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Editorial

From Classroom to Professional Practice: The Challenging Nature of Our Work

Ineke Crezee and George Major

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We are very happy to present Volume 7(1) of the *International Journal of Interpreter Education* to you. As incoming editors we are aware of having some very big shoes to fill, and are grateful for the ongoing support from Jemina Napier, as the outgoing editor, as well as Serena Leigh Krombach, Kimberly Hale, Doug Bowen-Bailey, and the Editorial Board. As the field of interpreting research advances internationally, this journal plays a crucial dual role: first, in examining the application of new theory to interpreter education, and, second, in reflecting on best practice for interpreter education. Our vision for the future of the journal is to continue to build on these existing strengths and to ensure that the strong international focus is maintained and enhanced, with contributions from spoken and signed language interpreter educators, researchers, and practitioners from all over the world. We will continue to push for an evidence-based approach to interpreting pedagogical practice, and welcome submissions on new research that has very clear applications to the educational setting. At the same time, we will strive to always include the voices of practitioners, research students, and consumers of interpreting services, by welcoming commentaries, interviews, and dissertation summaries. In this way we hope to maintain a healthy balance between research and reflection, as we continue to explore together the fulfilling but challenging work that we do, from the interpreting classroom to professional practice and development.

This volume has a number of articles focusing on the challenging nature of our work as interpreting practitioners and interpreter educators, in both signed and spoken languages. A closer examination these articles shows how connected interpreter educators are in their efforts to bridge the gap between classroom and the challenges of interpreting practice. This thread is apparent throughout the volume.

Miranda Lai, Georgina Heydon and Sedat Mulayim surveyed 271 practicing interpreters in the state of Victoria, Australia, around the extent of their exposure to traumatic material and their way of coping with the ensuing vicarious trauma. They also investigated how institutional care and self-care were administered. Danny Wang and Lynn Grant examine issues encountered by practicing court interpreters in New Zealand and participants' reflections on whether training prepared them for such challenges. Binhua Wang's article explores another potential gap between interpreter education and the demands of the profession. He describes an e-learning environment set up at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to provide student interpreters extended opportunity to not only analyze professional interpreters' skills and strategies, but also give them scope for practice, instructor feedback and self-reflection. A thought-provoking paper by Stacey Webb and Jemina Napier explores some preliminary doctoral research findings on job demands and resources faced by interpreter educators. They explore initial feedback from a small sample of educators and the many and conflicting demands that they face.

In the Teaching Forum, Janice Humphrey's article reports on supported fieldwork to increase the work-readiness of student ASL-English interpreters. Humphrey provides some clear teaching models which may be replicated by other educators wishing to address the gap from interpreter classroom to the demands of community.

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The Commentary (by Ineke Crezee, David Atkinson, Robyn Pask, Patrick Au and psychiatrist Dr Sai Wong) picks up on the issue of self-care and proposes ways of incorporating elements of this in interpreter education and professional development programs.

The Dissertation section includes a summary of work by Jan Cambridge. Practicing interpreters, interviewed by Cambridge for her doctoral research, questioned the appropriateness of the 'impartial' model of interpreting within mental health settings.

Debra Russell introduces us to Dr Jessica Dunkley, a Deaf medical doctor currently in her second year of residency in Alberta, Canada. Dr Dunkley provides a fascinating and unique perspective on the types of skills, attributes and knowledge she expects from interpreters working with her in the very complex medical (training) and professional context. Future volumes of the Journal will continue to incorporate the perspective of a variety of interpreting consumers, as we believe this is crucial in guiding and inspiring us as practitioners, researchers and interpreter educators.

The book review focuses on Sandra Hale and Jemina Napier's (2013) *Research Methods in Interpreting*, a book which will have been welcomed by all interpreter educators, thesis supervisors, postgraduate students and interpreting scholars. Much of the advice given by Hale and Napier is of great relevance to researchers and students even beyond the field of interpreting and translation; the chapter on how to write a literature review being only one example.

In her very first editorial for *IJIE*, Jemina Napier wrote:

If researchers are investigating aspects of interpreting, but are not publishing their findings, how can we benefit from the research? Likewise, if interpreter educators are reflecting on and evaluating their teaching, and not publishing their reflections, how can the quality of interpreter education improve? (Napier, 2009)

We feel extremely privileged to take on the role of co-editors of this pioneering journal, and we look forward to working with the contributors and readers of this journal to reflect on and advance interpreter education. Rolling calls for manuscripts will be sent out regularly, and we again wish to stress that we welcome submissions from interpreter educators, graduate students and scholars from across the world. Jemina Napier used to end her editorials with a quote, and we would like to continue that tradition. The quote below reflects our vision for the future direction of the journal, maintaining its strong international and cross-modal (signed and spoken language) and cross-disciplinary (research and educational) focus.

There is more that binds us together, than holds us apart. (Robert F. Kennedy)

Reference

Napier, J. (2009). Editorial: The real voyage of discovery. *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, 1, 1–6.

Vicarious Trauma Among Interpreters

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Vicarious trauma among interpreters

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Abstract

Public service interpreters in Australia work in a range of areas including welfare, health, education and criminal justice. Some of their assignments contain traumatic client material, which may be confrontational, upsetting or off-putting for an interpreter, potentially impacting on their perceived cognitive processes and emotions during and after the interpreting assignment. Through a large-scale online survey of 271 practicing interpreters in Victoria, Australia, the authors explore the extent of exposure to traumatic client material, interpreters' ways of coping with such material, and how institutional care and self-care are administered, if they are at all. The findings of the survey are presented in this article and the implications for public service interpreters are discussed from an occupational health and safety perspective. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are outlined.

Key words: vicarious trauma; public service interpreter; community interpreter; occupational health and safety

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Public service interpreters in Australia work in a range of government-funded services including welfare, health, education and criminal justice. Some of their interpreting assignments contain traumatic client material such as family violence, serious illness, death and accounts of torture experience, potentially impacting on interpreters' perceived cognitive process and mental health. However, to date, few researchers have conducted comprehensive research studies with Australian public service interpreters that cover multiple languages, have a large sample and contain analysis of the impact of traumatic client material on these interpreters. This article represents an important step in filling this knowledge gap. We present the results of a survey relating to traumatic client content in interpreting assignments and its

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impact on professional interpreters² in Victoria. We focus the discussions on interpreters' possible acquisition of vicarious trauma as an occupational health and safety issue, and call for 'trauma curriculum' (Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012, p. 123) to be incorporated in interpreter training in order to raise awareness of such harm and provide tools for interpreters' self-care.

Similar to other "egalitarian states committed to the 'welfare' of all their citizens and residents" (Pöchhacker, 2004, p. 14), Australia has adopted language service policies for access and equity, which include the provision of publicly funded interpreters for citizens whose language barriers prevent them from easily accessing government services. Such language service is also referred to as *community interpreting* (Chesher, 1997). The professional work of a public service interpreter may cover seemingly harmless assignments from council services such as a meals-on-wheels program or home repair services to some of the most disturbing and deeply personal events. Although community interpreters are by no means alone in this experience, a lot of professionals engaged in public services, such as police officers (NSW Police Force, 2009), fire fighters (MFB, 2008; CFA, 2015), customs workers (Australian Customs Service, 2007) and social workers (Davys & Beddoe, 2010) have counseling or supervision arrangements in place to support them during and after traumatic events or when working with traumatized clients. There is an urgent need to research and analyze the extent to which community interpreters engaged by Australian public services confront such situations.

In the next section, we present the definition of vicarious trauma (VT), a concept that originated from professional practice in the healthcare field, and we review previous studies on VT in professional interpreters. We then present our study, conducted in 2013 in Victoria, Australia, involving responses from 271 community interpreters collected through an online survey. The data collected indicate the extent to which interpreters are exposed to traumatic client material and reveal ways of dealing with the material and their exposure and the organized institutional support available to help them. The subsequent discussion of the survey findings is framed from an occupational health and safety perspective. Our discoveries regarding how practicing interpreters deal with possible VT can help interpreter educators better prepare their students to confront disturbing material. In addition, we argue that community interpreters' emotional and physical well-being should primarily be of the state and federal governments' concern when they engage community interpreters in the various public services provided under their jurisdictions; the findings presented in this article will inform policy discussions on providing support services to public service interpreters. The findings also have relevance to English-speaking professionals and clients with language barriers who rely on interpreters to communicate.

Background

What is Vicarious Trauma?

In the field of trauma research, evidence has supported the notion that psychological distress affects not only those who have been personally traumatized, but also the healthcare professionals who work with such clients (Collins & Long, 2003; Figley, 1999; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995a). Pearlman & Saakvitne (1995b) define *vicarious trauma* as the "[negative] transformation in the therapist's (or other trauma worker's) inner experience resulting from empathic engagement with clients' trauma material" (p. 151). The American Counseling Association (ACA) provides a lay description of VT as the "emotional residue of exposure that counselors have from working with people as they are hearing their trauma stories and become witnesses to the pain, fear and terror that trauma survivors have endured" (American Counseling Association, n.d.). The academic and professional literature on VT is dominated by research and recommendations relating to those who work specifically with trauma survivors (e.g., trauma counselors, emergency medical workers, rescue workers, crisis intervention volunteers), as specified by McCann and Pearlman (1990), with a paucity of research or advice concerning professional interpreters (Shlesinger, 2007), who are an integral part of service encounters where the healthcare professional and the trauma survivor do not share a common language.

² The authors use the term *professional* to mean those interpreters in Australia who hold a certain level of national certification and are remunerated for the professional service they provide. Professional interpreters are not those involved in ad hoc interpreting provided by friends, family or staff members in public services who find themselves 'helping with' communication because they happen to speak certain levels of English or the other language.

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The implication of possible VT among interpreters should not be overlooked. If VT can impact a trauma counselor on both personal and professional levels (ACA, n.d.; Trippany, White Kress, & Wilcoxon, 2004), so can it impact interpreters who work with trauma counselors. Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995b) refer to “profound changes in the core aspects of the therapist’s self” (p. 152). Impacts on a counselor’s personal life may manifest themselves in relationships with family and friends and affect the counselor’s health, both emotional and physical (ACA, n.d.). On the professional level, VT may impact performance and function, and it can result in errors in judgment and mistakes (ACA, n.d.), presenting obvious ethical concerns (Crezee, Jülich & Hayward, 2013; Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996).

Professional Interpreters and VT

Practitioners and researchers in interpreting American Sign Language (ASL) and Australian Sign Language (Auslan) have pioneered discussing and raising the awareness of VT among interpreters. Clare’s (2000) study surveyed 12 Auslan practitioners and posited a higher likelihood of VT for interpreters who confront unexpected trauma material or graphic images, experience lack of closure to many assignments and have feelings of survivor guilt (Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators [AUSIT], 2000).

In Baistow’s (1995) study of 295 public service interpreters from France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom, more than two thirds of the respondents agreed that they were sometimes upset by the material they had to interpret, and 49% experienced mood or behavioral changes related to their work (Baistow, 1999). Seventy-six percent reported that the effects lasted a few hours, whereas 50% reported that the effects could last from one to several days. Regarding the extent of employers providing support services, 34% of the respondents said their employer provided some kind of support service, and 20% had used the support service on some occasion; 22% did not know if any service even existed.

Loutan et al. (1999) studied 22 staff interpreters of spoken languages at the Geneva Red Cross. Interpreters reported having nightmares, depression and insomnia as a result of exposure to traumatic client material, to the extent that eight out of 10 interpreters working in the refugee program required psychiatric treatment.

Danish clinical psychologists Holmgren, Søndergaard, and Elklit (2003) reported on a study of 12 Kosovo-Albanian mental health interpreters working for the Danish Red Cross asylum reception center. Almost half had been exposed to either political torture or other traumas. Ten of the participants had previous interpreting experience, although whether they had professional training or not is unknown—they most likely did not, because Holmgren et al. (2003) describe them as ‘either studying or working full-time [at the Danish Red Cross]’ (p. 23) at the time of the interview. Two thirds of the cohort reported emotional reactions to their interpreting, and 78% described their work as either very distressing or to some degree distressing. These numbers may explain why over 80% of them expressed a strong need for supervision and assistance concerning their work-related emotional reactions.

Crezee, Jülich, and Hayward (2011) surveyed 90 interpreters in Australia and New Zealand and found that 60% of the respondents experienced difficulties when interpreting in refugee settings, such as professionals or refugee clients speaking too fast, unfamiliar terminology, unfamiliar dialects and so forth. Of these, 76% expressed that they found the stories told by refugees challenging to handle. The authors allude to possible vicarious traumatization or re-traumatization, particularly for those interpreters who were themselves from a refugee background, because “the retelling or revoking of trauma stories in such settings may unconstructively impact on the interpreters” (Crezee et al., p. 255).

In 2003, the Transcultural Mental Health Centre, under Western Australia’s Department of Health, conducted a pilot study of 15 nationally certified interpreters. The data indicated that interpreters who were exposed to the details of clients’ torture and trauma were at risk of psychological harm, particularly those interpreters who had experience in a war-torn country and were required to work with survivors of such experiences (Lipton, Arends, Bastian, Wright, & O’Hara, 2002, p. 16). This project recommends that mental health interpreters who are affected by stress related to exposure to torture and trauma details divulged by their clients be assisted by debriefing intervention workshops that provide support and supervision post-assignment (Lipton et al., 2002). However the recommendation stops short of how to identify interpreters at risk, a party responsible for providing intervention, and how intervention should be achieved. More than a decade after the publication of the pilot study, one of the authors (who still works in the mental health area in Western Australia) confirmed that there have been neither follow-up studies

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nor official sanctions on the implementation of debriefing recommended by the pilot study 10 years earlier (B. Wright, personal correspondence, 17 February 2012).

Similarly, in a 2001 publication by the Transcultural Mental Health Centre of New South Wales, Australia, Becker and Bowles (2001) argued that the lack of training for interpreters undertaking work with traumatized clients can place them at substantially greater risk of VT. They contend that

Since interpreters usually repeat clients' trauma stories in the first person, the impact of the trauma could be compounded for them. It was thought that offering interpreters a debriefing experience, plus insight into the psychotherapy process, could relieve stress as part of a structure that would support them in their work. This required both an experiential component and an educational component. (Becker & Bowles, 2001, p. 224)

Seven interpreters agreed to be identified in the Becker and Bowles study. All interpreters reported a need for undergoing training and debriefing, which is consistent with the literature (Acosta & Cristo, 1981; Pentz-Moller, 1992; Pentz-Moller & Hermansen, 1991a, 1991b; Westermeyer, 1990). However, with the exception of studies referring to public service interpreters in Australia, New Zealand and the U.K., where there are clear national certification systems, these studies do not indicate whether the participating interpreters were ad hoc, remunerated, unremunerated (e.g., volunteer), under certain employment arrangement (e.g., casual engagement or in-house positions), or held a certain level of education and/or training. The ambiguity about the interpreters' credentials and employment conditions is not surprising in that public service interpreting is by and large an underregulated or, in most cases in the countries mentioned in the above literature, an unregulated profession.

However, caution should be exercised in measuring levels of VT among interpreters. Authors such as Sabo (2011) and Hafkenschied (2005) argue that not every individual who works with traumatized clients will develop VT, and the incidence rate of VT is much lower than claimed by McCann and Pearlman (1990). Israeli clinical psychologist Yael Shlesinger also points out in her 2007 study of 53 interpreters working for various centres for survivors of torture in the U.S. that "the interpreters do not show higher levels of VT when compared to the general population. . . . interpreters who experienced past trauma did not show significantly higher levels of VT, nor did interpreters who do not receive supervision" (p. 166). Nonetheless, Shlesinger did report that the level of burnout positively correlated with interpreters' time spent in assignments with survivors of torture, and "interpreters who had a past experience of trauma showed significantly higher levels of burnout compared to those who had not" (p. 166). *Burnout* is a "general wearing down from the pressure of human service work" (p. 166), defined as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity" (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996, p. 4). The purpose of the current article is therefore (a) to add to the understanding of community interpreters' perceived experience and exposure to traumatic client material; (b) to advocate for best practice in public service involving interpreters; and (c) to build awareness about VT in interpreter training.

The study

We sought to contribute to the somewhat limited international research in the field by conducting an extensive survey that would answer the following three questions, in the Australian context.

1. What is the extent of exposure to traumatic client material perceived by public service interpreters?
2. How do these interpreters perceive the impact of traumatic material on themselves and their work?
3. What kind of support do interpreters seek in order to manage the impact of traumatizing material?

The survey used in this study gathered data relating to the respondents' level of interpreting experience, their self-reported level of exposure to client traumatic material and the nature of the material they considered traumatic. These data were used in cross-tabulations to identify patterns in the responses to Questions 1 and 2.

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Survey methodology

In early 2013, the authors obtained ethics approval to run an online survey targeting practicing interpreters in the state of Victoria. The survey was administered online using the U.S.-based Qualtrics online survey tool³ and distributed through the four main interpreting and translating agencies in Victoria, all of which have around 1,500 actively engaged interpreters who take bookings on regular basis (personal correspondence with Racines, 16 April 2015). Survey respondents were asked to respond to 10 questions (see Appendix) and in several cases were invited to provide text comments. Participation in the online survey was voluntary, and no tracking number or personally identifiable features were built into the survey. Therefore, in theory, the survey subjects were able to complete the questionnaire multiple times. Because an identical email invitation was sent to all four main agencies, it is assumed that interpreters would realise it was the same study and not repeat themselves, and multiple entries from the same survey subjects would be unlikely. The survey questions were designed and workshopped by the researchers after incorporating feedback from practitioners and colleagues from the interpreting and psychology fields. The online survey was open for 2 months, and 271 valid responses were received from the total population size of around 800 registered interpreters (see above and Footnote 3), representing a higher than 95% confidence level for the given random sample size (confidence interval of $\pm 5.4\%$). The results of the survey were extracted from Qualtrics data collation and its cross tabulation applications.

Demographics of survey respondents

Of the 271 respondents, covering a range of 54 languages, 16 of them (6%) were Auslan interpreters; the rest represented various spoken languages. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents were female and the rest were male, with an overwhelming majority of respondents (91%) aged above 30. Forty-one percent of the respondents had over 10 years of interpreting experience, although the survey did not seek to ascertain if the respondents practiced full time, part time or only occasionally. Only 8% of the respondents had no credentials or were awarded only “recognition” by Australia’s National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) because their languages were not included in NAATI’s testing programs. The remaining 92% were certified by NAATI as either Professional Interpreters (50%) or Paraprofessional Interpreters (42%).⁴ The survey did not request the respondents’ education levels, because NAATI’s certification system has minimum education requirements.⁵

This study represents by far the largest state survey of interpreters concerning VT, and is exceeded in size only by the international study conducted by Baistow (1999). Because the survey was distributed by interpreting agencies located in Victoria, we assumed that almost all of the 271 community interpreters who completed the survey practiced in the State of Victoria. (It is possible that a small number of respondents may have been contracted by Victoria-based interpreting agencies but came from other states and territories in Australia.) The findings can therefore be regarded as representative of the interpreters from Victoria. However, the findings can also be applied to the broader Australian context, given that conditions for the engagement of interpreters do not vary significantly across Australia. In analyzing the results, we found that not only was the response rate high, but most respondents gave valuable comments that clarified or elaborated their quantitative responses to questions.

³ More information about Qualtrics can be found at www.qualtrics.com. The researchers’ university is an institutional subscriber of the service.

⁴ NAATI is the national standards and certification body for translators and interpreters in Australia. It is jointly owned by the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. It awards two categories of credentials for translators and interpreters: (a) NAATI Accreditation (at Professional and Paraprofessional levels, earned by passing an exam or studying in an NAATI-approved course); (b) NAATI Recognition (for languages where accreditation testing is not yet available). As of 30 June 2013, NAATI maintained 51 language panels in its testing programs (NAATI, 2013).

⁵ Paraprofessional Interpreters must have equivalent of at least 4 years of Australian secondary education (Year 10) and Professional Interpreters must have general education to degree or diploma level in any field (NAATI, n.d.).

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Survey findings

Level of exposure to traumatic client material

Given the heterogeneity of the survey respondents' practice patterns (including full-time, part-time, and occasional engagement), we felt it would be difficult to dictate a baseline of absolute number of hours to define the levels of exposure to traumatic client material. Instead, we opted to ask about the respondents' perceived exposure (scaled responses included *minimum*, *moderate*, a *great deal* and an *enormous amount*) in the previous 6 months and to ask them to provide an estimated total number of hours in this period that indicated their perceived frequency of exposure. Thirty-two percent of the respondents reported a minimal amount of exposure to traumatic client material in the 6 months prior to the survey (although the question did not probe whether the respondents intentionally avoid assignments of such nature). Close to half of the respondents (45%) said they had *moderate* exposure to traumatic client material, with the mean of the amount of exposure described by respondents as *moderate* being 30 hours, or a little over 1 hour per week. A further 20% reported a *great deal* of exposure (with a mean of 91 hours, or 3.5 hours per week) and 3% reported that they had an *enormous amount* of exposure (with the mean being an alarming 250 hours or nearly 10 hours per week). In other words, 68% of Victorian community interpreters have to confront traumatic client material about an hour per week of their interpreting assignments, and a third of these are experiencing exposure averaging 3.5–10 hours per week in their interpreting assignments.

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Traumatic client material reported by respondents

I felt physically sick when interpreted for an incest case in a police interview.

I stepped out of the police station after a long session of interpreting for a murder suspect who was still covered in the victim's blood. The police officers may well go for a counseling session. Where do I go? I still have to go home and join the family dinner as if nothing has happened.

