la création d'un registre d'interprètes « dûment qualifiés » (Art. 5, second alinéa). Pensez-vous que l'application de cette directive ou de mesures similaires peut contribuer à améliorer le statut des interprètes dans les services publics ?**

- Oui, absolument
- Oui
- Moyennement
- Non
- Non, pas du tout

**37. Tout autre commentaire sur votre expérience personnelle et/ou sur la profession sera le bienvenu. Merci pour votre contribution.**

## Der Berufsstatus der Dolmetscher (auf Deutsch)

Sehr geehrte/r Teilnehmer/in,

Ich bin eine Ph.D. Studentin in Dolmetschwissenschaft an der Universität Triest (Italien). Ich schreibe Ihnen, um Sie um Ihre Hilfe bei meinem Forschungsprojekt zu bitten, das die Selbstwahrnehmung des Status der Dolmetscher untersucht. Ihre Antworten werden grundlegend sein, da sie dazu beitragen, das Bewusstsein der gesellschaftlichen Relevanz des Dolmetschens zu schärfen. Ausserdem werden sie einen Eindruck der zukünftigen Veränderungen des Berufes verschaffen. Meine Studie besteht aus zwei Fragebögen: Einer für Konferenzdolmetscher und einer für Dolmetscher im öffentlichen Dienst. Der erste Fragebogen wurde von mehr als 800 Konferenzdolmetschern ausgefüllt und bietet interessante Einblicke in die Lage der Dolmetscher. Der zweite Fragebogen richtet sich NUR an DOLMETSCHER IM ÖFFENTLICHEN DIENST. Wenn Sie als Dolmetscher in Krankenhäusern, Sozialdienst, Notdienst, Ausbildung, Polizei und Gerichte arbeiten, sind Sie herzlich eingeladen, an dieser Umfrage teilzunehmen. Das Ausfüllen wird ca. 5 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen. Alle Antworten der Umfrage werden anonym aufgezeichnet. Alle Anmerkungsfelder sind FAKULTATIV, fühlen Sie sich daher nicht verpflichtet, Ihre Bemerkungen einzutragen. Sollten Sie Fragen haben, schreiben Sie mir bitte: [paola.gentile@phd.units.it](mailto:paola.gentile@phd.units.it)  
Ihre Teilnahme ist ein wertvoller Beitrag zur Dolmetschforschung, und ich danke Ihnen im Voraus für Ihre Zusammenarbeit. Bitte versuchen Sie diesen Fragebogen an so viele Kollegen wie möglich weiterzugeben.

Vielen Dank!

Paola Gentile

### Sektion 1. Persönlichen Angaben

#### 1. Welches ist Ihr Geschlecht?

Männlich  
Weiblich

#### 2. Welche ist Ihre Altersgruppe?

18-25 Jahre alt  
26-35  
36-45  
46-55  
56-65  
65+

#### 3. Wo befindet sich Ihr Wohnsitz?

#### 4. In welchem/n Bereich/en arbeiten Sie?

Gesundheit  
Gericht  
Polizei  
Ausbildung  
Sozialdienst  
Einwanderungs- und Asylzentren  
Sonstige (bitte angeben)

**5. Seit wie lange arbeiten Sie im öffentlichen Dienst?**

1-5 Jahre  
6-10  
11-15  
16-20  
21-25  
26-30  
31-35  
35+

**6. Sind Sie Mitglied eines Berufsverbandes?**

Ja  
Nein

**7. Wenn JA, welcher?****8. Wie arbeiten Sie?**

Freiberuflich  
Als Mitarbeiter eines Übersetzungs- oder Dolmetscherbüro  
Sonstige (bitte angeben)

**9. Haben Sie jemals als freiwilliger Dolmetscher gearbeitet?**

Immer  
Oft  
Manchmal  
Selten  
Niemals

**Sektion 2. Dolmetschaufgaben und Meinungen über Konferenzdolmetschen****10. Ist Dolmetschen für Sie ein Vollzeitberuf?**

Ja  
Nein

**11. Abgesehen vom Dolmetschen, haben Sie einen anderen Beruf? (Sie können mehrere Angaben ankreuzen)**

Schullehrer  
Dozent  
Angestellte/r eines Übersetzungsbüros  
In-house Übersetzer/in einer Firma  
Freiberufliche/r Übersetzer/in  
Sonstige (bitte angeben)

**12. Haben Sie jemals als Konferenzdolmetscher/in gearbeitet?**

Ja

Nein

**13. Wenn Ihre Antwort NEIN ist, welche sind die Hauptgründe für Ihre Wahl? (bitte 2 Angaben ankreuzen)**

- Ich habe kein Interesse, in diesem Bereich zu arbeiten
- Ich habe noch nie die Möglichkeit gehabt, in diesem Bereich zu arbeiten
- Ich bin nicht dafür ausgebildet
- Ich kann wegen meiner Sprachkombination keine Ausbildung zum Konferenzdolmetscher erhalten
- Sonstige (bitte angeben)

**14. Was denken Sie über Konferenzdolmetschen?**

|  | Stimme voll zu | Stimme zu | Weder noch | Stimme nicht zu | Stimme gar nicht zu |
|--|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Konferenzdolmetschen hat niedrigere soziale Auswirkungen als Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst          |                |           |            |                 |                     |
| Konferenzdolmetschen erfordert eine andere Ausbildung im Vergleich zu Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst |                |           |            |                 |                     |
| Konferenzdolmetscher haben eine höhere Verantwortung im Vergleich zu Dolmetschern im öffentlichen Dienst |                |           |            |                 |                     |
| Konferenzdolmetschen hat mehr Prestige als Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst                            |                |           |            |                 |                     |
| Konferenzdolmetschen sollte mehr anerkannt werden  |                |           |            |                 |                     |
| Konferenzdolmetschen und Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst sollten ähnliche Tarifen haben               |                |           |            |                 |                     |

**Sektion 3. Ausbildung und Vergütung**

**15. Haben Sie einen Master-Abschluss in Übersetzen/Dolmetschen?**

- Ja
- Nein

**16. Wenn Sie NEIN geantwortet haben, welcher ist Ihr höchster Abschluss?**

|                             | Bachelor-Abschluss | Master-Abschluss | Ph.D. |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------|
| Fremdsprachen und Literatur |                    |                  |       |
| Literatur und Kunst         |                    |                  |       |
| Jura                        |                    |                  |       |
| Medizin                     |                    |                  |       |
| Wirtschaft                  |                    |                  |       |
| Wissenschaft                |                    |                  |       |
| Mathematik/Physik           |                    |                  |       |



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Ingenieurwissenschaft  
Architektur  
Sonstige (bitte angeben)

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**17. Inwiefern halten Sie die folgende Themen für Ihre berufliche Weiterbildung relevant?**

|   | Fakultativ | Nicht<br>erforderlich | Nütz | Wichtig | Erforderlich |
|---|------------|-----------------------|------|---------|--------------|
| Dolmetschtechniken  |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Fachsprache   |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Übersetzungs- und Dolmetschsoftwares  |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Sprachwissenschaft, Grammatik   |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Kulturwissenschaft  |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Soziologie  |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Ethnolinguistik   |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Deontologie, Rolle des<br>Übersetzers/Dolmetschers, Übersetzungs-<br>und Dolmetschmarkt |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Theorie des Dolmetschens/Übersetzens  |            |                       |      |         |              |
| Geschichte, Literatur, Geographie, Politische<br>Institutionen, Recht                   |            |                       |      |         |              |

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**18. Welches Bildungsniveau wäre Ihrer Meinung nach um als Dolmetscher im öffentlichen Dienst zu arbeiten geeignet?**

Abiturabschluss  
Kurzstudium (mindestens 60 Stunden)  
Bachelorabschluss  
Masterabschluss  
Ph.D.  
Sonstige (bitte angeben)

**19. Personen außerhalb des Berufes denken, dass ein Master-Abschluss in Übersetzen / Dolmetschen erforderlich ist, um als Dolmetscher arbeiten zu können.**

Stimme voll zu  
Stimme zu  
Weder noch  
Stimme nicht zu  
Stimme gar nicht zu

**20. Forschung zum Dolmetschen ist nützlich für den Beruf.**

Stimme voll zu  
Stimme zu  
Weder noch

Stimme nicht zu  
Stimme gar nicht zu

**21. Sind Sie der Meinung, dass die Vergütung der Dolmetscher im öffentlichen Dienst angemessen ist?**

Absolut  
Ja  
Teilweise  
Nicht wirklich  
Überhaupt nicht

#### **Sektion 4. Medienpräsenz, Wahrnehmung von Status und Prestige**

**22. Tritt Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst in Ihrem Land in den Medien auf?**

Absolut  
Ja  
Teilweise  
Nicht wirklich  
Überhaupt nicht

**23. Wie wird Ihrer Meinung nach Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst von den Medien dargestellt?**

Extrem positiv  
Positiv  
Weder negativ noch positiv  
Negativ  
Extrem negativ  
Es wird von de Media ignoriert

**24. Welche der folgenden Berufe haben Ihrer Meinung nach einen ähnlichen Status wie der des Dolmetschers im öffentlichen Dienst?**

CEO, Finanzmanager, Gesetzgeber  
Rechtsanwalt, Arzt, Dozent  
Mittelstufenlehrer, Architekt, Journalist  
Grundschullehrer, Krankenschwester, Sozialarbeiter

**25. Welche der folgenden Berufe haben einen ähnlichen Status wie der des Dolmetschers im öffentlichen Dienst, gemäß der Allgemeinbevölkerung?**

CEO, Finanzmanager, Gesetzgeber  
Rechtsanwalt, Arzt, Dozent  
Mittelstufenlehrer, Architekt, Journalist  
Grundschullehrer, Krankenschwester, Sozialarbeiter

**26. In einem seiner Artikel, Prunč behauptet, dass Dolmetschen im öffentlichen Dienst nicht gut angesehen ist, nicht weil es schlecht vergütet wird, sondern weil Dolmetscher sich mit Einwanderern beschäftigen, "den Ausgestoßenen der Gesellschaft" (Prunč 2012: 4). Stimmen Sie dieser Aussage zu?**

Stimme voll zu

Stimme zu  
 Weder noch  
 Stimme nicht zu  
 Stimme gar nicht zu

**27. Glauben Sie, dass Dolmetschen wichtig für die Gesellschaft ist?**

Absolut  
 Ja  
 Teilweise  
 Nicht wirklich  
 Überhaupt nicht

**28. Sind Sie der Meinung, dass die Gesellschaft die Arbeit des Dolmetschers als wichtig betrachtet?**

Absolut  
 Ja  
 Teilweise  
 Nicht wirklich  
 Überhaupt nicht

**29. Wenn Ihr Sohn/Ihre Tochter Dolmetscher/in werden wollte, würden Sie ihn/sie ermutigen?**

Absolut  
 Ja  
 Teilweise  
 Nicht wirklich  
 Überhaupt nicht

**30. Was ist die Hauptaufgabe des Dolmetschers Ihrer Erfahrung nach?**

Kommunikationsermöglischer  
 Sprach-und Kulturvermittler  
 Unsichtbarer Vermittler  
 Helfer  
 Darsteller  
 Sonstige (bitte angeben)

**31. Bitte berücksichtigen Sie alle Gelegenheiten, bei denen Sie als Dolmetscher gearbeitet haben. Wie oft haben Sie auch die folgenden Aufgaben ausgeführt?**

|   | Immer | Oft | Manchmal | Selten | Niemals |
|---|-------|-----|----------|--------|---------|
| Dokumente übersetzen                                    |       |     |          |        |         |
| Stegreifübersetzung                                     |       |     |          |        |         |
| Höflichkeitsformen und kulturelle Unterschiede erklären |       |     |          |        |         |
| Ausländische Bürger zu verschiedenen Büros begleiten    |       |     |          |        |         |
| Informationsmaterial bereitstellen                      |       |     |          |        |         |
| Verwaltungsaufgaben ausführen                           |       |     |          |        |         |

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Richtlinien für bürokratischen Prozesse zur  
 Urkundenbeschaffung anbieten (z.B. eine  
 Aufenthaltsgenehmigung)  
 Mehrsprachige Dokumente/Broschüren abfassen  
 Vorträge zu einem bestimmten Thema halten (z.B. wie man  
 ein Kondom verwendet)  
 Sonstige (bitte angeben)

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**32. Wie oft haben Sie sich in den folgenden Situationen befunden?**

---

**Immer    Oft    Manchmal    Selten    Niemals**

---

Personen mit denen ich arbeite haben widersprüchliche  
 Erwartungen von meiner Arbeit  
 Ich nehme während meiner Arbeit eine neutrale Haltung ein  
 Meine Arbeit hat eine emotionale Wirkung auf mich

Das Einfühlungsvermögen einer der Beteiligten beeinflusst  
 meine Leistung  
 Dienstleister sehen meine Arbeit als notwendig und schätzen  
 sie  
 Sprecher von Minderheitensprachen sehen meine Arbeit als  
 notwendig und schätzen sie  
 Sonstige (bitte angeben)

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**33. Glauben Sie, dass der Status des Dolmetschers im Gesundheits-und Gemeinwesen sich in der Zukunft verbessern wird?**

Ja  
 Nein  
 Ich weiß nicht  
 Sonstige Bemerkungen?

**34. Inwiefern werden die folgenden Änderungen im Beruf Ihrer Meinung nach vorkommen?**

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|  | Absolut<br>wahrscheinli<br>ch | Wahrscheinli<br>ch | Wenig<br>wahrscheinli<br>ch | Unwahrscheinli<br>ch | Absolut<br>unwahrscheinli<br>ch |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Dolmetschen wird<br>nicht mehr benötigt<br>werden            |                               |                    |                             |                      |                                 |
| Die Wichtigkeit des<br>Dolmetschens wird<br>anerkannt werden |                               |                    |                             |                      |                                 |

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Mehr  
Konferenzdolmetsc  
her werden  
benötigt werden  
Mehr Dolmetscher  
im Gesundheits-  
und Gemeinwesen  
werden benötigt  
werden  
Dolmetscher  
werden deutlicher  
sichtbar sein dank  
der sozialer  
Netzwerke  
Sonstige  
Bemerkungen?

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**35. Inwiefern würden Ihrer Meinung nach diese Maßnahmen wirksam sein, um den Status des Dolmetschers zu verbessern?**

|  | Äußerst<br>wirksam | Sehr<br>wirksam | Kaum<br>wirksam | Etwas<br>wirksam | Überhaupt<br>nicht<br>wirksam |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nationale Regierungen sollten den Beruf regeln<br>Berufsverbände sollten den Beruf stärker fördern<br>Akademische Qualifizierungen sollten eine erforderliche Voraussetzung für Dolmetscher sein<br>Eine Prüfung auf nationaler Ebene sollte eine erforderliche Voraussetzung für Dolmetscher im gesundheits- und Gemeinwesen sein<br>Massenmedien und soziale Netzwerke sollten ein besseres Bild des Berufes fördern |                    |                 |                 |                  |                               |

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**36. Die Europäische Richtlinie 2010/64/EU über das Recht zu Dolmetschen und Übersetzen in Strafverfahren schlägt die Einrichtung eines Verzeichnisses der Dolmetscher vor, die "entsprechend qualifiziert" sein müssen. Art. 5 (2). Glauben Sie, dass die Durchführung dieser oder ähnlicher Maßnahmen dazu beitragen wird, dass der Status der Dolmetscher im öffentlichen Dienst besser wird?**

Absolut  
Ja  
Teilweise  
Nicht wirklich  
Überhaupt nicht

**37. Weitere Kommentare über Ihre Erfahrung oder den Beruf des Dolmetschens werden sehr geschätzt. Vielen Dank!**

### Lo Status Professionale dell'Interprete (Italiano)

Caro partecipante,

Sono un dottoranda in Scienze della Traduzione e dell'Interpretazione presso la Scuola per Interpreti e Traduttori dell'Università di Trieste. Le scrivo per chiederle di assistermi nella mia ricerca, che consiste in un'indagine sociologica sulla auto percezione dello status professionale dell'interprete nella società contemporanea. Il suo contributo è fondamentale per la ricerca in interpretazione, in quanto aiuterebbe a fornire una visione d'insieme sullo stato attuale della nostra professione e sui possibili cambiamenti che potranno verificarsi in futuro. Il mio progetto di ricerca consta di due questionari, distribuiti rispettivamente agli interpreti di conferenza e agli interpreti che lavorano nei servizi pubblici. I risultati del primo questionario inviato agli interpreti di conferenza, che ha già ricevuto più di 800 risposte, stanno fornendo dei dati molto interessanti sullo stato della nostra professione. Questo secondo questionario è rivolto solo agli interpreti che lavorano nei servizi pubblici. Se lei lavora come interprete negli ospedali, nell'ambito dei servizi sociali, in situazioni di emergenza, in ambito educativo, nelle stazioni di polizia o nei tribunali, è invitato/a partecipare al presente sondaggio. Il tempo di compilazione è di circa 10 minuti e i dati acquisiti con il presente questionario verranno trattati in forma anonima. Tutti gli spazi per i commenti sono opzionali. Per ulteriori informazioni, domande o dubbi, contatti il seguente indirizzo e-mail: [paola.gentile@phd.units.it](mailto:paola.gentile@phd.units.it)

La sua partecipazione all'indagine costituisce un prezioso contributo alla ricerca in interpretazione, e la ringrazio in anticipo per la sua gentile collaborazione. Per favore, distribuisca il link al questionario anche tra i suoi colleghi.

Grazie!

Paola Gentile

#### Sezione 1. Informazioni personali

##### 1. Qual è il suo sesso?

Maschile  
Femminile

##### 2. A quale fascia di età appartiene?

18-25 anni  
26-35  
36-45  
46-55  
56-65  
65+

##### 3. Qual è il suo paese di residenza?

##### 4 In quale ambito/i lavora?

Ambito sanitario  
Tribunali  
Polizia  
Scuole  
Servizi sociali  
Centri per l'immigrazione/asilo

Altro (per favore specifici)

**5. Da quanto tempo lavora come interprete per i servizi pubblici?**

1-5 anni

6-10

11-15

16-20

21-25

26-30

31-35

35+

**6. Fa parte di un'associazione di categoria?**

Sì

No

**7. Se SÌ, quale?**

**8. Come è impiegato come interprete per i servizi pubblici? (E' possibile scegliere più di un'opzione)**

Interprete free-lance

Presso un'agenzia di traduzione/interpretazione

Altro (per favore specifici)

**9. Ha mai lavorato come interprete volontario/a?**

Sempre

Spesso

A volte

Raramente

Mai

**Sezione 2. Mansioni dell'Interprete e Opinioni sugli Interpreti di Conferenza**

**10. Lavora come interprete a tempo pieno?**

Sì

No

**11. Oltre a lavorare come interprete, svolge qualche altra attività lavorativa? (E' possibile scegliere più di un'opzione)**

Insegnante presso istituti scolastici

Docente universitario

Traduttore/trice presso un'agenzia

Traduttore/trice in-house presso un'azienda

Traduttore/trice free-lance

Altro (per favore specifici)

**12. Ha mai lavorato come interprete di conferenza?**

- Si
- No

**13. Se ha risposto NO, può specificare il motivo? (Per favore scelga 2 opzioni)**

- Non mi interessa lavorare in questo campo
- Non ho mai avuto l'opportunità di lavorare come interprete di conferenza
- Non ho la preparazione adeguata
- Non esistono corsi di formazione con la mia combinazione linguistica
- Altro (per favore specifichi)

**14. Cosa ne pensa dell'interpretazione di conferenza?**

|   | Stimme<br>voll zu | Stimme<br>zu | Weder<br>noch | Stimme<br>nicht zu | Stimme<br>gar nicht<br>zu |
|---|-------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| L'IC ha una rilevanza sociale inferiore rispetto all'interpretazione nei servizi pubblici                         |                   |              |               |                    |                           |
| L'IC richiede una preparazione diversa rispetto all'interpretazione nei servizi pubblici                          |                   |              |               |                    |                           |
| Gli interpreti di conferenza hanno responsabilità maggiori rispetto agli interpreti per i servizi pubblici        |                   |              |               |                    |                           |
| L'IC è più prestigiosa dell'interpretazione nei servizi pubblici  |                   |              |               |                    |                           |
| L'IC dovrebbe essere più riconosciuta   |                   |              |               |                    |                           |
| Gli interpreti di conferenza e gli interpreti per i servizi pubblici dovrebbero ricevere una remunerazione simile |                   |              |               |                    |                           |

**Sezione 3. Istruzione e Remunerazione**

**15. Possiede una laurea magistrale in traduzione/interpretazione?**

- Si
- No

**16. Se la sua risposta è NO, qual è il suo livello di istruzione?**

|   | Laurea triennale | Laurea magistrale | Dottorato di ricerca |
|---|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Lingue e Letterature Straniere                                    |                  |                   |                      |
| Discipline umanistiche (letteratura, filosofia, storia dell'arte) |                  |                   |                      |
| Giurisprudenza  |                  |                   |                      |



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Medicina  
Economia  
Scienze (biologia,  
farmacia, etc.)  
Matematica/fisica  
Ingegneria  
Architettura  
Altro (per favore  
specifichi)

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**17. Quanto considera le seguenti discipline utili per la sua formazione?**

|   | Facoltativo | Non<br>fondamentale | Utile | Importante | Fondamentale |
|---|-------------|---------------------|-------|------------|--------------|
| Tecniche di interpretazione                                       |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Terminologia tecnica  |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Software di traduzione  |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Linguistica, Grammatica   |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Linguistica dei corpora   |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Sociologia, Etnolinguistica                                       |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Deontologia, ruolo dell'interprete,<br>mercato del lavoro         |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Teoria della traduzione e<br>dell'interpretazione                 |             |                     |       |            |              |
| Storia, Letteratura, Geografia,<br>istituzioni politiche, diritto |             |                     |       |            |              |

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**18. Secondo lei, qual è il livello di istruzione adeguato per lavorare come interprete nei servizi pubblici?**

Diploma di scuola superiore  
Corso di formazione (minimo 60 ore)  
Laurea triennale  
Laurea magistrale  
Dottorato di ricerca  
Altro (per favore specifici)

**19. La società crede che una laurea magistrale sia una condizione necessaria per lavorare come interprete nei servizi pubblici**

Molto d'accordo  
D'accordo  
Né in accordo né in disaccordo  
In disaccordo  
Molto in disaccordo

**20. La ricerca in interpretazione è utile per la professione**

Molto d'accordo

D'accordo  
Né in accordo né in disaccordo  
In disaccordo  
Molto in disaccordo

**21. Ritiene che la retribuzione di un interprete che lavora nei servizi pubblici sia adeguata?**

Assolutamente sì  
Sì  
Moderatamente  
No  
Assolutamente no

**Sezione 4. Presenza nei media, percezione dello status e del prestigio**

**22. Nel suo paese di residenza, la professione di interprete per i servizi pubblici riceve esposizione mediatica?**

Assolutamente sì  
Sì  
Moderatamente  
No  
Assolutamente no

**23. Secondo lei, come viene rappresentata nei mass media la professione di interprete per i servizi pubblici?**

Molto positivamente  
Positivamente  
Né negativamente né positivamente  
Negativamente  
Molto negativamente  
E' ignorata dai mass media

**24. Secondo LEI, quale delle seguenti professioni ha uno status simile a quello di un interprete per i servizi pubblici?**

Manager, amministratore delegato, parlamentare  
Avvocato, medico, docente universitario  
Insegnante di scuola superiore, architetto, giornalista  
Insegnante di scuola primaria, infermiere/a, assistente sociale

**25. Secondo la SOCIETA' in generale, quale delle seguenti professioni ha uno status simile a quello di un interprete per i servizi pubblici?**

Manager, amministratore delegato, parlamentare  
Avvocato, medico, docente universitario  
Insegnante di scuola superiore, architetto, giornalista  
Insegnante di scuola primaria, infermiere/a, assistente sociale

**26. In uno dei suoi studi, Prunč sostiene che l'interpretazione nei servizi pubblici non gode di prestigio non tanto perché non è ben retribuita, ma perché gli interpreti lavorano a fianco di immigrati ed “emarginati della società” (2012: 4). E' d'accordo con questa affermazione?**

Molto d'accordo  
 D'accordo  
 Né in accordo né in disaccordo  
 In disaccordo  
 Molto in disaccordo  
 Commenti?

**27. Crede che la professione di interprete sia utile per la società?**

Assolutamente sì  
 Sì  
 Moderatamente  
 No  
 Assolutamente no

**28. Ritieni che la società attribuisca importanza al lavoro dell'interprete?**

Assolutamente sì  
 Sì  
 Moderatamente  
 No  
 Assolutamente no

**29. Se suo figlio/a volesse diventare interprete, lo incoraggerebbe nella sua scelta?**

Assolutamente sì  
 Sì  
 Moderatamente  
 No  
 Assolutamente no

**30. Considerata la sua esperienza, qual è il principale ruolo dell'interprete?**

Facilitatore della comunicazione  
 Mediatore linguistico e culturale  
 Tramite invisibile  
 Aiutante  
 Attore  
 Altro (per favore specifici)

**31. Consideri tutte le occasioni in cui ha lavorato come interprete. Con che frequenza ha svolto anche le seguenti mansioni?**

|                                 | Sempre | Spesso | A<br>volte | Raramente | Mai |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|------------|-----------|-----|
| Tradurre documenti per iscritto |        |        |            |           |     |
| Tradurre a vista                |        |        |            |           |     |

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Spiegare formule di cortesia e differenze culturali  
 Accompagnare il parlante straniero presso uffici  
 Fornire materiale informativo  
 Svolgere incarichi amministrativi  
 Spiegare procedure burocratiche (per esempio, come ottenere un permesso di soggiorno)  
 Redigere foglietti informativi multilingue  
 Altro (per favore specificare)

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**32. Con che frequenza le è capitato di trovarsi nelle seguenti situazioni?**

---

|   | Sempre | Spesso | A volte | Raramente | Mai |
|---|--------|--------|---------|-----------|-----|
| Le persone con cui lavoro hanno delle aspettative contraddittorie sul mio lavoro                                |        |        |         |           |     |
| Adotto un atteggiamento neutrale quando svolgo il mio lavoro  |        |        |         |           |     |
| Mi capita di provare un forte impatto emotivo quando lavoro   |        |        |         |           |     |
| L'empatia con uno dei parlanti influenza la mia prestazione   |        |        |         |           |     |
| I fornitori dei servizi (medici, giudici, etc.) mi considerano come un grande aiuto ed apprezzano il mio lavoro |        |        |         |           |     |
| I parlanti stranieri mi considerano come un grande aiuto ed apprezzano il mio lavoro                            |        |        |         |           |     |
| Commenti?   |        |        |         |           |     |

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**33. Crede che lo status degli interpreti per i servizi pubblici migliorerà in futuro?**

Sì  
 No  
 Non lo so  
 Commenti?