We were interested to find out what the respondents regarded as “traumatic client material,” confining their responses to the reported exposure over the previous 6 months. From a range of options provided, the responses yielded the following distribution in Table 1:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents' Reported Exposure to Traumatic Client Material

Traumatic client material		Respondents' reported exposure to such client content in the previous 6 months (% of total material)
1.	Client expressing sadness, helplessness and isolation	89.10
2.	Client talking about violence (family violence, sexual assault, physical assault)	71.09
3.	Client talking about traumatic events in his or her life	70.14
4.	Client talking about life-threatening illnesses	62.56
5.	Client talking about the loss of loved ones	55.45
6.	Client talking about sexual abuse, child abuse	50.24
7.	Client talking about torture	38.86
8.	Client talking about murder, criminal trial	28.91

Because this question allowed multiple responses, we can construe that the most common item chosen by 89.1% of the respondents (client expressing sadness, helplessness and isolation) represents the generic nature of the trauma content, whereas the items following with lower scores reflect the more topic-specific categories, such as violence, life-threatening illnesses and so on.

Perceived impact of traumatic client material on respondents

In response to the question probing the extent to which the respondents are affected after coming in contact with traumatic client material, the data in Table 2 indicate that the traumatic client material continues to affect 78% of respondents for some period following the assignment. There are 222 valid responses to the questions (see below in Table 2). Of the 173 respondents who do not forget about the traumatic material right away, 12% report that they feel *extremely upset...for some time* and a small number (3% of the total) report feeling *extremely upset...for a long time*. There is no doubt, therefore, that the survey respondents are identifying in themselves a sense of distress in response to traumatic client material.

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Table 2: Response to Client Traumatic Content

Q7: When you encounter traumatic client content in an interpreting assignment, you			
#	Answer	Response	%
1	complete the assignment as per normal and forget about it	49	22.00
2	complete the assignment but would be somewhat disturbed by it for a while	140	63.00
3	complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about it for a while	26	12.00
4	complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about it for a long time	7	3.00
Total		222	100.00

It is useful to compare these results to the findings reported by other similar studies. The present research found that the proportion of respondents reporting some degree of distress (78%) was higher than in both Baistow's (1999) survey of 295 European public service interpreters and Holmgren et al.'s (2003) study of 12 Albanian interpreters working in Denmark. Both of these other studies reported figures of around 66% for the same phenomenon.

From the cross-tabulation in Table 3, we observed that of those who would complete the assignment but feel *extremely upset for a while* (11.43% of the total responses), half said that they had been exposed to either a *great deal* or *enormous amount* of traumatic client material in the last 6 months, pointing to some sort of cumulative effect on the interpreter from the level or frequency of exposure. Paradoxically, such effect is not repeated in the category in which the interpreters would complete the assignment but would feel *extremely upset for a long time* (only 2.86% of total responses). Rather, over half of them (66.67%) were exposed to a lower amount of traumatic client material (*minimum* to *moderate* categories). Whether this is because individual interpreters in this category are themselves psychologically more sensitive or vulnerable, or because there might be a delayed effect of cumulative client traumatic content on these interpreters is beyond the scope of this research.

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Table 3: Cross-Tabulation of Assignment Response With Level of Traumatic Material Exposure

		Q6: Interpreter self-perceived exposure to traumatic client material in the last six months				
		Minimum amount	Moderate amount	Great deal	Enormous amount	Total
Q7: When you encounter traumatic client material in an interpreting assignment, you	Complete the assignment as per normal and forget about it	13	25	8	0	46
						21.90%
	Complete the assignment but would be somewhat disturbed by them for a while	48	61	22	3	134
						63.81%
	Complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about them for a while	7	5	11	1	24
						11.43%
	Complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about them for a long time	0	4	1	1	6
						2.86%
Total		68	95	42	5	210
		32.38%	45.24%	20.00%	2.38%	100.00%

Furthermore, 91% of these interpreters who felt extremely upset for a while reported that they had completed assignments that involved the client expressing sadness, helplessness and isolation (Item 1 in Table 1), and 75% of them had completed assignments that involved the client talking about life-threatening illnesses, suggesting a possible effect on the interpreters themselves of the intense emotions that the interpreter has to relay as part of the client content. Years of interpreting experience did not correlate with the interpreter's response to encountering traumatic client material, indicating that distress is experienced by interpreters regardless of how long they have practiced.

In addition to questions about the extent and duration of the emotional aftermath in relation to client traumatic material, the respondents were also asked about the impact on their interpreting work in general. As shown in Table 4, one in five respondents (21.36%) reported that the emotional distress was so severe that it reduced the perceived quality of their onsite interpreting performance, 16.50% said that they felt a loss of interest in interpreting, and close to 40% reported that they would try to avoid accepting these types of assignments in the future. Those who chose the *other* option entered text comments showing variations of the three options provided, for example, "try to avoid such type of assignments *for a while*", "weight my diary to not do too many assignments back to back or in a row", or "feeling sad", "stress", or "helpless and worn down". But there are also more positive comments such as "I'm glad I could help", "client appreciation encourages me to keep going", "appreciation of my own circumstances", and "I love the challenge". Additionally, some said they try to "seek professional supervision" or "clinical supervision", whereas others queried "I wonder why we don't receive specialist training".

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Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Occupational Impact with Level of Traumatic Material Exposure

		Q6: Interpreter self-perceived exposure to traumatic client content in the last 6 months				
		Minimum amount	Moderate amount	Great deal	Enormous amount	Total
Q8: After interpreting in a number of assignments involving traumatic client content, you find	A decrease in your own perceived interpreting quality	10	6	6	0	22
						21.36%
	A loss of interest in interpreting	3	8	5	1	17
						16.50%
	That you try to avoid accepting these types of assignments in the future	15	18	6	0	39
						37.86%
	Other	6	22	14	1	43
						41.75%
Total ⁶		30	46	25	2	103
		29.13%	44.66%	24.27%	1.94%	100.00%

Support available to interpreters

When asked if they sought any support for the concerns they experienced as a result of interpreting traumatic client content, 70% of the respondents said they had not sought any form of support, citing reasons such as “no need” ($n = 45$), “there is no one to go to for help” ($n = 8$), “I do not know who I can go to for help” ($n = 8$), “my employer didn’t offer any support” ($n = 4$), “lack of money” ($n = 4$), “trying to be professional” ($n = 3$), and “lack of time” ($n = 2$).

Of the respondents who sought support, the highest percentage (55%) reported that they went to colleagues, followed by 46% who talked to family, and then 38% who confided in friends. Only one in five had sought support from counselors, and 14% from therapists.

From the cross-tabulation in Table 5 below, we can see that apart from those who would “complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset...for a long time”, all those who identified themselves under the other three categories mainly sought support from family, friends and colleagues as a way to deal with the stress and distress that came with interpreting traumatic client content. Note that Question 10 (From whom do interpreters seek support?) allowed multiple choices. Therefore the numbers of respondents in the last row in each column should not be read as the aggregate number of the rows above them in the same column. For the 10 respondents who identified themselves as feeling extremely upset for either *a while* or *a long time*, it is worth noting that very few of them sought support from the agencies that engaged them for the assignments or professional assistance from counselors or therapists.

⁶ The numbers shown in this row do not correspond to the summation of the numbers in their respective column. This is because Question 8 allows multiple answers.

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Table 5: Cross-Tabulation of Occupational Impact With Level of Traumatic Material Exposure

		Q7: When you encounter traumatic client content in an interpreting assignment, you				Total
		Complete the assignment as per normal and forget about it	Complete the assignment but would be somewhat disturbed by them for a while	Complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about them for a while	Complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about them for a long time	
Q10: Who have you sought support from? You can tick multiple answers.	Family	9	17	3	1	30
	Friends	7	16	2	0	25
	Community members	1	0	0	0	1
	Peers	4	7	0	0	11
	Colleagues	8	23	5	0	36
	Mentors	1	3	1	0	5
	Supervisors	4	4	1	0	9
	Agency staff	1	2	1	0	4
	Counsellors	4	6	2	1	13
	Therapists	0	8	0	1	9
	Other	0	9	1	0	10
Total respondents		14	41	9	1	65

Analysis and discussion

Nature of the interpreted content

The findings presented above indicate that traumatic client content and assignment conditions are having a significant impact on community interpreters. Most interpreters surveyed were exposed to an estimated 1 to 3.5 hours of traumatic material on a weekly basis and reported as much as 250 hours of exposure in the previous 6 months, or nearly 10 hours a week. This material can involve both emotional and physical trauma, with physical violence and abuse identified by 70% of respondents as constituting traumatizing content. For 62% of respondents, traumatic material included the discussion of life-threatening illnesses. Over half the respondents had interpreted material relating to rape and sexual abuse, and nearly two fifths reported that they had interpreted cases involving physical torture—a figure that reflects the high number of interpreters working with recently arrived asylum seekers. These figures paint an alarming picture of a workforce that is exposed to the horrifying aspects of human suffering: violence, death, rape and torture. The remainder of the survey findings illustrate that these professionals are profoundly affected by the experience.

Perceived impact of VT and implications for practice and interpreter education

Almost four out of five respondents to this survey indicated that they continued to feel the effect of interpreting traumatizing material for a period following the assignment, and for half of these interpreters, this led to an avoidance of similar assignments in the future. No alleviation of the impact of possible

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vicarious trauma over time could be detected, and long-serving interpreters were just as likely to report distress from exposure to traumatizing content as their junior colleagues. The potential for vicarious trauma to affect the emotional well-being of trauma workers is well documented in the literature, and, to a lesser extent, in interpreting literature. Some client material may be confrontational, upsetting or even off-putting to the interpreter with the soundest mind, let alone to those interpreters with personal experiences that leave them more vulnerable to the disturbing nature of the material. For instance, Harvey (2001, 2003) suggests that interpreters listen, comprehend, process and reformulate the discourse as their clients talk about their trauma, so the interpreter bears witness to their client's victimization. Bontempo and Malcolm (2012) also contend that "any traumatic experience told through an interpreter may test the interpreters' own beliefs about their own safety or that of their children or other loved ones and may affect their willingness or ability to trust others" (p. 106). The implications for the delivery of public service in Australia's heterolingual community are clear: Continued exposure to traumatic content may reduce the willingness of qualified professional interpreters to be engaged in assignments of such nature for public service delivery.

The quality of the interpreting service also suffers, with 21.36% of respondents reporting that they felt their response to traumatic content had a negative impact on the quality of their interpretation. This figure most likely represents underreporting, given the sensitivity of judgments of competence for any professional, and so must be taken very seriously indeed. McCann and Pearlman (1990), in addition to challenging the interpreters' sense of personal safety, as discussed by Bontempo and Malcolm (2012), argue that, for psychotherapists, these and other cognitive shifts resulting from exposure to traumatic client material might create emotional distress, including anger, guilt, fear, grief, shame, irritability, and inability to contain intense emotions. In addition, Dutton (1992) asserts that the cognitive shifts may interfere with effective functioning in the therapeutic role. This supports the findings of the survey that traumatic material can affect the capacity of interpreters to complete their assignments effectively. Interpreting requires an intense level of cognitive function and has been documented in the literature as demanding maximum cognitive-processing capacity to maintain accuracy and conversational flow (Gile, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2009). Any additional load caused by the cognitive shifts described above will divert the brain's finite resources away from the task of rendering one language comprehensibly into another and cause a decline in the interpreting performance, either in accuracy, fluency, or completeness.

Support networks used by public service interpreters

'Nowhere to turn. Agencies don't care; they are too busy just giving out jobs. We have to bear it alone as best we can.'

'I am supposed to forget it.'

'I didn't know who to seek support from.'

'I have stopped interpreting.'
[Survey responses from the study]

Public service interpreters in Victoria have taken steps to address VT when it appears. Respondents to the survey indicated that they relied most heavily on colleagues, followed by family and friends. However, only a minority (20%) sought professional counselling, and 70% of respondents indicated that they had no support at all. Although 16% of these interpreters indicated that they had no need of such assistance, this still leaves 54% of respondents who felt that they had no recourse to any form of support, counselling, debriefing or even a sympathetic ear.

The policy documents of relevant industry stakeholders do not indicate any formal, effective or well-promoted support for professional interpreters by the interpreting and translating agencies and public services that hire them. There is no mention of this issue in the 2008 Commonwealth Ombudsman report on the use of interpreters (McMillan, 2009), which details all aspects of engaging professional interpreters by major government agencies such as Australian Federal Police; Centrelink; the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Nor is there mention of this issue in reports by Becker and Bowles (2001) and Lipton, Arends, Bastian, Wright, and O'Hara (2002) documenting the use of interpreters in New South Wales and Western

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Australia and the lack of debriefing and other support by government agencies using services provided by professional interpreters. The government-owned Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS) is the only agency we are aware of that provides counselling, although anecdotal evidence shows that only a minority of interpreters engaged by VITS know about or use this service. Even so, this organization's care arrangements might provide a useful model for support programs across the sector, as long as the arrangements are adequately promoted to practitioners and they are encouraged to use it. With the high number of employees working in challenging environments in the public service sector, there should be no shortage of models for the appropriate delivery of support to this group of professionals. The lack of service provision to date most likely reflects a low regard for translating and interpreting professionals and the relative disempowerment of workers through agency-facilitated employment (Professionals Australia, 2012).

Raising awareness of VT and the role interpreter training should play

Interpreting is an inherently stressful occupation (Kruz, 2003). It is, therefore, paramount that interpreters be "properly prepared during interpreter education programs via training opportunities or through mentoring" (Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012, p. 108). In an occupational context, positive and negative coping strategies in response to VT manifest in behaviors such as avoidance, denial, negative emotions and substance abuse, as opposed to self-care, professional development, positive thinking and cognitive restructuring (Bontempo & Malcom, 2012). The answers in Question 8 of our survey and the text responses cover both positive and negative coping strategies. According to NAATI's (2013) annual report covering 2012–2013, 57% of its certified interpreters achieve their certification through training. Training programs both have an indispensable duty and provide an excellent opportunity to equip interpreting students with awareness of the possible acquisition of VT and the positive coping strategies.

Although the awareness of VT is comparatively higher in the sign language interpreting community (see Professional Interpreters and VT under Background section), it is a relatively foreign notion to the interpreting educators and practitioners of spoken languages. For example, Australia's interpreter training in the vocational education sector is delivered under the Public Service Training Package. There is no mention of possible VT in any unit of competency, nor are self-care or coping strategies mandated to be covered in any units so as to provide a toolkit for interpreting students for their future practice. Inserting the possibility of occupational health and safety risk in appropriate training unit(s), and promoting the idea among programs and teaching staff will be a good starting point.

Conclusion and recommendations

Vicarious trauma affects Australian public service interpreters both personally and professionally, and may even lead them to leave the profession. The present study indicates that about four in five interpreters report experiencing distress following exposure to traumatic client material. Although the majority of affected individuals report only feeling disturbed by the content of their assignments for a short period, such disturbance may impact on the performance of interpreters for assignments completed during the affected period. Moreover, this figure for affected interpreters is considerably higher than that reported in two international studies (Baistow, 1999; Loutan et al., 1999) that found that approximately two thirds of respondents reported experiencing distress as a result of their professional engagement. The findings may reflect the working conditions for public service interpreters in this country or the nature of Australian interpreting assignments. Traumatic client material may also impact upon the interpreter's perceived cognitive process and emotional reactions during and after the interpreting assignment. The issue must be addressed. Interpreter training education must prepare student interpreters for the disturbing nature of situations they may be called to interpret and the possibility of VT, and equip them with information about where and from whom to seek assistance.

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Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

This study only probes respondents' self-reported exposure to traumatic client material and their coping strategies if and when they perceived the aftermath of such exposure. Administering established psychometric tools such as Briere and Runtz's Trauma Symptom Check-list 33 and 407 would be useful as objective measures of trauma impacts. Conducting focus groups with a selected population of interpreters, to generate additional and deeper responses to traumatic client material might to identify the specific needs of those affected by such exposure.

The field will benefit from additional investigations into occupational health and safety policies within public services on their approaches to possible VT among interpreters working with their employees. A review of the trauma curricula included in interpreter training programs will highlight the issue and encourage interpreter educators to better prepare their students for potential psychological effects.

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⁷ See <http://www.johnbriere.com/tsc.htm>

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Appendix: Survey questions

1. What is your gender?

#	Answer
1	Male
2	Female

2. Which age bracket do you belong to?

#	Answer
1	under 20 years old
2	20 to 29 years old
3	30 to 39 years old
4	40 to 49 years old
5	50 to 59 years old
6	above 60 years old

3. What is your interpreting qualification and the Language Other Than English (LOTE)? You can pick multiple answers.

#	Answer
1	NAATI Paraprofessional Interpreter, and your LOTE is:
2	NAATI Professional Interpreter, and your LOTE is
3	Other qualification, eg. bachelor of arts in translation studies etc
4	None

4. How many years of professional interpreting experience do you have?

#	Answer
1	1-5 years
2	6-10 years
3	11-15 years
4	more than 15 years

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5. In the past 6 months, have you done interpreting assignments involving the following client content?

#	Answer
1	violence, e.g. LOTE client talking about family violence, sexual assault, physical attack, assault
2	intensive emotions, e.g. LOTE client expressing sadness, helplessness, isolation
3	bereavement, e.g. LOTE client talking about lost of loved ones
4	life-threatening illnesses, e.g. LOTE client talking about terminal illnesses, palliative care arrangement
5	abuse, e.g. LOTE client talking about sexual abuse, child abuse
6	serious crime, e.g. LOTE client talking about murder, criminal trial
7	trauma, e.g. LOTE client talking about dramatic event in their life
8	torture, e.g. LOTE client talking about own or other's torture experience
9	gruesome images, e.g. having to look at confronting photos or pictures during interpreting assignment
10	other difficult or stressful content, please specify

6. If you tick any of the boxes in the previous question, how much exposure have you had in the last 6 months to these types of interpreting assignments? Please enter an estimated total number of hours over the last 6 months.

#	Answer
1	minimum amount
2	moderate amount
3	great deal
4	enormous amount

7. When you encounter traumatic client content in an interpreting assignment, you

#	Answer
1	complete the assignment as per normal and forget about it
2	complete the assignment but would be somewhat disturbed by it for a while
3	complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about it for a while
4	complete the assignment but would feel extremely upset about it for a long time

8. After interpreting in a number of assignments involving traumatic client content, you find

#	Answer
1	a decrease in your own perceived interpreting quality
2	a loss of interest in interpreting
3	that you try to avoid accepting these types of assignments in the future
4	other, please specify

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9. Have you sought support for the concerns you experienced as a result of interpreting traumatic client content?

#	Answer
1	Yes.
2	No, please advice why not?

10. Who have you sought support from? You can tick multiple answers.

#	Answer
1	Family
2	friends
3	community members
4	peers
5	colleagues
6	mentors
7	supervisors
8	agency staff
9	counselors
10	therapists
11	other, please specify:

Job Demands and Resources: An exploration of sign language interpreter educators' experiences

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Abstract

This article presents preliminary research regarding sign language interpreter educators' experiences of job demands and job resources. The study draws on job demand–resources theory (Bakker et al, 2014), where job demands have been identified as leading causes of burnout leading to poor health and negative organizational outcomes, and job resources are the main drivers of work engagement leading to increased well-being and positive organizational outcomes. In considering the 'readiness to work' gap evident in graduating sign language interpreting students (Anderson & Stauffer, 1990), not enough attention has been paid to interpreter educators' ability to deliver what is needed. By examining the balance (or lack thereof) between job demands and job resources, we may have a better understanding of the pressures that sign interpreter educators face in delivering the level of education needed to prepare sign language interpreting students. This article provides an overview of a qualitative scoping study, which involved conducting semistructured interviews with eight sign language interpreter educators in four different English-speaking countries, and the key themes that emerged in terms of the job demands experienced by, and job resources available to, sign language interpreter educators, with suggestions as to the potential relationship to student readiness to work as interpreters.

Keywords: Job Demands-Resource Theory, Interpreter Education, Burnout, Student Readiness.

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Job Demands and Resources: An exploration of sign language interpreter educators' experiences

Drawing on job demands–resources theory (Demerouti, 2001; Bakker and Demerouti 2007; Bakker et al., 2014) this paper presents preliminary findings of a study of sign language interpreter educators' experiences of job demands and job resources, and their perceptions of how these factors contribute to student learning outcomes. The experiences of a small sample of sign language interpreter educators across four countries: Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States are included. The article provides an overview of key themes that emerged in terms of the job demands experienced by, and job resources available to, sign language interpreter educators, with suggestions as to the potential relationship to student readiness to work as interpreters.

In order to examine the current experience of sign language interpreter educators it is important to first of all contextualise the development of the sign language interpreting profession and the subsequent development of formal sign language interpreter education.

Sign language interpreting was first described as an emerging profession in the early 1990s, and some would argue that it is still emerging (Napier, 2011). Prior to the professionalization of sign language interpreting, the role of 'interpreter' for deaf people was typically taken on by family members (often children with deaf parents), welfare and religious workers, and teachers of the deaf (Napier et al., 2010). These people generally had no formal language or interpreting training, and often no other educational qualifications. The professionalization process began as a result of the recognition of sign languages as real languages, and developments of disability discrimination and civil rights legislation, so demands for interpreting services increased and formal education and training provision for interpreters became more necessary (Swabey & Mickelson, 2008). Training was initially provided on an ad hoc basis, which led to the establishment of educational routes to practice and 'academicization' of interpreter education through formal college and university programs (Napier & Leeson, in press). Although in many countries formal sign language interpreter education programs have flourished, the professional 'readiness' of graduates has been questioned because they do not necessarily demonstrate the necessary competence to work professionally as interpreters (Patrie, 1994; Stauffer, 1994; Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2004). This has been described as a 'readiness to work' gap (Anderson & Stauffer, 1990) or the 'readiness-to-credential' gap (Godfrey, 2010), and is defined as follows:

[The readiness-to-work gap] indicates that students graduate but are not ready to gain employment as an interpreter practitioner who is competent to provide services across a wide variety of settings... the [readiness-to-credential gap] indicates that students graduate and may be employed to provide rudimentary interpreting services in limited settings but are not yet ready to obtain interpreting credentials set forth by the field at either the state or the national level. (Godfrey, 2010, p. 89)

Research that explores the sign language interpreter profile in relation to aptitude, cognitive flexibility and personality has attempted to explain why sign language interpreter graduates may not necessarily be ready to work professionally as interpreters upon graduation (see, e.g., Bontempo & Napier, 2007; Bontempo & Napier, 2009; Bontempo & Napier, 2011; Bontempo et al., 2014; López Gómez et al., 2007; Macnamara et al., 2011; Shaw, 2011; Shaw et al., 2004; Shaw & Hughes 2006; Stauffer & Shaw, 2006). To date, however, only one study has explored the relationship between interpreter education programs in the United States and the readiness to work challenges affecting graduating students (Godfrey, 2010).

Godfrey examined characteristics of interpreter education programs with the lowest readiness-to-credential gap, and proposed that programs from which graduates received their American Sign Language interpreter credentials within the shortest time after graduation were the most effective. Within this study it was identified that the readiness to credential gap varies depending on program duration and the type of credential. For example, graduates from 2-year programs require more time to gain credentials than graduates from 4-year programs. This suggests program duration does have a degree of influence over graduate credentialing and therefore, whether or not the program is in a higher education institutions (HEI) is a contributing factor to professional readiness. One major factor impacting credential rates identified in her study was the presence of service learning and practicum within the program curriculum. Godfrey suggests classroom instruction alone is inadequate to produce work ready interpreter practitioners; hence service learning and practicum experiences are essential components of interpreter education. Components such as these require partnerships between programs and individuals and organizations outside of the HEI. Therefore, if programs are unable to develop such partnerships with external entities (e.g., the Deaf community, professional interpreters, interpreting agencies), it may be difficult for programs to be effective, which again demonstrates how HEIs may impact professional readiness. Godfrey also noted literature-based speculations regarding the conditions of educational programs and how they may influence student outcomes (e.g., lack of facilities and characteristics of classroom instructions) (see Lackney, 1994). However, the results from Godfrey's (2010) study did not reveal anything regarding this matter. Godfrey closely examined program structures, curricula and staffing structures, and found that there was a correlation between the characteristics of the interpreter education program and student learning outcomes. She did not, however, interrogate the experiences and perceptions of the interpreter educators themselves about any challenges that they face in delivering the goals of the program in which they teach. It is possible to consider that, even in programs that are considered effective in Godfrey's terms, educators may still feel pressure as a result of tensions between expectations of the education sector and the requirements of the sign language interpreting profession. Even if curricula are revised to reflect the needs of the community and profession (see Cokely, 2005) there may be other factors that may contribute to educators' capacity to deliver work- or credential-ready sign language interpreter graduates.

1. Literature review

1.1. *Job Demands-Resources Theory*

The job demands-resources (JD-R) model acknowledges that every occupation has specific characteristics. These characteristics can be categorized into two groups (a) job demands and (b) job resources. Hence, JD-R theory can be applied to all work environments and tailored to specific occupations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). To date, this theory has not been applied specifically to sign language interpreter educators, which makes this research unique while complementing Dean and Pollard's (2001, 2011, 2013) examination of demands and controls for sign language interpreter practitioners and the implications for stress and interpreter education. Bakker and Demerouti (2007, p. 312) describe job demands as the "physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs," whereas job resources are "those

physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that are either/or functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands and the associated physical and psychological costs, stimulate personal growth, learning and development". Schaufeli and Bakker (2004, p. 296) explain job demands are the "things" to be done in the context of an occupation. Job resources are then the means that support an employee in doing those things. Bakker et al. (2014) describe the flexibility of the model's application to various occupations, given that some demands and resources (such as work pressure, autonomy) can be found across almost all occupational groups, whereas job demands and resources are more specialized. For example, they suggest physical demands remain important for construction workers and nurses, whereas cognitive demands are more relevant for scientists and engineers. JD-R theory also suggests that job demands and resources trigger a health impairment process and a motivational process. Job demands require effort on the part of the employee hence generally predict exhaustion, health complaints and repetitive strain injury (Bakker et al., 2003; Hakanen et al., 2006). Job resources support employees in their efforts and therefore have been linked to predict work enjoyment, motivation and work engagement (see Bakker et al., 2008, Hakanen et al., 2008, Halbesleben, 2010).

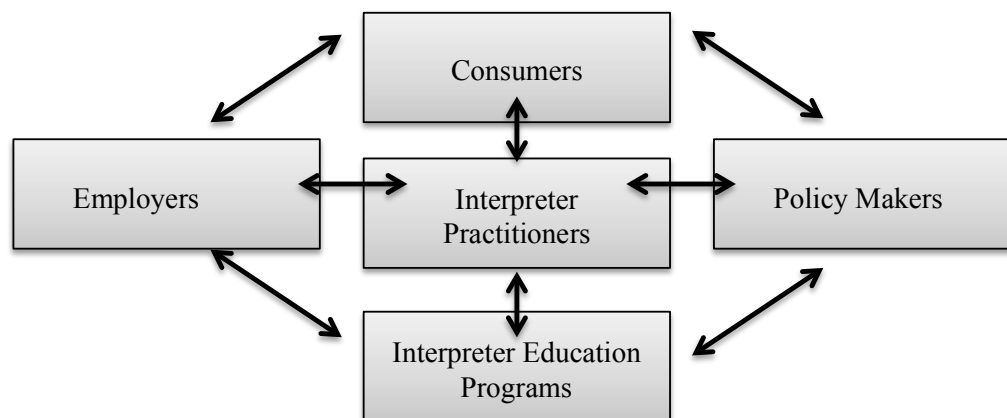
Many studies have supported the dual pathways to employee well-being proposed by JD-R theory and have shown that the model can predict important organizational outcomes (Bakker et al., 2014). With this in mind, by applying JD-R theory to sign language interpreter educators may provide better insight into why graduates from interpreter education programs may lack sufficient work readiness. Nahrgang et al. (2011) tested the relationship between job demands and job resources and burnout, engagement and safety outcomes in the workplace and found support for the JD-R model in the context of safety at work. Job demands (including risks and hazards) led to burnout; on the other hand, job resources (such as safety climate) led to work engagement, which predicted lower accidents and injuries. Boyd et al. (2011) investigated the antecedents of psychological strain and organizational commitment among university academics in Australia. Personality was integrated into the JD-R model to show how an expanded model can better explain employee well-being (Bakker et al., 2010). Its findings demonstrated support for the two proposed processes; job demands predicted health impairment while job resources predicted organizational commitment. Although these processes are often viewed independently, many studies have noted how they interact. JD-R theory suggests job demands and job resources may have a combined effect on well-being and indirectly influence job performance. The first interaction is one in which job resources buffer the impact of job demands on strain (Bakker et al., 2005; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007), and the second interaction is one in which job demands amplify the impact of job resources on motivation/engagement (Bakker et al., 2007; Hakanen et al., 2005).

Therefore, identifying job demands and job resources of sign language interpreter educators may provide insight into the overall well-being of sign language interpreter educators. If job demands are high and resources are low it may have an impact on overall job performance (teaching), which in turn may affect educational outcomes (student learning and work readiness). Additionally, specific job demands experienced by sign language interpreter educators and the resources they use to manage such demands have not yet been documented, which supports the need for further research. When examining the experiences of sign language interpreter educators, it is important to consider sign language interpreter education in the wider context of education as a system.

1.2. Education as a system

A *system* is an entity that exists through the interconnected interactions of its parts. Higher education systems (HESs) comprise HEIs, consisting of schools, departments, and programs. Paradeise and Thoenig (2013) describe Higher Education (HE) as highly complex institutions with several layers of governance and authority. Due to the interconnectedness of an HES, if one or more these parts, or layers as described by Paradeise and Theonig (2013), break down it may create a disruption to its counterparts. For example, the functionality of a sign language interpreter education program may be affected by the school or department where it is housed and the extent of support offered to programs across the school/department (e.g., resource allocation). Sign language interpreter education is bound to two distinct but overlapping systems: HES and the interpreting profession. Witter-Merithew and Johnson (2005, p. 116) created a diagram (reproduced in Figure 1) to illustrate how the sign language interpreting profession functions as system.

Figure 1
The Interpreting System
Witter-Merithew and Johnson (2005, p. 116)



Although Figure 1 is efficient in showing the interconnectedness within the profession, it does not reveal how sign language interpreter education is also part of the wider system of higher education, and we suggest this connection plays an important role in the overall functionality of, and challenges that may be evident in, interpreter education, which in turn has a direct effect on the profession itself. Although all HEIs are systems, the terminology used to describe the systems varies. Miller (1995) suggests that when researching HE in more than one country it is important to develop a common nomenclature to avoid confusion across the systems. For example, the name and type of HEI may differ (e.g., technical and further education, community college, polytechnic college); program types, length, and awards conferred vary; structures and job titles range (e.g., president or principal, dean or head of school, department head or chair). Countries may have different definitions for different levels of adult education, rather than combining different program types into the same category. In Australia, for example, HE is considered as the education offered at universities only, and therefore students pursuing education at technical and further education colleges are not considered HE students. On the contrary, other countries include vocational, undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs all as part of HE. Goodlad (1995) describes the HES in the United States, specifically in the state of California, as a three-tiered education system. In this system students may begin their education at a vocational level and advance through educational levels, earning various degrees, and all levels are considered part of HE. Considering Goodlad's (1995) and Paradeise and Thoenig's (2013) description of HE, it is justifiable to refer to the various sign language interpreter education programs in the four countries included in this study as a form of HE, regardless of the actual level of offering. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, HE includes all postsecondary educational offerings regardless of institution type.

The purpose of HE varies, and discussing this in depth is beyond the scope of this article. However, it has been suggested that HE has a direct link to employment (Watty, 2006). HEIs have been widely criticized for producing graduates across a variety of disciplines who are not ready to successfully enter the workforce (Toutkoushian, 2005; Mukherjee, 1995; Stensaasen, 1995). Schargel (1996) claims the educational system is failing to produce graduates capable of reading, writing, doing math, and thinking; and features of graduates' professionalism and communication skills have also been challenged. De La Harpe et al. (2000) describe

unprepared graduates as a global concern. Following on from Anderson and Stauffer's (1990) initial identification of the readiness to work gap in sign language interpreting graduates, Patrie (1994) later confirmed the relationship between HE and employment by stating that sign language interpreting graduates were not 'employment ready' upon graduation. However, due to the continuing shortage of available qualified sign language interpreters, graduates who may not be employment ready remain able to find employment (Bontempo & Levitzke-Gray, 2009; Godfrey 2010). Therefore, Godfrey (2010) notes a readiness to credential gap, in which students may be employable but are not yet ready to obtain professional credentials.

Professional readiness of graduates across all disciplines comes from a variety of factors including those exclusively external to HEIs. Mercer (1993) describes threats to success in three areas: situational, dispositional and institutional. Situational and dispositional are completely external to the HEI. Situational barriers are related to family, job and civic commitments. For example, a student trying to juggle family responsibilities while attending an HEI may struggle to finance or find child care; "time and energy spent trying to 'make ends meet' can drain the most dedicated student" (Fairchild, 2003, p.12). Carney-Crompton and Tan (2002) suggest household income, the number of the dependents in the household and financial aid received by the student are variables that can determine the persistence rate of adult students. Furthermore, dispositional barriers include dissonance among role demands (Mercer, 1993). Home (1998) reports three dimensions of the situational barriers women face: (a) role conflict from simultaneous and incompatible demands, (b) role overload from insufficient time to meet demands, and (c) role contagion (preoccupation with one role while performing another). Home claims full-time students have reported role overload and that student, family, and job demands all contribute to role contagion. Others have suggested factors such as motivation (Benshoff & Lewis, 1992), student personality and intellectual development (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1982) having effects on learning which would then impact professional readiness. Tierney (1988) suggests that HEIs are influenced by powerful external factors and also shaped by strong forces from within such as performance indicators, funding systems and structures, partnerships with industry, and operations of internal management—all of which may be institutional barriers to students' job readiness (Mercer, 1993). However, because educators mediate systemic influences on students, they may have insight into ways to overcome them.

This study was designed with the following research questions in mind:

- What external and internal demands do sign language interpreter educators face?
- What resources do they employ or need to meet such demands?
- How do educators perceive these demands and resources affecting teaching, learning and professional readiness of students?

2. The study

In order to answer the research questions, a qualitative scoping study was designed to elicit information from sign language interpreter educators about their experiences of working within the HES and delivering programs that meet the 'readiness to work' requirements of the sign language interpreting profession. The goal of the study was to collect preliminary data and examine key themes that could be further explored in a doctoral research project.

2.1. Participants

Eight sign language interpreter educator participants across four countries (Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States) were invited to the study through network sampling methods (Hale & Napier, 2013; Carrington, Scott & Wasserman, 2005), using the contacts of the two authors. These countries were chosen

because they share English as the majority language, and the Deaf community in two of the countries (U.S. and Canada) use American Sign Language (ASL), so that interviews could be conducted in English or ASL, which are the two languages of the primary author of this study.

All the participants were identified as highly experienced sign language interpreters and educators. Three participants had 21+ years of professional teaching experience, four participants had 16–21 years of professional experience and one participant had 6–10 years' experience. Six out of the eight participants were currently sign language interpreter practitioners and recognized as such by a certifying body. Three deaf participants and five hearing participants also participated in the study. See Table 1 for a breakdown of participant demographics.

Table 1: Participant demographics

Pseudonym	Highest level of education	Professional teaching experience (years)	Current Program type	Interpreter?	Credentialed interpreter?
Casey	Currently studying towards PhD	16–20	Postgraduate	Yes	Yes
Courtney	BA	6–10	Certificate	Yes	Yes
Pat	BA	21+	Diploma/Undergraduate	No	N/A
Jesse	MA	16–20	Diploma Program	No	N/A
Rachel	PhD	16–20	Associates/Certificate Program	Yes	Yes
Mary	PhD	21+	Undergraduate	Yes	Yes
Katie	PhD	16–20	Undergraduate & Postgraduate	Yes	Yes
Sandy	Currently studying towards PhD	21+	Postgraduate	Yes	Yes

2.2. Procedure

Because the experiences of sign language interpreter educators had never been studied, we selected the semistructured interview as the research method best suited to perform an initial examination of their perceptions. According to Hale and Napier (2013), in interpreting research, the semistructured interview allows for the interviewee to freely express thoughts and ideas. To fully understand the current experiences of sign language interpreter educators, we wanted to give them freedom of expression, rather than confine them to closed questions in the fixed time frame of a structured interview (Spradley 1979), but we equally valued providing some structure

with respect to the original purpose of the study.

After approval through the Heriot-Watt University School of Management and Languages ethics review process, 10 potential participants were contacted by email. Eight sign language interpreter educators agreed to participate in 90-minute semistructured interviews. Seven interviews were conducted using online video software such as Fuze (5) and Skype (2); one interview was conducted face-to-face. All interviews were conducted in either English or ASL. Eleven questions were prepared and focused on eliciting perceptions from participants regarding factors that influence their teaching and assessment practices; factors that influence student success; and their job demands and job resources, while giving us insight into the landscape of the HEI and program in which they work (e.g., hiring processes, funding allocation, performance evaluation etc.). All participants informed of the scope of the study prior to the interview. To avoid biased responses, we did not provide interview questions in advance.

2.3. Analysis

All interviews were video recorded and transcribed or translated from ASL into English. Transcriptions/translations of each interview were uploaded into NVivo software, a qualitative data analysis computer software specifically designed for researchers working with text based or multimedia information. NVivo housed the transcriptions and, we analyzed the transcripts using its query and visualization tools as well as its annotation features. We analyzed the interviews for themes (Aronson, 1994) and identified job demands ($N = 5$) and job resources ($N = 10$) and further subthemes. The interview data were analysed using a six-stage process of thematic analysis:

- (1) familiarization with data,
- (2) generation of initial codes,
- (3) search for themes among codes,
- (4) review of themes,
- (5) defining and naming themes, and
- (6) producing the final report (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Given the small sample included in this study the results are presented without minimal reference to participant demographics in order to preserve the anonymity of the informants, because even the smallest piece of contextual information may reveal the program in which they work.

3. Results and Discussion

Here we provide an overview of the job-demand categories, with illustrative quotes from participants.

3.1. Job Demands

Table 2 illustrates the five job-demand categories developed based on the experiences expressed by participants. The categories are organized in alphabetical order without any judgment on the importance of the demand.

Table 2: Job-demand categories

Job demand	Definition
Expectations	Expectations placed on the educator internally or externally regarding their work performance
External	Demands placed on the educator by stakeholders outside the HEI such as the Deaf community, interpreting community or other professional organizations
Higher education institution (HEI) constraints	The organizational structures and policies that frame the teaching environment
Personal	Demands on individuals originating outside of the HEI, which may impinge on their work (e.g., family and continued education)
Workload	The specific job tasks sign language interpreter educators manage on a day-to-day basis

3.1.1 Expectations

Participants described various demands related to the expectations of different stakeholder groups. These demands included the expectations of the administration, colleagues, external bodies, and students, as well as the expectations they had of themselves. For example, the administration expects key performance indicators to be met, colleagues expect opportunities to collaborate, and students expect detailed feedback on all assignments. Professional interpreters who provide support to interpreter education programs as mentors expect mentees to be at a higher caliber than they often are, and, likewise, the Deaf community expects that graduates will be professionally ready to work upon graduation. Pat explained how the Deaf community keeps tabs on program graduates: “The deaf community is watching us. They look at how well prepared our graduates are. And if they are lousy, we will hear about it. We have a lot of pressure on us from the Deaf community to ‘dot our Is and cross our Ts’ so to speak.” Furthermore, participants seemed to have a great deal of expectation of themselves to perform well in their job because others depend on them—a sense of moral obligation. For example, one participant stated, “Deaf people’s lives are at stake, and we need to make sure our interpreters can handle it. Deaf people deserve better.” Another participant stated, “I could just do my job. You know, I could just do that. But ethically I can’t do that. Morally I can’t do it. I know I can do it better. I need to do the best that I can.” Although expectations in some cases may serve as motivating factors (motivation is considered a job resource), they also appear to be juggling such expectations with the other demands.

3.1.2 External Entities

In addition to expectations, external entities such as the Deaf community, interpreting community, and professional organizations, (e.g., accrediting bodies) form another demand category. Mary suggests that these entities constitute a difference between interpreter education and other disciplines. She states, “You know most other college programs don’t have external communities to deal with.” In regards to the Deaf community she suggests motivation can derive from wanting to do the job well for Deaf people, but also explains how at times staff can become overinvolved in the politics of the Deaf community, which can become counterproductive.

Three participants expressed challenges with accreditation bodies because they often have influence over program curricula due to established requirements for accreditation. The participants reported that such requirements are often not in line with what they believed to be relevant and necessary for their students to be work ready. Thus in many ways it seems educators are forced to include what they believe to be counterproductive content to courses. In one case, a participant made an attempt to discuss concerns with the accrediting body; the concerns were not well received, so the participant must continue to meet the requirements of the external entity. This demand, although not the direct fault of the educator, demonstrates how many factors affect teaching and learning other than the teacher and student, and how the educator may need additional support to access the accreditation body to propose changes.

Yeah, it’s changing but the currently voluntary register that exists in [country]—has little or no input from people who actually know what interpreting is. I have been doing this for a little over 28 years and I can have knockdown, drag-em-out fights with colleagues about what interpreting is or isn’t but I won’t have it with people who know nothing about interpreting. To be lectured to, and talked at from people who are bureaucratic and regulatory but know nothing about the work is insulting—but it’s the context in which we exist. (Casey)

The requirements from [accrediting body] are that people who are assessing have to have the appropriate assessment qualification. So the people we think might be able to do the job become irrelevant and what is more relevant is the constraints that are put on us by the awarding body. (Courtney)

3.1.3 HEI Constraints

In addition to the external constraints that educators must navigate, they also have to contend with the constraints of the HEI in which they work. The structures, policies, program duration, student-contact hours, and key performance indicators (retention and graduation) are examples of this third demand category. The HES is the system in which educators operate. Therefore, educators are required to follow structures, policies and procedures to remain employed, even if these are not always in line with program goals. For example, grading structures set forth by HEIs can make it difficult for interpreting students to fail even though they may demonstrate inadequate skills. In one instance, an 80% was an A. The participant felt that a 50% pass rate was too low for students to advance through the program and eventually graduate with the level of skills required for work. Could a stricter grading policy in sign language interpreter education programs increase graduates’ professional readiness? In this case, only those who demonstrated a higher standard of skills would be able to advance through the program. One participant explained that in a particular HEI, students often do not have their marks back from one semester until the fourth week of the following semester. Therefore, some students enter more advanced classes when they have not yet passed foundational classes (e.g., prerequisites). In this case students are more likely to be out of their zone of proximal development as described by Vygotsky (1987), creating a larger gap for educators to scaffold students to the appropriate level. The same participant described policies around failing students that also placed constraints on their work: The educator must document every fail through a formal report to justify it, as well as offer the student an opportunity to sit for reassessment. Policies may be seen to threaten educator autonomy, a quality of education that has historically been valued (Berdahl, 1990; Beck & Young 2005). Also, this type of

policy adds additional work to the already extensive workload educators' carry. Educators tried to communicate these challenges to the administration, with disappointing results:

We say why it's not working. But it's just the way it is. We give them pedagogical reasons, we are giving them reasons in terms of student outcomes and all these kinds of things and they go, 'Yeah this is the way it is' and it's like, 'Okay, thanks for that.' It's not just me, you know, colleagues both inside my school and outside my school have the same issue. (Casey)

Another clear concern amongst participants was student enrolment. Whether student numbers relate more to the administrative expectations or an established program policy appeared to vary amongst the participant experiences and merits further investigation. However, in some cases it was clear that in order to keep programs operating, enrolment had to reach a set minimum number of students. A participant stated:

We get the money from student tuition and an allotment from the college to run the program itself. We have a certain percentage of our budget that goes to the library and the administration. Each program is supposed to give 33% to the college. We never can give 33% because we have small numbers. But yes, they give us money and the tuition together. There is a complicated formula but it does come down to student numbers. I know it has to do with how many staff we have teaching, what the numbers are, etc. I am not too familiar with it. But we get less money in tuition because we have less students. That money comes down to paying everything from staff salaries, staff benefits to lights. It's a bit unfortunate in a sense—you want less than the 30 students to effectively teach them, but your funds are based on tuition. So if you wanted to get more money to invest into the program you would need to accept more students but you can't do that because high numbers have negative effects on students. (Jesse)

Similarly, another participant explained:

Due to funding [requirements] and the higher education system we are forced to have specific numbers. I mean, without those numbers our program can't run. Every year, we accept 30 students into the program. We then split the 30 students into two cohorts. Each cohort has 15 students. That is an agreement that we have made with the college. We know that 15 is beyond the recommendation² and still high, but there is nothing we can do about it and that is simply the agreement that we have made. (Jesse)

Because HEIs depend on program enrolment and student retention numbers for funding and course availability, educators reported that they often preferred to offer support intervention and pass rather than fail students who demonstrate academic risk and are borderline pass/fail. However, if interpreting students continue to enter the workforce underprepared, these support interventions may not be strong enough for learners to achieve the level of skill they need within the program's time frame.