**34. Secondo lei, quali cambiamenti si verificheranno nella professione?**

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|                                       | Absolutamente probabile | Probabile | Moderatamente probabile | Improbabile | Decisamente improbabile |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Non ci sarà più bisogno di interpreti |                         |           |                         |             |                         |

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L'importanza della  
professione verrà  
riconosciuta

Ci sarà più richiesta  
di interpreti di  
conferenza

Ci sarà più richiesta  
di interpreti nei  
servizi pubblici

Gli interpreti  
godranno di più  
visibilità grazie ai  
social networks

Commenti?

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**35. Secondo lei, in che misura le seguenti misure potrebbero migliorare lo status degli interpreti per i servizi pubblici?**

|   | Molto<br>efficace | Efficace | Moderatamente<br>efficace | Inefficace | Assolutamente<br>inefficace |
|---|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| I governi nazionali dovrebbero<br>regolamentare la professione  |                   |          |                           |            |                             |
| Le associazioni di categoria<br>dovrebbero promuovere più<br>attivamente la professione                     |                   |          |                           |            |                             |
| Un titolo accademico dovrebbe<br>essere un requisito necessario<br>per svolgere la professione              |                   |          |                           |            |                             |
| Un esame a livello nazionale<br>dovrebbe essere un requisito<br>necessario per esercitare la<br>professione |                   |          |                           |            |                             |
| I mass media e i social networks<br>dovrebbero promuovere<br>un'immagine migliore della<br>professione      |                   |          |                           |            |                             |

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**36. La Direttiva Europea 2010/64/UE sul Diritto all'Interpretazione e alla Traduzione nei Processi Penali propone la creazione di un registro di interpreti "debitamente qualificati" (Art. 5 comma 2). Ritiene che l'applicazione di questa direttiva o di simili provvedimenti possa contribuire a migliorare lo status degli interpreti per i servizi pubblici?**

Assolutamente sì

Sì

Moderatamente

No

Assolutamente no

**37. Qualsiasi altro commento sulla sua esperienza personale e/o sulla professione sarebbe di grande aiuto. Grazie!**

### El Estatus Profesional del Intérprete (en Español)

Estimado participante:

Soy una doctoranda en Ciencias de la Traducción y de la Interpretación de la Universidad de Trieste (Italia). Le escribo para pedirle que me ayude con mi investigación, que pretende analizar el estatus profesional del intérprete en la sociedad contemporánea. Su participación sería fundamental para la investigación en el ámbito de la interpretación, porque va a ofrecer un cuadro completo del estado actual de nuestra profesión y permitirá mejorar sus condiciones de cara al futuro.

Mi investigación consta de dos encuestas, distribuidas respectivamente a los intérpretes de conferencia y a los intérpretes de los servicios públicos. Los resultados del primer cuestionario enviado a los intérpretes de conferencia, que cuenta con más de 800 respuestas, está proporcionando datos muy interesantes sobre el estado de la profesión. Esta segunda encuesta se dirige SOLO a los intérpretes de los servicios públicos. Si usted trabaja en hospitales, tribunales, en comisarías, servicios sociales, situaciones de emergencia y/o en el ámbito de la educación está invitado/a a participar en esta encuesta. Tan solo le llevará 10 minutos en realizarla y los datos serán procesados de forma anónima.

Todos los espacios para escribir comentarios son OPCIONALES, así que no se sienta obligado/a a responder.

Para más información, preguntas o dudas, puede contactarme a mi correo: [paola.gentile@phd.units.it](mailto:paola.gentile@phd.units.it)

Su participación en la encuesta sería de valiosa contribución para la investigación en interpretación. Personalmente, se lo agradezco mucho de antemano. Por favor, intente difundir el enlace de la encuesta también a sus compañeros.

¡Muchísimas gracias!

Paola Gentile

#### 1. Información Personal

**1. ¿Es usted hombre o mujer?**

Hombre  
Mujer

**2. ¿En qué franja de edad se encuentra?**

18-25 años  
26-35  
36-45  
46-55  
56-65  
65+

**3. ¿Cuál es su país de residencia?**

**4. ¿En qué ámbito trabaja usted?**

Sanitario

Tribunales  
Policía  
Colegios e/o centros de educación  
Servicios sociales  
Centros de inmigración

**5. ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva trabajando en los servicios públicos?**

1-5 años  
6-10  
11-15  
16-20  
21-25  
26-30  
31-35  
35 +

**6. ¿Es usted miembro de una asociación profesional?**

Sí  
No

**7. Si su respuesta es SÍ, ¿puede especificar cuál?**

**8. ¿Cuál es su régimen laboral en los servicios públicos? (Puede elegir más de una opción)**

Intérprete free-lance (cuenta propia)  
Intérprete en una agencia de traducción/interpretación (cuenta ajena)  
Otros (por favor especifique)

**9. ¿Ha trabajado como intérprete voluntario alguna vez?**

Siempre  
A menudo  
A veces  
Raramente  
Nunca

**2. Tareas del Intérprete y Comentarios sobre los Intérpretes de Conferencias**

**10. ¿Trabaja usted como intérprete a tiempo completo?**

Sí  
No

**11. ¿Además de trabajar como intérprete, desarrolla alguna otra actividad laboral? (Puede elegir más de una opción)**

- Profesor/a de colegio
- Profesor/a universitario/a
- Traductor en una agencia
- Traductor de plantilla en una empresa
- Traductor free-lance
- Otros (por favor especifique)

**12. ¿Ha trabajado alguna vez como intérprete de conferencia?**

- Sí
- No

**13. Si su respuesta es NO, ¿podría explicar por qué? (Por favor indique dos opciones)**

- No me interesa trabajar en este ámbito
- Nunca he tenido la oportunidad de trabajar en este ámbito
- No tengo la formación adecuada
- No puedo recibir formación en este ámbito debido a mi combinación lingüística
- Otros (por favor especifique)

**14. ¿Qué opina usted de la interpretación de conferencia? (en adelante IC)**

|  | Muy de acuerdo | De acuerdo | Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | Muy en desacuerdo |
|--|----------------|------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| La IC tiene un valor social inferior a la interpretación en los SSPP                     |                |            |                                |               |                   |
| La IC requiere una formación diferente con respecto a la interpretación en SSPP          |                |            |                                |               |                   |
| Los intérpretes de conferencia tienen mayores responsabilidades que los intérpretes SSPP |                |            |                                |               |                   |
| La IC es más prestigiosa que la interpretación en los SSPP                               |                |            |                                |               |                   |
| La IC tiene que valorarse más  |                |            |                                |               |                   |
| La retribución de los intérpretes de conferencias y la de SSPP tienen que ser parecida   |                |            |                                |               |                   |

**3. Formación y Retribución**

**15. ¿Tiene usted un máster en traducción/interpretación?**

- Sí
- No



No soy licenciado/a

**16. Si su respuesta es NO, ¿cuál es su nivel de formación?**

|                               | Grado | Máster | Doctorado |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Lenguas y Literaturas         |       |        |           |
| Extranjeras                   |       |        |           |
| Humanidades                   |       |        |           |
| Derecho                       |       |        |           |
| Medicina                      |       |        |           |
| Economía                      |       |        |           |
| Ciencias                      |       |        |           |
| Matemáticas/física            |       |        |           |
| Ingeniería                    |       |        |           |
| Arquitectura                  |       |        |           |
| Otros (por favor especifique) |       |        |           |

**17. ¿En qué medida considera las siguientes asignaturas como importantes para su formación?**

|  | Opcional | No esencial | Útil | Importante | Fundamental |
|--|----------|-------------|------|------------|-------------|
| Técnicas de interpretación                         |          |             |      |            |             |
| Terminología técnica                               |          |             |      |            |             |
| Software de traducción/interpretación              |          |             |      |            |             |
| Lingüística, Gramática                             |          |             |      |            |             |
| Lingüística de corpus                              |          |             |      |            |             |
| Sociología, Etnolingüística                        |          |             |      |            |             |
| Deontología, papel del intérprete, mercado laboral |          |             |      |            |             |
| Teoría de la traducción/interpretación             |          |             |      |            |             |
| Historia, Literatura, Geografía, Instituciones     |          |             |      |            |             |
| Políticas, Derecho                                 |          |             |      |            |             |

**18. En su opinión, ¿qué nivel de educación sería adecuado para trabajar como intérprete en los SSPP?**

Diploma escolar  
 Curso breve (min. 60 horas)  
 Grado  
 Posgrado  
 Doctorado  
 Otros (por favor especifique)

**19. La sociedad cree que un máster es una condición necesaria para trabajar como intérprete en los SSPP.**

Totalmente de acuerdo

De acuerdo  
Indiferente  
En desacuerdo  
Totalmente en desacuerdo

**20. La investigación en Interpretación es útil para la profesión.**

Muy de acuerdo  
De acuerdo  
Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo  
En desacuerdo  
Muy en desacuerdo

**21. ¿Cree que la retribución del intérprete es adecuada?**

Por supuesto que sí  
Sí  
Consideradamente  
No  
Por supuesto que no

**4. Visibilidad en los medios de comunicación, estatus y prestigio**

**22. En su país de residencia, ¿la interpretación en los SSPP recibe atención mediática?**

Por supuesto que sí  
Sí  
Consideradamente  
No  
Por supuesto que no

**23. En su opinión, ¿cómo se representa la interpretación en los SSPP en los medios de comunicación?**

Muy positivamente  
Positivamente  
Ní positive ní negativamente  
Negativamente  
Muy negativamente  
Es ignorada por los medios de comunicación

**24. En SU opinión, ¿cuál de estos grupos de profesionales goza del mismo status que el intérprete de los SSPP?**

Director ejecutivo, manager, diputado  
Abogado, médico, catedrático  
Profesor de escuela secundaria, arquitecto, periodista  
Profesor de escuela primaria, enfermero, trabajador social

25. Según la SOCIEDAD, ¿cuál de estos grupos de profesionales goza del mismo status que el intérprete de los SSPP?

Director ejecutivo, manager, diputado  
Abogado, médico, catedrático  
Profesor de escuela secundaria, arquitecto, periodista  
Profesor de escuela primaria, enfermero, trabajador social

26. En uno de sus estudios, Prunč afirma que la interpretación en los SP no es un trabajo prestigioso, no tanto porque no está bien remunerado sino porque estos interpretes trabajan con los inmigrantes, “los marginados de la sociedad” (2012: 4). ¿Está de acuerdo con esta afirmación?

Muy de acuerdo  
De acuerdo  
Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo  
En desacuerdo  
Muy en desacuerdo

27. ¿Cree que la labor del intérprete es importante para la sociedad?

Por supuesto que sí  
Sí  
Consideradamente  
No  
Por supuesto que no

28. ¿Cree que la sociedad valora el trabajo del intérprete?

Por supuesto que sí  
Sí  
Consideradamente  
No  
Por supuesto que no

29. Si su hijo/a quisiera ser intérprete, ¿lo/a animaría?

Por supuesto que sí  
Sí  
Consideradamente  
No  
Por supuesto que no

30. Considerada su experiencia, ¿cuál es el papel principal del intérprete?

Facilitador de la comunicación  
Mediador lingüístico y cultural  
Conducto invisible  
Ayudante

Actor  
Otro (por favor especifique)

31. Por favor tenga en cuenta todas las ocasiones en las que ha trabajado como intérprete. ¿Con qué frecuencia desarrolla también las siguientes tareas?

|   | Siempre | A menudo | A veces | Raramente | Nunca |
|---|---------|----------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Traducir documentos escritos  |         |          |         |           |       |
| Traducción a la vista   |         |          |         |           |       |
| Explicar fórmulas de cortesía y pautas culturales                           |         |          |         |           |       |
| Acompañar a los extranjeros a oficinas públicas                             |         |          |         |           |       |
| Proporcionar material informativo   |         |          |         |           |       |
| Desarrollar tareas administrativas  |         |          |         |           |       |
| Explicar procesos burocráticos (p.e. cómo obtener un permiso de residencia) |         |          |         |           |       |
| Redactar folletos multilingües  |         |          |         |           |       |
| Otros (por favor especifique)   |         |          |         |           |       |

32. ¿Con qué frecuencia se ha encontrado en las siguientes situaciones?

|   | Siempre | A menudo | A veces | Raramente | Nunca |
|---|---------|----------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Las personas con las que trabajo tienen expectativas contrastadas sobre mi trabajo  |         |          |         |           |       |
| Asumo una actitud neutral en mi trabajo   |         |          |         |           |       |
| He sufrido impacto emocional en mi trabajo  |         |          |         |           |       |
| La empatía con uno de los hablantes condiciona mi prestación                        |         |          |         |           |       |
| Los proveedores de servicios me consideran como una gran ayuda y valoran mi trabajo |         |          |         |           |       |
| Los extranjeros me consideran como una gran ayuda y valoran mi trabajo              |         |          |         |           |       |
| ¿Algún comentario?  |         |          |         |           |       |

33. ¿Cree usted que el estatus profesional de los intérpretes de los SSPP mejorará en el futuro?

Sí  
No  
No lo sé  
¿Algún comentario?

34. En su opinión, ¿cuál es la probabilidad de que estos cambios se produzcan?

|                                       | Muy probable | Probable | Ni probable ni improbable | Improbable | Muy improbable |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------|---------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Ya no se necesitará la interpretación |              |          |                           |            |                |

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La importancia de la interpretación va a ser reconocida  
 Se necesitarán más intérpretes de conferencia  
 Se necesitarán más intérpretes de SP  
 Los intérpretes van a tener más visibilidad gracias a las redes sociales  
 ¿Algún comentario?

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**35. En su opinión, ¿en qué manera las siguientes medidas podrían mejorar el estatus de los intérpretes de los SSPP?**

|  | Muy ineficaz | Ineficaz | Ni eficaz ni ineficaz | Eficaz | Muy eficaz |
|--|--------------|----------|-----------------------|--------|------------|
| Los gobiernos deberían reglamentar la profesión  |              |          |                       |        |            |
| Las asociaciones profesionales deberían promover la profesión más activamente                      |              |          |                       |        |            |
| Un título académico debería ser el requisito mínimo para ejercer la profesión                      |              |          |                       |        |            |
| Para ejercer la profesión debería ser preciso aprobar un examen a nivel nacional                   |              |          |                       |        |            |
| Los medios de comunicación y las redes sociales deberían promover una mejor imagen de la profesión |              |          |                       |        |            |

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**36. La Directiva de la Unión Europea 64/2010/UE relativa al derecho a interpretación y traducción en los procesos penales propone la creación de un registro de intérpretes que deben ser “debidamente cualificados”. Art. 5 (2).**

¿Cree que la implementación de esta directiva o de medidas similares puede contribuir a mejorar el estatus de los intérpretes de los SSPP?

Definitivamente sí  
 Sí  
 Consideradamente  
 No  
 Definitivamente no

**37. Algún otro comentario acerca de la profesión o de su experiencia personal sería muy apreciado. ¡Muchas gracias!**



# Appendix II

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## The Status of Conference Interpreters. Open comments

**Question 11: Have you ever worked in conference settings? If NOT, what are the main reasons for your choice? (Please tick 2 options)**

1. I am also a Certified Court Interpreter but never been called to Court. The court system in Mexico is currently Inquisitorial and will change by 2016 to and adversarial system with oral trials. The need for interpreters will increase, hopefully.
2. The answer is nuanced. I have never sought the opportunity because court interpreting is not only very badly paid but imposes certain obligations of availability.
3. I'm not sworn in (for court interpretation); in addition, court interpretation needs special training
4. Lang. comb.
5. Late Payment issues
6. I have just recently passed the Public Translator and Commercial Interpreter National Exam, therefore I believe I will soon work in public services, but haven't had the chance yet.
7. Had to take an exam and now I wait for the ministry of justice to put me on their records
8. I was working in an international organisation
9. Great deal of restrictions on your freedom and privacy
10. Did some police station work at the beginning of my career; after that had little time (taught interpreting for many years) and no real opportunity
11. I have worked in the public sector but NOT as interpreter
12. One need to sign up for interpreting at police stations and courts in Denmark. However, the list has been closed due to far too many are already on the list.
13. Although I am a certified translator, I face competition by others on the list who are not graduated translators, but who nevertheless were admitted to the list before I started.
14. I belong to rosters of contracted interpreters for Federal Court and State Department
15. In my country that kind of services are not requested a lot.
16. I've had enough work with conferences, my first choice.
17. No time!
18. there is not demand in my country for these services
19. I had another full-time job before becoming a free-lance interpreter.
20. No such market in Brazil
21. I no longer work in the courts due to low pay
22. Entrepreneur, translation and interpreter
23. Not a frequent option in Brazil
24. Wide-range freelance interpreting is enough to cover all.
25. It requires a different type of training
26. Being a sworn translator, I am a freelancer.
27. I am specialized in biological sciences
28. The demand for these services is low in my neck of the woods.
29. I have worked in courts and hospitals
30. This has been my first job after university. I do work the sectors you mention, as a volunteer
31. I had several professions and worked for courts in private trials or in congresses organised by the High Israeli court of Justice
32. I have worked in public services as a free-lance interpreter

33. I have, at the International Criminal Court (simultaneous int.)
34. You need a good B language and I don't have one.
35. I don't do a retour (1 A-, no B-, 6 C-languages)
36. My training was for conference interpretation
37. I started out as a conference interpreter and stayed in that field. A couple of times I looked for PSI work but wasn't offered anything (and then didn't have time to pursue it anyway!)
38. Particularly for the Ministry of Defence in the UK (if you consider that a public service sector) but have never done court or police interpreting.
39. I am a conference interpreter. I have worked in public service interpreting for private clients or international organisations.
40. Paraguay does not have this.
41. I'm not sure this market exists in my country
42. There was no demand
43. Sufficiently busy
44. When I was a freelance, I was living in a country (Argentina) where, to my knowledge, these services do not exist as such, i.e., provided by the government. I did have the chance of working in a hospital setting for a private client and here in Canada, once, pro bono, for humanitarian reasons, where I happened to be at a hospital and someone needed an interpreter urgently and there was none.
45. I've worked exclusively for the UN since graduating from interpretation school.
46. Very bad conditions (no documents for preparation, bad acoustics in courts)
47. It does not comply with AIIC work conditions
48. This service is practically inexistent in my country
49. Bad pay my only reason
50. Not fully professional - lots of amateurs
51. I am staff interpreter, worked for a court during my free-lance years
52. When I was a freelance 1991-1994 I was never offered such assignments, as it is different circuit of contacts
53. No car owned, hence not very mobile at night
54. I have a full time contract elsewhere, so no spare time to do so
55. Only worked in international courts
56. Not available
57. Fear of not being able to remain neutral
58. I genuinely dislike the fact that clients often assume that I will have low professional standards, you have to prove yourself every time you work in the PSI, due to the fact that there are many so called interpreters who do a sub-standard job, and that affects everyone's expectations of interpreters.
59. Almost no opportunities in this field in Brazil
60. That's why I do it only rarely
61. There is not a lot of public service interpreting in Brazil
62. I work, where I am called and able to
63. There's not really a demand for that in Brazil.
64. Do not have the requisite bilingual skills
65. I have only worked as a staff interpreter.
66. I am not a bi-active interpreter; I work from 4 C languages into my mother tongue, A language
67. I only work for law firms in court not as part of public services
68. I often turn offers down due to the low payment
69. There are no public services employing interpreters on a permanent basis in Israel.
70. I trained as a conference interpreter and have always worked as such. I have been too busy as a conference interpreter to do community or Public service interpreting, which usually pays less.
71. My diploma was not recognized in Denmark
72. I have no B language.



**Question 31. Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?**

- 73. Both Enabler and Mediator depending on the knowledge/education degree shared by speaker and listeners.
- 74. Professional communicator (translatologist, cf. Holz-Mänttari)
- 75. Both enabler of communication and language/cult. mediator
- 76. A + B Enabler and mediator multiple answer necessary
- 77. Faithful message transmissions actor
- 78. The first 3 points
- 79. To enable communication, it is fundamental to fully understand the culture of the passive language.
- 80. Political tool
- 81. Window dressing
- 82. Depends WHERE and WHAT you are interpreting
- 83. All of the above
- 84. Passing the message on. And that MAY require a bit of mediation, a bit of diplomacy. It DOES require a thorough understanding of the parties seeking to communicate, as persons, as parts of their society.
- 85. All of the above.

**Question 32. Do you think that the interpreting profession will change in the next few years?**

- 86. I hope so!
- 87. It depends greatly on the A-language, please take into account that my A-language is Dutch.
- 88. Technology will change the setting and more skills will be needed to cope with such linguistically and technologically complex situations. English is becoming a Lingua Franca with an endless number of variations. Interpreters will have to cope with "Englishes". More than ever intermediaries are used instead of Consultant Interpreters.
- 89. It'll go further downhill
- 90. New technologies, remote, telephone interpreting etc.
- 91. More demanding on the number of languages to be mastered, more challenging in terms of facts to be absorbed
- 92. Court interpreting should be more recognised thanks to recent European directives.
- 93. Distance interpreting will probably spread in its different forms. Unfortunately there are companies who are trying to introduce pay-by-the-minute telephone interpreting or over-the-internet interpreting even into the conference interpreting context, and what is even more unfortunate, there obviously are interpreters who accept such jobs. Distance interpreting may be acceptable if normal working conditions are strictly observed and if information security is guaranteed etc. However, this means that it will not be any cheaper than normal interpreting on the spot, which is of course what customers would like to happen.
- 94. More remote interpreting, video-conferencing, the role public service interpreting will become increasingly important (immigration). General knowledge of languages will increase which why interpreting will be needed only in very specialized fields (trade unions, works councils, major intl conferences). European Institutions will be a significant exception with a more sustained demand (democracy, national identity).
- 95. Work more for less, complex and precarious market, volatility, less rights, new technologies to learn and use, gap between conference interpreters (staff) and "others", shift in language combinations perhaps
- 96. I think the working conditions are bound to evolve because of new technologies
- 97. Technology is advancing really fast as much as the changes in our practice. (portable sound equipment, automatic interpreting software, teleconference resources...)
- 98. Will be affected by technology

99. I fear there will be ever more video conferences, so less and less direct contact with our customers - which makes the job much less motivating...
100. More people today learn multiple languages. Also, English is the lingua franca in technical fields. Therefore, interpretation is required less often.
101. It will disappear in less than two decades
102. Within ten years (plus-minus five), there will be conference interpreting software and voice synthesiser hardware which will cost the livelihoods of many interpreters.
103. In the EU English becomes ever more important, this has already changed our profession and will change it further still.
104. Even less recognition
105. Remote interpretation and new technologies will change the profession radically. Machine interpretation will replace interpreters in simple communication situations.
106. As long as the International Organisations need interpretation there will be a place for real professional conference interpretation. But the EU-Institutions are also trying to press the conditions by overfeeding the market.
107. Cuanto más trabajamos con personal de SSPP, más conocen y valoran nuestra función y habilidades.
108. Technology will definitely change, probably for the worse of the profession.
109. More technology, less travelling.
110. The importance of the profession (in Europe) is most likely to diminish because of dwindling demand.
111. Unfortunately, more IT will be introduced to the interpretation process, and not always to the benefit of the parties involved.
112. However it will not change because interpreters want it to change, it will change due to social pressure on savings, new technology, HR efficiency.
113. By the use of the Internet and telecommunication technologies.
114. It has already become more professional and less focused on star personalities in the profession. The IT tools such as remote interpreting is NOT changing the profession but only changing the ways how to perform. The focus on enabling communication between parties will remain the same.
115. Internet, English as lingua franca
116. I'm not sure it has a real future
117. But the interpreter will have to be increasingly knowledgeable about doing webcasts and webinars in the future, i.e., remote or non-present interpreting...
118. a) Many international organisations have now English as their only working language as opposed to several working languages (requiring interpretation at meetings); 2) financial constraints will limit PSI
119. Machine translation and interpretation will improve as will IT mediated conferences and interpreting
120. Computer Translation/interpretation tools are increasingly gaining terrain. Even though we, professionals, do know that there is a huge gap between a professional interpreter and a machine, general population and clients not necessarily know that.
121. Based on new technologies
122. Technologies will develop fast towards machine interpretation but will not be able to replace professional interpretation.
123. I always say that the profession is disappearing because of the widespread use of English
124. Change, yes; neither better nor worse...
125. In Brazil, large agencies are taking over the market from free-lance interpreters.
126. Many executives are learning languages now, especially English, and new technologies are being developed to help the interaction in different languages, not to the extent of replacing the interpreters but my guess is all this will change the scenario somehow.
127. English will be the international language.
128. I certainly hope it will get recognized by the society as an important job. However, the fact whether this is going to happen depends on us, interpreters, to a great extent - we need to make sure we deliver high-quality service and do not underestimate our work, our status or rates.