We in the program know the student can't interpret, is not going to be successful, but we can't lose all of our students so we handle it by increasing support to the students where we can. Now sometimes, we do go ahead and fail them but we will offer them opportunities to audit the course, provide tutoring support, etc. There is a lot of pressure on us to keep the students and not fail them for the sake of program numbers. (Jesse)

A lack of consistent student numbers may cause a program to run intermittently, to ensure enough students in each cohort. Because of this, students are limited in their choice of classes each term, and if they fail a course there is no guarantee the same course will be offered immediately for retaking. The participant describing this particular constraint explained that because a student would not be able to retake the course for another year, "we tend to give people borderline passes when we want to give them the message they are not doing well. But I feel

² The American Sign Language Teachers Association recommends an class size of 8–20 students for optimal instruction, with class size depends upon level and nature of instruction. See <https://www.aslta.org/resources/instructional-class-sizes/>

that there are some times we should fail more students and we don't". The demand of educators to pass and graduate poor students may offer another explanation why many graduates lack professional readiness.

'One size fits all' HEI student policies and structures do not necessarily align with the requirements of the communities in which students will work upon graduation. For some educators, their HEI conditions and structures make their work more challenging than it needs to be. This finding supports an earlier comments from experienced interpreter educator and researcher Betsy Winston (2005), who has suggested that sign language interpreter educators simply continue to do what they do because they are told to, and not because it is the right thing to do:

In spite of years of teaching interpreting, in spite of curriculum changes, in spite of recognized failure to adequately educate interpreters, we continue to do what we do. We accept students into interpreting programs because we are told to, ignoring evidence that this does not result in competent interpreters. We graduate students into the community, acknowledging they are not qualified, that there is a gap, and that they need at least a year or two to achieve even entry level competence. (p. 231)

3.1.4 Job-Demand: Personal

The participants in this study made some reference to their personal lives. Juggling family commitments and continued educational and professional pursuits outside the HEI is part of the sign language interpreter educator experience. At times the responsibilities that come with personal factors can interfere with managing their work demands. Rachel stated, "I have to focus on my family and the reality is this [marking] is so time consuming and requires so much effort that cutting that off lets me take care of my family." Another participant had to take leave due to a death in the family; educators taking any kind of leave exacerbates the staffing challenges for the HEIs. Two participants referenced putting their personal commitments on hold to better juggle workload; one participant could not pursue continuing education (a form of professional development identified as a job resource) due to workload.

3.1.5 Job-Demand: Workload

The extensive workload of educators in HE has been widely documented in the literature (see Soliman & Soliman, 1997; Houston et al., 2006; Melin et al., 2014). Therefore, it is no surprise that the roles and responsibilities described by the interpreter educator participants in this study were vast. Jesse explained, "People are constantly giving me more tasks and all of those tasks have deadlines and I can't keep up. They wonder why I am behind, but they don't recognize what's already on my plate." Nineteen tasks were identified:

1. Accreditation and administrative paperwork
2. Admission screenings
3. Academic board and committee participation
4. Creating new lesson plans
5. Creating new course
6. Curriculum review and development
7. Developing community partnerships
8. Hiring and recruitment
9. Marking, grading, and assessing students
10. Meeting with students

11. Office maintenance
12. Practicum and field experience coordination
13. Program coordination and development
14. Providing feedback to students
15. Research commitments
16. Resource development
17. Seeking funding for program enhancement (e.g. resource development, staffing, and research)
18. Supervising staff
19. Teaching

It should be noted that although there are similar practices across all disciplines (e.g., lesson planning, teaching and researching), each field has unique requirements for delivering an effective academic experience to students. Participants described several roles and responsibilities that may be specific to sign language interpreter educators; they elaborated on some of the tasks listed above more extensively than others. For example, all participants described the enormous amount of time they spent marking/grading and providing feedback to students. The assessment processes in sign language and interpreter education courses may be more time-consuming than in courses where marking consists of evaluating written work using an answer key because most interpreting assignments and exams are filmed, and instructors must watch and analyse videos to provide detailed feedback on interpreting skills. For example, Jesse continued:

I have told the administration about the workload. But it doesn't matter, the system has been created with the idea that teachers mark essays, process scantrons in a machine, etc. There was a workload form that was sent out for us to fill out. Marking videos was not there. The amount of hours our team spends on marking is unimaginable.

Jesse explained how one assignment for one class took approximately 22 hours of time to mark. Rachel noted that it could take her an hour to mark one 5-minute video clip. To try to cut down on student assessment, her program has implemented a new strategy of assessing work with the students during 1-hour one-to-one meetings:

I don't know how many holidays I've given up to share my time with student videos. . . . Instead of me being at home with my computer where I'm rewinding, watching parts, going forward to rewind again- I have one hour cause then I have another student coming in. Start to finish my whole grading process and feedback takes one hour, per student, per assignment. Whereby before it might take an hour and a half, 2 hours and I wasn't sure really that they would understand what I meant. Even if I signed my feedback, or I said my feedback, and by the time I gave them that feedback they were already moving on to the next one. So when I gave it back, I found out that so they weren't really actually necessarily all that motivated to even look at it, understand or try to apply it. (Rachel)

Rachel appears excited about this new assessment process, but a single assessment for each student in a class of 15 would still require two full days of work; and many educators teach more than one class. Some participants described making decisions about how much work they assign to students, and in one case an educator reduced student workload, limiting how much feedback students receive from the educator directly. Pat describes his experience: "I often think about cutting homework. But it's not right to do, so I don't. I want them to be able to do well and have the practice opportunities but it's just exhausting." Certainly the number of classes one educator teaches and how many students in each class varies, yet, feedback and formative assessment are critical to teaching and learning (Higgins et al. 2002) in general and necessary components of sign language interpreter educators' work.

Workload does appear to have affected the participants' energy levels and job performance, a phenomena supported by current literature (Jex, 1998; Bakker et al., 2004) suggesting that employee exhaustion levels can diminish available energy sources which limit energy supplies needed to invest in work and that can therefore

contribute to ineffective job performance. Additionally, within Job Demand-Resource theory working conditions will initiate two distinct process, an energy-driven process, associated with job demands, and a motivation-driven process, associated with job resources (Baker et al., 2003; Bakker et al., 2003; Demerouti et al., 2001). One participant described that their passion for making a difference in students' lives remains, but it requires more energy than it did before. Casey stated, "It takes more energy just to have that [passion]. And you know, I'm not meek but it still sucks. You would like to be more interesting. I had all of these grand hopes during the last module. I did some things that were just a bit different, but I just didn't have the time or the energy, you know?" Similarly, Pat states, "Within the first month of teaching I have the energy. But as time goes on it just fades." It appears then that workload, an identified job demand, is not being managed due to insufficient time, which is an identified job resource, and thus is affecting these interpreter educators to the point of losing their passion and energy. This leads us to consider what job resources were identified by interpreter educators that may alleviate these demands.

3.2. Job Resources

Table 3 shows job-resource categories identified during the interviews. The 10 resource categories were by participants as ones they have and employ, or ones don't have but need when managing job demands. These resource categories have been ordered alphabetically. It should be noted there is some overlap within identified job-resource categories.

Table 3: Job Resources categories

Job Resources	Definition
Administration/Management	Expertise, support and management style of the HEI
Classroom/Teaching materials	Books, videos, and technological equipment educators use to deliver courses.
Program components	Curriculum
Facilities	Buildings, classrooms, labs, offices
Financial resources	Program-specific funding; salary
Human resources	Staffing
Motivation	Internal and external factors that keep the educators going
Professional development	Feedback through appraisal and evaluation as well as training received through conference, seminar and workshop attendance
Support	Physical and emotional support the educators receive personally or professionally
Time	Time available to complete job tasks.

3.2.1 Job Resource: Administration/Management

Participants identified a supportive and understanding administration or management team as an important resource. Some participants felt it was difficult to meet job demands when administrators were not fully understanding of the nature of the sign language interpreting profession or of sign language interpreter education some participants. One participant commented that those outside the profession in management roles might not have the same understanding or expectations:

Administration is a challenge for us. They don't really understand what interpreting is. I have to say, it has gotten better through the years. But there have been times that they just didn't understand why our numbers were so small, why so many students were failing, or struggling. The administration just doesn't understand our program, the field of interpreting and what it actually takes to become an interpreter, they don't understand Deaf Culture, [sign language], why we have small classes etc. So we have spent a lot of time trying to educate the administration. (Jesse)

Another participant described experiences with an overbearing supervisor who threatened program closure based on low student numbers. The program's initial enrolment was high, but graduation rates were not as robust; and "graduation rates definitely made us feel threatened, we only graduate about 4 or 5 of the 10 who enter the interpreting program." Similarly, Sandy stated that the HEI could "cut the program at any time because the numbers are so small and will always be small." Although the complexities of interpreting tasks may be clear to sign language interpreter educators, who may not expect all students who enter the program to successfully exit if they do not meet the requirements of the profession.

Another participant described wanting to discuss fiscal concerns or other program related matters with the administration but being refused. Pat clearly expressed frustration about working in such an environment:

I would ask if I could discuss fiscal concerns and the answer was always no. I could not respond negatively to the administration, but unfortunately I did not have access to bring other concerns and complaints to them and it was all really uncomfortable. (Pat)

A lack of supportive administration/management may affect interpreter educators' overall wellbeing and work experience. However, some participants reported positive experiences with supportive and knowledgeable administrations, describing the benefit of a supportive work environment not only for themselves personally, but also for the program. Pat describes the change in administration:

Our new administration seems to understand. This has been good and it goes to show it matters who is in charge. The new administrator wants students to do well and if they are not doing well, he believes they shouldn't continue. This is an exciting change. Finally, someone who gets it!

On a similar note, Katie states:

It's helpful if the people who are administering the program, maybe not delivering the program, actually have some sense of what the program is about and why it needs to be resourced the way it is. For example in [name of country] there is a quota of how many bums on seats are required before a course gets cut but in our field they allow things to run with 15 students, or even 10 students, which would never happen in any other course of the college.

When the administration is interested and involved, participants reported that resources are purchased, funds are allocated to the program and there is an overall sense to key stakeholders that the HEI was invested in the best interests of the program.

3.2.2 Job Resource: Classroom/Teaching materials

Physical resources such as books and videos are widely available in the United States more limited in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Although ASL is used in Canada, both Canadian participants stressed the need to have access to classroom/teaching materials developed in that country:

We have limited resources from Canada and a lot of our resources are coming from America, which is fine but we definitely need to have more resources developed out of Canada. Specifically for teaching ASL and interpreting skills. This means we end up developing our own materials. We have to film ourselves, creating scenarios for the students to work with. Mock interviews, etc.

Most of our materials have been made in America. We have some materials of our own, but I really would like to see more Canadian-developed materials. Especially in relation to our language classes . . . I say this because the materials we have seem to include so many regional variations, and when you are teaching you are constantly having to stop and clarify what is American and that gets frustrating . . . There has been a lot of discussion about the development of it, but at the end of the day, who is going to do it? I don't have time to do it . . .

Having to create essential texts and videos to share with students adds to educators' workloads. On the other hand, one participant commented that good educators make successful programs and the lack of materials is in fact negligible, that "a good educator can manage, make do and improvise." However, if graduates are not work ready, managing, making do and improvising are not enough, especially considering interpreter educators' extensive. Participants from the United States noted that although there are plenty of resources there is no time (a job-resource category) to review new resources and identify which ones are best suited for a well sequenced, scaffolded curriculum.³

3.2.3 Job Resource: Program Components

Course curriculum is a core, necessary component of interpreter education programs. Most participants saw inadequacies in their current curricula and felt they needed review and further development. Pat stated, "There has been a lot of discussion about the development of it [curriculum], but at the end of the day, who is going to do

³ Bruner and Ross (1976) developed the term *scaffolding*, as a metaphor to describe interactional talk between learners and skilled others. Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, suggests intelligence is better understood as what a learner could do with the help of skilled others (see Cameron, 2001, p. 6). Initially learners may rely heavily on the help of others; they gradually shift towards greater independence as they acquire skills and knowledge for themselves. *Sequencing* is the explicitly arranged activities to support overall learning. Therefore, a sequenced sign language interpreting program curriculum includes an intentional order of courses where learners can be scaffolded from learner (dependent) to professional (independent).

it? I don't have time to do it between teaching and coordinating. We would have to bring someone from the outside in that we pay in order to develop what we need." Most participants suggested a well-developed curriculum would strengthen their programs and enhance teaching and learning. Although having to develop curriculum has implications for workload (a job demand), a fully developed curriculum can serve as a functional instructional guide to support teaching and learning:

We need a curriculum for sure. We have so many amazing materials. But nothing that's scaffolded, and spiraled and reinforced and so that's great and it's almost like hold off with the materials. The goal of a good program is that it's well developed from beginning to end, right? And that students have time to take it in, and practice it, and master a skill before they move on. That is not my reality. Right? So, maybe we need to back up, and really create that well scaffolded, well sequenced, well developed curriculum with opportunities for students to master each part of it... and pilot it and see where it works, and see how far we get, and see how long we really need rather than here's what we got and then lets make the program fit within these constraints. And then how long is it going to take? How many hours would it really take to do it right? I don't know. I mean—I don't know of a curriculum out there at all. Yeah, I want to work on this. This is one of the things I want to do. I would love to develop a curriculum that's designed to help interpreters move from beginning to end. (Rachel)

3.2.4 Job Resource: Facilities

Facilities are buildings, offices, classrooms and labs available for teaching and self-study. Participants reported a variety of experiences regarding HEI facilities. For example, language labs are facilities that educators can incorporate into activity lesson planning while also providing students with increased opportunities to learn outside the classroom (Stepp-Greany, 2002; Gorm, Hansen & Shlesinger, 2007). Sandy appeared excited describing a newly refurbished sign language interpreting lab, which would make a difference in the delivery of the program "Our interpreting program is beyond what most programs are. We have a pretty nice lab, and we are getting a new lab starting in the fall that's going to be even bigger and better so we have great facilities". On the other hand, some participants described labs as unavailable to them or not meeting technical requirements of sign language interpreting students; in such cases, student-learning experiences are more limited. In addition to lab spaces, Mary expresses disappointment that her HEI does not have enough office spaces for staff to be housed in a shared building, which can increase collaboration opportunities and reduce feelings of isolation: "Right now we have six offices all together. The part-time teachers also have a space. They share an office. When we get our seventh person we will be maxed out and will have to find this person another office, which will be in another building. This is unfortunate because they will be separated from the team."

3.2.5 Job Resource: Financial

Financial resources serve as the major structural backbone to interpreter education programs. It is the funding that supports many other job resources; therefore, this category does have overlap. Funding supports overarching program costs, including human resources, job resources and staffing (see Section 3.2.7). Participants expressed a need for more funding, with needs varying from increasing human resources to improving facilities and resource development. Casey described paying guest lecturers out of pocket when the HEI could not provide: "I bring people in who are going to help us, and they need to be remunerated. If the university is not going to do it, I'm going to do it." Courtney felt that continuously asking interpreters in the community to volunteer as mentors was becoming more and more difficult, and a small pot of money to remunerate them for their time would be advantageous:

Students need access to professional interpreters. [We need] more access to those people without feeling like you are asking something over and above, something that is acceptable to those interpreters, without them wanting to be paid, there is not much money for that.

Many of the participants are engaging with work they personally are not remunerated for. Some are juggling roles and responsibilities of program coordinators although they have only been hired as teaching staff. Katie was hired as a contractor but often works directly with the HEI to help coordinate, because there is actually no full-time staff to work on the program. Rachel is the only full-time staff member who teaches within the interpreting program; each semester, she fears that one of the contractors will decide not to come back because of the extensive workload. She specifically noted that no funding is available to increase staff:

We just went through a pretty serious budget crisis and we seem to be coming out on the other end of it. But we had many full-time people retire and they didn't fill those positions so right now we have a higher portion of [contractors] for the classes, than we did say 8 years ago. We are pretty much in agreement that we need another full-time interpreting teacher first, second we need another ASL teacher...then we send that up to the governing board. Then the governing board and senate and all the other divisions look at it and all the other departments and they determine first, second, third and then administration decides how many faculty are going to be hired.

Despite staff submitting formal requests year after year, the HEI has not allocated funding for an additional position. Therefore, if funding allocation is tied to program enrolment and program enrolment in sign language interpreter education programs remains small, it may always remain a challenge for programs to receive funding to add an additional line for teaching to their budget—that is, funding and staffing/human resources are closely connected.

3.2.6 Job Resource: Human Resources

Human resources include the personnel directly supporting the program (e.g., administrative, teaching, research assistants, lab assistants, etc.) Although two participants reported being satisfied with their current situation regarding teaching staff, six participants described concerns in having too few full-time staff and needing to rely on contractors to fill teaching gaps. A few participants expressed not only feeling overwhelmed with workloads to manage on their own, but also sensing that using contractors, instead of hiring full-time staff, has had negative implications for the program as well as for student learning. Mary stated, “You need to have full-time professors at a [HEI]. If not the classes become just classes for monetary gain and the teachers are not focused on the university goals.” Another participant elaborated:

Of course we want more permanent staff, but because of our small numbers we can't get any more. Contractors are here to teach their assigned classes and only that. They are not here on a daily basis and that has an impact on student success as well. . . . But for program consistency, curriculum development, teaching strategies, contractors are not here on a daily basis to be involved in that. They aren't paid for it. They are paid to teach their courses and that's it. They are not paid for meetings with the students, not paid for the hours spent on marking assignments, not paid for preparing materials, and that impacts students for sure. I wish we had more permanent staff. I have a good group of contractors but it would be more beneficial to have additional full-time staff to do those things I mentioned, such as enhancing our curriculum, create additional resources, etc. But the college has turned down our requests and so we fill the gaps using the contractors. (Jesse)

Jesse went on to clarify that the contractors are not unqualified individuals but that students have limited access to them because they are not on campus regularly to provide additional support. Full-time educators can

invest more in students and programs. Education literature documents the negative impact that contingent or adjunct (casual) employees can have on student performance (Wyles, 1998; Monroe & Denman, 1991; Johnson, 2011).

3.2.7 Job Resource: Motivation

Motivation consists of the internal and external factors that motivate individuals to continue doing what they do. Studies show that employees who are motivated are more engaged in their work and provide higher levels of job performance (Bakker et al., 2004; Rich et al., 2010). The participants in this study showed several areas of motivation that pushed them to work hard. We believe that the sense of personal and professional responsibility they expressed is unique to the field of sign language interpreters:

We are preparing students more effectively and some are making it and some are getting it and so and if we don't then the repercussions are huge. You know the consequences are horrifying because these people [students] are going to work with our friends, and our colleagues and our children, right? (Rachel)

Because interpreter educators do have ties to the external communities in which their students eventually serve, they may have a different level of motivation that pushes them to invest time and energy into their work, as they receive indirect feedback on their graduates through their community relationships. They work long hours and juggle job demands because they are motivated by the goal that their students will be able to provide quality interpreting services to the Deaf community upon graduation:

So sure, as a teacher we could take the perspective that it's too much work to plan and carry out these external learning experiences. But we know they will have impact. To not do them will really have repercussions. So much depends on the energy and the motivation of the teacher (Mary)

Participants also noted that their own reputation could be on the line if their students do not provide such quality services to the community:

It's also uncomfortable when a student leaves a program and they haven't taken it on board what you taught. . . They are one of mine [and] they have [my] label on them; I've been responsible for them. I am obviously not the only person responsible for them but that brings pressure and is still uncomfortable now. (Courtney)

It should be noted that the identity of the sign language interpreter educator is important to the Deaf community. According to Moore and Levitan (2003), Deaf people *will* ask students the name of their teacher for two reasons: (a) curiosity and (b) to tell students if their teacher is considered 'good' or 'bad.' Moore suggests these judgments are made by knowing the teacher's qualifications, their attitude, or may be political (e.g., a personal grudge). Considering the importance of the educator's reputation within the Deaf community, if many students are graduating without professional readiness, the Deaf community may believe this to be a direct reflection of the educator rather than the institution in which the program is housed.

Participants were also clearly motivated by wanting to serve the students to the best of their ability. They appeared regretful in not giving more time to support students. One participant compared students to becoming the children of the educators. And like parents want children to succeed and will do anything they can to enable that, the educators want their students to succeed in the same way and will try to find additional support, mentoring,

peer support whenever possible. Mary describes the importance of these additional supports: “You know, we select 15 or 16 into our program they are our babies and we need to do everything in our power to keep them developing and make sure they have everything they need to practice...they are our babies.” Additionally, three participants shared the joy they experience when students return to say thank you and share their professional successes and it is these success stories that keep them wanting to work hard. Rachel states, “There are former students from the our program all over the world doing research, and teaching and getting faculty positions and interpreting in schools with kids who are going to grow up and make some difference becoming leaders in these deaf organizations. The rewards are so high.”

This motivation for their students to succeed appears to provide a deeper understanding of how participants sustain their workloads.

3.2.8 Job Resource: Professional Development

Professional development (PD) is the way in which employees develop and maintain their professional (in this case interpreting and teaching) skills. PD can include attending training through conferences, workshops and seminars; working in collaboration with peers through team teaching and peer mentorship; and receiving feedback from students and other structured performance appraisals (Desimone et al., 2002). Many participants felt that PD was a much-needed resource. Not all HEIs provide funding opportunities for educators to attend such events; often, funding is limited or not available. Pat shares this as a concern: “The other thing that is a bit of an issue, [the HEI] doesn’t fund us to go to conferences.” In many cases training was mainly supported through personal funds. Additionally, due to the nature of sign language interpreting being a specialized discipline, participants explained the difficulties in finding mentors to observe their teaching and provide feedback. In many cases this is difficult internally because staffing is limited, and therefore there is no one available. One Deaf participant described the last time a person observed a class delivered in sign language: “She couldn’t sign. She was just watching my interaction with the students. There was no interpreter. Really, since then no one has watched me teach.” In other disciplines it may be easier to collaborate across disciplines and discuss teaching strategies, yet this is often not possible when working within language fields because those observers need to also hold that language skill. Sign language interpreter education is a small field in general, which makes an even smaller ‘tier’ of senior or advanced practitioners to call upon. It is clear that the interpreter educators in our study do want to develop professionally:

Up until this point I have never been able to be evaluated by another interpreter educator or by somebody who could give me that type of input. There are no other full-time interpreter educators at my campus. I asked if I could have an adjunct person evaluate me and that hasn’t worked out. I have never received feedback or been evaluated by a peer who is in my field. (Rachel)

Some participants are currently continuing in education, while others are making plans to do so. One participant noted that many of the staff members teaching in the program are behind on current theories and practices surrounding the field of sign language interpreter education, and they do in fact need training. However, there is no funding for PD and the staff members are not always willing to personally invest in it:

Sometimes, one person on the staff will be able to go, but we can’t all go. And the teachers need more education relating to interpreting. Sure they know some of the theories, but some are just not keeping up to date with the current literature. (Pat)

Another participant expressed the willingness to engage with new literature to keep up to date on best practices, but admitted that without enough time, teaching content and delivery will remain static until more time is available.

3.2.9 Job Resource: Support

The support that employees receive within and outside the workplace is very important for well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Chay, 1993). Participants in our study, noted varied experiences of support. Some said they recognized the importance of support from colleagues but struggled to find it, because of other constraints such as the lack of human resources and time, Sandy shared: “When [name] and I used to work together we would give collegial feedback, which was great. But [now] there is no one around to do that with.” Therefore, without the opportunity to collaborate, sign language educators feel isolated, as well as unsupported by their administration (see Section 3.2.2) External supports were not overtly discussed however, literature does show that personal networks can serve as a support system (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Zimet et al., 1988).

3.2.10 Job Resource: Time

Time as a resource represents the amount of time needed to manage workload tasks. Participants appeared to believe that if more time were available to them, they would better manage job demands, therefore improving learning experiences for students:

The fact that I don’t have or feel like I have the time to be creative or innovative is going to have an impact on students. I’d love to have more—be more interesting, be more creative with stuff as opposed to let’s take out the PowerPoint from last year tweak a few things, change the lecture notes, change the dates. (Casey)

Throughout the interview process participants made reference to needing more time to collaborate and meet as a team; develop, modify and prepare innovative courses; grow and enhance programs; research, publish and disseminate information; review and seek available resources and/or develop new ones; stay current with literature and best teaching practices; strengthen and improve curricula. Without enough time to manage their workload, it appears many of these participants are ‘just getting by’ and their job performance is not optimal:

If I had one thing my teaching would be better. Hmm. I think time. With the workload I carry, I don’t have enough time. I don’t have enough time to create new lessons, seek out new resources, develop new activities etc. I simply do not have enough time. The classes I teach sometimes are lacking and we get by. (Jesse)

These insights provoked the following questions: (a) If educators are just “getting by”, what type of example does that set for students’ practice? (b) What type of impact does this have on student learning outcomes, including work readiness? (c) If the participants in this study do not feel they have enough time to do their job effectively, can students fully develop the knowledge skills and abilities they need? Participants suggested that without a reduction in workload or additional time, increasing human resources may be the best strategy for helping them to manage job demands.

4. Limitations of the Study

Before concluding the report of this qualitative scoping study of sign language interpreter educators’ perceptions of job demands and job resources, and discussing the implications of the findings, it is necessary to acknowledge some of the potential limitations of the study.

Sample size: The sample size of this study was small (eight participants, two from each country). However it has high construct validity because it draws on established literature while also demonstrating internal

validity, because participants mentioned similar issues showing they have many common experiences (Hale & Napier, 2013)

Program variation: This study included a variety of program types: postgraduate, undergraduate, diploma and certificate. Program types will inevitably lead to different program level outcomes and therefore the experiences reported by the participants related to job demands and resources will vary. For example, teachers working with students with previous interpreting experience in a postgraduate program will have clearly different experiences than those teaching groups of students entering undergraduate programs with no previous interpreting experience.

Analytical approach: Even though the data translator is a Certified American Sign Language Interpreter, who has been signing for over 15 years, when translating ASL data into English there is inherent subjectivity in the translation choices made (Young & Temple, 2014; Stone & West, 2012). Thus it is important to recognise that there may be some bias in the interpretation of the data, because the translation may have skewed subtleties presented in the ASL source text.

5. Conclusions

All participants in our study perceived that their performance does have an impact on their students' learning outcomes and student success, although the type of impact certainly varies among students and programs. Although this study did not attempt to measure the impact of sign language interpreter educators' job demands and resources on students' learning outcomes and professional readiness, future research should explore this link. Considering job demand–resource theory, if educators do not have resources to manage job demands, they may experience weakening job performance and even burnout. Thus, understanding sign language interpreters' overall well-being is critical to a better understanding of why students continue to graduate without the minimal requirement of skills needed to practice.

Sign language interpreter educators participating in this study expressed high job demands and low/limited resources. Many of the interviewees experienced high levels of exhaustion and stress, as well as burnout, which is a similar finding to studies of other occupations exploring implications of high demands and low resources on employee well-being (see Bakker et al., 2007; Bakker et al., 2005). However, participants were passionate about their work, which appeared to serve as a motivating factor. Although many of these factors may also apply to educators in other educational disciplines there are a few areas that appear unique to sign language interpreter education: the extra time and attention required for marking visual assignments; the scarcity of educational materials in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as highly regarded resources sequenced to best scaffold learners; constraints that national accreditation bodies have on sign language interpreter educators—what the educators want to teach and what accreditation bodies expect them to teach may not always align; and the presence of the Deaf community as a major stakeholder and influence over sign language interpreter education.

It is clear there is more to learn specifically about sign language interpreter educator job demands, job resources, overall well-being, and the ways in which interpreter educators perceive these factors as influencing their job performance and overall student learning outcomes. However, this initial study clearly demonstrates that experiences of sign language interpreter educators (positive and negative) are rooted within the nature of the HEI (e.g., the level of the support from the administration, whether or not program needs are met), and that sign language interpreter educators, situated in their current social reality of HES, are in what they can achieve. Therefore, additional examination of how interpreter educators perceive their reality as potentially influencing their job performance and student learning outcomes will be a beneficial addition to research previously conducted on the readiness-to-work gap.

Seeing how research has primarily focused on sign language interpreters, students and interpreter pedagogy, the findings in this scoping study confirmed that there is a need to further examine interpreter educators within the

context of the HES. What role do HEIs have in relation to student learning outcomes? What obligation do they have to ensure that interpreter educators are prepared to not only face the demands of the job, but to equip students to facilitate accurate communication exchanges in a variety of settings? Understanding student learning and professional readiness should not be limited to student ability and interpreter profile, where predominantly scholars have focused their research, but should also include HEIs, sign language interpreter education programs, and educators. If higher education has been built around fostering students to become autonomous and reflective learners who hold knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully transition into the interpreting profession, the role of HEIs must also be explored and not just the currently working interpreters. Considering that the professional sign language interpreting system is linked to the HES, it is important to note that constraints in the HES influence how the sign language interpreter education system functions. That graduates leave HEIs to work as professional interpreters without the necessary skill sets shows a breakdown in both systems. We hope that sharing the experiences of sign language interpreter educators highlights the reality of the HES and how this system influences the interpreter educators within it, and in turn, student learning outcomes.

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Challenges of Court Interpreting: Implications for Interpreter Education

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Abstract

This article aims to examine the findings of a research study into challenges faced by court interpreters in New Zealand. Despite the research being conducted on court interpreters who were based in New Zealand, implications of this article may also be applicable to overseas court interpreter educators and practitioners. The research included an online survey followed by interviews with practicing court interpreters. A total of 30 court interpreters throughout the country participated in the survey, and 11 volunteered to be interviewed. Survey respondents were asked about challenges encountered at work, including legal terminology, terminology in other domains, tag questions, and so on. Based on the survey results, five questions were generated as an outline for semi-structured interviews. The authors report on the lexical and discursive aspects of these challenges established from the online survey and the interviews. It is hoped that the findings of this study can be used to improve court interpreter education and practice, and promote equal access to legal rights for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals residing in not only New Zealand but also other English-speaking countries.

Keywords: court interpreters, challenges, interpreter education, tag question, speech style

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Challenges of Court Interpreting: Implications for Interpreter Education

This article will report on the findings of a study on common lexical and discursive challenges, including terminology, tag questions, and speech styles, frequently encountered by court interpreters in New Zealand. Previous studies carried out by overseas researchers suggest that faithful reproduction of the linguistic features is crucial to the fidelity of court interpreting, but those nuances were often neglected by court interpreting practitioners (Berk-Seligson, 2002; González, Vásquez, & Mikkelsen, 2012; Hale, 2004). However, little information can be found in the literature about New Zealand's court interpreting practice, let alone about how to address relevant challenges through education. Plausible explanations for the lack of investigation include the following: (a) Court interpreter education is relatively new to New Zealand. Not until 1998 did New Zealand start to offer formal legal interpreter education programs at the tertiary education level (Crezee, 2009). As a result, in-depth research reflection of court interpreter programs has yet to develop. (b) Court interpreting, as a research subject, has not attracted enough attention due to a lack of awareness of its importance. The current study employed an online survey involving 30 court interpreting practitioners as respondents, followed by one-on-one interviews with 11 court interpreters, in order to identify court interpreting issues that can be addressed by interpreter education.

Although Māori, English, and New Zealand Sign Language are all recognized as official languages in New Zealand, English is the primary language of public life, including in the court of law. However, not everyone in New Zealand is able to use English to communicate. For example, the New Zealand 2013 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2013b) showed that there were 87,534 people who were not able to have a conversation about everyday things in English. Between 2006 and 2013, the number of limited English proficient (LEP) individuals in New Zealand increased from 81,939 to 87,534 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013a). The most common languages spoken by Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals were Chinese languages (including Mandarin, Cantonese, and Wu), followed by Samoan and Te Reo Māori. In addition, LEP individuals may not be familiar with the New Zealand court system, which is based on the Westminster system. However, the court interpreting service is utilized in New Zealand to ensure LEP individuals' equal rights to justice.

History of New Zealand Court Interpreting Studies

As noted, the court interpreting service is of great importance in terms of ensuring the LEP individuals' equal access to legal services. However, there is a need to investigate more closely how, and how well, this is done. For example, the Supreme Court judgment *Abdula v The Queen* SC 18/2010 [2011] NZSC (New Zealand Supreme Court) 130 revealed the fact that the New Zealand court interpreting service may have a few issues that need to be addressed. As yet there has not been enough research on this (Shin, 2013), which was the motivation for the current study. In New Zealand, only a few news reports can be found related to challenges for court interpreters.

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Morrison (1996) reported on two issues: abandonment of a court case due to poor and biased interpreting in Auckland, and court interpreters' discontent with their remuneration in Wellington. Another news report indicated the absence of "a register of trained interpreters" (Pierson, 1997). Palmer (2006) reported a growing demand for highly qualified court interpreters along with "a greater awareness of the importance of using people who are trained, rather than family members and friends" (p. A19).

Although these news reports provide a brief overview of some challenges of court interpreting, it is impossible to systematically identify what problems interpreters face in New Zealand courtrooms without an in-depth analysis of empirical data. This is crucial if we are to work toward resolving these serious problems. The aim of the study reported on here was therefore to identify potential problems faced by court interpreters in New Zealand and provide possible resolutions to these issues, in an attempt to improve interpreter education and ongoing professional development. The study design drew on relevant research studies carried out in other English-speaking countries, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, America and Canada, given the fact that these countries share a considerable amount in both "legal tradition" (Mikkelsen, 1998, p. 24) and "lawyer system" (Phelan, 2001, pp. 29–30).

Linguistic Challenges for Court Interpreters

One of the most frequent challenges for court interpreters can be the terminological precision of legal language, because legal terms differ from everyday English (Hale, 2007a). According to Mellinkoff (1963), courtroom language can be dated back to its origins of Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and French. He points out that court language is largely inaccessible to lay people due to its wordiness, lack of clarity, pompousness, and dullness. Other than legal language, court interpreters must have a wide range of vocabulary from a variety of domains, such as forensic pathology, chemistry, and narcotics, in case any relevant expert witnesses speak about these issues in the court (González et al., 2012).

Beyond the level of the lexicon, the court interpreter also faces a number of discursive challenges. Berk-Seligson's (2002) analysis of hundreds of hours of courtroom interpreting data suggests that interpreters are also actively engaged in influencing the illocutionary act in the discourse process. Hale's (2004) study of court interpreting in Australia revealed that interpreting tag questions can be problematic for court interpreters. In English, the major types of tag questions are formed by a statement with a tag question appended (e.g., *Isn't that right?*). A rising tone of the tag indicates a genuine question, whereas a falling tone has coercive illocutionary force and is widely used in cross-examination (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985). Hale found that interpreters omitted the tag question in their interpreting over 50% of the time, which she suggests can change the illocutionary act of the original discourse (2004, p. 44). Hale's (2007b) article presents a clear example of this. She describes how the Counsel asked: "You're making all this up, / aren't you?" However, the Spanish interpreter omitted the tag ("aren't you") and interpreted it into a flat tone statement, which diminished the illocutionary force of accusation (2007b, p. 199). Crezee, Burn and Gailani (2015) found similar issues in their study of student court interpreters. It is of interest to see whether practicing New Zealand court interpreters are also aware of this issue.

Maintaining speech style can be another challenge for court interpreters. Generally speaking, the level of formality of the language used in court can range from informal to formal (Hale, 2007a, p. 66). Whereas the judge tends to use formal language, the witness or defendant is more likely to use an informal style. O'Barr (1982) found that lawyers are adept at manipulating linguistic styles to serve different purposes, such as enhancing their own credibility and discrediting hostile witnesses. Hence, in order to maximally maintain the fidelity of participants involved in court settings, prerequisites for court interpreting should include the ability to "manipulate registers from the most formal varieties to the most casual varieties" (González et al., 2012, p. 20). However, Hale (2004) noted that court interpreters tended to alter stylistic features in a number of ways. When interpreting into English, for example, interpreters were inclined to raise the register, copying the lawyer's style, whereas when interpreting into the other language, they were found to often lower the register, copying the witness's style. The

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current study sought to ascertain if court interpreters in New Zealand are aware of the importance of maintaining the speaker's speech styles, because this would be relevant for the training of interpreters.

Data and Methodology

The current study utilized an online survey followed by semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are widely used in applied linguistics because they enable the researcher to strike a balance between some level of control and the flexibility to follow up on relevant topics that arise (Nunan, 1992). Semi-structured interviews also promote a healthy balance of both the researcher's and participants' points of view (Weerakkody, 2009). In the semi-structured interviews conducted here, the interviewer also went through the survey questions with the interviewees to check if they wanted to add or clarify anything. The 30 survey respondents and the 11 interview participants involved in this study were both recruited from the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI) website online users' forum. Only affiliate or full members of NZSTI have a login and can get access to this forum. Participants' confidentiality was ensured because the survey respondents did not have to identify themselves, and in the interviews they were identified by a code.

Findings

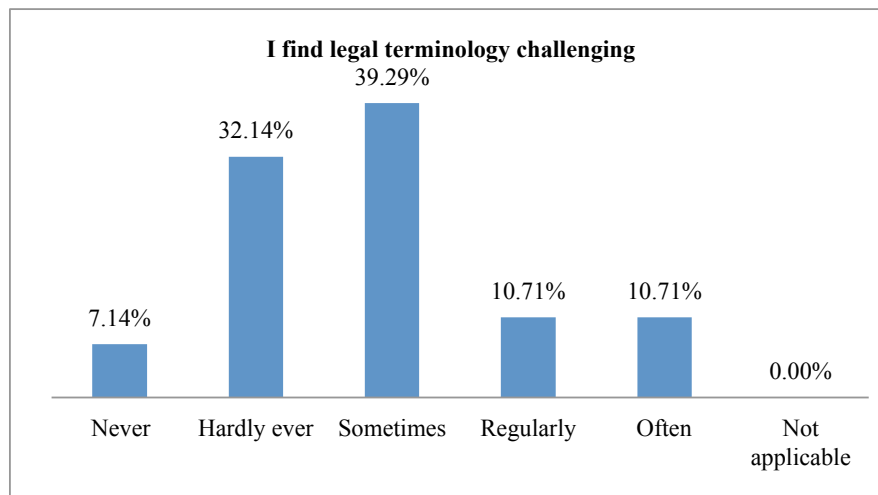
Summary of Survey Findings

Interpreters were asked to select as many challenges encountered at work as possible, and to click on a five degree Likert-type range of options from *-never* to *often* to indicate its frequency. During the data analysis stage, responses were converted into numbers, where 1 = *never* and 5 = *often*.

Participants were asked about lexical challenges. Survey results revealed that the respondents' average ratings were (in descending order): legal terminology (2.86), terminology in domains other than legal (2.45), and tag questions (2.37). Frequency of the respondents' encountering of each challenge is shown in Figure 1 below:

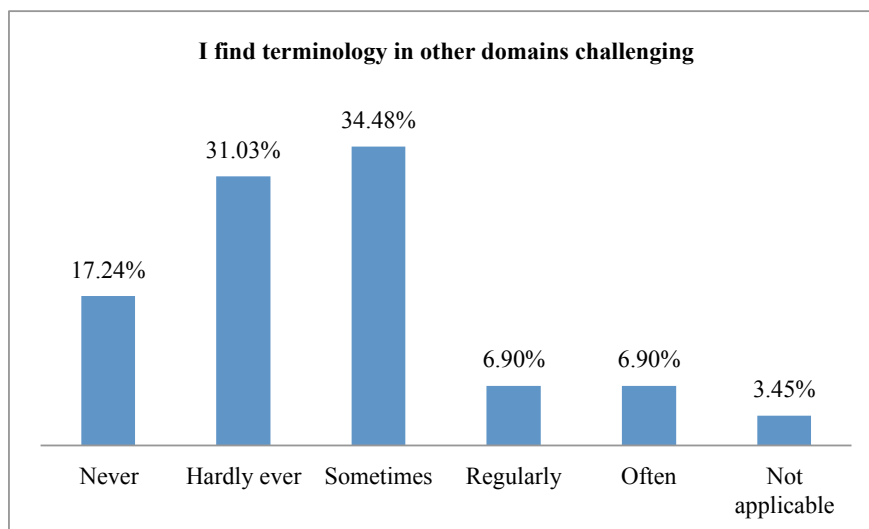
Figure 1: Frequency of Encountering Legal Terminology Challenges

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The majority of the court interpreters thought that legal terminology at times is “sometimes” a problem while at other times is “hardly ever” challenging. A total of 28 respondents answered this question; two respondents did not offer a reply. Among those who answered this question, almost 40% said that they sometimes found legal terminology hard to interpret. More than 30% of the respondents said that they hardly ever found legal terminology challenging. Overall, then, legal terminology caused a few problems to interpreters about 40% of the time but caused more problems to interpreters about 60% of the time. The next figure shows the challenges of encountering terminology in other domains.