129. It has been changing with greater emphasis and growth for PSI
130. Conditions seem to be deteriorating over the years as graduates enter the market prepared to earn much less
131. Well, according to how technology is flowing, you never know....
132. The status will deteriorate and the need for interpreters will decrease
133. I would like to point out that I believe that PSI is just as important as conference interpreting-- provided the proper training is provided for both.
134. Unfortunately rates will go down
135. The profile of professional interpreters and awareness of the limitations of the job vs. do-it-all-for-a-tuppence operators should be raised
136. Everybody imagines that his or her English will do, no need for interpretation.
137. The IT technology will do the job
138. Technology will completely change the profession in the next 5 to 10 years.
139. It is already changing for the worse. in the UK where interpreters have no status because the English think they do not need them as it is others who do not speak English and their problem any foreigner gets hired as an interpreter.
140. Although not necessarily soon, it may eventually dwindle, due to IT.
141. Will adapt to new Technologies and face growing competition
142. It will probably continue to lose its appreciation and prestige. I am glad I started as a CI in the 90's but I wouldn't want my children to become CIs in the present situation.
143. Technology is already changing the rules of the game to a certain extent. It may play a bigger role in the future? How soon? That remains to be seen. Working conditions will continue to deteriorate. And I don't mean just fees.
144. With a further increase in the number of agencies controlling the market because of interpreters' lack of interest in building their own clients' base, the profession will lose even more of its prestige and become more of a "She can speak the language" skill only.
145. I think that eventually we will be replaced by automated interpreting systems. In 15-20 years.
146. Machine interpreting will come reliable and replace some segments of live interpreting
147. Our status is being eroded as a result of price dumping. In many countries, the growing use of English means there's less and less work around.
148. I think that fewer interpreters will service mainly very high level face to face meetings. Major institutions will find ways to circumvent interpreting.
149. More remote interpreting, poorer sound quality, poorer working conditions.
150. Decreasing rates, decline in demand for conference interpreting
151. More use of new technologies.
152. Globish, remote
153. The changes will result from developments in ICTs.
154. Too many new interpreters entering the market each year
155. More remote interpreting
156. We have seen a constant erosion of our profession through the proliferation of bogus interpreters' agencies.
157. There is now less importance given to respecting rates (that can no longer be set) and working conditions. We have lost some of our bargaining power with clients
158. Much of our work is being taken over by people with lower levels of training (e.g. no consecutive skills) and who ask for much lower fees and working conditions (working alone in the booth, etc.).
159. Most people think, that they speak English and many think, that they don't need interpreters any more. I heard somebody say: "Mr. President, I have the interpreters not necessary"...
160. More specialized interpreting with lesser pay, fewer niche markets with maintained remuneration. More remote interpreting
161. Further dominance of English, which is why I would not encourage my children to go into the profession.

162. More and more conferences in English without interpreters. The demand will decrease even more.
163. Less work, more interpreters, but above all more unfair practices (especially for some agencies)
164. The volume of work seems to be shrinking. Highly medical conferences and easier middle management conferences are disappearing. jobs at BoD level, prestigious client meetings and conferences for the general public will continue to feature interpreting.
165. Theory is useful, and every professional should know what the basic cognitive, procedural and other concepts of their trade are. But talented students can be turned into excellent interpreters without any theory.
166. At some conferences, "standard" fees do not cover the effort (e.g. medical and highly technical meetings). But then, this is set off by easier gigs with the same pay.
167. The status will continue to decline as more people learn English
168. I imagine that remote interpreting will be ever more present
169. I already think that standards have dropped. Due to the recession, many unqualified interpreters are undercutting and getting the contracts.
170. For the worse
171. N° 23 and 24: I had to choose my answer among those offered - yet I would compare interpreting in status and for comparison sake with the work of an artist, e.g. an actor
172. English is Esperanto of Today. Public procurement rules are favouring big anonymous companies and eliminating the professionals. Everything goes to the lowest bid and those who can afford to pay guarantees
173. I will probably disappear considering all communication will be in English
174. There is more and more competition from untrained / badly trained "interpreters" in the market. Price dumping as a means of securing jobs is currently increasing. Also, tele interpreting is being requested more and more frequently. A LOT, linguistic needs have changed dramatically... more and more clients and their long line of middle men
175. Technology and social media will become a comprehensive part of it
176. Technology will change the profession, though I'm not sure how. I believe people will still be needed but will have to adapt.
177. I think we are losing our status as time goes by. Interpreters were more respected in the past. The need for interpretation has changed as more and more people are able to communicate in English, so we have to accept this new reality and try to adapt to it.
178. Distance interpretation will become more commonplace. Smaller languages will disappear from the interpretation scene.
179. Modern technological developments are bound to have an effect
180. There will be more requests for remote interpreting (tele- or videoconferencing) as traveling becomes increasingly unaffordable. The market for interpretation itself may change inasmuch as it will focus on the top and the bottom of the scale (senior policymakers and smaller SMEs, as opposed to mid-level civil servants and corporate executives, who will be increasingly expected to be multilingual). Quite independently from this, the status of interpreters may decline further as the need for interpreting becomes more focused on niche markets.
181. Between English becoming the lingua franca (due to globalization) and the universal push to lower costs at all levels, mediocre interpretation is hastening the profession's decline. There will be far less demand for interpreters and more current users will turn to speaking pigeon English rather than pay for what they consider a 'luxury'. The many unqualified or poor interpreters are a nail in the coffin of the profession.
182. It has already changed a great deal in the last 30 years.....English has become the predominant language and is spoken by EVERYBODY often in a ghastly way.....
183. for the worse
184. More instances of remote interpreting. Continued increase in speed required to interpret.
185. There may be more demand for "newer" international business languages such as Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, etc.

186. Standing and pay going further downhill.
187. Casualization of the profession, lower pay, fewer conferences
188. Interpreters will have to prepare for the advent of new technologies, first of all remote interpreting. They will have to learn to accept that they are service providers rather than the stars of the event.
189. It's too hard to predict the future for anything in this part of the world, but previous (mainstream) predictions for the profession have all failed to materialise.
190. It will become extinct
191. I fear it may disappear, or become less interesting. that is why even if answered yes I don't know if I would advise my son to become an interpreter
192. It will disappear completely.
193. More people speak English, communicate in (bad) English
194. The inexorable spread of global bad English, combined by short-term spending cuts will affect the profession
195. I do think that the new generation of delegates will speak English better and that more meetings will be 100% in English/ Globish, but I don't think it would be a good thing because the general command of English will not allow them to subtly express complex ideas.
196. English has conquered the world, that changes the communication needs and practices.
197. Conference interpretation is often not NEEDED, but required for political reasons. Remote interpreting or other technical devices will certainly play a bigger role soon
198. It is likely to further incorporate technological developments
199. probably for the worse, with more teleconferences and bad sounds. Interpreters are expected to do a lot more than interpretation.
200. English has become the lingua franca allegedly spoken by very many people and this caused the impoverishment of knowledge, skills and ability to express oneself fully.
201. Fewer meetings will use interpreters.
202. To question 20: It depends completely on the remuneration. So a good answer is just not possible.
203. Need for more flexibility, but also firmness in knowing the boundaries of what is acceptable whilst still allowing interpreters to do a good job.
204. More and more people will be forced to speak English
205. I believe it will disappear gradually.
206. The conditions are worsening and because of the economic crisis the customers try to save money on interpreters
207. It will either die or change according to the needs of the market.
208. Technology will change the way we work - remote interpreting will become commonplace; Globish will take over some markets; some types of interpreting will be replaced by automatic interpreting (Google Translate-type software)
209. In as much as people learn English, it will become less necessary unless one has a very unusual language as part of the language combination (Russian, German, Portuguese in Latin America), etc.).
210. interpreters will be impacted by artificial intelligence technology and may be reduced playing a secondary more technical role (a technology operator)
211. MORE INTL CONFERENCES USE ENGLISH AS A LENGUA FRANCA
212. I believe the role of native speakers has been overestimated. An interpreter, non-native speaker, is also capable of delivering a state of the art performance. This already happens in practical terms. I all depends - above all - upon one's effort: study and experience.
213. New IT solutions
214. more "bidule" ; more "DIY"; less privileges
215. Depending on the job you are doing, it is a highly specialized profession that requires knowledge, skill and insight and many other such attributes. Therefore it will always be well paid by those who see the value and disrespected by those who do not. However, technology will replace soon a number of run of the mill interpreters who work automatically, as we already see with written translation.

216. We'll have to be more market-oriented to sell our services (I'm talking about the private market) as solution providers. To a large extent, interpreters' attitudes (especially the older generation) turn them into "problem providers" with lots of demands which clients can hardly understand.
217. More tele-interpreting, interpreting from screens when meeting is far away etc.
218. There will be more technology used, such as video conferencing
219. It has already changed a great deal over the past 50 years.
220. Become more intertwined with technology
221. Will not be worth doing any more... With rates going down at this rate, with interpreters becoming all the more corporate and paying peanuts to colleagues, it will not be worth to study and prepare so hard as we do... It will become less appalling to give foreign language lessons unfortunately, less well paid yes, but at our level of language knowledge, very easy to do and save lots of hustle... Shame, what a pity..
222. With all manner of technical developments, new social milieus, new languages requiring interpreting out or into them and the progress in theoretical thinking, it is inevitable
223. More and more people are Learning English to communicate directly with their counterparts. In many instances we will cease being relevant.
224. Everyone will speak Globish, and there will no longer be any need for conference interpreters
225. It is going to move away from real interpreting to something between oral and written translation
226. New technology like visio-interpreting
227. techniques will change and improve, the communicator will always be needed
228. For the worse
229. Interpreters won't be able to make a living unless they are employed in an institution
230. The appearance of PSI is already having a negative impact on pricing for conference in my market, as people working in PSI but with no conference training seek to move in, charging the same rates as in PSI. Our market is 100% private, and unregulated, so this is an unfortunate trend.
231. Interpretation is bound to change drastically due to new social and technical conditions
232. Bad English is spoken by a growing number of people.
233. No longer an elite.
234. Both translation & interpreting agencies and IT start ups have identified interpreting as a skill set that can be monetised to their advantage, provided that they can act as intermediary between interpreter and end-user.
235. Video conferencing will increase. Whether that is a valid alternative remains to be seen. My fear is that by eliminating personal contact, messages will become more confusing and interpreters will be seen increasingly as an expensive machine, not as human beings who could contribute to social communication. We'll end up BEING machines, like so many of my younger colleagues already are. Brilliant at keeping up with unstoppable floods of words, incapable of or indifferent to understanding the message and therefore incapable of or unwilling to establish whether the message has actually got through!
236. Remote interpreting and new technology will become increasingly widespread.
237. Distant web-based interpreting will make more way; the commoditisation of conference interpreting will progress; from and into-English conference work will become even more prevalent
238. It does not change, it evolves with the new technologies and new needs.
239. Will go web based
240. On a longer term it will disappear - at least for certain languages
241. It will largely disappear
242. It will no longer exist except UN, EU, etc. because they don't mind spending/throwing out money,
243. In the sense that, apart from the European institutions, he or she will be less useful (everyone already speaking English)
244. Probably
245. There will be a major shift on which languages are more important than others. English will continue to prevail



- 246. It will be less required.
- 247. you know what Niels Bohr said, "Prediction is very difficult, especially if it's about the future"...
- 248. Technology - tele-interpretation
- 249. Some languages have almost disappeared, f.i. German
- 250. It will disappear in several contexts
- 251. It will disappear

**Question 33: In your opinion, to what extent are the following changes likely to occur?**

- 252. Fees are in part related to the self-awareness of the interpreters as individuals and as category.
- 253. There is a clear decline in fees in Poland
- 254. At least in Finland, there are fewer interpreting jobs available and competition is tougher. The bulk of the work happens in a few months in the spring and in the autumn, when interpreters are so busy they hardly have time to sleep, while the rest of the time they are sitting idle or trying to find something else to do. Jobs are increasingly put out to tender, which forces everyone in the field to carry out extra work, often resulting in nothing at all. Fee development has been poor in recent years, especially with regard to purchasing power. It does not look as if a lot of customers thought of interpreting as the demanding, intensive work that it is, that should also be paid accordingly. Instead, they buy the service where it is cheapest.
- 255. Good questions.
- 256. PSI and Conference/Diplomatic Interpreting are completely different and the trends are different.
- 257. I suppose this valid for the next 15 - 20 years
- 258. The Associations will (should) play a critical role in educating the general public on the pros and cons of the services we provide.
- 259. The worst part and change is the remote interpretation I think and the believe that you can negotiate everything in BAD English.
- 260. Society will no longer be able to distinguish between brilliant interpreters, good ones, mediocre ones because the English language is being slaughtered.
- 261. This absolutely a language-group question; with just a handful of qualified interpreters in a language of limited diffusion, the situation is completely different from that of major European language interpreters.
- 262. My answers are related to the little visibility I think the profession has in society and to the little understanding there is about the profession. This can gradually degrade both the profession and fees at large, although not so much in conference interpreting, which is not impacted to the same extent as other kinds of interpreting.
- 263. I like the way the profession has evolved in 20 years, because before, people thought I wanted to "show off" while I REALLY did know things and terms. Now, even when some less pleasant colleagues (most of them are pleasant) put my terminology proposals to doubt, I may ask them to look up in the Google, not to "win", of course, but so that the truth about one or another term or expression will be made clear AND that the person will see that it is not because I told them a thing that they must believe it but also they see on Internet that I knew it. In this way, the profession has become more competence-friendly and less based on personal battles over terminology, at least. One may always discard you, because they do not like you, especially when they have this power, but no longer based on false assumptions!!!
- 264. Is it ethical to continue to train conference interpreters in a climate where they will have no work and will need 7 to 10 years to work in other lines of employment before (if and when) they become known and can rely solely on conference interpreting as their source of income?
- 265. The fact that there will be a need for PSI doesn't mean there will be the money to pay for such services
- 266. Interpreting ethics do not always fit in with social networking
- 267. Sorry to be so negative but your questions are framed in such a way as to be impossible to answer truthfully. I don't think it is "moderately likely" that fees will decrease but I don't have the option of

- "it's possible, but I don't know (nor really care)". Earlier questions likewise, so my answers become meaningless (and your results accordingly too)
268. There should be a "don't know" option here. I would have used it for a couple of items, so you can't take my responses as strictly valid.
269. If fees decrease any more interpreters will have to pay to perform their services!
270. I don't really feel qualified to answer number 33. I hope interpreting will always be needed and that its importance will be acknowledged!
271. do-it-all-alone-all-day-for-a-tuppence-interpreters!!! Never mind the quality...
272. We are in a situation of financial crisis. Most professions are suffering. So is ours, in our country at least
273. Depressing... In my experience, people who have graduated from certain courses do not have the necessary practical skills or general knowledge required.
274. The questions make no distinction between English-Mother tongue interpreters and any other language-mother tongue interpreters. The first case will disappear, not the other ones. Also, you make it compulsory to answer question No. 24 and it shouldn't be.
275. There will always be a grey/private sector market versus the official UN-EU/large bodies market.....AIIC will maintain some decency in the latter, but the first will remain unpredictable because of the culture of competition and free market ideology.....
276. It is difficult to answer some of your questions, as fees depend on your status (staff/Free-lance), whether you work for an international institution (EC, United Nations etc.) or f.ex. local administration, police etc. There are huge differences between countries as well.
277. The languages needed to be interpreted Will change
278. Private market rates have not gone up in over 10 years
279. If interpreters accept decreasing fees they will decrease
280. Less attention given to quality. Emphasis is on message only.
281. As the market is flooded with semi-trained people willing to work in any direction, and with agencies whose only criterion is price, and as technology improves, there will be more people casing fewer jobs which are less well paid, and more reliance on things like Google translate which will also be used for speech recognition and interpretation. More and more people want just the gist. Also AIIC's old-boy network approach of having "sponsors" harms the profession, as people get in through whom they know not necessarily how good they are. And many also continue to work well beyond their mental capacity to do so!
282. See previous comments. Fees are going down. In Germany some interpreters work for fees which are even below those paid 12 years ago before the introduction of the euro as single currency.
283. Visibility doesn't mean quality nor professional services, the point is that increasingly people without the proper skills and profile will take the lead in whatever "interpreting".
284. THERE ARE COUNTRIES AND LANGUAGE COMBINATIONS THAT WILL BE MORE AFFECTED THAN OTHERS
285. I think the need for interpretation will decrease as more and more people are fluent in English.
286. To a certain extent, the above answers are already applicable to Greece
287. The working languages are likely to change. Interpreting as such has always existed and will remain an important intermediary in communication situations.
288. Adequate remuneration: do you are aware of the fact how differently interpreters are paid around the world????!! I am not convinced of the answers usefulness.
289. Too many graduates, falling demand, less cake for everyone. Higher expectations regarding quality, very few people able to meet expectations. Rise of the grey market.
290. As above, English as a lingua franca has almost replaced communications in different languages. In very few instances people acknowledge the importance of interpreting and also when interpreting services are requested, interpreters are looked upon as some sort of weird creatures and only very rarely and by very few people as professionals. Interpreters are the main cause of the downturn trend



- in terms of their fees. Totally unable, also within the various societies and associations to protect themselves
291. It's a dead profession
292. Conference interpreting fees will probably not decrease in the Netherlands, but they will not increase much either. They have been the same for years and increasing them has been difficult. There is, however quite a difference between the day fee for AIIC interpreters and non-AIIC conference interpreters (like myself). We get less. Still not bad, compared to southern European countries, but not as high as AIIC, which I think is unfair, especially to people (like me) who have a Masters in conf. interpreting.
293. If the only interpreting mode in a growth market is public service interpreting (growth in immigration), then fees are likely to decrease
294. Skype translator is definitely going to change things in the medium term, and it will probably affect first and most the field of public service interpreting, where budget is scarce. It may work so badly that it could end up revealing how important good interpreting is in certain situations, or it may get really good, and we may be all put out of work, though I think it is unlikely and it will take still many years. In between many other scenarios possible.
295. Compared to other liberal professions, interpretation is not really highly paid and certainly not if you take into account that there are days when you do not work, that there are no benefits (paid holidays, etc.).
296. Answers above refer to a country such as Brazil
297. You always will have Rolls-Royce and small entry cars. There should NOT be a uniform fee for different kind of performance. I would be more for a range ...
298. 1) Interpreting has already declined in certain language combinations. 2) Fees have already decreased somehow: no compensation of cost-of-living increase + fierce competition among countries of residence, also thanks to use of recruiting via Internet and new interpreting technologies (tele-conferencing).
299. There is relatively little PSI in our market, but as noted, those performing such services are untrained and underpaid. That is spilling over into conference.
300. You said answers were optional. They are not. Please IGNORE my answers to the questions seeking to compare interpreters to other professions. I had to answer "primary school teachers" in order to be able to move on to the next questions. In reality, interpreters are basically equated to nosey parkers, creators of confusion, rip off merchants and prostitutes. Illiterate into the bargain. In answer to this question 33, I would say: we'll be competing with Google, more and more. The accuracy of our work is challenged during meetings by monolingual delegates who check one word against Google and then complain to the chairman about our "wrong" terminology. Etiquette prohibits us from answering and the delegate will fill out "incorrect terminology" on his customer's survey form at the end of the meeting. This has become a very shitty job. We, as interpreters, are in the wrong too: why don't we protest? why don't we shut our mikes when people challenge us? Anyone who is accused has the right to answer, so why are we putting up with this treatment??
301. I am afraid that interpreting will be increasingly confined to certain sectors and that wage and working conditions will inevitably worsen
302. I believe this is very much language dependent: while some language combinations may become less and less required, others will become more relevant.
303. Especially in Italy fees will decrease.
304. English is more prevalent and communication happens relies on electronic support rather than good public speaking skills. Taken together these point to declining demand for interpreting.
305. Interpreting will become more and more a profession that does not allow to earn one's living, i.e. there will be less professional interpreters stricto sensu (I mean full-time freelancers).
306. The excessive surplus of interpreters has led to the decline of fees and prestige

**Question 35. Any other comments about your experience or the interpreting profession are greatly appreciated. Thank you!**

307. The knowledge of English will continue to grow. Many potential users see interpreters as a necessary evil. It is human that we human beings do not want to be dependent on others. So most people would prefer to communicate directly in bad English rather than to pay for an interpreter. On top, most users are not aware of the enormous culture gaps that exist. Good luck with your work.
308. In Mexico most interpreters do not pursue a professional career. Interpreting is a well-paid job for individuals with low levels of schooling and entering the profession is easy. The market is chaotic due to a lack of a strong professional associations. Interpreting programs are offered by private schools, therefore their main interest is to earn money and not to train professionals. The current state of the profession in Mexico is grim.
309. Retired 10 Years ago for reason of age
310. Interpreters frequently have to set their egos said to serve the ego requirement of others, this is one of the reasons they are not good at promoting their status.
311. The profession as such might not be properly recognized, in part due to the market being flooded by people who call themselves interpreters because they can understand and sometimes speak a few languages, work (mostly badly) for ridiculous fees and give us all a bad name. On a brighter note, organizers understand the difference between a good and a bad interpreter (especially after a bad experience followed by a good one). Good luck with your thesis!
312. No
313. The profession itself should make greater efforts to improve the status of its members.
314. Gli studi universitari in interpretazione dovrebbero essere ripensati in funzione della realtà del mercato del lavoro attuale (la formazione sembra rispecchiare ancora l'epoca in cui la maggiore ambizione per un interprete era quella di essere un interprete delle istituzioni europee). Dovrebbe essere data maggiore attenzione a realtà diverse da quella dell'ambito di conferenza e alla realtà istituzionale per lasciare spazio anche alle realtà aziendali (quindi più importanza all'interpretazione attiva e a lingue non "classiche"). Da un mese e mezzo lavoro all'estero come interprete alle dipendenze di un'azienda italiana. La mia media di ore lavorative al giorno è di 12 ore. In un mese e mezzo non sono ancora riuscita a far capire che per un interprete un carico lavorativo del genere è estremamente logorante ma mi è difficile farlo capire per l'ignoranza e la scarsa sensibilità che constato nei confronti della mia professione.
315. Non-interpreters are usually completely awed when they hear that I am a conference interpreter who does SIMULTANEOUS interpreting ("oh that must be so difficult, I don't understand how anyone can do that!"). When they hear that I mainly work in the language pair Finnish <> English, their admiration disappears: "But why, everyone speaks English!" The same attitude is also often seen in consecutive situations, where clients either refuse to rely on an interpreter altogether (regardless of the level of their language skills) or constantly monitor the performance of the interpreters and eagerly correct any mistakes, or "mistakes". However, most interpreting work in the Finnish market is done in the language pair Finnish <> English, and colleagues with other language combinations find it difficult to get enough work, so they are increasingly trying to add English to their language combination. The overall economic situation makes things worse for everyone in the sector, and it is increasingly difficult to make a decent living by interpreting alone. An increasing number of colleagues (myself included) are considering other career options. This is why I am not sure if I would encourage my children to become interpreters.
316. The best thing about interpreting is that you get to have a glimpse of the inside of so many different fields and subject areas, which is really interesting.
317. Even though a given subject area would interest you tremendously, you cannot go any deeper into it, because when the job is done, you have to leave it, write an invoice and move quickly on to the next subject area. As I get older, I find this increasingly frustrating.

318. A totally fulfilling profession. Interesting, challenging, rewarding (both financially and also professionally at the best of times). Requires tenacity and talent plus suitable personal traits to guarantee personal success (which profession doesn't!). I have a journalistic background to supplement the linguistic which has helped of course. A small language environment (Finnish) limits competition which also has been beneficial; quality and excellence prevail rather than fee dumping. Public awareness of our profession was (temporarily) increased by the country's membership in the EU.
319. There is no "interpreting profession". PSI and conference interpreting are two different occupations. To be valid and generate meaningful data, the questions in this survey should specify whether they are asking about conference interpreting, diplomatic interpreting, business interpreting, court interpreting or PSI. The answers could be hugely different, depending.
320. As much as the translators, if the interpreters are not proud of their profession and they themselves don't understand and value it, there is no chance others will...
321. A good interpreter should make sure s/he uses language to match the educational and cultural level of the participants, and in cases when that is not up to par with the speakers' discourse, the interpreter should be able to give a rendering both accurate and 'simpler'. This is very important in meetings and seminars where people attend in order to acquire knowledge much needed for their jobs or welfare; and even more so, when what they will carry to their job will affect those they impact (e.g. vocational training, environmental workshops, EU projects, etc.)
322. I love my profession and I remain deeply convinced that a good interpreter improves understanding and communication, even if the customer has a reasonable knowledge of the source language, because it gives him or her time to focus on content instead of words, thus improving the quality of discussions. I feel this is my role - and I play it with considerable enthusiasm, even after all these years:-)
323. We are a dying breed as typists.. by my retirement age, I suppose we stop to exist with the amazing new advances in technology
324. Changes I have noticed in conference interpreting over the past 10-15 years:
- Much fewer long (three, four or more days) and terminology-intensive (scientific, technical, socio-political, legal, medical, educational) events. Organisers either omit interpreting, provide their own unprofessional-but-adequate quasi-interpreting, or use interpreters selectively for a small proportion of papers or sessions where there is no way around the problem;
  - Many more short (typically one day) events covering lightweight socio-political topics using PR clichés. These are usually intended as opportunities for networking, tourism or womanising under cover of noble-sounding titles. Interpreters are provided, though they often feel in the way and are under-employed (all too often, sound technicians tell us that not a single guest has taken an interpreting receiver -- this in halls with maybe 1000 or more delegates);
  - Significantly greater and ever growing possession of good-enough-English among event attendees worldwide, with the result that interpreters are hired ever more rarely and then only for special occasions like awards ceremonies or media appearances;
  - A gradual withdrawal of interpreting from the scope of attention of professional conference producers/organisers. This results in events being held without interpreters, even where their services are objectively needed. Often, the attitude of hosts and visitors is ""Well, never mind! We managed without them. They are an expensive luxury, what on top of the special equipment needed for them. On top of that, they are often prima donnas
325. On legislation to govern interpreting: Bulgaria is currently drafting a statute on court interpreting. The process is fraught, controversial and unlikely to result in anything worthwhile. It will only boost bureaucracy. Interpreting is an area that obstinately refuses to fit into legislative or other bounds and definitions.

326. On interpreter training: I know superb interpreters without any qualifications in language, let alone interpreting. I also know superb linguists who, despite training as interpreters (often long and rigorous) are thoroughly unable to interpret. Academia can teach one languages and (possibly) shorthand writing -- and little else. It covers a mere tenth of what an interpreter needs. I write this (and what follows) with some regret, because it makes me appear an enemy of academic and intellectual values, which I am not.
327. Interpreting is a very complex mixture of knowing languages, being an actor (in the purest Thespian sense) with an exhibitionistic streak, being a gambler and risk-taker, being a prestidigitator, and having the ability to enter fairly deep trance-like states at a moment's notice and to retain them for extended periods. They have to possess great personal discipline and the ability to banish all hint of fatigue, "bad biorhythms," or "bad astrological phases". This on top of lightning reaction speed, diplomatic skills, savoir-faire, a measure of dress sense, and good personal hygiene. The ability to criticise oneself constructively and learn from experience also matter much because interpreting begins anew with each new assignment! Most of the above are simply not subjects that can ever be academically respectable and fit for teaching in higher education. They also cannot be taught in short courses. In fact, most people cannot acquire all of them - or are not motivated to acquire all of them -- in a lifetime.
328. Interpreters have to do written work, too (translating, editing, writing, speaking and teaching) because otherwise they lose (or never gain) the essential ability to edit -- to remove parasitic words (and even phrases) while delivering fidelity and completeness.
329. I love my profession, for me it' s a hobby!!
330. It's a great job but the EU is becoming ever more professionalised - experts know each other from different countries. PSI will continue to be at least as important.
331. We are no more than a necessary evil
332. Interpretation has little to do with academic studies. Languages can be learned in many ways and the best way is usually "living it". Yes, one need to learn the technique and and the ethics of interpretation but it is and will always be a handicraft profession. The most talented interpreters do not necessarily have an academic degree of Interpretation but have learned the profession in a tailor-made course for example. Others may be useless interpreters for ever although they have an academic degree. The interpreter should be tested to see the performance. For me personally it was great to do the Master in Conference Interpreting and I happened to have academic studies that has to do with languages and interpretation before that but I have met excellent interpreters that have very different backgrounds and as I said the best performing interpreter is not always the one with the academic studies. The many interpreter schools are also changing the labor market a great deal. As there are a lot of enthusiastic "so called" interpreters that have a less demanding idea of how the profession should be exercised the profession's reputation, remuneration and general working conditions are getting worse. Another problem is that if the client do not get a clear added value from interpretation they will not ask for it again. To be a professional interpreter also implies keeping up high standards when it comes to working conditions.
333. Lavoro con molto piacere sia como inerperte sia como traduttrice
334. Good luck with your PhD!!!
335. There is need for a strong association to promote minimum professional fees rather than letting agencies or outsourcing entities dictate fees and conditions
336. Good luck!
337. A useful, very fulfilling, but little understood profession in our Peruvian market. The public has strange -and quite erroneous- ideas about interpreters: wizards, secretaries, machines, among them. I think professional associations should promote the profession through the media -including social networks- and also by attracting the best interpreters and helping talented younger interpreters get better training. I think this would stop any possible degradation of the profession.
338. Interpreting is really the profession where the academic qualifications are less important than some personal studies and experiences.

339. If there is no more need/demand for the job, it is bound to disappear like many other jobs in the past. Regulatory or support measures will only delay the demise of the profession.
340. The fact of the matter is that with the advent of Google our job became easier and easier, so, THANK YOU, GOOGLE!!!
341. Our greatest threat as professional conference interpreters are the wannabes who don't have a clue as to how to perform and they accept a job nonetheless. Also the many interpreting schools that have mushroomed over the last few years, of which some simply give the diploma away to those who have paid a hefty fee even though they are not qualified to work and do the job properly, efficiently and elegantly. These are the main threats to our profession.
342. Quite a number of questions/answers would have required a comment/explanation of opinion, but there was no possibility to comment
343. At international seminars level, interpreting is well recognized and valued. Now, other kind of clients, such as executives, or people attending to small meetings in companies are increasingly noticing they require this kind of services.
344. I still love it after more than 30 years :-)
345. Good luck Paola!
346. Some questions are too subjective and at the same time vague, e.g. my opinion of the interpreters' status - but is it what I think it is, it should be or how it is perceived? And again, what I think society thinks of interpreters is perhaps even über-subjective.
347. the last 2 answers should read irrelevant but that option wasn't given.
348. I'm sorry, I hate these kinds of "closed" surveys that presuppose things (perceptions, values) I do not share. I have sworn to myself that I will just ignore them in future, but I find it hard to do so and thus discourage students (having taught for so long !).
349. I think interpreting is prostitution of the mind; it pays relatively well at the elite end of the market and poorly at the bottom end (just like sex work). The clients who really need help can't afford our services (except when we volunteer), and those who can afford it are usually those least deserving of our assistance. Working as an interpreter has one major benefit to the interpreter : an inside seat on how the worlds of commerce and politics really work.
350. In your requirements for training you left out science and technology all together. In my experience basic biology, chemistry, physics (all applied, not theoretical) have proved essential. Also terminology relating to how meetings are run.
351. I really, really hate surveys that say "just 5 minutes of your time" I haven't timed this, but it has been substantially longer...
352. It's been great fun and quite exciting so far!
353. Re national government regulation & promotion by prof associations: In theory both are good ideas, but how to keep the politics out of them. Similarly, some professional associations have lax membership requirements and very different ideas about conference interpreting qualifications.
354. I think the situation is very different from country to country.
355. Our professionalism (quality of work, general knowledge and individual conduct) should be our trade mark. This is the key to higher prestige of our profession.
356. In Spain, 22 universities are now offering interpreting and translation studies. Too many professionals for the needs of the country.
357. Although the profession has been in transition, change has been and will be gradual
358. Voice and ear training are essential but very overlook in schools syllabus
359. There is less interpreting work due to Government cutbacks and companies spending less on conferences
360. When I began interpreting, 50 years ago, there were no language schools for interpreters and translators, other than Geneva and Vienna. I trained in Israel under a teacher from the Vienna school. In my experience, taking on students, translation and interpreting degrees are utterly useless, unless someone has an inherent gift for languages they might as well forget it.

361. I founded the local Association in Ecuador and know how hard we have worked in the sense of all your questions. Not even universities acknowledge the work as they should!
362. Questionnaire is weird
363. Interpreters are increasingly perceived as a necessary evil. People would be happy to do without them, mainly because they find them too expensive and also because resorting to English seems to them a better solution.
364. good interview :)
365. The quality of professional interpreters and the perceived status of the profession also depend upon the work language. E.g. it is easier to find extremely good professional conference interpreters in English, French or German, while with languages that are seldom required on the Italian market, clients might engage a non-professional interpreter with poor results.
366. Interpreting used to be more appreciated earlier, now people have mobile phones with dictionaries and google translator and they think that interpreters are not needed anymore. I hear many times that we cost too much although the fees have been the same last 10 years!
367. Testing in real-life situations is much more effective for gauging a person's interpreting ability than ascertaining if he/she has a degree.
368. The value of promoting the interests of interpreters through professional organisations should be recognised by the members of our profession. There are too many 'mavericks' out there who dump prizes and do harm to our general image.
369. Many interpreters are female and in a macho culture like the UK and Spain (my languages) we are always treated like second class citizens. few people see the interpreter as a need even when they see us helping them communicate successfully with their interlocutors.
370. Interpreting requires talent. Interpreters do not need training in any technical aspect of language (phonetics etc.). It would be as asking musicians to study the physics of sound. Interpreters need more training in public performance (acting, voice coaching, breathing) and specific subjects, such as law, economy, finance, international relations, geopolitics, etc.
371. General culture is "probably" more important than language knowledge.
372. As an English /Spanish interpreter it is true that increasingly more people speak English around the world but the richness of communication has suffered from oversimplification of expression. I still believe the role of responsible interpreters is essential to communicate more complex and innovative thinking
373. Only good interpreters should be in the profession, that is key to good practice and recognition. today there are far too many degrees which are good for nothing the market needs good professionals only . Best luck with your research
374. I was once jokingly introduced as the "interruptor" rather than the "interpreter", at a Liaison job. Also (my name is Yves), great surprise was expressed on my arrival on another occasion: "But he's a MAN!" (They'd heard: Eve). Some attention to gender attitudes might be an interesting avenue to follow.
375. In my opinion, interpreting brings neither status nor material wealth but the knowledge acquired by being exposed to the widest possible range of subject matters is the most valuable form of wealth any curious, bright person can aspire to.
376. Corpus linguistics, see one of your CV questions above, means nothing in English.
377. At the moment interpreters are portrayed by the media as an expensive luxus...the only way to respond to that is by doing a good job
378. The important thing for an interpreter is to do a good job, with or without a master degree. I don't think having a degree must always be compulsory for interpreters.
379. The grey market is taking a large part of the jobs and does not require academic qualification and sometimes no proof of qualification at all. The official market requires good qualifications (but do not check the diplomas etc.) but is ready to take someone without experience if the price is lower... Professional interpreters are sometimes obliged to work according to the rules of the 'real' market even if they are members of an international organisation, if they want to work. In Israel, many



- interpreters of the past were not trained as interpreters but were very good after some experience. Today, more and more interpreters and chief interpreters were students of the only Department of Translation and Interpretation; their training in technics of interpretation and specialised vocabulary is essential, in my opinion, even if they are still new interpreters with a special gift, coming from another field. There is no enough work for interpreters or it is underpaid and conditions are 'unhealthy' (working alone during a day, without real documentation, client unaware of the requirements of the profession etc.)
380. Government involvement has been prejudicial to our profession, as illustrated by the FTC rulings in the United States.
381. It has changed a lot over the last 10 years, and not for the best. Good luck!
382. Interpreter schools should emphasize the need for young candidates to learn one of the emerging languages, especially Chinese.
383. Question 34 is difficult to answer. We should not depend on what the mass media do or not do. The quality of our work is our best publicity.
384. My professional organisation does a lot of work to promote the status of interpreters. Generally the image of the profession is quite good. Students should concentrate on training their interpretation skills and improve their general technical, political, cultural education, but all the scientific research that has become very fashionable lately takes away training time in the booth and hardly make them better interpreters.
385. Just as Internet makes people believe they can have everything for free, it is assumed that with every pupil learning 2 foreign languages and with google translate the profession will disappear like the dinosaurs. What will happen will be as in photography: digital technology makes photographers of us all, till the dust settles and people realize any professional work is done on film to this day, from Hollywood movies to the front pages of digital photography magazines shot on medium format...film. In other words, it is likely our profession will be squeezed into even more of a niche market, those lucky to be in will still make a comfortable living, the others will likely struggle to make ends meet and have to do other work as well
386. Our biggest problem: wrong mind-set and lack of entrepreneurship! Too many egomaniacs. Want aiic & co to do the work they should be doing themselves on the field.
387. The customer's biggest problem: how is he supposed to find us? As a group with all the choices we can give, we remain almost invisible. If no recommendations available, no wonder the customer ends up with agencies and semi-professionals.
388. CI's problem: money. For this field, I think better regulations are needed.
389. The pie of work is shrinking, while the number of those who want a piece of it is increasing. Universities churn out interpreters without informing them of the (free-lance) market situation, because they need to justify their *raison d'être*.
390. It was a privileged profession. It is sad to see that it has often become a "mal nécessaire".....it is also sad that the profession has never been recognised as such.....
391. I had to answer to the above question, however the assumption is that a higher recognition of the status of interpreter is needed/desirable, but who says that this is actually desirable? Society can live very well without having a specially high consideration of interpreters. Justo considering it a normal job is good enough, for society.
392. Interpreters are nowadays often seen as a necessary evil in the EU institutions and sometimes an unnecessary expense. The constant checking done by delegations in meetings, with nodding and twitching as we work shows a lack of confidence in our abilities and destroys morale. This is a new phenomenon and is a clear demonstration of our reduced status, even though the job has become far more difficult with increasingly technical subject-matter and large language regimes due to EU enlargement. The private market is shrinking, and we often have to interpret treasurers congratulating themselves on how much money they have saved by not recruiting interpreters and holding meetings in English. A knowledge of English these days is often a prerequisite to getting any job with international links, and so fewer and fewer private clients see interpreters as a justified

- expense. Many colleagues feel the profession of conference interpreter will not last longer than a few more decades.
393. This is a job I love!
394. What is important to highlight is that interpreting has nothing to do with translation. That the very same words used in another language can mean something different. So being submerged in the culture of the languages used is almost as important as the technique of speaking the language. In fact, in my view, instinct is as important as technique. Example: try to interpret humour, anger, pride - depending on the booth you are in, you either have to mitigate or exaggerate to get the same meaning in another culture.
395. Interpretation is still misunderstood by the general public and generally confused with translation. Skilled interpreters deserve far more recognition, in particular the high level of stress involved.
396. Only widespread use of interpretation services in ANY context and situation and willingness to pay for it will contribute to general recognition and will keep the fees up! In Switzerland this is the case - the country needs communication across language barriers and there is a strong and widespread willingness to pay for it and pay for it well - services are recognized - especially so on the so-called grey market!!!!
397. Some people have qualifications but no real ability, so making qualifications mandatory would not necessarily help. There are already too many interpreters, so promoting interpreting via social networks or media could only help the pockets of schools wanting to train them for a fee. The media as a whole are irrelevant to this question as far as I can see. Many interpreters are actively training for another profession in expectation that the pay decline will continue and the jobs will continue to be more scarce and more stressful as conferences are constantly shortened and speakers forced to squeeze more words into less time. There are fewer breaks, working hours are creeping up. Weekend work (for no extra pay) and night sessions (ditto) are becoming the norm.
398. I love my job and still believe it to be the most beautiful profession in the world. However, price dumping and competition from the low market segment make it increasingly difficult to maintain good working conditions and adequate prices. In Germany aiic has initiated activities to show interpreters how much they gain per hour based on the time they need to write quotes for clients, prepare for a conference and work as an interpreter. Based on feedback provided by colleagues during workshops, the price per hour is sometimes lower than that of a plumber - which to them is often a shock. Maybe this kind of approach should be publicized a lot more in the interpreting world to promote a professional approach.
399. Too long! Feel free to ask, and good luck.
400. Good luck with your PhD research work!
401. Time, place, context - the economic cycle - we are not stars or protagonists - merely voices - preferably heard but not seen.
402. Today, as yesterday and presumably tomorrow, a good interpreter is the one that prepares his meetings/hearings thoroughly, checks terminology and do background work before ever attempting to turn a mic on!
403. Just a comment regarding the questions about media coverage and prestige; I answered quite neutrally, because at least in my country, there is a big difference between the perception and prestige of PSI and conference interpreting - so it really depends on which profession you mean. PSI is usually covered in the media when the quality is inadequate which is of course critical in the hospital, court and criminal systems, thus giving PSI interpreters a bad reputation. Whereas conference interpreting is generally held in high esteem (at least in my experience), though it does not get much media attention at all, partly due to the fact that it is a very small profession in my country.
404. It's a wonderful profession! I'm extremely happy working as a conference interpreter.
405. Re 34, the trouble is that too many post-grads with MAs can't actually interpret in real life, student selection needs dramatic improvement. Re 12, I was trained post-grad by the EC, would not have chosen a post-grad university course. Universities pay too little attention to markets, and don't guarantee at all that their interpreting diplomas mean the holder can do the job.



406. Re the question about more pay for PSIs, I am very much in favour, but ONLY if standards are wildly improved. At the moment there is no comparison with the level of skills CI requires, but PSI should require a much higher of ability than currently recognised.
407. This questionnaire is too academically oriented.
408. IT IS A WONDERFUL JOB! because it is different every day, you keep on learning new things and meeting interesting people, it gives you freedom and it is well paid
409. I think that it will become a must to have a retour language in the near future. I also think that for certain languages the need for interpretation will no longer be that strong as in certain countries people learn English from early on and are absolutely confident to express themselves in English. I am referring to countries like Sweden, Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands.
410. The economic crisis of the country has accelerated the decline of the profession.
411. The interpreter is like a conveyor belt. Without it the machine stops. But interpreters are usually beta types. Do a good job, feel useful and be happy.
412. Sorry, wrong questions (but that my depend on Country of residence) All the best
413. Price cutting coming from unqualified interpreters will compromise the status of the professions.
414. Although appropriate professional training is extremely important, this should not be excessively academic. Research skills are not likely to come easily to an interpreter.
415. Please share the results with respondents. Thanks.
416. What we are dealing here are long-term societal trends (the growth of multilingualism amongst mid-level decision makers, who are the main users of conference interpreting) against which government policies are unlikely to have much of an impact. Thank you for your intelligent questionnaire - a welcome change from the naive, ill-informed ones we often get from undergraduate students :-)
417. 23 and 24 do not convince me, since there was no blank space answered as I could
418. If the public institutions understand the profession better in Turkey, the profession would be more widely recognised and respected. Then we wouldn't face so many demands from the client that cannot be fulfilled (such as working all day as the only interpreter)
419. This survey overlooks what I see as a major (potential) factor - the standard-setting role that big institutional clients (EU, UN agencies around the world) have in relation to local demand. If there's a steady volume from the institutions, and it's demand for multilingual meetings (not just local language + English), that has a big positive effect on the way the local / regional market works.
420. Sorry for not answering the last question, too complicated to answer like that. (I had to answer but I am not convinced)
421. About research, about interpreting: it is needed, but we are a minority activity..... I tend to help researchers, but apart from your research I tend to be appalled by the questions which show that the researcher has not got a clue about the profession (and you can get to understand the profession without being an interpreter.
422. The invasion of Globish gives conference goers the erroneous impression they are better off without interpreters, which makes me pessimistic as to the future of the profession.
423. Good luck!
424. Few people outside interpreting manage to understand what we do (even in the big international organisations),though the principle of it is fairly straightforward. The lack of prestige of the job can perhaps be ascribed to the fact that everybody speaks at least one language; a degree of multilingualism is not unusual.
425. I am only getting started in the profession and enjoy it a lot but I feel like the situation is changing towards smaller linguistic regimes and lower pays (especially on the private market). A lot of people are questioning the usefulness of interpreters and consider them a waste of money. To tackle that, we need to be excellent to prove our added value and we need to explain better why we are useful and why we should be paid "so much" while indeed, avoiding wasting resources.
426. If people were really aware of the ridiculous level of broken English they speak, they would realize the intellectual poor image they deliver and choose their mother tongue...but it is too late for humanity. No way back ....

427. More and more people decide to speak English, and speak with accents, more difficult to understand. People think they speak the same language but it is rarely the case. Interpretation will be important after miscommunication incidents in English. Right now people think that if everyone speaks English everything will be fine. They also think machines could do our work. Both ideas are not very convincing,
428. I still love my job although it's getting tougher and tougher to gain respect and be considered professionals due to a number of reasons that have to do with interpreters, associations and the lack of protection by the State. If you are a professional in Italy and pay taxes there, often it is better to state that you are a communication professional since there is no official status acknowledged by the IRS and interpreters are always under the heading "others". This as far as fee lance professionals are concerned. For staff interpreted the stays and level of recognition is different. Future? Well, probably better either to get into a public organization or just use languages as an ancillary skill.
429. Answers must vary because they do not express the opinion of respondent, but rather market conditions where she/he works.
430. I love conference interpreting and whatever the pay... I will never stop! ;-)
431. I believe that the customers should be trained to work with interpreters and facilitate their task, by providing the necessary support before the conference, i.e. preparatory material, and during the conference, i.e. signalling to the speakers that when delivering a speech it is important to take into consideration the fact that they are being interpreted and by giving them a list of things they should have in mind, for instance, have a well-structured stream of thought, speak freely or, when reading out, trying to do that at a normal speed having of course provided the text of their prepared speech to the interpreters well in advance.
432. I have worked for many years. The world of free-lancing is more and more difficult to navigate. Fewer job openings for permanent interpreters.
433. I think more flexible and mobile equipment could make CI more accessible in new contexts - among laypersons etc.
434. Solidarity and ethics in the translation booth not always happens; speakers speak at light speed most of the time. Thank so much. All the best.
435. For most questions I would have responded - "it depends"
436. The response to 34 is: Qualifications and MARKETING by whoever! Congrats to you, Paola! Full steam ahead!"
437. There is a movement towards certification both internationally (ISO) and nationally (UNI).
438. If properly managed (not very likely) it will raise the quality and perception of the profession
439. Very competitive, gossip-maniac colleagues, collegiality decreases, people don't want you to add new language combinations because they think you will steal their job, they should dare to say it and not keep telling everyone instead bad and unfounded things about you, state regulation absolutely necessary in my view..
440. Academic, nay, simple professional credentials cannot be expected from most practitioners working with "peripheral" languages. But for the core working with central languages, i.e., languages spoken in developed countries, they ought to become essential. The hope is that quality and prowess will "trickle down" or "spill over" the rest of practicing professionals,
441. The poor market situation is our fault. Period. Most interpreters are totally unprofessional.
442. In order to increase the recognition of the profession, the users of the interpreter services should be made more aware of what is involved and needed in delivering a quality interpretation. When there is better understanding from the users, then the demand for quality interpreting services and the related prerequisites (training, research, quality control) will increase.
443. I came to the profession late in life. While I do not have an MA, I have taken a series of courses and professional development programs to acquire the techniques and ethics of the profession. I do not believe the lack of an MA makes me a poorer quality interpreter.

444. Too many interpreters and organisations do not realize the importance to regulate the new technical era of interpretation, in many cases new equipment has been introduced permanently without standards placing everybody devant un fait accompli
445. Linguistic skills and general culture are not enough. Establishing good contacts and having the right personality to emerge in this field are equally important.
446. Good luck!
447. Qu 17 - no idea what corpus linguistics means, but was forced to answer the question in order to move forward in survey, therefore chose optional though would have preferred to leave it blank. Answers given reflect my perceptions of the UK population. Good luck with your research!
448. I am not convinced you have much experience of the reality of conference interpreting. One of the things that should be stopped is clients outsourcing the recruitment of interpreters to commercial intermediaries (agencies, but strictly in law, that is an incorrect designation). It is they now, not the interpreters themselves, that project the image of the interpreter.
449. MAs and PhDs in "interpreting" do nothing to enhance our image. Most of these degrees have a suspicious parentage. Most are simply not the equivalent of any other good university Master's degree. What is a client to think of a conference interpreter with German as her first source language and a MA in conference interpreting who has to ask when the Second World War was?? Very good mastery of one's target language, a broad and solid general education, including chemistry, physics, history, etc. etc. is FAR more useful than a course in the theory of interpreting.... Sound interpreting techniques and etiquette are useful. And I wish more emphasis were put on these and less on the number of source languages or the limitation to a single target language.
450. One other aspect not mentioned here with would help interpreters and the interpreting profession: more work on encouraging speakers to speak in their mother tongue rather in their (often questionable) English. Speaking in your mother tongue needs to be seen as just as prestigious - not a signal that the speaker possibly cannot express him/herself in any other language!
451. Unfortunately, many of your questions result in soft answers which will not give a statistically correct view of the profession. In Canada, for instance, most interpreters have not been through a formal and specific conference interpreting education, thus do not practice consecutive i., do not care about research, etc. but, because it is a bilingual country, it is always needed for all official and public meetings...
452. The greatest problem is that interpreters only become visible if their work produces negative effects. However, I don't think that the positive effects are interesting for the mass media. Social networks might help.
453. Governments should not allow the setting up of so many interpreting schools in Italy, which are mostly unqualified and misleading
454. The general public should be made aware of the background required to become an interpreter.
455. My clients and people in general always go Waouh about my job, but I have no idea how we are perceived compared to other professions.
456. When I meet somebody interested in an interpreting career, I tell them they need more than ordinary motivation, and that you really have to love it. If you do, it's greatly rewarding.
457. Re 34: unclear whether the question relates to CI or PSI or both. My answer relates mostly to PSI.
458. Where we once met a clear need we are now seen as irrelevant to communication; English is now used widely and is now aspirational, so people prefer to speak imperfect English rather than their own language. This has led to a lessening of expectations so limited English is acceptable. We also have to deal with the introduction of machine translation such as Google - the result is acceptable and the modern world loves gadgets.
459. Those who have been our clients since we established the profession post WWII no longer need us to the same extent; those who do need us are unwilling or unable to pay the fees we are used to commanding. This is a conundrum the profession needs to discuss.
460. Interpreters suffer from being a freelance profession often with great difficulties to create a critical mass, or to co-operate in order to fight for e.g. working conditions.

461. Question 20 does not make sense (what remuneration are you talking about?). Terms like 'status' are vague...
462. It is great fun!!!
463. Good luck with your project.
464. I will recommend this profession even today!!!! I love it. You get paid well and enjoy a great deal of freedom.
465. You did not one bit take into considerations that in different countries the profession is estimated and paid differently. If one works on an international level you work in quite different conditions. Italy is a bad place for really professional conference interpretation. Sorry!!
466. Interpreting is a great job, but hardly anyone can do it properly...
467. Too many interpreting schools and too many interpreters are the only cause of the decline of our profession
468. Degrees are less important than the ling. knowledge & acknowledgement and respect of the rules - hours, salary, language combinations, professional domicile etc...
469. It will not last for more than 20 years maximum on the Italian private market with a constant downgrading of fees working conditions prestige and quality.

### The Status of Public Service Interpreters. Open Comments.

**Question 16. Have you ever worked in conference settings? If NOT, what are the main reasons for your choice? (Please tick 2 options)**

1. No conference interpreter work for my language in Canada
2. Conference interpreting is too stressful
3. I do it whenever the chance presents itself. I like it.
4. Want to start a family soon; lack of time/finances to pursue further education.
5. Busy with my own work
6. Full-time work
7. I don't have enough schedule to attend conference.
8. Availability (have children)
9. I do not feel comfortable and confident in interpreting conferences, in spite of the training
10. I specialise in court interpreting (criminal law)
11. My English language is not well enough and it is often required
12. I am very busy with my work; I couldn't even if I wanted.
13. It seems difficult
14. Haven't time
15. I have no time as it often requires lots of time
16. I don't like to stand in front of a lot of people and camera's
17. I have done conference interpreting in the past, but I don't like it, I prefer health and community interpreting
18. I cannot answer the following questions. I have worked as a conference interpreter, but only a couple of times.
19. By conference I take it you mean huge setting with simultaneous interpreting.
20. Pas de formation
21. Je n'aime pas la cabine, j'ai à l'occasion travaillé avec bidules
22. Zu stressig
23. Ich haben einen anderen Hauptberuf
24. Es liegt mir nicht.
25. Keine Zeit, um mich dafür noch ausbilden zu lassen
26. Sehr selten wegen meiner Sprachkombination (kein Englisch)
27. Noch nie damit konfrontiert worden.

28. Ho avuto una preparazione specifica e in qualche occasione l'ho fatto ma preferisco altri ambiti di lavoro
29. Docente
30. Perché devo rispondere se ho risposto sí?
31. He trabajado como voluntaria en la Iglesia traduciendo simultáneamente
32. Me parece un ámbito elitista y me provoca un poco de rechazo
33. Dependiendo del tema pienso que podría hacerlo.