Figure 2: Encountering Challenges of Terminology in Other Domains

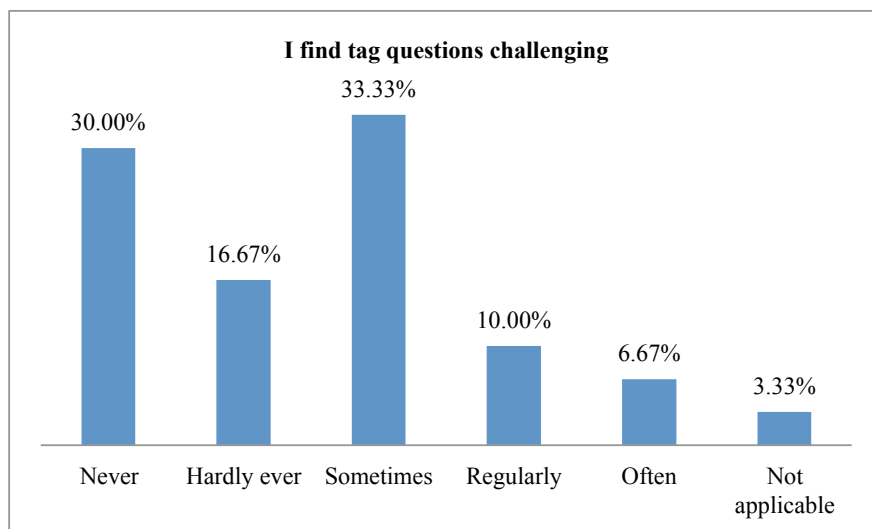


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Figure 2 shows similar results to Figure 1. A total of 29 respondents answered this question; one respondent skipped it. Ten respondents (34.48%) chose *sometimes* with another nine (31.03%) choosing *hardly ever* to indicate the frequency. Five other interpreters (17.24%) said that they never found it challenging to interpret terminology in other domains. Overall, then, whereas half the respondents did not find dealing with terminology in other domains a challenge, the other half found that it was, which is another finding that interpreter education should take into consideration.

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Figure 3: Encountering Tag Question Challenges



In response to the difficulty of tag questions, all respondents answered this question. One third (33.33%) said that sometimes these were difficult to interpret, whereas another third (30.00%) never found it hard at all. Half of the remaining third “hardly ever” found them challenging. If we combine the sometimes with those who rated being challenged by tag questions “regularly” and “often,” it adds up to half the group, so again this is a finding that those involved in interpreter education should consider.

Summary of Interview Findings

All interview data was transcribed verbatim, without grammatical corrections so as to convey participants’ voices as authentically as possible.

Lexical Challenges

The interview data revealed that the interviewees were aware of linguistic issues at the lexical level. When asked about the challenges they encountered in court interpreting, 10 of the 11 interviewees raised issues about legal terminology, although they either had been through training or had a great deal of interpreting experience. As one interpreter said,

You have to expect jargon, and to be spot-on. (Interpreter 7)

Another interpreter pointed out that knowledge of this legal jargon requires proper training and effort, and is not something that others are familiar with:

Even though you live in New Zealand for a long time, unless you...the courtroom interpreting is a very specialized area. My experience with other New Zealand people or those who were born, grew up, educated with a degree, they are not familiar with court terminology. (Interpreter 1)

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This interpreter also reported that even though she had learnt legal terminology from studying a Certificate in Advanced Interpreting at university level, this training had not covered every single item of legal jargon interpreters might encounter. The continual emergence of new legal jargon means court interpreters need to keep themselves updated. Another interpreter commented:

You can never be prepared. The biggest challenge for me is to interpret new words of court terminology. You always get surprised. (Interpreter 8)

Another participant found that small claims tribunals, which are known as “disputes tribunals” in New Zealand, were ideal settings for him to gain experience, as a lead-up to undertaking court assignments. He said:

I picked up legal terminology from disputes tribunals. Many of these referees are lawyers or someone with legal background. So I got used to their vocabulary. Since the setting is less formal than courtroom, I felt not so pressured and thus picked up things very quickly. (Interpreter 5)

With regard to terminology in areas other than the legal domain, interviewees discussed vocabulary in healthcare settings and business fields. Four of the 11 interviewees reported that they found this jargon challenging when it arose in court interpreting assignments. Two interpreters reported that they found medical terminology sometimes even more difficult than legal terminology:

A few of the cases actually had some medical, you know, they were interviewing doctors as well, so the courtroom vocabulary, and also some health vocabulary. That’s one of the more difficult part. (Interpreter 8)

There’re some psychiatric patients who are reviewed in the parole, there’re some words we really need to paraphrase and to really explain in detail. So we have to stop the judge or the board and explain to the client. (Interpreter 7)

Unsurprisingly, interpreters reported to be more comfortable with terms arising in fields that they were familiar with:

I actually have financial things coming into the cases, which to me it helps that I have a background. But it took years to get my master’s and whatever I did. So it kind of helps a bit more behind you. But also obviously you start with whatever you have. And it takes years. Somehow you get it easier. (Interpreter 3)

Because I was a teacher and I teach, well, business subjects...so I’m familiarized with the terminology. (Interpreter 9)

Well, be honest with you, because of medical background and I was a doctor here already, which gives me an advantage, so in a way [...] that’s not the hardest part for me, because the vocabulary is there. (Interpreter 4)

However, simple substitution of lexical equivalents in the target language does not necessarily equal interpreting fidelity in the court setting. Apart from vocabulary, aspects of speech such as style and speech acts used in court should also be taken into consideration. As Hale highlighted (2004), court interpreters must maintain fidelity of the illocutionary intent of the original utterance. That is, court interpreters must capture all the nuances of the original text and faithfully reflect them in the target text, conveying not only content but also style. Seven of 11 interviewees raised discourse-related issues in their interviews, suggesting that they might have some awareness of the challenges of discursive issues.

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Discursive Challenges

Five interpreters reported that registers of language vary among speakers of different professions, ages and status. One noted that it is important for the rendition to reflect the register used by the speaker, because language choices can reflect the speaker's background and demonstrate fidelity maintenance beyond just content:

The interpreter should be very accurate and convey all the nuances, and the tone of voice as much as possible. Educational level can indicate the level of words he might choose. Their professions also decide what kind of jargon they might use. You have to expect that. (Interpreter 1)

Another interpreter commented on lawyers' use of register:

The lawyers tend to speak in their different level of English. That makes it difficult to interpret. (Interpreter 8)

Despite these comments, interview data suggests that most of the participants were not fully aware of discourse issues in interpreting. Some participants admitted that they would change the speech style of the original utterance to better suit the listener's educational background. They reported that they would choose to explain concepts in detail to the client rather than use the equivalent legal terminology, if they judged that the client would not understand the high register of the source text. Yet Hale (2004) has argued the importance of maintaining the speech style of the speakers.

If you are in the court, I don't need to literally translate the equivalent of legal terminology in [language] because the client won't understand it anyway because of its language. But I can explain it. (Interpreter 4)

Part of the challenge is that most of the time the defendant, if you interpret it at the same level to your language, they may not understand it. Sometimes if you translate a technical English word into a technical [language] word, they would say: 'What's that?' Because they don't understand the technical terms in [language]. (Interpreter 8)

It should be noted that register alterations happen not only in the case of translating into a language other than English, but also in the case of translating into English. The comment made by Interpreter 9 suggests that she saw the altering of a legal lay person's word into a legal jargon in English as evidence of her being professional. Her comment is presented here:

I did sight translation which didn't use any legal terminology, going: 'I've been driving for 25 years and haven't done anything against the law.' So I interpreted it into English, going: 'I've been driving for 25 years and haven't violated any traffic offences'. If you don't understand the legal terminology, you wouldn't use 'violated' or 'traffic offences'. When we know police language, we can better convey the meaning since we are speaking the same language. Usually people wouldn't use these words, but we interpreters know how to convey the meaning with these words.

From the comments of Interpreter 4, Interpreter 8 and Interpreter 9 above, it appears that register alteration in interpreter-mediated court cases occurs in both language directions, with interpreters believing that they could sacrifice the speaker's speech style for the listener's better understanding.

Apart from speech styles, pragmatics is of great importance for court interpreting at the discourse level. As outlined in the literature review, court interpreters may misinterpret the illocutionary act of tag questions (Hale, 2004). Although none of the interviewees said that they found tag questions challenging, the results showed that some of them might not be fully aware of the difficulty. Nine of the 11 interviewees simply said that they did not

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find it difficult without any further comments. However, two interpreters said that they would choose to interpret tag questions into genuine questions:

If the defense counsel asks these questions, you can translate it into: 'Have you or not ever been there?' in [language]. I don't think this would be difficult. I know what the speaker means, then I express it in [language]. So you must understand the function of these English expressions. I don't think it's too difficult to translate tag questions from English into [language]. I was trying to convert tag questions into [language] which [nationality] speakers can understand. Word-for-word translations is something they can't understand. (Interpreter 9)

I don't find tag questions difficult. As long as you got the meaning correct, it's easy. It doesn't really matter the way they put their tag questions. You only need to interpret it into a question. (Interpreter 5)

Interpreters may not be aware of the function and implication of tag questions; if they are at all, as these two were, they may only recognize tag questions' propositional content. This problem mirrors that of an earlier study (Hale, 2004). Hale's (2007b) article presents a clear example of this, as mentioned previously. Authentic (real life) data from New Zealand's contexts is needed to explore this more fully; interviewees' recollection and self-report may not reliably reflect what actually occurs when they interpret tag questions onsite.

Implications for Interpreter Education

Survey and interview findings indicate that New Zealand court interpreters may face similar lexical and discursive challenges to those reflected in the literature, such as terminology and discursive issues. In addition, the lack of insight into the importance of register and discourse issues suggests that interpreters would benefit by having additional training.

Among all the linguistic challenges, survey participants considered legal terminology the most significant. Interview data revealed that court interpreters see legal terms as difficult because they are greatly different from everyday English, supporting the findings of Mellinkoff (1963) and Hale (2007a). Interviewees highlighted the fact that they have to deal with new legal terms ad hoc, even though they may have studied legal terminology in pre-service interpreter education programs. This issue clearly cannot be entirely addressed by pre-service training; instead, it requires that interpreters undertake ongoing professional development to keep current in new legal terminology.

Terminology in areas other than the legal domain was rated the second most challenging linguistic issue. The interview data mirrors previous findings in that court interpreters should have knowledge of medical terminology (González et al., 2012): interviewees mentioned encountering medical doctors and psychiatric patients speaking in court using medical terminology. They also indicated that business and finance terms can be encountered in the court setting, and previous knowledge or experience in these areas can be invaluable when it comes to understanding and conveying these technical terms.

Beyond the lexical level, interpreters face discursive challenges, and it seems that interpreters may not be fully aware of the complexity of tag questions. Similar to Hale's finding (2004), an interview participant admitted that she would omit the tag and change any tag questions into genuine questions. As a result, the illocutionary act of the original tag question may be altered in the interpreter's rendition. A limitation of this study is that it relies on self-reported data, so further investigation is needed to establish if this misconception of tag questions is widespread. Also, it is of interest to see how explicit teaching around tag questions could be incorporated into current interpreter education programs, especially within the New Zealand tertiary institutional scenario.

The maintenance of speech style was highlighted as another challenge for court interpreters at the discursive level. When interpreting into English for legal professionals, informal language was more likely to be changed

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into formal language; when interpreting into the language other than English for LEP individuals, formal English was more likely to be changed into informal language. The interviewees' justification for their speech style alteration was to better facilitate the communication process. This finding supports earlier research on speech style alteration in court interpreting by Hale (2004) and González et al. (2012). It might be worth investigating how to enhance student interpreters' stylistic awareness in interpreter education programs, because in court cases not only the content of but also the style of the utterance is crucial to the speaker's credibility.

As for interpreter education, both the survey and interview demographics indicate that the participation of interpreters in training programs in New Zealand at the tertiary level was reasonably high. A total of 75.86% of the survey participants and 81.82% of the interview participants had joined or were then undergoing one or more interpreting training programs. In contrast to other countries lacking adequate training programs (Niska, 2005; Straker & Watts, 2003), modularized interpreter education programs from undergraduate to postgraduate level have been established in New Zealand. Similarly, whereas the literature describes a lack of requirements for compulsory training programs (Hale, 2007a), the New Zealand authorities have instituted requirements. For example, an inquiry to NZSTI (email, 14 July 2014) suggests that the New Zealand Ministry of Justice was aiming to reach a point where they would only use trained interpreters recognized by the NZSTI, although currently there are still some unqualified or only partially qualified interpreters on the court interpreting service list, because it takes time to introduce new requirements for using trained interpreters.

On the other hand, the current research did identify some problems in New Zealand interpreter education programs. Similar to what was described in the literature (González et al., 2012; Hale, 2004; Shin, 2013), New Zealand interpreter education is facing confusion caused by professional accreditation bodies, such as the Australian National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). NAATI is accepted by professional New Zealand interpreter organizations, such as NZSTI, as an equivalent to pre-service training programs, despite the fact that NAATI has been criticized for over 20 years for its ineffectiveness to accredit court interpreters. According to Hale (2004), as generalist accreditations, a NAATI test "does not conduct any special examination for legal interpreters" (p. 26). Our survey respondents' rating for NAATI tests were lower than those for any other tertiary education programs. One of our interviewees said:

NAATI as a test doesn't provide anything. But [New Zealand tertiary institution] gives you the background of the industry [...] and gives you practice, and, you know, examines you as well. So it's much, much better. Just sitting NAATI exam is not enough. You have to get a qualification and do the practice. (Interpreter 4)

In addition, New Zealand interpreter education programs reflected features of short duration and a lack of in-depth academic insights. None of the survey respondents had obtained a bachelor's degree in interpreting; rather, they had all joined or were then undertaking certificate/diploma/graduate diploma courses. The only two respondents taking postgraduate level courses were both specializing in translation. Interview data also suggests that some participants lacked an understanding of interpreting issues such as speech styles and tag questions. Within a short period of pre-service training at the undergraduate/graduate level, it is very unlikely for student interpreters to acquire an adequate knowledge other than specialized terminology so as to accurately reproduce discursive nuances. This issue was also reflected in earlier research of Schweda Nicholson (1994) and Ko (1995). Nevertheless, inquiry with a New Zealand tertiary institution (email, 18 July 2014) confirmed that a 3-year bachelor's degree program that incorporates legal interpreting courses has just become available. It is hoped that the modularized curriculum design of New Zealand interpreter education programs may attract those interpreting certificate/diploma holders to upgrade their qualifications.

Apart from pre-service interpreter education programs, ongoing professional development is of great importance to court interpreters. The online survey of the current research suggests that the most frequently used professional development methods of New Zealand court interpreters were: "Reading reports on court hearings in the newspaper either online or in print", "court observation", "using Internet resources such as search engines, question boards, forums and websites", and "Attending seminars and conferences for interpreter professionals". These methods largely overlap with suggestions made by González et al. (1991). In addition, it should be noted

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that three methods were highlighted by interviewees in the current study: court observation, supervision for monitoring and assistance, and tape recordings of court case interpreting to be used in interpreter training.

The interview participants highly recommended court observation as part of not only preservice training, but also ongoing professional development. Through observation, novice interpreters can familiarize themselves with the court order in different court settings. Two interviewees shared their experiences of going to observe court interpreters working in countries other than New Zealand and said that it gave them new perspectives on court interpreting. Moreover, both the interviewees and the literature had suggested a supervisory interpreter onsite for monitoring and assistance purposes. Experienced interpreters working in the same language pair would be desirable candidates for this supervisory interpreter position.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This article reports on the findings of a research study into challenges faced by court interpreters in New Zealand, based on survey and interview results. The study found that court interpreters were aware of the terminological challenges encountered at work, but lacked insight into discursive issues such as tag questions and speech styles. Interpreters may not fully understand the illocutionary act of tag questions, thus choosing to omit the tag in their rendition. Also, they were more likely to tailor the speaker's speech style to what they perceived to be the listener's comprehension level, rather than reproduce the original speech style in their interpreting. The lack of understanding of these discursive issues might be due to the relatively short duration of their certificate and diploma programs. However, New Zealand is establishing standards by requiring that courts use only NZSTI-trained interpreters; the NAATI accreditation system alone neither includes nor mandates any specialized pre-service court interpreting training.

It is recommended that court interpreters engage in ongoing professional development to improve their skills and keep current with new terminology. Court interpreters may consider getting support from their professional community through court observation, attending seminars and conferences, and communicating with other interpreter practitioners. Court interpreters, who are based in not only New Zealand but also other countries, may also benefit from working with court interpreting recordings as well as communicating with court interpreters in other countries, to problem-solve using combined experience in this community of practice.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Indicative Questions for Semi-structured Interviews with Court Interpreters



1. How would you describe your experience as a court interpreter in terms of years, number of cases?
2. What sort of training did you have before you started interpreting in your very first case?
3. How prepared did you feel? Please explain why?
4. Is there anything you felt could have been included in the training that could have served to better prepare you for the realities of court interpreting? If so, please explain.
5. What challenges have you encountered in courtroom interpreting? Please describe.
6. What types of on-going development do you feel would help you to improve on your courtroom interpreting expertise?

Bridging the Gap Between Interpreting Classrooms and Real-World Interpreting:

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Abstract

Developing students' interpreting competence requires not only systematic training of interpreting skills but also sufficient authentic and deliberate practice, as well as acquisition of professional interpreting strategies and norms. To this end, students need to be encouraged to do more autonomous, situated, and self-reflective learning in addition to classroom learning. This article reports on an interpreting-corpus-based blended-learning project of interpreter training, which, by complementing in-class instruction with out-of-class online practice, was designed to enhance students' awareness of interpreting strategies and to develop their professional competence. The design, implementation and effectiveness of the project are described and an experiential learning model with an "Experiencing – Observation – Reflection – Discussion" cycle proposed.

Key words: interpreter training; blended-learning project; experiential learning model

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Bridging the Gap Between Interpreting Classrooms and Real-World Interpreting

1. Introduction

1.1 Challenges and problems in interpreting classes

Interpreting is an interlingual and crosscultural activity that requires a high level of competence in multitasking in cognitive operations and immediacy in information processing and transference. Developing interpreting competence requires both instructor and student effort: skill transfer by expert instructors in the classroom and hundreds of hours of deliberate, self-directed out-of-class practice by students. Interpreting students across different training programs are now commonly required to complete an adequate number of practice hours (cf. Wang & Ye, 2009). For example, the “European Masters in Conference Interpreting” (EMCI) program requires students to attend 400 hours of interpreting classes in the course of one academic year, complemented by about 600 hours of group work and self-directed practice. Interpreting researchers (e.g., Moser-Mercer, 2000) estimate that achieving professional standards requires 3,000–5,000 hours of deliberate practice (including class activities, group work and individual work).

Considering the requirements of professional interpreting practice, interpreter training should always strive to be skills based and profession oriented, and involve simulated real-world features (Wang & Ye, 2009). However, despite the best efforts of class instructors, the following three issues are commonly encountered in interpreter education:

- 1) Insufficient practice hours. Compared with the demand of hundreds of practice hours referred to above, the number class hours offered in the curricula of most interpreting program are far from sufficient. However, due to institution and program limits, adding class hours is not always feasible.
- 2) Lack of authenticity in course materials and classroom activities. Real-world interpreting skills depend on the interpreter’s ability to cope with spontaneous speeches given by different speakers, in differing accents, and at varying rates of delivery. It is always difficult for classroom instructors to create mock activities which retain the same level of authenticity as real-world speeches. This results in a gap between classroom practice and real-world interpreting contexts.
- 3) Lack of guidance for students’ out-of-class practice. Students in interpreting classes are often required to undertake out-of-class practice but may not have access to suitable material nor know how to evaluate their own performance.

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1.2 Possible ways to address these challenges

Liu (2008) demonstrated the “qualitative differences” between student and expert interpreters in terms of interpreting processes and output. According to Liu, expert interpreters are better at providing a more accurate and complete interpretation, characterized by fewer errors, faster responses, and less effort. Expert interpreters seem to have developed well-practiced strategies in the process of comprehension, translation, and production. According to Ericsson (2002), “deliberate practice” is a key ingredient in the development of expertise. We may infer that classroom instruction and students’ self-directed practice are equally important when it comes to mastering interpreting skills.

In spite of the importance of self-directed out-of-class practice, current interpreter education appears to be almost entirely teacher-centered. According to one study of conference interpreter training (Hartley, Mason, Peng, & Perez, 2003, p. 2),

Currently, many if not most interpreter training programs still apply a trainer-centered approach where expert-trainers, as the source of expertise and authority, play the major role in judging and assessing trainee interpreters’ performance. However, the acquisition of interpreting skills by trainees requires not only professional guidance during classes, but also extensive practice outside these hours.

Students required to search for recordings or transcripts of speeches for use in self-directed practice sessions often have difficulty accessing appropriate resources, potentially resulting in students picking up incorrect habits during interpreting practice. The fact that students do not always have access to suitable study support and appropriate materials means that “the work they do in their self-study hours is often unstructured and unmonitored” (Sandrelli, 2002: 190).

A blended-learning approach utilizing interpreting corpora and information and communication technology (ICT) tools may make it possible for trainers to establish stronger connections among classroom instruction, real-world interpreting, and students’ self-directed development. Despite the wide-scale development of corpus and ICT tools in the language classroom over the past decade, interpreter training has benefited from such technological progress only to a limited extent. In fact, such tools have great potential for implementation in interpreter training, especially in situating teaching and learning in more authentic and realistic environments. Kiraly (2000, p. 43) notes that “for learning to be authentic and productive, learning tasks need to be embedded in their larger, natural complex of human activity.” Interpreting corpora can provide suitable and structured materials for deliberate practice, and ICT tools can help instructors to guide and monitor students’ out-of-class practice (cf. Crezee, Burn, & Gailani, 2015; Ritsos, Gitins, Braun, Slater & Roberts, 2013).

2. The interpreting-corpus-based blended-learning project of interpreter training

In 2013, Hong Kong Polytechnic University launched a blended-learning project utilizing corpus and ICT tools. The project aimed to address the challenges in interpreter training discussed above and integrate professional interpreters’ successful experiences with student interpreters’ self-directed learning.