**Question 19. In your opinion, which level of education would be appropriate to work as a public service interpreter? Option “other”**

34. About 6 months depending on which type of interpreting: conference, simultaneous, consecutive and site. Also which setting, such as; court, health care, immigration, community amongst others.
35. Specific training and college diploma with related subjects
36. Being able to attune one's self to people of different walks of life
37. School degrees are not critical but if an interpreter doesn't have a degree, he/she would need a long enough course (definitely longer than 60 hrs) to cover any missing skills/abilities
38. MA in Interpretation/Translation (I can't help but be biased!)
39. Long term specific training for the field. All of the above are useful. The college educated person will have a quicker grasp of what it entails. However, native or near native knowledge of working languages is more essential than a degree. I've seen Ph. D perform poorly.
40. At the very least, the equivalent of a BA or higher
41. I believe a BA is an adequate degree but I know excellent conference interpreters without a degree
42. I think we need entry level competencies that can be acquired through a variety of means. 60 hours is a very elementary level of training but most PSI's don't have access to BAs, much less MAs or Ph.Ds. We need reliable ways to assess for language proficiency, interpreting skills (modes), and ethics/standards, terminology that cover both the most common languages and the less common languages. We especially need strategies for not excluding interpreters of less common languages from entering the field, which means we need to both keep on pushing for higher competency standards while at the same time piloting innovative training techniques to help low literacy and numeracy interpreters of less common languages to acquire competency as well.
43. At least undergraduate degree on anything and short course on interpretation
44. Either BA or MA level (or higher of course)
45. BA/MA depending on language proficiency, i.e. bilinguals only need T&I technique training and special terminology, whereas someone like myself also needed the grammar, cultural studies etc.
46. Diploma
47. Actually no degree is necessary as long as the person is intelligent and a skilled linguist, I have seen many examples of this
48. At least a BA, more is of course welcome, but not essential
49. Diploma in interpreting and translation
50. Innate ability, skill, interest
51. Training in legal and police matters, besides a good language level
52. At least University
53. Relevant interpreter training with proper skills testing.
54. BA/MA but to me years of experience is essential
55. Practice and long experience in the country of your b language, because language is the transport of culture if you don't know the culture you definitively can't be an interpreter
56. Specific training on public service interpreting, no matter the degree, but definitely more than 60 hours.
57. Community college 2 year program
58. BA or Diploma from an accredited program
59. It depends on the person and their bilingualism level, some who's strong in two languages could be ready for work with a 60 hour training course or some sort of training course on interpreting skills and ethics

60. Practice
61. Long specialised course
62. DPSI / state exam
63. Deep experience of language and culture always surpasses education
64. Pass a rigorous high level test like DIPSI
65. Don't believe education is key to knowledge and ability in all cases, if the interpreter can do the work, I don't care if they never finished elementary school
66. Longer course 150 hours
67. Course or study in public sector interpretation
68. In the UK, currently, the minimum level of qualification for interpreters is set at level 6 of the QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework): University Degree, BA, BSc. The real problem, and the most serious danger is represented by unscrupulous agencies that, for reasons both practical and economic, tend to use unqualified personnel, even in the most complex and delicate situations, like, for example, legal interpreting in Courts and Tribunals . This legal vacuum needs to be filled as soon as possible.
69. A specialised study with examination of interpreting ability is sufficient.
70. Not important
71. Thoroughly knowledge of both languages, be bi-lingual
72. If it is specific translational studies, then it is enough with BA. After that can you take additional education in interpreting in court and conferences.
73. Ability and professionalism is far more important
74. It is not only about university degree, there is more required than only that. i.e experience, specific knowledge
75. DPSI
76. Minimum 60 hours course and a follow up written & oral exam
77. It is very individual
78. I believe it is the combination of one's innate talent, intelligence, ability, life experience, knowledge, wisdom, linguistic skills, interpersonal skills, dedication and passion that count more than formal education.
79. General university degree + interpreter training + specialization training (in the areas you interpret)
80. Any other specialised training
81. Some kind of education, either college-level courses or internships, are necessary.
82. All of the above, except a PHD. Definitely NOT solely a short course. A lot of lifetime education goes into being an excellent interpreter. I think that the higher your educational exposure, the better an interpreter you are.
83. It depends on the specific assignment
84. It depends on the person
85. Relevant courses in interpreting
86. DPSI
87. Experience is also critical, education alone is insufficient.
88. Depends on the case you're ask to work in.
89. Like me, I have a recognised qualification which is not in any category above
90. Pas dans mon cas
91. Diplome
92. Un baccalauréat + beaucoup de lecture + des années d'expérience
93. Entre licence et master
94. Licence/master interprétariat ou licence/master autre + formation/formation continue/concours
95. Formation longue + expérience
96. Une vie de préparation n'y suffirait pas...
97. Master et bcp de stages et pratiques
98. Diplome de l'enseignement de secondaire superieur
99. Oder anders erworbene kenntnis



100. Wichtiger als ein Abschluss ist es die Sprachen zu beherrschen und empathiefähig zu sein
101. Gute Allgemeinbildung, tiefgehende Kenntnis von Sprache, Geschichte, System des Gesundheitswesens, der Politik und staatlicher Institutionen im Herkunfts- und im Zielland
102. Kombination aus Medizin und Sprache mit Praxisbezug
103. Für Wiener Verhältnisse: Master, denn ein Bachelorabschluss beinhaltet keine Dolmetschpraxis!
104. Laurea e corso
105. Laurea in traduzione e interpretariato
106. Laurea specialistica in interpretazione e traduzione
107. Il diploma è un buon punto di partenza ma ci vogliono anni di esperienza
108. Laurea in lingue o scuola interpreti più formazione specifica a seconda dei settori
109. Accanto alla laurea magistrale, formazione specifica a seconda del settore di impiego
110. Corso di formazione et/o laurea magistrale
111. Buona conoscenza della lingua del paese
112. Corsi di formazione che superano 300 ore compreso lo Stage
113. Il livello di istruzione è a mio parere meno rilevante di e subordinato ad altri aspetti, quali la sensibilità, l'attitudine alla mediazione ed alla comunicazione, nonché la conoscenza delle istituzioni di riferimento
114. Unos estudios de un par de años y mucha práctica guiada
115. Conocimiento académico del idioma extranjero y haber vivido al menos 3 años
116. Lo importante es que se pueda empezar a comprobar conocimientos básicos de las diversas terminologías, pero que haya posibilidad de seguir mejorando su nivel. O sea, tener siempre la motivación de tener un curso, un grado a obtener e así ir subiendo en su carrera. En Noruega el sistema es muy pobre con relación a posibilidades de cursos entre los básicos y el poco que hay a nivel superior
117. De enseñanza media hacia arriba apoyados con cursos y seminarios, trabajo en equipo, intercambio de experiencias
118. Formación ad hoc (cursos de especialización)

**Question 27 In one of his papers, Prunč argues that public service interpreting is not a prestigious job also because interpreters deal with "the wasted lives and the outcasts of modernity" (2012: 4). Do you agree with this statement?**

119. Those who think this way must have limited understanding of life and humanity
120. I don't believe immigrants are considered 'the outcast[s]' of society where I live, so I don't think it has much weight in whether interpreting is considered prestigious or not.
121. I don't think immigrants are the outcast of society, especially in Canada, a country of immigrants from around the world.
122. Many immigrants are well trained and motivated
123. Because client's cultural, ethnic, financial and emotional state has to be considered a great deal.
124. The so-called prestigious and highly remunerated professionals such as doctors and lawyers often deal with the so-called outcast population strata. This doesn't make their job less prestigious.
125. Police deal with criminals, doctors deal with the sick. But people respect them. People simply cannot imagine what interpreters deal with.
126. Both are reasons
127. He is German and a linguist. That's how he perceives it, he doesn't alter my own ego.
128. I also feel that the organizations we work for do not have a full understanding or respect for what we do. As far as remuneration is concerned, until we create a national criteria (i.e., court certification or RID certification) organizations will simply hire inexperienced and untrained interpreters who only serve to dilute our profession.
129. Public opinion does not know about the remuneration.
130. The general public has no clue there is a difference in rates
131. This is probably one reason, but hardly the only one.

132. This is just one aspect that has to do with the low prestige of PSI. It's poorly understood by the outside population. It has its roots in social justice and the non-profit world, which is also typically underpaid and undervalued. The majority of its practitioners come from minority populations. It does not have a full educational and entry pathway to bring it more recognition and prestige. There are many reasons.
133. I translate often for people against whom criminal procedures are in course but that does not make me feel different, it's a job and like any job you have to try and do your best.
134. The immigrant status is not high ranked in any society
135. In Finland interpreter has higher education, he can't be compared with customers
136. Extremely difficult question to answer ...
137. I almost do not work with immigrants. In case of interpreting mainly for immigrants, yes, it can be true.
138. But the funding comes from welfare programs for immigrants so pay is low
139. Because public service interpreters are mainly immigrants, in my country it is generally seen as an "immigrant job" and ascribed similar status as that of cleaning staff, or other such unqualified labor. This perception negatively affects our remuneration, even though there is a critical shortage of skilled public service interpreters, creating a vicious circle in which few of those who take up the job at all are committed to professionalism...which in turn feeds the perception of interpreters as unskilled laborers.
140. I agree in the sense that I think this might be other people's perception.
141. In my opinion, this statement is irrelevant.
142. Some immigrants are millionaires.
143. Not just immigrants, officials are "annoyed" that they cannot work directly (more complex planning, costs, longer time of sessions etc.)
144. "Not so much because it is not well remunerated" that is EXACTLY why people think of it as something that any fool can do.
145. Immigration policies are very different depending on the country, Australia's migrants are not outcasts, are brought in because of their skills to contribute to society, it is actually the refugees that end up marginalised mainly due to lack of language skills or ability to adapt
146. Professional fail to recognise how ESSENTIAL it is to communication for some people
147. We deal as well with lawyers, medical doctors, judges, police, etc.
148. It is a difficult, prestigious job, requires great knowledge and special abilities
149. Not in Poland - here people think that an interpreter is like any other clerk
150. This question seems to be "country-specific." In other words, I don't think it can be applied to Poland.
151. It is not my job to define or qualify anyone. My job is to make sure they understand and are understood. Besides, immigration police works with immigrants too, yet somehow they are usually respected for their job.
152. I'd say it's rather the status of my "employers" (ministries, courts, prosecutor's offices) adds to my prestige.
153. I work for deaf people so that is a totally different group in society
154. Both
155. Only because it is a job now often performed by naturalised immigrants and therefore less prestigious. They've mastered the new language without any specialized training, therefore the public believe it to be an easy job: it's an easily acquired skill, even immigrants can do it.
156. Agree to some extent, but it doesn't explain everything. Some lawyers work only with cases of refuge and immigrations - it doesn't make their status any lower. Doctors from Red Cross who work in Africa in poor districts have no lesser status than others. I think good quality professionalization and formal EDUCATION are key here!
157. The same goes it sign language interpreters who deal with deaf people
158. I am a sign language interpreter, I work with Deaf individuals. I rarely work with Deaf immigrants.
159. The skill is not understood
160. Depends on in which country your work
161. And the judges then?



162. Qns 25 and 26 cannot be answered adequately. I chose the last category, but I don't agree with it.  
Community interpreting has a lower status than school teachers
163. In Brazil at least, this is totally irrelevant
164. In the UK (and some other parts of the EU), immigrants and anything attached are portrayed very negatively. Plus the job is really not well remunerated in the UK.
165. That is only one sector of society that we deal with!!
166. "And they also deal with criminals." could be added to that statement.
167. It's all About the money
168. In Belgium it is maybe not a prestigious job yet, because it is sometimes still performed by not well educated interpreters.
169. All people have the right to be heard and the interpreter in this sector should get better paid so better interpreters w education want to do it
170. There are also many other professions that deal with the outcast.
171. Public Service Interpreting is not about immigration; it covers almost any area of human activities, therefore this comment, although the source is certainly very authoritative, is totally irrelevant, in that it is completely disconnected from the real world.
172. There are many kinds of public service interpreting. Interpreting in court and for the police is well respected.
173. I agree that public thinks so, but I do not agree myself that it should be so.
174. An awful thing to say
175. It's not a prestigious job because the public and a good part of the service providers believe it requires only the ability to speak 2 languages, and no professional or educational qualifications
176. While I don't know this, it seems a likely statement.
177. I think there are many unqualified interpreters whom destroy the reputation of the interpreters
178. Interesting suggestion
179. Not totally agree but probably true it depends
180. In addition, paternalism towards Deaf people is very strong, so if the Deaf person is the person seeking services, there is a double whammy and negative perception of them (e.g., Deaf + immigrant).
181. I think our job is often minimized because people don't understand the training necessary or the impact it has, but I don't think the people we work with has so much to do with our "prestige"
182. I am a sign language interpreter and do not work with migrants.
183. Especially in California, there is an extreme anti-immigrant sentiment and most believe that if you want to be in the USA you should learn to speak the language. Also, it is common opinion that anyone who provides public services to immigrants should foot the bill for the interpreter and translation services or learn to speak the immigrant's language if they want to service that population.
184. In Australia the Deaf community is a minority community, people don't care about minorities and believe we should just 'fix' all the Deaf people with Cochlear implants and Hearing Aids.
185. If this is a statement from the perspective of the wider community then yes. I agree.
186. The profession of a court interpreter in the UK has been virtually destroyed since rates were slashed under the new framework agreement and a lot of poorly qualified people have entered the profession. It is only going to get worse with the introduction of video link technology.
187. It depends on whose perspective and how one defines "well remunerated"
188. Also, because I work with deaf people, who use a signed language instead of spoken language, some English speaking professionals can look at them as disabled, and think that I am there as their carer, not realising that I am a professional interpreter who is qualified to interpret between English and British Sign Language
189. I am paid well. I think people just are uninformed and lack experience with people who are Deaf.
190. It is not a recognised job.
191. It is not well remunerated because of greedy agencies
192. I think currently our status is well below any of what you listed
193. All decent people that are willing need to be respected.

194. It's very rewarding and I get amazing respect from magistrates (which I do not get from other staff at the University where I work full time) - if it was a more viable profession, I would quit my University job and go full time.
195. I wouldn't say 'outcast', but instead 'often forgotten and sometimes neglected.'
196. A lot of professions are involved with "the outcast of the society"
200. Q26 status in eyes of general population is well below any of listed professions
201. Only partly true.
202. En effet, l'interprétation dans les services publics n'est pas considérée souvent comme indispensable. Des nombreux collaborateurs pensent pouvoir s'en passer. Quand ils font toutefois appel à un interprète, ils l'appellent souvent "traducteur", en sous-estimant les compétences de l'interprète et ses possibilités d'intervention.
203. Elle est mal rémunérée parce que les interprètes n'ont pas toujours la formation et les compétences requises.
204. Je pense que ce métier n'est pas considéré en FRANCE car il n'y a pas de vrai statut. La plupart des personnes ne savent pas que ce métier existe.
205. Plutôt parce que traduire est un concept peu connu. Mélange entre connaître un peu une langue et aider l'autre, bilingue. or, il ne suffit pas d'être bilingue pour être interprète.
206. En Belgique, on ne travaille qu'avec des étrangers mais avec des Belges francophones, en Flandre.
207. Les interprètes des Nations Unies sont certainement mieux vus!
208. D'accord avec cette citation, mais ma profession est aussi mal rémunérée
209. Les 2 raisons sont valables pour expliquer le manque de prestige
210. Le manque de prestige est une question complexe. Elle s'explique aussi par le fait que les interprètes eux-mêmes ne sont pas toujours à la hauteur. Exemple : la tenue vestimentaire est parfois très négligée...
211. Wohl weil es schlecht vergütet wird
212. Ich denke, das Bild des Dolmetschers in Gesundheits- und Gemeinwesen hat sich in den letzten 5-8 Jahren stark geändert, zumindest in Österreich.
213. Alles was gut vergütet wird, wird heutzutage auch gut angesehen, leider! Siehe Managergehälter!
214. Es hat damit gar n nicht zu tun! Die Aufwand und die Wichtigkeit des Dolmetschers wird hier total unterschätzt!
215. Beides bedingt einander zu Teilen.
216. Il problema (riscontrato dal Prof.Prunc) si verifica in AUSTRIA in quanto per le procedure d'asilo PREVALENTEMENTE NON vengono utilizzati interpreti professionisti, ma DILETTANTI presi dalle file degli immigrati!!!
217. Generell werden Beruf, die physisch dicht am Menschen, z.B. Altenpflege, zu schlecht bezahlt
218. Weil die Auftraggeber bei der Auswahl nicht auf die Qualität sondern nur auf den Preis achten.
219. Weil es kein BUwusstsein für die Notwendigkeit und Wichtigkeit dafür gibt.
220. Kommundolmetschen ist nicht gut angesehen, weil es leider viele "schwarze Schafe" also inkompetente Dolmetscher ohne universitäre Ausbildung gibt, die in diesem Bereich arbeiten und das Image des Kommundolmetschers durch schlechte Leistungen senken.
221. Da hat er Recht, das schließt aber die schlechte Vergütung nicht aus.
222. Stimt - leider! Als Dolmetscher in "guten Kreisen" erhält man selber auch mehr Status, und umgekehrt.
223. Not the case of Brazil.
224. Seit wann beschäftigen sich Dolmetscher nur mit Einwanderern?
225. Möglicherweise
226. Non gode di prestigio perché si ritiene un lavoro privo di difficoltà che consista semplicemente nel ripetere meccanicamente delle parole
227. E' l'amministrazione che non è in grado di valutare la professionalità e la qualità dell'interpretazione in quanto è un ruolo specialistico
228. Non ho esperienza, nel mio paese non è rilevante
229. Non è questa la ragione esclusiva: Si ritiene in generale che la prestazione professionaledell'interprete possa essere resa da chiunque parla e comprende bene la lingua di appartenenza dello straniero.

230. Ad attribuire scarso prestigio all'interprete sono le stesse istituzioni per le quali lavora
231. Di sicuro non è il caso del Paese mio
232. È un lavoro molto precario, senza continuazione, tutto dipende chi ha il potere politico. Nostro lavoro è riconosciuto come molto importante, ma la parte economico finanziaria, sembra che non ha nessuna importanza per enti pubblici. È incomprensibile che certi servizi (per esempio. lavorare con assistenti sociali) “scadono” con la data della convenzione e non si continua a lavorare finché “dall'alto” non viene ok. I nostri assistiti non hanno la “scadenza”, hanno bisogno di nostro aiuto sempre.
233. Pur non conoscendo Prunc, sono testimone di questo atteggiamento ogni giorno. In generale, l'incapacità di parlare la lingua del paese in cui si risiede, viene considerata come una mancanza, una disabilità, che emargina questa fascia di persone. L'interprete, viene considerata appartenente a questa categoria... sempre e comunque una straniera. Più volte ne ho discusso con i miei colleghi di anzianità diverse, e condividiamo questa percezione. più volte siamo vittime di discriminazione perchè considerati stranieri come i clienti che assistiamo. In Australia, l'interprete è solo considerato semplicemente "qualcuno che sa parlare un'altra lingua", non un professionista che, per diventare tale ha studiato anni, al pari di un ingegnere...Se pensa che la voce di un interprete, docente e ricercatore sul campo quale sono possa esserle utile per la tua ricerca, la prego di contattarmi
234. Non credo sia quello il punto. Credo che il punto sia che non sia ben chiaro agli utenti quali competenze siano necessarie; inoltre, non hanno strumenti per percepire la qualità, quindi spesso non distinguono una prestazione buona da una pessima.
235. Depende del ámbito de los SSPP.. Pues en Japón, por ejemplo, si hablamos de los casos penales, cuando digo que trabajo en los Tribunales de Justicia, muchos dirán "Wao, brava!", pero si lo hiciera en la Policía, dirían "Uhh.., ¿no te dan miedo?".
236. Se supone que un traductor tiene que trabajar como voluntaria precisamente por el sector en que trabaja
237. Tampoco ayuda el hecho de que se considere que cualquier bilingüe es apto para interpretar o traducir
238. Es cierto pero la remuneración también influye y sobre todo, en el ámbito médico, influye el hecho de que se recurre mucho a interpretes ad hoc como acompañantes, familiares y voluntarios.
239. Efectivamente. Ahora que se está tramitando la transposición de la Directiva 2010/64/UE nos damos cuenta de que es un tema que no interesa mucho, al menos al gobierno, porque el ámbito penal no es rentable y las personas que intervienen en esos procesos no interesan.
240. La interpretación y traducción profesional no está bien considerada porque no se le da importancia si una traducción está bien o no. Algún día los abogados usarán el vacío legal que existe en este país para tirar abajo los juicios. La sociedad no sabe el riesgo que existe si se traducen mal los folletos médicos, los diagnósticos o las conversaciones. Hablar o entender una lengua no es igual a ser traductor. Y eso en la sociedad española no se ha valorado.
241. No siempre es el caso, a veces se interpreta a personas de mayor estatus (europeos del norte), pero eso no influye en el estatus del TISSPP. Es parte del clasismo social, igual que la enfermería se considera de menor estatus que la medicina, aunque ambas sean imprescindibles.
242. Al ser considerados auxiliares de la administración pública a menudo el intérprete es tratado como un simple funcionario del Estado
243. En Finlandia no se exige absolutamente ninguna formación ni prueba de conocimientos a los intérpretes de SSPP. Están condenados a trabajar para empresas que tienen acuerdos con las instituciones y los explotan en complicidad con éstas.
244. CREO QUE NO ES UN TRABAJO PRESTIGIOSO PARA LA SOCIEDAD PORQUE SOMOS INVISIBLES. ESTAMOS EN UN SEGUNDO PLANO.
245. Soy holandesa, trabajo en holanda, nunca me he sentido marginada de la sociedad.
246. En España, porque no interesa a nivel económico y cualquiera en general se piensa que es una labor fácil que no exige formación ni esfuerzo.
247. No se valora el conocimiento del idioma y de la sutileza de saber tratar al extranjero
248. Veo que en casos en que me llaman a traducir oralmente con no marginados (en notarías o con veterinarios) me tratan y pagan mucho mejor que en trabajo con inmigrantes/marginados. Unos patovicas (argot argentino para guardias de seguridad) hasta me han confiscado algunas veces las llaves

- de mi casa!!!! Una vez he tenido roce con la policía por una infracción de tráfico, NO EN ABSOLUTO me hicieron eso, los policías Sí entendieron que era un ciudadano normal que cometió una falta menor y NO un peligroso delincuente. Esos patovicas NO, traducir NO es delito ni falta!!!!
249. En Noruega es un trabajo prestigioso, sobre todo porque no es un título protegido, y hay muchas personas que trabajan como intérpretes sin tener ningún tipo de capacitación. Esto reduce la reputación de los intérpretes en general y el prestigio de la profesión.
  250. Quien labora en SSPP lo hace por gusto, por vocación. No lo confunda con el sentimiento humanista que pueda, o no, tener la persona.
  251. Pienso que tanto la pregunta 25, 26 y 27 no están formuladas de manera que pueda contestarla correctamente. 25 y 26 deberían preguntarse: que status tiene el interprete en comparacion con los grupos de profesionales.... ? asi Como estan escritas, se comparan a los grupos de profesionales con los interpretes, y no es correcto.
  252. En este país los intérpretes somos bien apreciados, aunque se nos pague poco. Cuando se trabaja para la policía y la corte la paga es mucho mejor, más allá de la educación del intérprete.
  253. El prestigio del trabajo no viene de con quién se trabaja, si no de cómo se realiza y la importancia que se da al mismo.

### Question 31. Considering your experience, what is the interpreter's main role?

256. Facilitator of communication between parties with differences in their language, cultural, and social norms and beliefs.
257. To facilitate community so that the speakers retain the greatest degree of control of their own communication as is possible. You are there to promote direct communication, not insert yourself.
258. Know both languages and cultures as his own pockets! be representative, good actor, humble, polite to interpret
259. Facilitator of communication, some cultural mediation, ally to the Deaf/HoH Community
260. Depends on the task and the setting.
261. I don 't know what you mean by invisible conduit
262. A bit of each of the above except for the "actor"
263. All of the above
264. All of the above
265. One who transfers meaning, assisting people to communicate, if not understand one another
266. A language and culture expert who can help participants negotiate an meaningful encounter
267. Lang/Cultural mediator and ally.
268. I think role is context specific and at any given time we would rate any of those roles as the main one.
269. language and cultural equalizer
270. I don't use metaphors to describe what interpreters do. No other profession does this. Part of the reason we are not seen on par with other professions. We conceive of ethics using metaphors and not normative ethical terms.
271. The first four and a translator of the meaning of what has just been interpreted.
272. Invisible et technique
273. Alles gleichzeitig
274. Mix delle risposte 1 e 2
275. Tutti questi ruoli a seconda dei casi
276. Desidero specificare che gli operatori con i quali svolgo le mansioni d'interprete "pretendono" che l'interprete sia un "tramite invisibile", personalmente invece ritengo l'interprete sia un "attore", in alcuni casi indispensabile, alla buona comprensione del messaggio che deve essere veicolato e pertanto il successo di un'operazione, sia essa un'indagine di Polizia, un intervento chirurgico, una testimonianza ecc. dipendono dall'interprete.
277. Un profesional de comunicacion y mediador, en igual medida

278. Lo ideal es garantizar la comunicación siendo invisible pero en la práctica la balanza entre los intervinientes no está equilibrada y hay que dar ciertas explicaciones por desconocimiento de la figura del intérprete por parte de alguna de las partes interesadas
279. Las respuestas 1 y 2

**Question 32. How often have you found yourself in the following situations?**

280. Some professionals aren't patient and I personally feel they don't value the service provided. Even some clients don't seem appreciative because they expect more than just interpretation, for example client wants interpreter to say what the interpreter to say or answer in their opinion rather than the clients own words. Clients feel that interpreter is not doing a good job and is 'taking the professionals side. '
281. Service providers need more training and understanding of our role. Sometimes they don't appreciate how challenging this job is and how to cooperate with us.
282. Many "interpreters" are incapable but are able to continue working because many end users are unaware of the poor quality of services they provide. The agencies they work for only have one goal in mind - profits.
283. Increasing resentments toward PSI as HCP's are frustrated in getting timely service, or have the wrong notion we are getting paid obscenely. Sub-par PSI (as there is never a quality assurance monitoring) give HCP's impression that all PSI are low quality free-lancer once they had just ONE prior to having a veteran PSI.
284. When you say "service providers", are you referring to language services providers that subcontract me for interpreting assignments?
285. Although I may be impacted by what I hear in sex abuse, sexual harassment cases, or crimes against humanity. I know the importance of remaining neutral and not judge the person speaking. It's important for the others in the room to hear what that person has to say.
286. Even at one of the most renowned hospitals in the Northwest (Harborview Medical Center), the interpreter services leadership touts that we are valuable, but they don't invest in is as human beings or professionals. None of my current training or certifications have been able to help me gain a greater income than my colleagues who aren't as prepared as I am. Not only do they not care about that gap, but they deny us our continuing education benefits by declining to be flexible with our work schedules. Recent union negotiations revealed an uncaring and ungrateful leadership team.
287. They often explicitly express their gratitude and only sometimes a minority speaker thinks that I do not execute my job properly.
288. An interpreter should not let himself/herself emotional impact during work, but sometimes this happens when working with people who find themselves in a highly stressful life situation. I am always aware of this and try not let it impact my work.
289. When people experience professional interpreting with a competent, trained interpreter who stays within professional role boundaries, it is often a revelatory experience. Once they see the positive impact good interpreting has for their communication, they will pay to bring you back, even in social service agencies with limited budgets.
290. It's important to control your emotions
291. I sincerely HOPE that I always act as, and am perceived as, a neutral party who is not biased and who seeks to objectively resolve any linguistic difficulties that arise (and faithfully reproduce what the parties themselves are saying, even in the most difficult situations).
292. I love my job.
293. Last statement does not apply to my case, neither English nor Spanish can be understood as minority languages, at least in my country. The former is fully a foreign language, the latter is the official (and only) language of my country.
294. In Sweden The interpreter always is neutral and impartial and has to interpret everything that participant says to each other and it has to be said in first person. ( These are some of the rules that is mandatory in Sweden).

295. I do not work with service providers (agencies etc.), and my language is English, not really a minority language! But the people I interpret for usually see me as a help
296. authorized translations are seen as a "must" and involves extra costs. Many think if you are a translator you know everything : "do me 20 pages for yesterday"
297. In my city, we have a very low rate of immigrants. Should the rate be higher, the attitudes might change drastically.
298. 1. I always clarify what my role is way ahead of the event. 2. However, I don't equate neutrality with not reacting to unacceptable speaker behaviour.
299. What does "neutral"" mean? I would prefer "impartial."
300. Not sure what minority language means in this context.
301. Often it happens that minority language speakers can understand and speak national language to such a good extent that I am just sitting there, helping out only with a few sentences.
302. Difficult to answer these as I don't want to generalize or answer for communities I cannot speak for
303. You should add "not concerned" as a possible answer. Please, don't consider the answers "sometimes", given to avoid blocking of your questionnaire.
304. Highly varied, the more informed and educated the parties the easier it is. A lot of emotional intelligence is required.
305. The main problem of the interpreter is to work with agencies, as a public service and private enterprise are often incompatible.
306. I think Norwegian authorities, HiOA and the National register for interpreters have done a fine job in later years.
307. In Norway, some lawyers seem to think that showing a lack of respect for interpreters is acceptable behavior in court. When they experience my services they suddenly realise how bad the "quasi interpreters" they used before were. There is a big problem in Norway with private agencies sending completely unprepared people to serve an interpreters in public sector.
308. Even the minority clients we serve, don't give the work we do the proper importance or gratitude.
309. I don't believe we are or can be neutral, but we can acknowledge our lack of neutrality and keep it in check.
310. Just to say only this any interpreter should receive the same training and qualification and it is just a place where do you happen to work !!!!!
311. It is a satisfying career and I sleep well at night knowing that I have helped one life a little bit. The part that I don't like is the struggle to be paid by large purse holders for services rendered.
312. My answer to question 26 was wrong as none of the answers listed is applicable. I only ticked it so as to complete the survey.
313. Empathy influences my performance in so far as I am more sensitive to opportunities to allow the minority voice be heard
314. No one seems to appreciate the work the interpreters do.
315. I did a voluntary batch of sessions for my church (preparations for 7 baptisms, leading right up to the event) - this resulted in the minority language speakers saying 'God bless you, God bless you' several times.
316. Empathy \*should\* impact your work. Understanding where a person is coming from is empathy... without it you would not be able to \*understand\* someone.
317. British public hates interpreters
318. Quelquefois une grande aide, le plus souvent une aide, tout simplement
319. La plus grande difficulté est de ne pas sortir du cadre, de faire comprendre que nous sommes des tiers neutres et qu'il ne faut pas nous demander de prendre position dans l'affaire.
320. Am häufigsten wird die Arbeit von Dolmetschern geschätzt, wenn es Vergleiche zu Situationen ohne Unterstützung eines/einer Dolmetscher/-in oder zu Situationen mit qualitativ minderer Verdolmetschung mit entsprechenden negativen Folgen.
321. Der Punkt "Minderheitensprache" macht in einem allgemeinen Formular wenig Sinn
322. Die letzte Frage ist irreführend, ich habe nie mit Minderheitensprachen zu tun,



323. "Notwenig" ist ein schöner Verschreiber, passt in den Kontext
324. Lavoro prevalentemente in ambiti professionali, mai nel settore sociale
325. Una volta capita il ruolo e l'importanza della nostra figura professionale, i fornitori del servizio apprezzano meglio la nostra collaborazione. Non vi è concorrenza ma solo cooperazione tra due figure professionali e nell'unico scopo di soddisfare l'utenza finale.
326. Quando io entrai in Amministrazione nel 1996 il primo commento che sentii sulla mia qualifica fu "E questa da dov'è uscita dall'uovo di Pasqua?".
327. Nella mia attività lavorativa bisogna fare un grande distinguo: se si tratta di persone arrestate o sottoposte a fermo d'identificazione la collaborazione è molto spesso assente mentre quando gli stranieri hanno necessità di farsi capire (vedi richiedenti asilo o permesso di soggiorno) sono molto collaborativi.
328. Pochi comprendono le difficoltà del lavoro ("Devi solo tradurre") e la preparazione che sta a monte; e poi nell'amm.ne pubblica un certo numero, oggi, sono interpreti e traduttori grazie a pseudo-concorsi per pseudo-titoli, voluti dai sindacati per ottenere tessere per sé e far ottenere aumenti di livello e di stipendio agli interessati, che non hanno neanche il buon senso di continuare a fare gli amministrativi come facevano prima.
329. Devo dire che le persone di madre lingua italiana apprezzano tanto il lavoro che faccio per loro - soprattutto quelle che parlano solo ed esclusivamente italiano
330. Non posso rispondere di persona quindi ho risposto "mai" ma dovrebbe essere "non applicabile"
331. Nell'ospedale in cui lavoro, la maggior parte dei dottori considera l'interprete una seccatura (i colloqui sono più lunghi, più difficili da gestire, soprattutto in presenza di parenti che interferiscono nella comunicazione). I pazienti vengono considerati degli ignoranti e quindi le informazioni e le spiegazioni che vengono date sono scarse rispetto a quelle date ad un cliente di lingua inglese. L'interprete viene prenotato e chiamato quando il membro della famiglia non è presente (con loro è più facile comunicare: il paziente viene completamente escluso dalla conversazione ed i dottori si affidano alle informazioni distorte e parziali dei familiari mettendo a rischio la salute del paziente. I membri della famiglia prendono decisioni per loro, facendo anche firmare consensi informati, e dil paziente rimane all'oscuro di tutto...) Gli ospedali hanno anche delle policy che riguardano l'uso dei servizi linguistici e l'inclusione dei pazienti con scarsa conoscenza della lingua inglese nelle loro cure... la policy viene ignorata fin quando qualcuno, come me, cultural liaison officer, gliela ricorda...insomma il discorso è lungo e complesso e dipende anche dalla lingua del parlante straniero. Nel caso di flussi migratori "nuovi" in l'Australia e quindi lingue che vengono definite "rare" (Dinka, Hakka, Haka, dialetti africani etc) allora non si può fare a meno dell'interprete, visto che i pazienti sono immigrati di prima generazione e non hanno parenti che parlano inglese...
332. Le persone che meno capiscono il ruolo dell'interprete, per quanto riguarda gli ospedali, per esempio, sono le infermiere e le receptionist dei reparti, vale a dire quelle persone che non lavorano a stretto contatto con l'interprete e spesso mostrano un atteggiamento di sufficienza.
333. Un miembro muy importante de The Joint Comission Hizo muy buen comentario acerca de mi trabajo. ;)
334. La apreciación parece tener que ver con el terreno en que se mueve el intérprete. El mayor aprecio lo he encontrado siempre en el sector de la psicología, psiquiatría
335. La "neutralidad" tiene varias lecturas, no puedo ser neutral porque mi presencia condiciona la consulta medica y la interacción con los interlocutores y hay que ser consciente de ello (el hecho de ser mujer,blanca y joven, por ejemplo)
336. Cuanto más trabajamos con personal de SSPP, más conocen y valoran nuestra función y habilidades.
337. Depende del contexto, del beneficiario de la traducción, y del entorno social y laboral
338. Al trabajar sobre todo con víctimas de tráfico de seres humanos con fines de explotación sexual sufro mucho. creí que con el paso del tiempo lo llevaría mejor, pero cada vez me afecta más.
339. Casi siempre trabajo sin que me faciliten material por adelantado para preparar la interpretación, aunque ésta sea muy especializada
340. Con el tiempo se adquiere experiencia y hoy por hoy estoy segura de poder hacer el trabajo mejor que antes. Todavía hay gente en los SSPP que creen que el interprete es una "maqina" y hablan sin tener en cuenta que debemos repetir. Ahora me atrevo a poner "orden", pedir pausas, y tambien sugerirle al

poveedor de servicios por ejemplo, que use papel para que el extranjero pueda escribir o dibujar, cuando la explicacion no es suficiente y especialmente si la traduccion es telefonica. Ahora estoy trabajando mucho por telefono. En algunos casos, Cuando ha habido problemas de entendimiento he tenido que decir que la persona NO HABLA el mismo idioma. Hay gente que vivio en España, por ej y aprendio el idioma pero no lo domina porque no es su idioma materno.

### **Question 33. Do you think that the status of public service interpreters will improve in the future?**

341. I hope so, but I'm concerned that a lot of interpreters working in the field are not providing adequate interpretation services. Perhaps due to the fact there is a high demand for my language combination, but not enough interpreters. People who might have knowledge of two languages are hired readily even though they don't have the skills or even the knowledge of the particular setting/context of various assignments.
342. Hopefully it could improve and be considered an important role.
343. It depends on which country they're working in, how many services are needed and will be in need in the future.
344. There needs to be a major lawsuit for incompetence to change things.
345. We are being repudiated, replaced and phased out in many different ways. A sunset industry to me, thus the discouragement to my child to get into my profession.
346. I also recently founded a non-profit organization called Bilinguals International. One of its missions is to offer workshops to healthcare providers on how to work with certified interpreters better and also on risks of using bi-lingual staff as an ad hoc interpreter. If you would like to talk further, please contact me.
347. That's a tough one to predict, as long as few individuals are aspiring to enter the interpreting market actually go to the trouble of getting an advanced degree in T&I.
348. It depends on how we (PSI) work for the society. Because people who cannot speak foreign languages cannot imagine what we are doing.
349. PSI and the research on it is having its momentum, of which your study is a proof.
350. I don't think a PSI needs a "status" in the public eye. How people perceive my job doesn't affect me. It is how I perceive it that matters. I get paid a very decent fee when I interpret based on my expertise. Making a living and feeling good about what I do is the most important thing to me.
351. Until we come together to elevate this profession by creating national standards for criteria, training and credentialing, this profession will continue to be diluted by untrained and incompetent PSI who drag the rest of us down.
352. It has been mostly invisible for such a long time, and I do not see signs of change.
353. The status is quite good.
354. I hope it will thanks to improvements in the education of public service interpreters (may raise the status of the profession) and lobbying work by professional organizations.
355. Over time, yes, as the profession matures and more countries adopt formal legislation that promotes language access. This will happen because worldwide migration continues to increase and to spread through all parts of the world. In addition, in many parts of the world people are increasingly using human rights charters as a basis for arguing for the right to access to services through a language bridge.
356. I hope so.
357. World is coming more closer.
358. I believe it would improve if interpreters, generally speaking, were better trained and more conscious of their role and their significance.
359. I can only hope so.
360. Here in the US, Title VI assures language access and with the Obama care, more immigrants LEP need interpreters to assure compliance and avoid suits.
361. I would hope so.
362. I hope so.



363. In this country, in the Federal system, they are well thought of and well compensated. It could be better but is not bad.
364. Hope so! Greatly undervalued at present.
365. We seem to be heading for global "mis-communication", be it because of all differences between human communities, or because of losing the mastery of our own native tongues
366. The rates are still practically the same as over 20 years ago when I started, i.e. they have not even been fully adjusted for inflation. On the other hand, the demands have increases (written + oral examination in the paralegal field, to be put on the official list; return travel time limited to 1 h for the whole of canton, even if sometimes this means more than a double time span; ...)
367. It depends which political party wins the election, certainly not under this government.
368. It depends on the society in which the interpreter is living.
369. The market situation is bad and that fact that people in economic difficulties/students are prepared to work for nothing at all and disregard the working rules is a sure recipe for disaster.
370. It should, but budgeting conflicts create a schism between service providers and interpreters.
371. Swedish constitution demands that everyone who can't speak Swedish has right to interpreter.
372. I hope so!
373. Not in Poland - this is an abandoned theme - latest amendments (except for remuneration) to the law on professional status of translators/interpreters is 10-year old and nobody cares to adapt it to the changing reality
374. People rely on gadgets
375. Yes, but it requires active involvement on our part in shaping the status.
376. As long as we do not stand up for ourselves in this country, I do not see it happening.
377. With the quality formal education in Norway in place.
378. The profession does not exist as such. It is at the lowest at the moment
379. Not in the UK. Unfortunately government administration here sees does not understand the purpose nor value of efficient translation and fails to manage it efficiently. In the end they spend too much where not need and make cuts without proper consideration.
380. As more research and education become more common, the status will rise
381. ... it should ....
382. We are paid far below the minimum rate. I am a certified and trained interpreter with more than 25 years of experience and yet I have to do 3-4 jobs to make ends meet. Is this the way a 'professional' is supposed to live in my country?
383. The status is not important for me
384. I hope so!
385. In Belgium there is no legal status for interpreters, but on the other hand the access to the job is easy. Everybody can become interpreter in the public sector.
386. Really hope so, as I love the job.
387. Only if their competence and the quality of their work is ensured to a completely different extent than what is the case in Norway today.
388. I hope so
389. Unfortunately agencies are apparently gaining space, and the logic of profit seems to prevail on the needs of the public service, while the interpreters have less and less direct access to the market.
390. Yes, if we work on it.
391. Definitely not in the UK
392. Not in Norway. "they" will always be Up there with their (jantelov-search wikipedia)
393. I hope it will.
394. I think the demand and criteria for PSI will be higher in the future than it is today. The higher the criteria (and demand) to become PSI, the more improved status will PSI get.
395. There has been work done in Norway to improve the status of interpreters, in regards of studies, registration and evaluation of interpreters. For example the Courts in Norway are obliged to choose Interpreters holding a certain Level of education.

396. I hope so!
397. Check the Tolkesentralen project of the new governmental report on public service interpreting, plans for a new law regulation etc. I'm sure IMDi can help you with that.
398. The interpreters themselves complain too much and are not solidarity to each other. e.g. The ones certified that work in court almost all of the time are giving opinion on behalf of all of us. They are quite marxistic. They create a bad climate.
399. As long as the government decides which rates we can ask and not a penny more we cannot improve our situation (I speak as an sign language interpreter, I do not know how the situation is with other languages)
400. It would help if the spoken language interpreting field would adopt our tradition of education and then upgrade their performance and the entire perception of the interpreting field together
401. It will get better eventually, but very slowly.
402. I certainly hope so!
403. If 33 years of experience is worth anything, I've seen it improve and can hope for more!
404. Unfortunately the powers that be are not in the least concerned about enhancing the status of public service interpreters. Cost cutting is the name of the game.
405. Not unless things change at government level
406. In spoken languages, yes. In signed languages for deaf communities, no.
407. The rates paid are abysmal and are being cut with every passing year. How can this improve the status?
408. it will be interesting to see how technology will impact the need for humans to perform this role
409. I don't know that it's exactly status we crave, but rather deep respect for the intricately complex work that we do on a daily basis. Yet, again status may begin to be more tied to context, if both parties for who we are interpreting are of equal status (employment) then yes, our status will likely rise. However, if there continues to be a deep socio-economic divide between language majority and language minority clients then, no, I think our status is like to remain the same.
410. I wanted to comment on the question of comparing interpreter status to that of other professions. As a PSI, I work with nurses and social workers. Why should I see myself as above them? Yes, I work with doctors and University lecturers, too, and I feel I'm as good at my job as they are at theirs, but I don't have a doctorate, so why should I equate my status to theirs? This does not indicate a lack of self-esteem or a low estimation of my colleagues; rather, I think it is a matter of respect and humility.
411. Education of interpreters and clients continues to increase and is becoming the norm rather than the exception. Technology has opened up communication avenues as well.
412. But it will be a struggle!
413. Not in the UK. Here the profession is being completely destroyed because of outsourcing. Agencies pay interpreters very badly and do not treat us as professionals. The press attacks interpreters all the time and the public think that foreigners should not have access to an interpreter for free. If you research the articles published in the British newspapers in the last couple of years you will see how interpreting/interpreters are treated in the UK. This might help: <http://professionalinterpretersalliance.blogspot.co.uk/> Also check Linguist Lounge.
414. Nobody cares about what we do, nobody values our profession. Since 2012 and the new laws on healthcare interpreting we are considered to be less than nothing. The powers that be don't know that they are playing with people's lives
415. If I can help it, yes. I have two Employment Tribunal cases challenging the current terms & conditions. Also, I think that it will become a more stratified profession.
416. I do hope so!
417. I hope so.
418. I can only hope so
419. I get a lot more respect as an interpreter than I do as an administrator. I think the general public's perception may be negative due to the media, but public and voluntary organisations I work for are always grateful and respectful.
420. At least I hope so!

421. PSI undermined by the current UK government who see it as an easy cost cutting target and because of the general immigration debate at present.
422. I hope so, but it is hard to imagine at this stage.
423. I hope so
424. Depends on who is in government and what new 'ideas' they come up with
425. Public don't like to see interpreters anywhere
426. Eventually but not immediately
427. Good work is being done in this area, but the "authorities" do not view it as any sort of priority.
428. J'espère bien. J'en reste confiante.
429. Tant que les donneurs d'ordre ne comprendront pas que l'interprétation et la traduction sont plus que de simplement "parler des langues", l'image de la profession sera mauvaise et la rémunération ira avec.
430. Dès que les gens se rendront compte du fait que les traductions par machines ne valent rien
431. Je pense que les interprètes jurés devront avoir un meilleur statut sinon il n'y en aura plus. Actuellement, ils sont partout payés avec retard (de 2 mois à 2 ans de retard), ce qui fait que beaucoup décrochent de la profession. Or, ces traductions sont requis par la loi belge, par exemple, pour un mariage, ou pour les enquêtes précédant un mariage à l'étranger, à la police. Si ces services veulent encore trouver des interprètes, quelque chose doit changer.
432. Si des réformes positives sont faites, oui
433. Plus de formation et une prise de conscience de l'importance de la rémunération dans les services de santé
434. Déjà il faudrait que les interprètes eux mêmes arrêtent de considérer 2 types d'interprètes (conférence et "autres) pour que la société nous voit comme un même corps de métier
435. A cause de la baisse des budgets (d'où recours à des interprètes moins qualifiés car moins exigeants)
436. Je crains que non
437. l'excuse financière, fallacieuse, sera mis en avant pour justifier le défaut de formation et de rémunération
438. J'espère mais je n'en suis pas sûre quand on voit que les services publics peuvent faire appel à n'importe qui (femme de ménage, serveur...) par le biais des assermentations ad hoc et ne sont pas obligés de recourir à des interprètes formés.
439. Es ist immer vom Status und der situation abhängig in der übersetzt werden muss.wenn es eine dienstleistung oder ähnliches ist wird es geschätzt. wenn es um eher unerwünschte Ausländer geht eher nicht.
440. Solange der Beruf des Dolmetschers nicht geschützt ist, ist es schwierig, den Status zu verbessern.
441. Ich hoffe es stark.
442. Mein Status schon, da ich mich noch spezialisieren möchte
443. Ich hoffe es!
444. Warum sollte sich der Status verbessern? Selbst wenn es mehr Geld gäbe, würde man es für sichtbare Dinge verwenden
445. Hierzulande haben auch sehr schlecht qualifizierte, unfähige und gar unzuverlässige Personen gedolmetscht, und sind teilweise unvorteilhaft in die Medien geraten, mit verheerenden Folgen für das Ansehen des Berufes. Dies muss sich zwangsläufig bessern.
446. Spero
447. La nostra realtà è diversa
448. C'è sempre più consapevolezza dell'importanza del ruolo dell'interprete e se verranno supportate da normative adeguate in materia di tutela, lo status dell'interprete nkn può che migliorare!
449. Non migliorerà sino a quando la retribuzione resterà bassa e non vi sarà un criterio di selezione per il reclutamento degli interpreti per i servizi pubblici, in particolare per i Tribunali, dato che il recepimento della Direttiva UE 64/2010 è avvenuto solo sulla carta
450. I cambiamenti nella pubblica amministrazione sono lenti e c'è ancora molto da fare. Qualche passo avanti però è stato fatto, grazie al nostro impegno.
451. Non sono molto ottimista perché noi professionisti del settore speravamo che l'attuazione della Direttiva 2010/64/UE sul diritto all'interpretazione ed alla traduzione nei procedimenti penali (in Italia è stata

attuata con il decreto lgsvo n.32 del 4 marzo 2014) e della Direttiva 2012/13/UE sul diritto all'informazione nei procedimenti penali (In Italia è stata attuata con il decreto lgsvo n.101 del 1° luglio 2014) creasse finalmente presso le Procure ed i Tribunali un Albo professionale che, previa verifica dei titoli, e dei requisiti., autorizzasse solo gli iscritti ad asseverare atti/documenti tradotti ed a tradurre/interpretare nel corso di procedimenti penali; così purtroppo non è avvenuto per cui attualmente, come in passato è sempre stato chiunque può asseverare una traduzione, purché se ne assuma la responsabilità, pertanto la professionalità viene svilita ed annullate le pretese di un "dignitosa" riconoscimento dell'opera di ingegno.

452. Presupposto sarebbe il miglioramento dell'intera Pubblica amm.ne, ma ci credo poco
453. In Australia il sindacato sta tentando di stabilire contatti con i governi federale e statale, in quanto al momento la "fornitura" di interpreti dipende da gare di appalto. Questo significa che spesso per vincere le agenzie giocano al ribasso, con conseguenze negative per gli/le interpreti.
454. lo spero tanto perché è un lavoro difficile ed ancora troppo poco apprezzato e retribuito
455. Con la crisi attuale tutte le strutture cercano di risparmiare sul nostro lavoro
456. Temo con governi sempre più di destra
457. Lo spero, però penso che ci sia tanta corruzione nel sistema degli appalti pubblici.
458. Spero
459. Voglio essere positiva e fiduciosa, ma è molto difficile che migliori
460. Non lo so, sicuramente dovrebbe migliorare per potersi rafforzare
461. In un futuro molto lontano. Il nostro settore purtroppo si trova a difronte molti ostacoli: il deprofessionalismo, le lobbies che governano il mercato, la mancata regolamentazione nel settore, il non riconoscimento della nostra professione in quanto tale, paghe ridicole... Il futuro sta nelle mani delle nuove generazioni di interpreti (interpreti professionisti, che hanno studiato e sanno cosa è l'etica professionale) che insieme all'esperienza della vecchia guardia possono lottare oggi per migliorare il domani
462. La tecnología hace parecer innecesario en un futuro al traductor/intérprete (Skype ofrece ya interpretación en sus conexiones). Pero el aumento de la necesidad de comunicación entre hablantes de diferentes idiomas puede evidenciar aún la importancia de traductores e intérpretes competentes.
463. Espero que sí y lucho por ello.
464. Se está trabajando para ello. Actualmente están infravalorados. Hay que seguir trabajando y ser optimistas.
465. Por sentido común debería mejorar, pero por el devenir general, como todas las profesiones que no sean directivas/especulativas/comerciales, de hecho empeorará.
466. Depende de la voluntad del legislador, del colegio profesional y de los traductores
467. SÓLO MEJORARÁ SI LOS LEGISLADORES CONOCEN A FONDO NUESTRO TRABAJO Y A NOSOTROS COMO PROFESIONALES, Y SE DAN CUENTA DE LA LABOR QUE HACEMOS.
468. Dentro de la Administración Pública española no interesa desde un punto de vista económico, así que esto se intenta evitar por todos los medios
469. En la actualidad, en mi país NO valoran mi profesión, en 2009 promulgaron una ley que impone a los SS.PP. utilizar intérpretes diplomados y jurados pero en la práctica llaman a menudo gente sin calificación. Eso sobre todo cuando hay agencias que actúan como intermediarios. Además los honorarios han sido congelados desde 2003, en términos NOMINALES!!!! Me parece que somos casi la única profesión calificada en Holanda que ha sufrido tal congelación de honorarios durante tanto tiempo.
470. Los servicios de SSPP, bien hechos, son cada vez más necesarios para que las relaciones humanas interlingüales (comercio, política, religión) ocurran de manera más favorable.