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2.1 Objectives of the project

The project aimed to achieve the following outcomes:

- 1) To develop an authentic speech repository for interpreter training, which would provide authentic audio and video materials for both classroom instruction and out-of-class learning.
- 2) To build an on-site interpreting corpus, in this case a bilingual (English/Chinese) parallel corpus, that is searchable and from which typical teaching and learning materials can be extracted.
- 3) To create an e-learning environment for out-of-class autonomous learning, with the aid of ICT technicians. This e-learning environment aimed to incorporate several interfaces of learning: the authentic speech repository, the on-site interpreting corpus, and a web-based environment used for out-of-class practice as well as peer assessment.
- 4) To integrate professional interpreters' successful experiences into the interpreting classroom. It was hoped that engaging students in an in-depth analysis of the interpreting corpus and having them reflect on the interpreting skills and strategies of professional (on-site) interpreters, valuable professional practices would be integrated into student learning.

Cultivating in-class situated learning and stimulating students' autonomous out-of-class practice aimed to bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world.

2.2 Implementation of the project

Two years of incorporating this teaching and learning project into interpreter training has led to several major accomplishments:

- 1) The development of a repository of authentic speeches and their interpretations.

Video recordings of real-world speeches and their on-site interpretations were collected, and those appropriate for interpreting teaching and learning were selected. Recordings were edited, formatted and then pooled together to form a repository of authentic speeches and interpretations. The repository covers interpretations in both English–Chinese and Chinese–English interpretation, including a variety of interpreting scenarios such as opening addresses, press conferences, luncheon addresses and keynote speeches, and a wide array of topics ranging from politics and diplomatic issues to services, trade, information technology, tourism, energy, climate change, and so on. The repository includes a large number of videos of professional interpreters working with actual speeches.

- 2) The creation of an on-site interpreting corpus.

All the recordings of speeches and their interpretations have been transcribed. A parallel bilingual interpreting corpus was uses the aligned transcripts of source-language speeches and target-language interpretations. A snapshot of the on-site interpreting corpus is shown in Figure 1.

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Figure 1. A snapshot of the on-site interpreting corpus

[12-1] 女士们、先生们：上午好。	Ladies and gentlemen, good morning.
[12-2] 我们高兴地邀请到温家宝总理与中外记者见面，并回答大家提问。	Today we are delighted to invite Premier Wen Jiabao to meet Chinese and foreign press, and take your questions.
[12-3] 现在有请温总理讲话。	First, some opening remarks from... Premier Wen.
[12-4] 记者朋友们，这是我在两会之后最后一次向大家见面了。	Friends of the press, this is the last time for me to meet... the friends of the press after the NPC and CPPCC sessions.
[12-5] 我要感谢多年来记者朋友们对于中国改革和建设事业的关注。	I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your longstanding interest in China's reform and development.
[12-6] 今年可能是最困难的一年，但也可能是最有希望的一年。	This year might be the most difficult one, but it may also be the most promising year.
[12-7] 人民需要政府的冷静、果敢和诚信；政府需要人民的信任、支持和帮助。	The people need their government to be calm, resolute and trustworthy and government needs the people's trust, support and help.
[12-8] 面对国际金融危机和欧债危机的蔓延，发展，关键是把我们的事情办好。	In the face of the deepening international financial crisis and the European debt crisis, what is most important is that we run our own affairs well.
[12-9] 我将在最后一任守职而不庸，受义而不困，永远和人民在一起。	In my last year in office, I will not waver in carrying out my duties and will remain true to my conviction. I will always be... with... the people. Thank you.
[12-10] 我愿意回答大家的问题。	Now I'm ready to take your questions.
[12-11] 南南主持人：总理，您好，我是新华社记者，也是中国新华网电视网的记者。	With Xinhua News Agency and China Xinhua News Network Corporation.
[12-12] 今年是本届政府任期的最后一年，请问总理，您如何评价自己的工作？南南总理。	Mr. Premier, this year is the last year in the term of this government. How do you evaluate your work?
[12-13] 我担任总理已经9年了，这些年过得不易，也不平凡。	I have served as the Premier for nine years. They have been nine difficult but momentous years.
[12-14] 但我总觉得还有许多工作没有做完，许多事情没有办好，有不少遗憾。	I often feel that much work remains to be finished, many things have yet to be properly addressed and that there are many regrets.
[12-15] 我懂得政府的一切权力都是人民赋予的，我所做的工作都是应尽的责任。	I know full well that all power of the government comes from the people and every piece of the work that I have done for the people during my term of office is only a fulfillment of my due responsibilities.
[12-16] 我为能做人民的公仆而为人民办些实事而感到欣慰。	I feel truly encouraged and happy that I get to have this opportunity to serve the people as a public servant.
[12-17] 我真挺希望，我，连同我这一生，给人民做的有益的事情，人民都把它忘记，并随着我日后长眠地下而湮没无闻。	I sincerely hope that the people will forget me and all the concrete things that I have done for them and they will fall into oblivion as one day I will go to my eternal rest.
[12-18] 由于能力所限，再加上体制机制等方面原因，我的工作还有许多不足。	Due to incompetent abilities and institutional and other factors, there is still much room for improvement in my work.
[12-19] 虽然没有因为不负责任而造成任何一件事情上的失误，但是作为国家机关、国家最高行政机关的负责人，对于我在任期间中国经济和社会所发生的问题，我都负有责任。为此，我感到歉疚。	Although I have never committed any... intentional error in my work because of dereliction of duty, as head of the top... executive body of the country, I should assume responsibility for the problems that have occurred in China's economy.

3) The launch of an e-learning environment that uses the Blackboard platform for students' autonomous learning.

This e-learning environment was designed to integrate the speech repository and the interpreting corpus into the Blackboard learning platform. It comprises the following four components of experiential learning, which guide students through the process of autonomous learning (see Figure 2):

Step I. Practice with authentic speeches.

Step II. Observe on-site interpreting done by professional interpreters.

Step III. Analyze interpreting skills and strategies.

Step IV. Share and discuss reflections on skills and strategies.

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Figure 2. The e-learning environment for autonomous interpreting skill development

The screenshot displays the L@PU (Learn@PolyU) e-learning environment. The interface is divided into three main panels, each representing a different stage of the course:

- Panel 1: I. Practice with Authentic Speeches**
 - Advanced Interpreting** sidebar: Integrating Professional Interpreting Skills & Strategies into Your Learning; I. Practice with Authentic Speeches; II. Observe On-site Interpreting by Professionals; III. Analyse Interpreting Skills and Strategies; IV. Discussion – Share ideas on skills and strategies; Share useful speeches for practice; Announcements; Library Resources.
 - Build Content**: 1. Opening address Development and Investment Forum on China Info Service Industry. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Enabled: Statistics Tracking. Practice interpreting for the speaker.
 - Build Content**: 02. Joint press conference of President Barroso and Premier Wen. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Enabled: Statistics Tracking.
 - Build Content**: 03. Luncheon address E-C & C-E. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Enabled: Statistics Tracking.
- Panel 2: II. Observe On-site Interpreting by Professionals**
 - Advanced Interpreting** sidebar: Same as Panel 1.
 - Build Content**: 1. Opening address Development and Investment Forum on China Info Service Industry. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Enabled: Statistics Tracking. Now listen to the on-site interpreting by the professional interpreter.
 - Build Content**: 02. Joint press conference of President Barroso and Premier Wen. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Enabled: Statistics Tracking.
 - Build Content**: 03. Luncheon address E-C & C-E. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Enabled: Statistics Tracking.
- Panel 3: III. Analyse Interpreting Skills and Strategies**
 - Advanced Interpreting** sidebar: Same as Panel 1.
 - Build Content**: Analysis of practice 1: Click here and hand in assignments. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Attached Files: 1. Opening address Development and Investment Forum on China Info Service Industry.pdf. Click to watch the video with reference to the transcript attached. 1. Transcribe the interpretation by the on-site interpreter; 2. Compare your own interpreting with the professional's and analyse interpreting skills and strategies; 3. Upload your own interpreting, transcript of interpretation by the on-site interpreter and analysis report.
 - Build Content**: Analysis of practice 2 -- Sample for reference. Availability: Item is no longer available. It was last available on May 1, 2014 11:59 PM. Attached Files: 02. Joint press conference of President Barroso and Premier Wen.pdf (310.773 KB).

Figure 2. The e-learning environment for autonomous interpreting skill development (continued)

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Step I involves students watching authentic live speeches, practicing interpreting them, and recording their interpreting performance. Students then upload the recordings to the website to be graded by the instructor. In Steps II and III, students write analysis reports on interpreting skills and strategies that they have observed in the professional interpreters, while also reflecting on their own interpretations. In Step IV, students engage in peer learning by sharing ideas on what they have learnt.

- 3) Students' systematic analysis of interpreting skills and strategies used by professional interpreters.

As part of the assignment on the e-learning environment, students analyze the interpreting skills and strategies that they have learnt from the professional interpreters and reflect on their own interpreting performance. Instructors then review the reports to gauge student learning.

2.3 Effectiveness of the project

The e-learning environment has been applied to students' out-of-class practice and autonomous learning in a number of interpreting courses including Introduction to Interpreting, Consecutive Interpreting, Simultaneous Interpreting, Advanced Liaison Interpreting, and Advanced Interpreting. At the time of writing, 160 students in seven cohorts had engaged with the e-learning environment.

This environment has been effective in managing and enhancing students' deliberate and focused practice. It has served as an efficient complement to classroom teaching by increasing students' practice hours: Since the e-learning environment was introduced, autonomous out-of-classroom practice has increased by approximately 36 hours, and more time has become available for learning activities in class.

With videos of students interpreting practice and their written analyses and reflections, instructors now find it easier to monitor students' practice and progress in out-of-class learning. Students have generally agreed that the e-learning environment has both motivated them and assisted them to achieve learning outcomes for various courses.

3. Implications: Towards an experiential learning model of interpreter training

The concept of interpreter training, as implemented by the blended-learning project, can be represented by the experiential learning model (Kolb, 1984), which features a learning cycle of experiencing – observation – reflection – discussion”:

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Figure 3. An experiential learning model of interpreter training (adapted from Kolb, 1984).



Access to the authentic speech repository has led interpreter education to become more situated in real-world contexts, with students enjoying more authentic environments during both in-class and out-of-class learning. Situated and self-directed learning have helped to optimize the effectiveness of interpreter training. In addition, because both instructors and students engage in assembling the authentic speech repository and the on-site interpreting corpus, the process itself promotes active and collaborative learning.

Using the interpreting corpus, instructors guide students in observing the on-site interpreting performance of professional interpreters and in using these observations to improve their interpreting performance, thus bridging the gap between the interpreting classroom and the real-world context. Student learning follows the experiential learning model shown in Figure 3: Instructors encourage students to experience, observe, reflect on authentic interpreting tasks and solve problems in real-world interpreting scenarios. The project enriches interpreter training with analysis and criticism of professional interpreters' skills and strategies in real-world contexts. The use of appropriately designed ICT tools shifts interpreter education from the teacher-centered (transmissionist) approach that prevails in most interpreter training towards a learner-centered (constructivist) approach, encouraging students to become self-directed and self-regulated learners.

4. Conclusion

The blended-learning project described here has explored the following new approaches to interpreter training:

- (a) the implementation of new technologies including interpreting corpora, ICT tools, and the Blackboard learning management system to facilitate teaching, learning and assessment;
- (b) the integration of professional experience into interpreting classrooms; and (c) the promotion of active and autonomous student learning.

The university plans to further adjust and improve the e-learning environment based on the feedback of student users. The next stage of the project will involve expansion of the speech repository and interpreting corpus to accommodate different modes of interpreting and to include material catering to the needs of students at different levels of development. Other programs exploring blended-learning approaches may consider including peer-to-peer learning and assessment to further enhance student learning.

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Teaching Interpreters About Self-Care

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Abstract

Personal factors as well as the nature of certain assignments may negatively impact interpreters and cause stress. The authors sought to examine the various stressors that affect interpreters. They argue that if interpreters are able to identify a potential stressor early on, they may be able to address it through self-care. In the worst-case scenario, ongoing and unaddressed negative impact may result in burnout, at which stage professional assistance will be required and there may be long-term consequences. The authors propose an approach aimed at helping interpreters recognize signs of being negatively impacted, as well as teaching them self-care techniques, so as to reduce the deleterious effects of the stressors they face.

Keywords: interpreter self-care toolkit, negatively impacted, interpreter burnout, interpreter work stress

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In practice, interpreters may experience issues which have a negative impact on their emotional well-being, ranging from problems with boundary setting to transference or countertransference or trauma (cf. Lai, Heydon, & Mulayim, this volume). Some interpreters possess personality traits which make them more vulnerable to stressors. Bontempo and Napier (2011) uncovered the significance of emotional stability as a predictor of signed language interpreters' self-perceived competence. They suggest that interpreter education programs take their findings into account when selecting candidates. Bontempo and Malcolm (2012) stress the importance of preventing vicarious traumatization. Interpreter educators should look at preparing their students for possible stressors, so that students can engage in self-care practices which may help them handle the impact of possibly traumatizing experiences (Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012). Such experiences can come about in any setting. In this commentary we will review frequent stressors on interpreters and present an overview of the progression of the negative impact of such stressors. It will then suggest elements of self-care which can be included in both interpreter education or professional development programs.

Stressors on Interpreters

Interpreting service administrators are no doubt aware of stressors impacting on interpreters. Discussions with managers of interpreting services in New Zealand revealed that interpreting staff are subject to a range of stressors, ranging from highly stressful, traumatic assignments to job insecurity, and most managers said that it was up to the interpreter to come and talk to them. Some interpreters are loath to admit to job stress for fear of being considered emotionally vulnerable and receiving fewer interpreting assignments as a result. Managers said they tended to notice signs of negative impact at the psychological level (refer to diagram in Figure 1) either because the interpreter appeared stressed or admitted to being stressed or because a third party had told the managers about particularly impactful interpreting assignments. However, an interpreter who is aware of potential stressors has already taken a step toward needed self-care.

Boundary setting

Boundary setting may involve interpreters taking on too many interpreting assignments with too little time in between, or taking on assignments that are outside of their realm of expertise. Focus discussion group participants in a study by Crezee, Jülich, and Hayward (2013) stated that in a small country like New Zealand, there are very few staff interpreter jobs and most interpreters work as freelancers (Gilbert & McKee, 2013). Thus interpreters may take on assignments when they come up, with financial considerations outweighing considerations relating to work stress reduction.

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Work stress

Work stress may involve assignments concerning refugee stories relating to particularly distressing levels of violence or torture. Such anecdotal information may prompt managers to talk to interpreters, offering them access to counselling or simply allowing them to debrief. In other instances, interpreters themselves may come in for debriefing. In one instance, an interpreter interpreted between a foreign visitor and the police, only to find that the police had completely changed their version of events in the court case that ensued. Obviously, he was unable to say anything due to the precept of impartiality in the interpreters' Code of Ethics (New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters [NZSTI], 2013), his confidence in the authorities was severely shaken and it left him feeling stressed. Fortunately, he was able to discuss the situation with the interpreting service manager to debrief.

The unpredictability of ongoing work and income is inherent in the freelance interpreter's work. There is much anecdotal evidence (Crezee, Jülich, & Hayward, 2013) demonstrating that interpreters occasionally breach the rules of ethical conduct for fear of missing out on work. Interpreters may book themselves in for difficult assignments that they know will be very stressful, for consecutive assignments without leaving time for (peak hour) travel, or for telephone interpreting calls without being in a solitary space, with background noise and movement impacting on their ability to focus. Stress can accumulate when the interpreter reflects on the errors that ensue. Addressing work stress requires accepting the nature of freelance work and finding a balance among income, quality of interpreting, and manageable levels of stress.

Crezee and colleagues (2013) found evidence that interpreters working in refugee settings in particular may be adversely impacted by the traumatic nature of certain assignments, experiencing direct trauma, vicarious traumatization, or traumatization when interpreters' own traumatic memories are reactivated. Seventy-six percent of participants in a survey on interpreting in refugee settings responded that they had felt negatively impacted to some degree by interpreting assignments. An interpreting service provider made the following comment:

Each of our hospitals has the same core list with a few minor variations [...] as some who have a refugee background choose not to cover the mental health areas, and not wanting to relive some of their own traumas in the process: the latter was more applicable to the African refugees (Somalia, Ethiopia) in the earlier days of their coming to NZ.

However, as stated before, settings do not completely predict the risk of interpreters being negatively impacted.

Variable stressors

Additional stressors may involve the following:

- The interpreter's own situation (financial situation and both work and personal relationships)
- The interpreter's own life experiences and current mental and physical condition
- The interpreter's own level of resilience
- The interpreter's own level of psychological skill (self-efficacy, locus of control, explanatory style; Atkinson, 2012; Atkinson & Crezee, 2014)
- The nature of the interpreting assignment and whether this triggers adverse memories
- The interpreter's state of physical and mental health and wellbeing

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A number of authors propose that interpreter training programs include curriculum focusing on reducing anxiety or coping with particular personality traits. Schwenke (2012) found a positive association between “maladaptive perfectionism” (tending to be extremely self-critical and developing a negative attitude when things do not go according to plan; Rice & Stuart, 2010, Stolz & Ashby, 2007) and burnout and suggested that “instructors should be trained to identify individuals displaying maladaptive perfectionistic stress responses (...) and to refer them to appropriate stress reduction resources” (Schwenke, 2012, p. 78). Harvey (2003, 2012) offers advice as to how interpreters can deal with “potentially debilitating anger or pain” as a result of overempathizing with the client. He suggests interpreters try to view acutely painful situations with the interested gaze of an anthropological researcher, rather than through the lens of an empathetic interpreter, to avoid feelings of anger or hurt. Bontempo and Malcolm (2012) strongly recommend educating student interpreters about the risk of vicarious trauma in healthcare settings. Berthold and Fischman (2014) likewise propose curriculum components of this nature. However, the field lacks—but needs—reports of actual self-care programs in interpreter education.

Interpreter educators should discuss with their students the common stressors of the profession, alerting students as well as practicing interpreters of the need to identify and address the negative impact of such stressors at an early stage, to avoid potential initial impairment of physical (biological) health through to mental ill-health and impacted general functioning on the bio-psycho-social levels. The flow chart in Figure 1 illustrates the possible progression of symptoms and interventions.

For interpreters experiencing the first impact of stressors at the physical and mental levels, “intervention” takes the form of self-care at the first level (undertaking physical self-care) or second level (seeking professional help). Intervention at the level of tertiary care, involving medication or containment, is outside of the scope of this commentary.

The self-care approach we propose interpreters learn involves three steps:

1. Becoming aware of being negatively impacted, and choosing to take action, or not
2. Making a decision regarding what self-care action to take
3. Dealing with the consequences of either lack of awareness or not taking action at the various stages of being negatively impacted

Discussing with students potential stressors and suggestions for action at Step 2 will help interpreters maintain their mental, emotional, and physical health.

Time and workload management

One of the key aspects of managing time is to not always be on-call. Interpreters need to mark out sufficient time for leisure, recreation, family time, and meals. Time differentiation is easier in some fields of interpreting than in others, however; those interpreting for emergency services are more likely to have erratic schedules, whereas those in the legal system tend to work only during normal working hours.

Interpreters can also limit workload and the number of stressful cases to ward off possible burnout, particularly when they take an active approach to ensuring recreation/family time. For example, an interpreter involved in a large number of court hearings involving child abuse or other forms of sexual violence may decide to ask court administrators to assign them to less stressful cases. Interpreters might also decide to specialize in several areas, so that they do not become reliant on a highly stressful specialization to make their living, and can switch to less stressful work when they become aware of approaching burnout.

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Rest and diet

Mentioning the benefits of enough rest and a healthy diet might appear superfluous; however, busy people often fail to ensure that they meet these basic needs. Adrenaline and contextual psycho-physiological stimulation allow people to temporarily forget that they are hungry or tired. This may be beneficial in the short term, but cutting back on meals and sleep has long-term negative effects on physical and mental health. In addition, continually high levels of the stress hormone cortisol may impact on quality and duration of sleep. Some interpreters are more vulnerable to anxiety than others, as outlined in previous studies (Bontempo and Napier, 2011), and it can be very difficult for them to learn to take time out to rest and enjoy relaxed meals. Some reach a crisis point before taking action, or they may have to be coerced to do so by a health professional or concerned family member who sees signs of stress.

Exercise

Regular exercise is a related area of benefit. It is particularly important given that interpreting tends to be a relatively sedentary job (although often not as much so as translation). The benefits of regular exercise hardly need to be mentioned, but the psychological benefits of exercise are not often discussed. Exposure to the natural environment, awareness of the physical body, and accompanying relaxation can help to offset mild to moderate levels of burnout and trauma.

Similarly, recreational activities and hobbies, which may or may not involve much physical movement, allow interpreters to rest and to focus on things that they enjoy. These may combine some of the benefits of regular exercise and rest, or they focus on activities which use a largely different set of emotional and psychological foci, allowing the interpreter's job persona to 'go offline'.

Interpreters who are migrants or refugees themselves may sometimes be inclined to invest more time at work, leading to an imbalance between life and work. The literature on stress reduction suggests that social life and family support are protective factors that may prevent a professional from getting caught in a vicious cycle of burnout.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness can be taught and encouraged in interpreter education and ongoing professional development. The diagram in Figure 1 includes Bancroft's (2013) suggestion that an interpreter practice mindfulness when he or she is suddenly negatively impacted during an interpreting assignment and unable to take a break. *Mindfulness* is a humanistic approach based on the Buddhist principle of mindfulness and commonly refers to a form of contemplative practice used throughout the world for personal wellness (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Feuerle (2013) and Bancroft (2013) facilitated special workshop sessions for interpreters at the 2013 InterpretAmerica Summit and the 2013 Critical Link 7 Conference respectively. Bancroft recommends that interpreters practice mindfulness by focusing on their breathing, on feeling the chair beneath them, and on getting the message across, no matter what the message entails, and focusing on doing the best they can for their client, thus taking the focus of their emotions away from themselves. By practicing mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 2005), interpreters can focus on being 'here now – in the present', as Bernay (2012) described in his study with beginning teachers. Participants noted that they perceived reductions in their stress and increased ability to cope with the needs of individual students as result of engaging in regular mindfulness practice, and they found it to be a significant element of their initial teacher education and professional development programs. The interventions Bernay (2012) describes could easily be included in interpreter education, to assist interpreters in achieving similarly increased resilience to stressors.