### **Question 34. In your opinion, to what extent are the following changes to the profession likely to occur?**

471. When you consider how this profession will change, be sure to take into account how technology is flipping the profession. Reliable access to the internet and video and audio connectivity will be to interpreting what initial access to written exchange via email and the web were to translation. The

- translation industry went from a cottage industry to a multi-billion global industry over 15 years or so. Interpreting is on that tipping point. Mobile penetration is expanding even into the hardest to reach nations in Asia and Africa. The only barrier to communication is now language - as these technologies improve, the demand for instant verbal communication is going to explode. The only way to meet it will be with a mix of machine interpreting "known as speech to speech translation" and human interpreters working across many technological platforms. Also, our workplaces are being flipped- healthcare is going increasingly remote, for example. How will medical interpreting be impacted by doctors in India or Mexico who can provide diagnostic and real-time consulting through personal home medical devices and skype? In other words, we are in a time of tremendous disruption that is going to transform PSI just as it is now transforming the conference interpreting market.
472. In Denmark, I could imagine a rise in the number of refugees and (illegal) immigrants needing PSIs. That is: I could envision a future where more users of interpreters request interpreting in languages that are their second or third languages (English, French ...) rather than their first native language (which in Denmark would be more exotic/rarer languages such as African tribal languages and Middle Eastern dialects). As far as I have been hearing, often it is simply not possible to find a qualified interpreter, or indeed any interpreter at all, who can communicate in such languages.
  473. I often come across people who actually apologize to me for the inconvenience of calling me in, for example for a police interview. They seem to believe that their own English is proficient enough to do the interview themselves. (To be fair, Danes are generally pretty good at speaking English!) More often than not, 5 minutes in, they realise that they actually need my help after all.
  474. Maybe the trend will go to phone/video (conference) interpreting, which puts pressure on rates, but also much reduces the costs, per diem, travel, ...
  475. Conference interpreting is simultaneous interpreting.
  476. I don't think social networks have anything to do with the visibility of interpreters.
  477. The dynamics may totally change - it's a question of how far in future are we talking about :)
  478. Many people think that interpretation is a waste of money for the country
  479. With the movement of people across borders, particularly within the EU, and the ever-changing economic situations in different countries, people will always go where the work is without necessarily having the language skills for each country.
  480. Interpreters are always in-fighting on social networks and behaviour is rarely conducive to effective collective action.
  481. The social networks exist already. How could the interpreters become more visible than nowadays? Everybody can open an account on LinkedIn or facebook.
  482. Immigration policies influence the need for interpreters.
  483. The state of T&I is in a total and utter disarray and I am rather frustrated
  484. It's difficult to know the answers to these questions
  485. We need students like you to shed light on the profession and bring it to the forefront of our economies.
  486. In the UK the profession will soon be left to unqualified bilinguals, all professional qualified interpreters will have to leave the profession because we are so badly paid.
  487. My position is that when you work at a long trial as a PSI you do the same job as a conference interpreter, except harder from a psychological sense. But you only do two languages.
  488. Tant qu'il y a 23 langues dans l'Union, notre pain-beurre est assuré...
  489. Les associations de d'interprètes oeuvrent pour la reconnaissance de la profession, par exemple auprès du gouvernement, pour que les interprètes jurés soient payés en temps voulu. Je pense que cela va porter ses fruits.
  490. Passe
  491. L'invasion de l'anglais est perçu comme source d'économies, donc défavorable aux interprètes en particulier et à la culture en général.
  492. Computer und Software übernehmen die Arbeit.
  493. Migrationsstrukturen verändern sich darum auch die Struktur der Dolmetscher

494. Insbesondere soziale Einrichtungen und Institutionen im Gesundheitswesen sind entweder nicht gewillt oder finanziell nicht in der Lage, Dolmetscher/innen angemessen zu entlohnen. Hinzu kommt die gesellschaftlich zunehmende Ansicht, dass man sich auch mit Kauderwelsch-Englisch oder laien-Sprachkenntnissen hinreichend verständigen und dabei viel Geld sparen kann.
495. Die Sichtbarkeit liegt an uns, s. Berufsverbände
496. Hier fehlt die zeitliche Begrenzung. Änderungen in 5 oder 10 oder 20 Jahren?
497. Molto dipenderà dalle lingue di lavoro: probabilmente diventeranno indispensabili, temo, interpreti di lingue orientali (cinese), africane e dei paesi arabi a scapito delle lingue europee
498. E' essenziale stabilire contatti fra governi, agenzie e rappresentanti degli/delle interpreti
499. Spero davvero che l'importanza della professione verrà riconosciuta presto
500. Tendrán más visibilidad los intérpretes aficionados y gratuitos
501. Todo depende del lugar y del momento en el que nos encontremos.
502. Las redes sociales aceptan al error en las comunicaciones, porque los usuarios son jóvenes, inexpertos, y la gran mayoría de veces no hay "consecuencias" que las limiten.
503. En tanto exista la inmigración, existirá la necesidad de intérpretes.

**Question 37. Any other comments about your personal experience or the profession would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!**

504. Depending on the field we work--in legal practice, I must convey the message verbatim. But, in health work, I apply cultural and language expressions.
505. I do agree that the status of interpreters needs to be improved, regulations and certification would be a step in the right direction. In this way, proficient interpreters would continue to be able to provide services, whereas interpreters who don't have the necessary skill or language/cultural proficiency would not pass certification and thus not be able to provide this service until they met the requirements. This would also insure that with only qualified interpreters in the profession, the profession's status. The only certification available for interpretation is a translation exam, the two services are quite different and thus this exam is not appropriate. The courses/training are quite expensive compared to the potential income, many of my colleagues decide not to attend. Recently, I completed some courses, however they cost approximately 3-4 months of my income earned through interpreting.
506. Thanks!
507. It is important but absolutely undervalued and it is only rewarding in a personal sense
508. Being in an English speaking country I find testing of the language the interpretation is from is at times unnecessarily high though the language the interpretation is into (English) is extremely low making the whole job of interpretation inaccurate and weak
509. It is important to take into consideration the level of education some of the interpreters have - they might not even have any school experience, but serving as a great link for understanding their community. It is sometimes very hard to find interpreters for minor language groups.
510. The interpretation needs are not very high in my living area and it's not a source of stable income, so I do it as freelance. And the pay level is moderate or relatively low. I won't encourage anyone to get into this profession unless a personal interest is so strong that it weighs more than the material rewards. That's only applicable in my case.
511. Thanks
512. The media shows daily UN conference news clip "voice of translator" another misnomer and oxymoron, they could not even tell the difference between the roles of translators and interpreters likewise with 90% of HCP's I work with last 11 years. That is the current sad state of our perception by media and HCP's alike.
513. I also recently founded a non-profit organization called Bilinguals International.
514. One of its missions is to offer workshops to healthcare providers on how to work with certified interpreters better and also on risks of using bi-lingual staff as an ad hoc interpreter. If you would like to talk further, please contact me"



515. Stipulation/Certification of an ISO standard for interpretation will upgrade the standard of the interpretation job..
516. I strongly believe that my actions and attitude as an interpreter are important influences on the way people perceive this endeavor. I commend you on putting together an excellent survey, Paola!
517. I have been a medical interpreter since 2009 and my experience is mostly positive. I provide a service and I know that my contribution is valuable. It would be nice to see certification become more accepted at a national level.
518. I wrote a small paper for interpreters status in the society particularly in local towns last year. So I am very interested in what you are doing. Since 2000, some universities have started interpreting and translation studies as regular curriculum in Japan. I believe this helps improve our status. Not all the students of the interpreting course become interpreters, but they know how hard the interpreting jobs are. So they tend to respect us more than ordinary people. When such people give us jobs, they help provide information and materials in advance, because they learned they are so important for interpreters to do a good job.
519. I have never been as passionate about a job as when I work in the courtroom or at a police station. PSI has its problems but blaming solely the interpreters is unfair. I believe more wide-scale and periodical professional development training courses would largely improve the quality of interpreting and the status of PSI. However, I do not believe that implementing certification or accreditation systems can solve the problems. Service providers need to be educated on working with interpreters and interpreters need to be given proper working conditions and opportunities to grow in their profession.
520. Thank You. Happy New Year.
521. Thank you
522. I live in California where the court interpreters have been respected and acknowledge for years. This was mostly due to the active work of interpreters themselves. In other parts of the US interpreters struggle to be acknowledged and respected. I agree that working interpreters should have advanced education. I know that in Europe a Masters is necessary. That has not been the case in the US. In fact, I truly feel sorry for those interpreters/translators who spend thousands of dollars to acquire a higher degree and find themselves unable to find work. I do think that eventually this profession (like many others) will require a Masters. However, we have to remember that the government only acknowledges those individuals who have taken a test and passed in order to work in the state and federal courts. It doesn't matter how much general knowledge you have of the field. Specific legal knowledge is essential.
523. The best interpreter should work with two mother tongue languages
524. As a freelance healthcare interpreter, having national certification has helped advance the profession. Networking on social media has been key for me in learning appropriate rates, best practices, and continuing to grow professionally. Particularly a group on Facebook for certified interpreters has been very helpful and has connected me to new agencies and fellow interpreters.
525. Please send me a copy of the results of your study
526. Do not expect anything but enjoy your work
527. To be on the National Register of interpreters in Criminal Proceedings one has to agree to ridiculously low hourly rates approved by the Government. The Directive proved to be ineffective in improving the status of public service interpreters in Bulgaria.
528. I tried to make a full-time business out of this in an area with significant but not overwhelming immigrant population. I could not make it sustainable. Now I enjoy it part time.
529. Good luck with your research
530. Please make the results of your research known!
531. As a native speaker of Romanian and Hungarian languages when it comes to actually working the fact that I don't have a Master's Degree means very little both to the people I work for/with or myself, it is the real understanding of the language and culture that is relevant - no degree will replace that.
532. I am against national proof in translating because I know it should be not very successful at least not in Finland because of Finnish too rigorous criteria. I have been doing this job for almost 30 years, so I know how it is in Finland... Greetings to Trst, this is one of my favourite cities.

533. I've been studying myself status of interpreter in Finland languages Russia-Finnish. And thank you for studying this! Good luck with your work!!!
534. I enjoy my work and find it very satisfactory, but I have worked consistently over the years to provide a service of a very high standard. I believe my performance and that of my colleagues has helped both professionals and migrants understand the role of the public service interpreter. Our public image has improved greatly since I started working in this field, some 25 years ago. However, there is still a long way to go.
535. While professional training + examination are no guarantee that a person will be a good interpreter in practice, at least these things vouch for that person having a minimum of qualifications. If we truly took interpreting quality seriously, there would be a mentor period or supervisory function for newly graduated or newly active interpreters. During this period they could observe, listen, learn, discuss ... and both the mentors and the novices would become better interpreting professionals! Good luck with your research. :O)
536. It will good to develop a good system in monitoring the performance of Court interpreters as this affects the offender and the plaintiff.
537. Good luck
538. A strong trade union whose members quite simply refused to work at low-paid assignments or under poor conditions might help public service interpreters' status and pay, but trying to get public service interpreters to take collective action would be like trying to get cats to migrate in a large herd. This is because public service interpreters tend to work independently of each other, and have little contact with their colleagues. Those who are less professional further have little desire to have their work scrutinized, and therefore have little desire to associate with colleagues in a professional organization of any kind.
539. Some questions do not apply to me, but I had to answer anyway
540. God bless you
541. We already have the register mentioned in 36 in Denmark, and in my experience, it makes our clients have faith in us and our competences as PSIs.
542. I don't have a lot of experience as an interpreter. My professional degree is Certified Public Translator, but since there is no "Public Interpreter" degree in my country, any time the Law requires an interpreter, the Court summons us. I like the job (appearing in Court), fees are ok, but unfortunately cases involving foreign nationals are not a common issue in Uruguay.
543. Interpreters should be well read, should be culturally sensitive, and should be willing to learn new things every day.
544. I am basically a conference interpreter, but unfortunately I did not complete the other survey. I tried to do it just now, but it is closed.
545. I started interpreting 40 years ago in 1974. While I have obtained other degrees besides my Master's in Conference Interpretation, I have never ceased loving my field and being certain that it makes a difference. At the same time, despite ongoing efforts to enhance the status of interpretation in various fora, a combination of factors conspire against that goal: uneven entrance requirements into the profession is a major impediment. The growing use of English in conference settings is another factor that, along with cost, will likely make the need for interpretation less pressing.
546. Each nation/individual seems to be "re-inventing" the lingua franca, i.e. the English language, and the general education in the native language is going down - not conducive to interpretation
547. This type of work can only be an accessory activity, if one is free-lance, since it is sporadic and sometimes very short, eg. 1 hour, plus travel... which all keeps you from some other activity at least half a day. I need quite a bit of flexibility to combine conf. int., translation and community interpreting - my priorities are in that order...
548. Re: Remuneration - it's all about negotiating a rate you want, it has nothing to do with "fairness." It's all about negotiation.
549. I suggest you have this questionnaire corrected by someone whose mother tongue is English, it contains several grammatical errors.
550. I LOVE MY JOB AS A MEDICAL INTERPRETER!



551. It is a great profession, absolutely love it - problem is that it doesn't seem to be enough work (outside Europe) to be able to only focus on interpreting / translation work
552. Interpreters' work and responsibilities should be adequately remunerated as their job is of utter importance. If the work of the Interpreter doesn't work, then nothing works. Thank you.
553. Well, I strongly disliked the choice of words in the question about whether conference interpretation is more prestigious!!? It is simply much more demanding and not everyone is suitable for that work. Based on what I have seen on the private market (I work a lot for the EU institutions) the quality is often very poor. I train both community and conference interpreters and I think that also active interpreters should acknowledge the differences...
554. The demeanor of the interpreter is another important factor in public perception. We, as interpreters need to respect all cultural and ethnic backgrounds and conduct ourselves in a highly professional manner.
555. My answers refer to me as a Court Interpreter in Sweden. Surely, the conditions in other countries are different.
556. Most conference interpreters I know would never entertain the idea of working in the Police or Court environment, though some would do voluntary work for humanitarian organisations or for political asylum cases sometimes.
557. In Sweden, we have an examination but the privatization harmed that very much. private interpreting agencies are cheating very much about their interpreters qualifications...
558. It's a very uncertain profession in terms of work and thereby also the wage.
559. For ensuring quality as well as optimal use of interpreter skills, it should be organized nationally, not like now with numerous private agencies vying for public service contracts buy competition on how much they can lower the pay to interpreters.
560. GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR RESEARCH. ALL THE BEST, PAOLA
561. Accuracy and speed in transmitting the message to both parties are essential prerequisites in providing a good service as interpreter.
562. Not really. I would be interested in the results of the survey, though.
563. Public institutions have already admitted that interpreters are useful "creatures", most of the population regards them to be like any other craftsmen who should render services; people open their eyes widely, when they are informed about legal regulations, social background and cultural differences which affect the interpreter's job and how tough it could be
564. Best of wishes with your dissertation.
565. Thank you for doing this research. And good luck!:)
566. Thank you for devoting your research to such an important topic
567. Some questions do not allow proper choice and I put my replies at random there
568. I'd like to be informed of your findings:)
569. I'm conference interpreter, no training on it but work about 32 years as an conference interpreter, I work about 90 days a year as a conference interpreter. I feel I'm very well accepted and valued, especially by ministries, banks and big congress and i love my work
570. The biggest problem, perhaps, is the lack of educated interpreters in all languages, the use of uneducated immigrants and so called two markets - the requirement of creating one's own private company but leaving the rates at the level of employed freelancers. Big companies do not appreciate their subcontractors and as business owners, nobody protects your rights. With rare languages there might be only 1-10 hours of work in a month, even less, but still one must have his own company in order to work. Such company does not last very long time. Many public interpreters have another job but then it is hard to be available for interpreting assignments. Often the interpreters are chosen by the place they live, not by professionalism. The travelling costs easily rise above the interpreting fee.
571. I found it difficult to answer the questions in this form. It seems to me that the form forces me to choose an answer even though neither of the options corresponds to what I think. For example, in question # 25 none of the options corresponds to reality. These caveats should be taken into account when analyzing

- the results of the survey. In other words, the form does not express "what I think," it expresses what I am forced to think. I hope you conduct semi-structured interviews with some of the participants.
572. Many people are jealous to the interpreters because of the knowledge of foreign languages and they don't want that interpreters should be appreciated more. Male interpreters earn more than female, they also get better jobs. Interpreters should be invisible when acting and enaming the communication so that people can take them seriously and trust them. It is very important what to wear when working with different social classes and different cultures.
573. Professional designation is important for society to accept and recognize our work as a specialized skill. Title Protection/Licence for Interpreters will aid in that recognition.
574. Im proud of my work. Canada is a great place to work. We are working on becoming a more accessible country.
575. In The Netherlands we have a register, which is controlled by the government: it pulls all the strings and uses them to its own benefit, yet complying with the Directive! Tendering public service interpreting and translation assignment has further devalued our profession (litt. and fig.) It enhances people to think the word is easy: if paid so little, it can't be much...
576. The community needs to be educated about the important role Professional Interpreters do in facilitating communication at a regular intervals, especially in a mono lingual society like Australia.
577. There is no future for interpreters in the UK. Many professionals have left the profession. Since the new laws were implemented the conditions and treatment became unacceptable for qualified interpreters. Cleaners are better off than are the interpreters. There seems to be no future at list in this country. We feel sorry for the ones who are starting. Also there is no request of quality anybody can become an interpreter. Courts have got used to low quality and performance. Judges do not complain anymore is a fait accompli unfortunately.
578. Re Question 36, the directive is exteremely diffilut to implement unless new technologies are implemented. Unfortunately, it looks like the use of such will most likely take an exploitative course and will have its impact on the overall quality of the services, its common practice and standards
579. In the Netherlands, the government works with a register of qualified interpreters and translators. Unfortunately there are translating agencies that will hire interpreters that are not in that register, because it's much cheaper. The government does nothing against this.
580. An interpretor should always remember that he or she is not a part of the conversation, and has a Secret vow.
581. Unqualified interpreters are still working daily because they are paid less money wheras qualified interpreters are sitting at home without work.
582. In this time many people have two native languages, why is a university degree than required to interpret?
583. Non-conference interpreting is highly dependent upon government budgets; this is a major factor in its poor remuneration; this means it does not have a relationship to a market but to a bureaucracy, and all govt funding is constantly under threat. A second major factor that affects standards and recognition is the constantly growing number of languages required, leading to newcomers to teh field in small and emerging languages who have little professional socialisation and who are unlikely to receive adequate training.
584. Professional Association/Trade Union should fight for better pay and conditions to attract better qualified interpreters. It is unreasonable to expect post-grad qualifications from people paid peanuts - they can't afford it.
585. I'd be available for a one-on-one conversation to expand on these topics if required
586. Regarding 36, if one day we discover what means "appropriately qualified"...
587. There are too many people who don't have the necessary linguistic knowledge to exercise the job. A lot of people become interpreter because they're from a foreign origin and thus are labeled "native speaker". An interpreter Dutch-French is paid 50% less than an interpreter Dutch-Farsi. Although the D-Fr interpreters have generally at least a master degree and the D-Farsi interpreters are political refugees

- with high school education in the best case. Is this appealing or appalling ? At least this is how the system works in Belgium.
588. In the UK, interpreting and translation is offered by some very poor universities Westminster and Salford for example. I would argue that a degree in interpreting isn't a synonym of competency. I think we are now paying the price for interpreters greed and selfishness in the past from being very well remunerated to very precarious conditions. The Interpreters organisations are extremely London centric and neglect other regions of the country.
589. Maintaining records of int & Trans activities is highly recommended. Keeping self well knowledgeable and well acquainted with world developments at all level. Reading & intensive surfing on the Internet. Enhance bank of terminology eps: specially medical legal scientific linguistic idiomatic technological etc Etc...
590. Like lawyers, doctors, and accountants, some certification/accreditation exam should exist for minimum qualification. Thereafter, it behooves each of us to set the bar high.
591. Good luck ;-)
592. Until now I had no negative experience with service providers. From time to time the client, who spoke some English, insisted that the presence of the interpreter was not needed.
593. I miss not so much studies MA/BA in translation studies, but good courses organized in cooperation with the public services in question
594. As interpreter for police and court one is constantly in 'negative' situations. This requires a very strong physical balance on the part of the interpreter. An interpreter can get a lot of 'emotional' material to handle without any possibility to 'unload' due to professional secrecy. An interpreter must not only be good professionally, but also have a strong psyche.
595. It is a very useful survey
596. In the UK, in theory, the profession is already regulated; a National Register has already been established (NRPSI), it is highly respected and very efficient; interpreters must be properly qualified (DPSI, level 6); the European Directive 2010/64/EU, apparently, has not yet been implemented. The real problem lies somewhere else: the power of the agencies and their influence on the Government.
597. Getting into public service interpreting has been rewarding both for my personal satisfaction and economically.
598. In my opinion Private Interpretation is a very lonely profession, it should be improved. The quality must be improved by education because the life of people is on risk specially in health services, courts etc
599. The problem for interpreters is that the interpreter users do not treat the interpreter as an equal colleague.
600. There is a big difference in possibility to take education, examination and attitude to interpreter as such depending on language-pairs you interpret in.
601. I have met interpreters who are not familiar with Code of Practice and are actually working as PSI. I think that is how an image of an interpreter can be spoiled. Good luck!
602. Since most interpreters are freelancers, interpreters compete with each other. The unethical behavior of some interpreters towards other interpreters does not enhance the status of the profession, and the competitive nature of the profession makes the professional associations less effective. People who work as interpreters and who may regard certain candidates as competitors, should not be allowed to arrange examinations.
603. The importance of an interpreter's academic qualifications other than those acquired through courses in interpretation (such as knowledge of law, medicine, accounting, etc.) must be acknowledged. Lists of interpreters (used by courts and found on the internet) ought to state each interpreter's special qualifications.
604. In Slovakia, where I am working, we already are a regulated profession and have the register of legal interpreters and translators maintained by the Slovak Ministry of Justice. I like interpretation very much and I enjoy doing it.

605. I have practically ceased to work in court since the MOJ gave Capita contract in January 2012 and I have considered leaving the profession I love. More needs to be done to educate the population about the need for PS interpreting.
606. I have not gotten a lot of translation/interpreter work, so I feel like a novice still. But I do command English and Norwegian fluently and feel that can be of service, and hope to get more experience with this work in addition to my bread and butter in health care. I like keeping my languages up to date and fluent and doing something alternative in my life.
607. This is No(r)Way! Ciao!
608. Interpretation services should never be the subject of tender competitions.
609. Access to qualification/education for interpreters should increase.
610. Agencies should comply with public regulations in the field, preferably be run by the government and they should not be allowed to charge from the interpreters' salary. (which is the case in my country, Norway)
611. Ad. 36, the problem is that the court has little knowledge about the profession. They seek a simultaneous interpreter, but there is no qualification course for this technique. Then the interpreters lie about their ability. I don't lie, so I get few jobs in court although I'm more qualified than a lot of the others.
612. Here in Guatemala, interpreters do several different kinds of interpretation, conference workshops, court, etc. The market is not big enough for us to become specialist in any one kind of interpreting.
613. Interpreters themselves injure their status by thinking of themselves as "helpers" (often of the "underdog") rather than "professionals" (being that they are also voice of attorneys, judges, doctors and other professionals) and this is, to a large extent, because that's what many practicing "interpreters" (read "untrained bilinguals") are when they do not try to obtain certification and professional training. In addition the users of PSIs often consider them as a "necessary evil" rather than a professional on equal footing with them. They have no idea of the time and effort it takes to prepare for and pass exams such as the Federal Court Interpreters Certification exams in the US, which has a pass rate of only 4%. Thousands of attorneys pass the bar exams each year, whereas only a handful of interpreters can pass the USCCI exams, but the courts, attorneys and administrators do not recognize this huge discrepancy in terms of our pay and working conditions. One of the reasons is that many think they can employ any bilingual person to interpret and get the same results. But you already know this :-)
614. I love my work, but the interpreter's status is extremely low in Norway. In order to be an interpreter you don't need any studies or training, so I'm competing with people that have no moral and ethic standards, let alone qualifications. We do have a national certification process and as a certified interpreter my title is protected by law. I hope the future will bring more awareness.
615. There are some, very few good examples of countries where the interpreting services are run properly...the profession is acknowledged and respected but there are others where there are more negatives unfortunately,
616. I work in the injured worker industry, primarily, and it is fraught with legal regulations that tie provision of services and reimbursement thereof to the status of the case (denied, accepted, medical treatment authorized, etc.). It makes it a challenge for interpreters to be fairly remunerated for services rendered. In my opinion, interpreting services should be divorced from the facts and outcome of the case, much like legal interpreters get compensated whether the "criminal" is found guilty or innocent.
617. In Australia, unqualified Australian Sign Language Interpreters are allowed to work in schools. This is damaging to the community they serve.... lack of qualifications gives no guarantee of linguistic competence, or professionalism. I've worked as a qualified interpreter in schools and been regarded as a person who has absolutely no education whatsoever. I actually hold more qualifications than the teachers I work with.
618. Ongoing monitoring of skills. Reflective practice as mandatory
619. Unfortunately the powers that be are not in the least concerned about enhancing the status of public service interpreters. Cost cutting is the name of the game.
620. I love my job and whether it is appreciated by society or not, I feel very useful and proud of my work.
621. I think the status of interpreters will always be low if the professionals we are working with do not understand the complexities of working between two languages simultaneously. I think the status of

- interpreters could be raised if the professionals were given training on how to work with interpreters, and understanding the difficulties we face.
622. I would like to see more equity in the perceived prestige of unimodal and bimodal interpreters, and also bimodal K-12 and postsecondary interpreters.
  623. I think if you're looking for status in a profession, you may be looking at the wrong field, or interpreting for the wrong reasons. Status is earned, not granted.
  624. In my experience, the interpreter's status can be most effectively improved by the interpreter's own presence and manner of interacting with those s/he serves. The more confident the interpreter is in portraying a "colleague" role/attitude in any setting, the more consumers will view the interpreter in the same way.
  625. I am a CMI (Certified Medical Interpreter) Vietnamese and truly believe that my role is essential to ensuring patient's wellbeing. As a PSI- public service interpreter, we are often marginalized due to the social status of our clientele but without good interpreters these people would not be able to access essential services guaranteed by law. Interpreters, conference or PSI, provide services that are essential in the everyday operation and function of people's daily lives.
  626. The interpreting profession needs to be recognised, regulated and protected. There needs to be three levels requiring a national qualification: community interpreter (level 3) public service interpreter (level 6 = Ba) conference interpreter (also level 6). To achieve this, a National Curriculum needs to be established, accredited and regulated by a single National body to train both the interpreters and the trainers. A National data base, like the NRPSI also needs to be maintained. A National Code of Conduct needs to be established, adhered to and policed by the above-mentioned body
  627. In the UK we had a national register of interpreters appropriately qualified since 2000, however in 2012 the government outsourced legal interpreting to an exploitative agency. The profession has been completely destroyed and professional interpreters are now leaving the profession en masse. There is no future for public service interpreting in the UK, soon there will only be amateur bilinguals working as interpreters, the professionals are going.
  628. Work as a PSI in the UK has been dealt a severe blow not just by national government outsourcing, but local government doing the same. The profession is not helped by a plethora of agencies who not only pay worse than peanuts but are able to recruit so-called "interpreters" who accept these extremely low rates. For many, it's seen as making "pin" or "expenses" money rather than a profession.
  629. The NRPSI, for example, does not require post-graduate level qualification. There're more & more lesser & lesser trained pple flooding into the profession in the UK. I also think that your questions 25/26 do not reflect any reality. Currently we're viewed at a lower status as any teachers, maybe bus drivers have the same status, or higher.
  630. Please implement the European Directive 2010/64/EU and get the UK Government to go back to contacting interpreters directly via the NRPSI, instead of using external agencies like Capita and the Big Word.
  631. As a Czech & Slovak (and English of course) interpreter in Ireland I think that we are not paid what we should be paid to evaluate that we are pretty much working 24/7 and 365 days a year ...as my colleague said: "we are paid peanuts" for what should be paid ...working hours are unbelievable and the time on road isn't paid at all (at least here in Ireland) ...so, I can spend 4 hours (or sometimes more than that ...) on the road and the only remuneration I get is the mileage, which in the case of courts is not adequate for our effort and time spent on the road ...the other, quite interesting fact is, that in Ireland one cannot obtain a qualification in PSI, the only University which was providing this course, is not teaching this profession anymore, I asked them why and their reply was: "Interpreters who did this course didnt find it any valuable for getting more work" , because, anybody who speaks two languages can be an PSI in Ireland, even when you are a member of professional body (ITIA) it doesn't bring you more work ..so, the closest course I can do to enhance my skills is in the UK or Northern Ireland ...
  632. The UK government are conveniently ignoring a European Directive (again) - the RPSI is now effectively defunct. FWA with ALS was a travesty, creating a monopoly and another example for diabolical procurement by the government, the fact it remains in place with Capita TI is a waste of public money,

- smells of corruption and will probably be the death knell of a profession I care deeply about. PSI should be a protected profession but it is too late now.
633. I could write a book, really. Main thing though is that we're hilariously underpaid and have to wait years to get our money
634. Unfortunately you didn't leave an 'no opinion' answer as an option. As a result my answers are fatally flawed. For example, I did not have an answer for 25 and 26, but was not allowed to opt out.
635. As long as the interpreter is underpaid, I don't believe it's status will raise. In courts the role of the interpreter is due to his costs not always rewarded the way it could or should be. Besides the interpreter often has to start uninformed with his job, which makes his work unnecessarily stressful.
636. We are underrated, under paid, receive bad press, are made out that we are paid fortunes and we are not really needed "as they should learn to speak English"
637. Difficult job that has no respect from public. I personally regret staying in the job so long.
638. Some of the questions were not too relevant to me so i have answered neutrally as there was no choice to say n/a
639. In the UK PSI has been de-professionalised through outsourcing. Unqualified, inexperienced foreigners are used as interpreters by agencies and paid the minimum wage and this is becoming standard. Myself and many colleagues are leaving the profession.
640. Je pense que le statut de l'interprète dans les services publiques sera amélioré à long terme. Le changement n'arrivera pas sous peu. Tant les grandes mesures (directives, examens de certification) que les mesures courantes (promotion du statut d'interprète par les réseaux sociaux et les associations) sont utiles et efficaces. En outre, les deux vont de pair dans le but d'amélioration la situation du statut de d'interprète dans les services publiques.
641. Les interprètes de services publics comme vous les appelez travaillent avec des avocats et des juges qui ont un sentiment de supériorité et qui se présentent en situation de lutte, ce qui fait que l'interprète est cantonné à un rôle subalterne, mais finalement, ce n'est pas l'essentiel. Il ne plaide rien!
642. Tout dépend des "qualifications" nécessaires pour être inscrit sur la liste.
643. Une des caractéristiques de TI, c'est la diversité de leur formation et de leurs parcours. Ce serait dommage de se priver de gens compétents, sous prétexte qu'ils n'ont pas fait la "bonne école."
644. Du courage pour passer avec succès votre épreuve
645. Merci pour cette enquête. Elle met en focus le travail des interprètes, qui sont, une nécessité fondamentale.
646. Très souvent, les donneurs d'ordre dans les services publics ne connaissent pas le fait qu'il existe des formations dédiées à l'interprétation et que l'interprétariat ou la traduction sont des métiers.
647. En Belgique, il y a une division en 5 catégories selon les langues. Par exemple, le français, l'anglais, l'espagnol, l'italien fait partie de la 1ère catégorie et est rétribué 34,05 euros l'heure alors que l'arabe est dans la catégorie 3 et le chinois dans la catégorie 4 et sont payés 3 x plus ou 4 x. Pourtant, les interprètes jurés en arabe ou en chinois n'ont pas toujours fait d'études universitaires. Je trouve que payer tout le monde au même tarif horaire serait plus juste et moins coûteux pour le Ministère de la Justice.
648. L'interprétation doit avoir un statut professionnel international prenant établi à partir d'une réglementation internationale. Tout usage d'interprète ayant une relation familiale ou amicale avec l'interlocuteur ou la personne étrangère devra être interdit et sanctionné de nullité par une loi nationale c' est un metier humain et tres enrichissent chaque jour
649. Le professionnalisme ne peut etre (facilement) enseigne
650. Rien de particulier.
651. le mot service "public" s'écrit avec un -c en francais, pas q-u-e, il y a d'autres petites fautes ici et là dans ce questionnaire, mais il est intéressant.
652. La Norvège a un examen d'aptitude professionnelle pour interprètes qui répond en partie aux besoins et aux ambitions de la profession, mais il n'est hélas pas toujours appliqué. Je pense aussi qu'une solide expérience de la traduction est une excellente préparation au métier d'interprète. Sinon, les connaissances nécessaires à l'exercice de la profession sont en théorie infinies



653. Una profession qui me fait progresser et améliorer comme persoone,comme professionnel et comme quelqu'un d'utile pour toute l'humanité. Bon courage...
654. La directive existe mais dans les faits on fait encore appel à des gens qui ne sont pas formés car cela a un coût trop élevé pour la justice, donc nous sommes sous employés.
655. Lorsque j'interviens en tant qu'interprète j'ai souvent des réactions positives des différents protagonistes. Il est vraiment dommage que cette reconnaissance reste sans effet sur la formation des magistrats ou des personnes intervenant dans un processus administratif, pour qu'elles sachent ce qu'un interprète professionnel peut leur apporter. Les compétences dépassent quelques fois les attentes, car nous intervenons à côté de personnes dont le métier n'est pas l'interprétariat. Évidemment, les prestations ne sont pas identiques.
656. Je remarque aussi que la présence d'un interprète permet aux interlocuteurs de mieux gérer leurs émotions liées à la frustration générée par une mauvaise compréhension. De ce fait, les auditions gagnent en efficacité.
657. Je trouve intéressant votre questionnaire, surtout le biais de départ avec la différenciation interprète de conférence et interprète de conférence "autre", je ne suis absolument pas d'accord avec ce découpage :) mais ça vient sûrement du fait que je suis interprète en langue des signes et pas en langue vocale. Bonne continuation à vous!
658. Je pense qu'il y a beaucoup à faire. Un code de déontologie national serait absolument nécessaire. Par ailleurs je pense qu'il serait bon qu'il existe des réunions type "groupe Balint" pour les interprètes qui travaillent pour les services publics car nous sommes parfois exposés à des situations émotionnellement très difficiles à gérer.
659. J'adore mon métier!
660. Es gibt ein derartiges Verzeichnis in Dänemark.
661. "Es sollte darüber nachgedacht werden, wer die Kosten von Dolmetscher zu zahlen hat, denn die Arbeit des Übersetzers im Gesundheitswesen soll nicht nur für den Patient/den Kunde wichtig sein! Auch der Arzt bekommt dadurch Unterstützung für seine geplante Behandlung oder Anamnese! Eine enge Zusammenarbeit mit Ärzten und Krankenhäuser wäre auch angebracht. Ich wäre auch bereit an zusätzlichen Kursen zum Thema Gesundheit, Mensch und sein Körper oder direkt verschiedene Krankheiten und ihre Behandlungstechniken teilzunehmen. Auch am WE!"
662. In Spanien regelt das Justizministerium den Dolmetscherdienst seit einigen Jahren über Dolmetscherfirmen, die zu Dumpingpreisen anbieten und Personen einstellen, die nicht als Dolmetscher ausgebildet sind, nur um öffentliche Gelder einzusparen. Diese Maßnahme schadet allen: Dolmetschern, Gerichten und vor allen Dingen den Betroffenen (Mandanten, Prozessteilnehmern)
663. A) mi dispiace notare che anche Lei (nonostante venga da un curriculum specifico) non usa correttamente i termini ""dolmetscher/Übersetzer"". B) le domande 25 e 25 non dispongono dell'opzione ""nessuna di queste categorie"" - fatto che meglio risponderebbe alla realtà, in quanto POCHISSIMI (anche fra i mediatori linguistici) hanno anche solo una pallida idea di quale sia la professione (e quindi non sanno valutare la posizione del professionista in relazione ad altre professioni). D) Il problema non è l'applicazione della direttiva UE (2010/64), che in parte già è applicata (ad esempio in Austria, con la selezione degli interpreti giurati iscritti nelle liste PUBBLICHE del ministero di giustizia), BENSÌ CHE L'ACCESSO ALLA PROFESSIONE È CONSENTITO A CANI E PORCI, senza alcuna distinzione fra preparazione professionale specifica o dilettantismo!!!! La maggior parte delle amministrazioni pubbliche richiede certificazioni o preparazione specifica per mestieri ben meno sensibili: Ad esempio in Austria richiedono un MEISTERPRÜFUNG per fare il fiorista =commerciante di fiori!! ma chiunque (anche un idiota qualsiasi con la terza elementare e SENZA CONOSCENZE di lingue straniere) ha facoltà di registrare in camera di commercio un ufficio di traduzioni. Lo stesso avviene in ITALIA, ove fra l'altro neppure i cosiddetti CTU (interpreti in tribunale) sono soggetti a seria selezione per TITOLI (e non sulla base di quello che affermano....- Trovo VERAMENTE ASSURDO che non si distingua, a livello di riconoscimento professionale, una persona preparata e con adeguato titolo di studio (Istituti per la Formazione di INterpreti a livello universitario esistono da almeno 50 anni) da un "autonomato"

- interprete/traduttori (che si dichiara tale in quanto ha lavorato per un paio d'anni come receptionist in un albergo all'estero). È QUESTO CHE ROVINA LA PROFESSIONE!!!!
664. Solange Gesetze über die Vergütung von Dolmetschern und Übersetzern durch staatliche und soziale Instanzen dadurch außer Kraft gesetzt werden, dass durch Rahmenverträge niedrigere Tarife durchzusetzen werden, werden Leistung und Beruf nicht gewürdigt und der Status nicht verbessert!
  665. Das Wichtigste ist ein gesetzlich geregelter Berufsschutz.
  666. Ich bin die einzige gerichtlich beeidete und zertifizierte Dolmetscherin für slowakische Sprache in einem von 9 österreichischen Bundesländern und wurde nach 16 Jahren von dem Polizei-Dolmetschverzeichnis gestrichen. Ohne Begründung, ohne Bescheid. Die "entsprechende Qualifizierung" ist schön aber eben nur eine Richtlinie.
  667. Ich habe die Gerichtsdolmetscherprüfung abgelegt und ich mache bei Gericht die Erfahrung, dass ich schon einen gewissen Status habe. Ich habe den Eindruck, dass ich von den Richtern als qualifizierte, unverzichtbare Mitwirkende an der Verhandlung angesehen werde und nicht als notwendiges Übel.
  668. Jeder qualifizierte Dolmetscher muss durch seine Leistung Bewußtseinsbildung für den Beruf des Dolmetschers schaffen. Und er soll auch vermitteln können, dass seine Arbeit wirklich etwas wert ist.
  669. Es ist ein sehr interessanter Beruf, allerdings wenig geschätzt und ohne Prestige. Die Öffentlichkeit weiß zu wenig Bescheid
  670. Wenn man seine Arbeit gut macht, wird man von den Behörden und Klienten sehr geschätzt und anerkannt!
  671. Das Gebührenanspruchsgesetz für Dolmetscher und Übersetzer bei Gericht ist im heurigen Jahr verschlechtert worden. Prunč hat Recht mit seiner Aussage: Fremdenfeindlichkeit schlägt auf Dolmetscher zurück.
  672. Rechtschreibfehler und englischsprachige Passagen in der deutschsprachigen Fassung des Fragebogens
  673. mehr dazu mündlich bei einem italienischen Kaffee :)
  674. Eine Gleichstellung der Dolmetscherprüfungen in den EU-Staaten wäre notwendig. Innerhalb von EU dürfte der Wohnsitz nicht entscheidend sein, ob man als "gerichtlich beeideter Dolmetscher" tätig sein darf.
  675. Gut ausgebildete DolmetscherInnen sind die Visitenkarte des Berufsstandes, es sollten nur DolmetscherInnen mit entsprechender Ausbildung herangezogen werden. Nach der Metzgerlehre darf man auch nicht operieren.
  676. Lieber Paola, ich halte Deine Untersuchung für sehr wichtig, und freue mich, die Ergebnisse lesen zu können! Viel Erfolg!
  677. Liebe Frau Kollegin, Ihr Fragenkatalog ist umfangreich, doch wie bei den meisten Umfragen liegt das Problem in der Verallgemeinerung. In Ihren Ausgangsfragen ist die Trennung zwischen Übersetzen und Dolmetschen nicht scharf genug vollzogen, dort mischen sich beide Bereiche unseres Berufes. In der Slowakei muss man eine Fachprüfung für Übersetzer und für Dolmetscher gesondert ablegen, wenn man in das Verzeichnis der gerichtlich vereidigten Übersetzer und/oder Dolmetscher aufgenommen werden möchte. Die Öffentlichkeit weiß zu wenig über unseren Beruf, die meisten Bürger sind der Meinung, dass man nur ein Fremdsprache beherrschen müsste, dann könne man auch übersetzen oder dolmetschen. Diese Unwissenheit zieht sich dann durch die Laienwelt. Schlimmer finde ich, dass wir bei Gericht manchmal auch als "Sündenböcke" für die Herren Anwälte dienen - weil sie ihren Mandanten nicht rechtzeitig genug stoppen können, wenn der sich gerade um Kopf und Kragen redet usw. Die meisten Menschen sind aber ausgesprochen dankbar für unsere Dienstleistung und bei längerer Zusammenarbeit entwickelt sich schon ein
  678. Verständnis für die Belange der anderen Seite. Es gäbe viel zu besprechen zu diesem Thema, doch ...Toi, toi, toi für Ihre Doktorarbeit und auf gutes Gelingen.
  679. Credo sia indispensabile regolamentare la professione non solo con la creazione di un albo ma anche con una adeguata formazione, le mie attuali competenze sono frutto dell'esperienza "sul campo" più che della preparazione accademico-universitaria.
  680. La cosa più importante è l'esperienza che viene con gli anni di lavoro



681. È molto importante la preparazione di base ma meglio di tutto è sapersi rimettere in gioco continuamente. La società cambia, è dinamica e con essa anche le necessità di interpretariato. Quindi un continuo aggiornamento delle conoscenze, delle tecniche e degli approcci verso la professione è senz'altro doveroso! bisogna comunque che la qualità del servizio deve essere all'altezza delle aspettative dell'utenza finale.
682. Purtroppo nell'Amministrazione in cui presto servizio non c'è una continuità lavorativa come interprete e spesso svolgo pratiche di tipo amministrativo con conseguente decadimento delle capacità professionali.
683. Per quanto riguarda i servizi pubblici, si dovrebbero reclutare almeno gli interpreti delle lingue più diffuse in base a criteri di selezione e non, come spesso avviene, "a caso". Per le lingue meno diffuse occorrerebbe istituire corsi per i parlanti stranieri di quelle lingue
684. Maggiore attenzione di chi svolge una professione come la nostra, più meritocrazia e remunerazione. Chi lavora, come me, in una Questura affronta anche situazioni delicate (carcerati, pregiudicati, violenze, intercettazioni). Non si è adeguatamente preparati ad affrontare i processi, si dà per scontato che l'interprete deve sapere tutto e subito.
685. In riferimento alla domanda precedente preciso che, come ho già spiegato la Direttiva 2010/64 è GIÀ STATA ATTUATA CON UN PROVVEDIMENTO NAZIONALE (VEDI SOPRA DECRETO LGSV 32/14 che però non è stato efficace perché non ha creato il "registro di interpreti debitamente qualificati e pertanto il PM o il giudice, come si verificava prima dell'entrata in vigore dei decreti legislativi innanzi citati, può nominare "chiunque" ritenga sia in grado di comprendere la lingua dell'indagato. La deontologia, l'incompatibilità dell'incarico, le capacità professionali non vengono minimamente prese in considerazione; esempio ne sia la nomina in qualità di interpreti, di camerieri del ristorante cinese per escutere a sommarie informazioni testimoni o altre parti in causa, senza nulla togliere al rispetto dovuto a ciascun lavoratore, ma dubito che in quella persona che svolge un'attività lavorativa completamente diversa si possano riscontrare le competenze necessarie per svolgere l'attività professionale di interprete in un procedimento penale.
686. A proposito dei Tribunali: finché il compenso ai CTU (interpreti e non solo) è quello (inverosimile!) attualmente in vigore, non si andrà da nessuna parte.
687. Mi piacerebbe ottenere i risultati della ricerca. Grazie!
688. La professione di interprete dovrebbe essere molto ben retribuita (al momento di sicuro non lo è dappertutto - solo presso istituzioni europee è molto ben retribuita).
689. Grazie, signora Gentile, bellissima iniziativa!
690. A mio modesto parere, investire e preparare interpreti/traduttori di lingue come l'arabo, altre lingue dell'Africa ecc. Sono comunque indispensabili e il livello è quasi sempre basso e incontrollato.
691. Grazie
692. Problema è che manca la definizione stessa di "debitamente qualificati" - le condizioni per essere definiti tali
693. L'albo e più trasparenza negli appalti pubblici unitamente a una retribuzione adeguata dovrebbero migliorare significativamente la situazione.
694. Bel questionario. Le auguro buon lavoro!
695. Per svolgere questa attività oltre alla preparazione bisogna essere in disponibilità, il lavoro richiede immediatezza, presenza senza considerare orari o festività, in altre parole quando il tribunale o le forze dell'ordine hanno bisogno si deve correre!
696. lavoro da anni come mediatrice in ospedale e presso la polizia: esistono effettivamente delle sostanziali differenze tra IC e interprete nei servizi sociali, proprio per le motivazioni sopracitate. Sarebbe importante eliminare questa barriera, la capacità di un interprete di facilitare la comunicazione non ha limiti, sia che sia in cabina o seduto di fronte a un immigrato/agente di polizia. In bocca al lupo! laura
697. Per poter lavorare nei servizi pubblici un interprete deve avere una formazione molto complessa (linguistica, diritto, sociologia, psicologia, studi sull'UE ecc.). Attualmente purtroppo lavorano nell'ambito come "interpreti" tantissime persone senza neanche una laurea.
698. Ci vorrebbe un regolamento delle tariffe. Dovrebbe essere garantita una tariffa minima per legge e delle condizioni di lavoro base, come il rimborso delle spese di trasporto.

699. Mientras haya confusión o malentendimiento en la sociedad para distinguir a los intérpretes de los simples bilingües, sería desesperante que se mejore la situación de la profesión..Buon lavoro!
700. Aparte de toda clase de especialización hay que Tomar en cuenta la experiencia misma de la vida...
701. Debería haber una directiva para otros ámbitos igual de importantes como el sanitario, el educativo y el penitenciario.
702. La profesión es maravillosa pero en España es muy difícil por no decir imposible vivir de la traducción.
703. El reconocimiento del TISSPP en España es desastroso (TISSPPs en Ministerio de Interior y Justicia con plaza fija por oposición para la que solo se pedía título de educación secundaria, clasificación profesional inadecuada, sueldo bajo). En cuanto a la transposición de la Directiva 2010/64/UE no va a mejorar la situación por la pésima disposición del gobierno a escuchar a las profesionales.
704. La escasa estima que los dirigentes de la sociedad tienen por los extranjeros hace que no consideren necesario escucharlos ni comprenderlos. Al menos en las interpretaciones en juzgados debería exigirse a los intérpretes una cierta competencia. De lo contrario se está violando uno de los principios de estado de derecho.
705. Haber nacido en otro país y haber pasado allí tu infancia, no garantiza ni que domines bien el español por el simple hecho de que tus padres lo hablaran (ya que en muchos casos los padres eran inmigrantes con poca competencia lingüística en su propia lengua) ni que domines el idioma del país en el que pasaste tu infancia, porque en muchas ocasiones sólo conoces un registro, el escolar, y no dominas otros ni tienes un vocabulario variado.
706. En la pregunta sobre cómo nos tienen considerado, he marcado la más baja posible en la encuesta, aunque discrepo porque al menos en el Ministerio de Interior de España siempre se nos compara con las señoras de la limpieza en cuanto a remuneración y formación necesaria para prestar nuestros servicios (prometo que NO es broma, sino que nos lo han llegado a decir así literalmente). Por tanto jamás nos han asimilado en importancia a maestros ni trabajadores sociales ni mucho menos a profesiones consideradas por lo general de nivel superior.
707. El título universitario no da a uno los conocimientos suficientes para aprender un idioma. Es necesario que la persona sea nativa con el fin de poder entender ambas culturas porque el idioma es vivo y es continuamente cambiante.
708. Pregunta 36: definitivamente Sí pero bajo la expresa condición que NO se permita la competencia desleal por ""intérpretes"" sin calificación pero más baratos. Y si recomendaría a mis hijos hacerse intérprete: NO porque (por lo menos en los servicios públicos) en Holanda pagan poco (en relación con las responsabilidades que implica), no tienen seguridad de trabajo, a menudo te tratan como a un criminal peligroso y pienso que se incumple la ley (que impone en teoría llamar a un intérprete jurado y diplomado) para ahorrar algo en gastos de viaje o poder recurrir a alguien más barato pero sin diploma ni juramento. Eso sobretodo si los SSPP recurren a agencias y no los llaman ellos mismos. Bajo esas condiciones el trabajo de intérprete es poco más que ""una diversión que aporta algún dinerito"" adicional para quién tiene otros recursos (patrimonio, un marido o esposa con empleo fijo). Recomendaría a mis hijos aprender algún oficio técnico (hasta de cuello azul, o sea, trabajo de obrero calificado) o hacer una carrera tecnológica porque hay mucha demanda de ello en Holanda y Alemania y a ellos SÍ se los valoriza debidamente (pecuniariamente e inmaterialmente)!!
709. Para mí, no es bien que la exigencia sea tener formación superior de inmediato para ser intérprete, si los salarios son tan bajos como lo son. Pero, que haya posibilidad de empezar, después de un gimnasio y que haya cursos consecutivos a niveles más altos y consecutivamente mejores salarios para que tengamos continuamente la motivación de mejorarnos nuestras aptitudes y conocimientos. Se para sermos intérpretes con los salarios que tenemos en los servicios de salud y sociales, nadie tendrá la motivación de hacerlo.
710. La UE puede considerar realizar capacitaciones regionales o locales, a menor costo, para quienes tienen la aptitud de profesionalizarse, pero no los recursos. ¡Que no se regale! Pero que quien sea elegido lo vea como un reconocimiento a su trabajo. Creo que eso motiva a los traductores de un país o región, Y A LA VEZ, esto ES PROMOCIÓN de la profesión a las personas, en general. ¿Por qué de la UE? Por prestigio que AVALE la acreditación, a nivel local, regional e internacional.

711. Siempre habra gente haciendo trabajo de interprete sin tener suficiente cualificacion. Cuando los recursos economicos en las intstituciones publicas no son suficientes, no se elige a los interpretes ""mas costosos"", no se le da prioridad a la calidad. Esta claro que un interprete que tenga que trabajar de 3 a 5 dias en la corte y que tenga que trasladarse desde otra ciudad, es mas costoso que un interprete local, aunque no tenga las mismas cualificaicones, y en muchos casos se elige de esta manera, aunque no siempre.
712. Desde mi punto de vista personal me exijo a mi misma la seguridad de poder hacer el trabajo lo mejor posible y estoy segura de que si alguien se va a la carcel no es porque yo le hice una mala interpretacion, sino que tal persona hizo algo por lo que fue juzgado.
713. Deberia ser mas facil poder educarse Cuando uno ya esta trabajando como interprete, de manera que pueda ampliar las cualificaciones. De todos modos, el tener mejores cualificaiones implica mejor sueldo para el interprete, pero no significa que pueda trabajar mas, si las instituciones no pueden/quieren pagar.
714. Es una profesion muy solitaria!
715. ¡Suerte en la investigación! Enviennos los resultados.
716. Frecuentemente se tiene más en cuenta la interpretación que la traducción. Cuando ambas son necesarias y no todos pueden realizar ambas. Se puede ser un buenísimo traductor y no tener habilidades para la interpretación y un buen intérprete que no es tan bueno en la traducción. En cualquier caso, a ambos, en los SSPP se les han de facilitar todas las herramientas necesarias para poder hacer un buen trabajo. formación y sensibilización de los actores inmersos en procesos que requieren trabajar con intérpretes
717. Si ese Registro se deja en manos de empresas privadas entonces la respuesta a la última pregunta sería "definitivamente no".
718. Suerte con su cuestionario.