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Third-person interpreting

Bancroft (2013) suggests that during traumatic interpreting assignments, interpreters switch from first-person to third-person interpreting, to allow them to linguistically and psychologically distance themselves from the trauma story for just a little while (cf. Bot, 2005).

Counselling and debriefing

Within the New Zealand setting, interpreters often have access to counselling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or through the organization they work for. Refugees As Survivors New Zealand (RASNZ) provides its interpreters with regular intervention. Refugee Trauma Recovery provides debriefing for interpreters when required, and Relationships Aotearoa has been contracted by Interpreting NZ to provide assistance to its interpreters when needed. There do not appear to be a great many studies reporting on the actual implementation of supervision and mentoring programs. Berthold and Fischman (2014) propose ongoing supervision and therapy for practicing interpreters. Bolduc (2012) reported on the positive experiences of working and novice interpreters who participated in a “Peer Mentoring Project” in Massachusetts. Kao & Craigie (2013) reported on a project involving 186 student interpreters in Taiwan, where social support proved to be beneficial to student interpreters experiencing anxiety. Some professional bodies actively engage in supporting novice interpreters, for example, the Sign Language Interpreter Association of New Zealand (SLIANZ) and the Australian Sign Language Interpreters’ Association (ASLIA).

Finally, supervision and communication with colleagues can be a good avenues for releasing stress. Professional associations may provide opportunities for these for interpreters to ‘talk shop’ with fellow professionals (within the limitations of the confidentiality clauses of their code of ethics), who will usually provide a sympathetic ear and give good advice. This informal debriefing can reduce or even prevent the onset of psychological distress and fatigue. In organizational settings, such as the United Nations, supervisors may monitor the interpreter’s well-being and provide psychological interventions if necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Interpreter training and programs and professional development must include education about the possible progression of the negative impact of common stressors. Interpreting students must first learn how to notice the signs of stress in themselves, which includes honestly assessing

- their own vulnerabilities (background and problem “triggers”)
- their own limitations and coping strategies
- their own symptoms versus their own functioning
- the system within which the interpreting job takes place

Educators should emphasize the importance of engaging in preventive self-care by focusing on:

- Good time management
- Rest and a balanced diet
- Regular exercise (outdoors, with friends, as per personal preference)
- Recreation (as per personal preference)
- Maintaining time for personal interests, and favourite leisure pursuits

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Interpreters need to create personal safety nets to fall back on when they start to feel negatively impacted. Students must be guided to make use of their own support systems (family, social support) and provisions such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and peer supervision.

Although using these techniques does not guarantee that interpreters will never need to seek professional psychological or medical help regarding serious work stress, practicing them will help interpreters to reduce both existing and potential future stress, to maintain their physical and mental health, and, perhaps most important, to increase enjoyment and satisfaction in their work, however challenging it may be.

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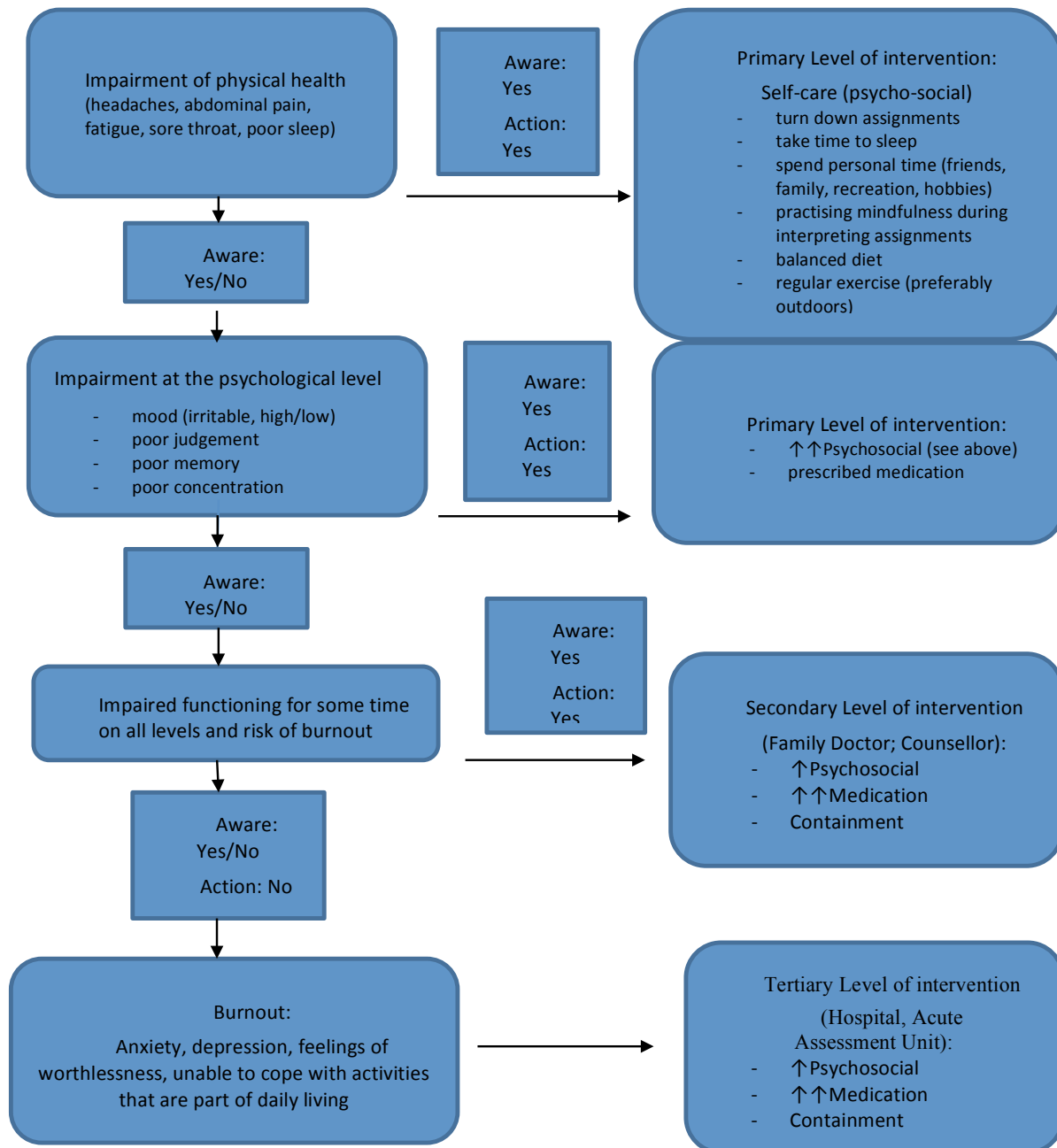
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Figure 1: Possible progression of symptoms in response to stressors with (self-) care options



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Interview with a Trailblazer: Jessica Dunkley, MD

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Abstract

Jessica Dunkley is a Deaf medical doctor currently in her second year of residency with the University of Alberta in Canada. In this interview she describes her experiences of accessing medical school with interpreting services. She discusses the skills, knowledge and attributes she seeks in the interpreting team working with her in this complex medical context, and she describes her needs and preferences for the working norms that the designated team must adopt. Her experiences offer interpreters and educators opportunities to examine their own interpreting assumptions and to learn about the ways in which Deaf doctors and medical practitioners perform their work in order to produce effective interpreting services.

Keywords: interpreters and interpreter education; Deaf doctors; medical discourse; decision making; team interpreting; American Sign Language (ASL); power and privilege.

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Interview with a Trailblazer: Jessica Dunkley, MD

Dr. Jessica Dunkley is a Medical Doctor from Vancouver, Canada. She is also a Registered Physiotherapist and holds a master's degree in Clinical Epidemiology. Jessica is Deaf and grew up with deaf parents. Her resiliency is demonstrated in her passion to reach out to everyone to reframe their perspective in their journey to success. She enjoys working with diverse populations, from indigenous peoples to people with disabilities. She has a passion for giving motivational speeches to youth across the country and strives for equal access for deaf people in higher education. After graduating from medical school, Jessica began a 5-year residency program in Public Health and Preventive Medicine at the University of Alberta in 2013. Aside from academia and medicine, she enjoys road cycling along the Sea to Sky Highway.

Debra Russell is an ASL–English interpreter and interpreter educator from Calgary, Canada. Her interpreting practice spans 30 years, and is community based in a range of medical, legal, mental health and employment settings. As the previous Peikoff Chair of Deaf Studies and the Director of the Western Canadian Centre for Deaf Studies at the University of Alberta, her teaching has also taken her to six continents. In addition to her teaching, she maintains an active research program, with current projects that focus on Deaf interpreters, legal interpreting, and mediated education settings for Deaf children. In 2011 she was elected President of WASLI (World Association of Sign Language Interpreters). Deb is also a dedicated student of yoga and loves to travel.

Deb: Share a bit about your background with us.

Jessica: My experience using interpreters began when I was 5 and entered kindergarten and used them throughout Grades 1–12 (elementary and secondary education system). I used interpreters as a child, and then I used interpreters in my undergraduate degree and my postgraduate training. I think it's interesting that my preferences for interpreters have changed over the years. I have a medical degree, and I'm about to do a 5-year internship in family medicine and public health, which is the path one takes in Canada to practice medicine—complete medical school and then a residency. For those unfamiliar with “public health,” it refers to programs that address the social, economic, and environmental factors that affect health. There are four major aspects to public health, such as health surveillance, health protection, disease and injury prevention and health promotion.

I think my interest in medicine came from when I was doing physical therapy in my undergrad year. Until then I hadn't thought about medicine, because I had the experience of being raised in a family where my parents were both deaf; and I had looked at their lives, which were rather limited, and assumed that as a deaf adult my opportunities might be similarly limited. However when I attended university and began my physical therapy course, I realized then that there were greater educational opportunities for me in the health care field, and that my options were really wide open. For example, technology is available that can support me in health care, such as a visible stethoscope, which substitutes for the actual hearing of the sound. So there are all kinds of electronic solutions that are available to me, and that attracted me to medicine.

Russel and Dunkley

In terms of the internship I am about to start, the first 2 years will require a lot of medical interpreting. That will include hospital, family medicine clinic time, and also many academic meetings during the day, medical conferences, and so on, so I'll use a regular designated interpreter for that work.

The third year, which is an academic year, will be more like graduate school. And then in the fourth and fifth years, I'll be focusing on public health, so that could be working for a provincial Health Authority, working for the Federal Government in some of their areas. This will be at a managing and operational level, so more administrative rather than a strong clinical focus. The work will look at health care at the population level, and could be outreach work, or it could be operating preventative programs, or it could be mother–infant health programs, fetal alcohol syndrome programs, obesity, and so on. The clinical medicine will really focus on medical issues at the individual level, and so public health will be much more looking at the long-term solutions and the long-term effects of health solutions. So, for example, looking at antismoking programs and at legislation and finding out whether or not those are successful as a determiner in increasing public health.

Deb: And what was it like going to medical school in Canada—you were the first Deaf person here to blaze that trail—and how did interpreting services fit into that training?

Jessica: In terms of my previous study experience at medical school, the first 2 years certainly had an academic focus, and the last 2 years were hospital focused. In the first 2 years, I think it was very similar to any academic program in the ways that I used interpreters, and I looked for interpreters who demonstrated fluency in American Sign Language. I also looked for interpreters who could convey highly technical information at a very high rate. That information came quickly, and I needed interpreters to be very organized to be able to respond to new vocabulary (such as the 5,000 new words needed for medical school). Sometimes interpreters needed to understand and convey the content; other times they just needed to provide it to me in the English format, and I could adapt because I had a very solid understanding of the information. This situation required the interpreters to be flexible and willing to proceed when they didn't always understand. I had the skills to filter through the information and determine how I would understand that information and then apply it, and so they could give that information to me in pieces, and I could link that together. That was challenging for the interpreters to get used to as opposed to maybe working with other students who don't use similar strategies.

I've also noticed that interpreters who have a postsecondary education seem better able to handle the volume and the rigor of medical school. I'm not speaking about interpreter education specifically, but rather interpreters who are well read, who are very familiar with world events, and who have a large global knowledge. I think that this gives interpreters the maturity to do the work: maturity regarding their own self-control skills, their ability to deal with stress, self-management skills, their ability to function in a health care setting, and to recognize the importance of the work. It can be very stressful working in a hospital environment, and it requires a great deal of speed; not all interpreters can do that. Also, for interpreters who would like a standardized schedule, things being stable and very predictable, and who would like to know what they're doing day-to-day—this is not the environment for you. In a medical environment, the work is always unpredictable. I needed interpreters who had a thirst for knowledge and were thrilled to be able to learn new things. Those types of interpreters did very, very well in this environment.

As a consumer, I'm very assertive about what my needs are in terms of interpreting. I like to be able to set up the relationship with the interpreter. I like to be very clear with them about what my needs are as a deaf physician. For example, I don't need them to sign every single thing that's going on in an environment, because I can manage this just as well as my non-deaf physician colleagues can. When I'm approached, I don't need to wait for the interpreter to be present. I can deal with it; I've got strategies. If I look over at the interpreter, however, it means that I'm looking for some interpreting services. I want to be treated as an equal deaf physician, and that requires me to be assertive these interactions with my medical colleagues. It can take an interpreter a little bit of time to get used to that style, especially if they have worked with deaf consumers who depend more fully on interpreting services to interact with others.

Deb: What is the bottom line for you when you think about the traits you want the interpreters working with you to have?

Jessica: I think if interpreters are open-minded and open to feedback, that's great. But there are other interpreters who don't like my particular approach. They're very used to their own traditional way of viewing interpreters and deaf clients, and it affects how they interact with them. I don't like that. I make it very clear that it's inappropriate for the situation that I'm in, and whether the interpreter likes feedback or not, that's how it needs to be. For example, if I'm dealing with a patient and there's something that arises and the way the interpreter is working doesn't suit me, then I want them to be open to the feedback, and I want them to be able to modify their behaviour immediately in regard to what I need in the clinical sense. And so it's really important to me that the interpreter understands his or her own weaknesses and is open to adapting their style.

I'm very firm on that particular principle because an unwillingness to discuss feedback doesn't reflect well on either myself as the deaf physician or the interpreter. There have been times where I really want to be able to get along with the interpreters I'm working with, and so I can sometimes take advantage of that, you know, like as a teenager I could take advantage of interpreters that I really liked and who liked me.

Deb: Can you describe what you mean by taking advantage of the interpreters?

Jessica: I could take advantage of those interpreters who were willing to negotiate with me when I was in high school. For example, there were a few interpreters who sort of went outside of their role (gave me hints on tests, took notes for me, etc.), but it benefitted me, and when it benefitted me, I embraced it. I was a teenager. I didn't do this in my undergrad, but that wasn't a particularly career-oriented program either because in sciences, you can take courses and not be really sure what you're doing. Medical school was a very career-focused program, however, and medicine is the same thing, and so my requirements of interpreters are different than they might be for other deaf consumers.

Deb: The next question is, given that you've seen so many interpreters, how would you like to offer some advice to interpreter educators? What would you like those programs to do differently and/or what would you like them to do more of as they educate the next generation of interpreters?

Jessica: I think right now, the number of Deaf people in educational settings is rising dramatically. I think many of those programs that teach interpreters have trained interpreters to work with the community; that is, working with deaf people who are accessing services as clients, whether that be in a welfare context, or a human service context, that kind of thing. So interpreter programs are often training people to work with deaf people who are not in a position of power, but that's changing. The more we see deaf people acquire advanced education and enter and advance within a range of professions, the more of a challenge this provides for interpreters and interpreter educators.

Maybe the community views graduates from interpreter programs as very competent, but from an academic perspective, I would suggest that they're not so competent yet. I'm more interested in their ability to convey information accurately, rather than whether or not their fluency in American Sign Language looks native-like or not. As mentioned before, I'm also looking for somebody who can adjust to my preferences, even if this means essentially tossing out things they learnt in the interpreter program. That is just part of working as a designated interpreter, and I don't think all interpreters appreciate that they will need to adjust practice so dramatically in that role. For example, the whole practice of consecutive interpreting doesn't apply well to the context that I'm working in. Often interpreters want to slow the process down, really work until they've constantly

understood everything. That's not the model of interpreting that I need. The power dynamics can be challenging and more complicated when you have a Deaf person in the position of service provider, and when that person has much more expertise than the interpreter. The Deaf person is in a powerful position here based on knowledge, training, expertise, and professional role, which is very different than what most interpreters have been trained for or have experienced in their work in the community.

Deb: Is there anything else you'd like to say, Jessica? Questions I should have asked you but I didn't?

Jessica: I would just like to add that I recently attended a screening process used to take students in to interpreter education programs. I had attended one several years ago, and then I did it again last year. I have a couple of different observations based on these experiences. I think one of the weaknesses of the way that we screen interpreters in or out of education programs is that there's an assumption that fluency in ASL is enough to make them a successful interpreter. Yet what I'm looking for is interpersonal maturity, world knowledge, and the ability to manage academic discourse. It strikes me that interpreting programs perhaps are operating on instinctual levels about what they're looking for in an interpreting student, and I'm not sure that those students really meet the needs of deaf academics. It may be that there aren't enough people who apply to programs, so maybe programs need to be doing much more promotion about the changing face of interpreting and understanding more about the range of deaf people interpreters will work with. Just as the nature of interpreting is expanding, we need to expand on what we are looking for in applicants.

Deb: It certainly is a debate that's occurring around the world in terms of what are the attributes that make one a successful interpreter, and can we predict any of those attributes prior to taking students in. Certainly some of our early studies are speaking to self-confidence, higher levels of self-esteem being correlated within the foundational skills of acquiring interpreter skills and being able to work effectively. It may be that many of our Canadian and perhaps some of our North American programs are not screening in the same ways that you're describing that you would like them to, Jessica; and we're not focussing on measures of self-esteem or self-confidence, world knowledge, maturity, interpersonal skills. So the traits that you've been talking about, I'm not sure that we're really looking for them. We seem to be very focused on their language proficiency but perhaps not some of those other skills that are really key to effective practice.

Jessica: That's a good point. I can really see that.

Deb: Finally, do you have a preference for gender matching in the designated interpreters that work with you?

Jessica: I don't usually, although sometimes I would consider it important in terms of patient care. For example, if I'm working with a female patient in a very sensitive situation—let's say a labour and delivery—then we would want to respect that patient's right to have a female interpreter present during labour and delivery. Otherwise, they've not only got something different in having a deaf doctor; they've also got a male interpreter in the room. In situations like that, gender matching is key. But beyond the patient context, gender matching is not so critical for me.

Also, just going back to the need to better understand the role of designated interpreters, I wonder if there is a need for a forum for interpreters who are working with designated health practitioners. Interpreters could have almost an exchange program where they could see other models that work, and where they could see how other interpreters approach the role of a designated interpreter. I think that that would be a really powerful approach to mentorship that probably can't be handled in an interpreter education program. As you said, we maybe have to let

go of things that we've been traditionally teaching interpreters in terms of serving deaf people who are in lower positions of power. Discourse management is much more than interpreting the words; for myself as a deaf professional it's also very much about the flow of interaction and how I'm perceived. So the mentorship between interpreters might be a key way to increase the pool of interpreters available to professionals like me.

Deb: I want to thank you very much for your time, Jessica. I appreciate you doing the interview, and I think that many of our readers who are training interpreters will be very interested to hear some of your thoughts about the changing face of interpreters and the kinds of attributes that they should be screening for in terms of getting interpreters to work in a designated role. Thank you very much for your time.

Jessica: Thank you, Deb.

From the Classroom to the Community: Supported Fieldwork for ASL-English Interpreters

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Abstract

This article aims to describe an approach to supervised mentorship that can help close the current readiness-to-work gap among graduates of both 2 and 4-year interpreter education programs, expand student confidence, prepare students for transition to work or additional education and partially restore the role of Deaf community members as cultural guides and gatekeepers. This sequence of mentorship settings can also be used to guide instructors in determining a student's readiness for practicum or internship placement, identifying the most appropriate fieldwork setting for each student, and alerting students and potential employers of their readiness to work.

Keywords: Classroom-based scenarios; Cultural guides, Cultural gate keepers; Fieldwork; Internship; Practicum, Readiness-to-work gap

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From the Classroom to the Community: Supported Fieldwork for ASL-English Interpreters

The education and preparation of *ready-to-work* ASL-English interpreters has been a work in progress in the United States and Canada for the last half century. Experience and research has guided us in understanding the foundational knowledge and skills required to become a qualified interpreter, as well as the sequencing of course offerings and appropriate ways of evaluating student progress and graduate readiness to work. Educational requirements have been elevated and practicums or internships have been lengthened (Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education [CCIE], 2014). Interpreter educators have recognized the critical role historically played by members of the Deaf community as gatekeepers, determining who was respectful of Deaf culture, including the joys and struggles of Deaf individuals (Cokely, 2005; Moody, 2011). This realization has helped educational programs pioneer ways of building new allegiances with the Deaf community (Shaw, 2013), in order to maintain and enhance the development of linguistically and culturally prepared ASL-English interpreters acceptable to members of the Deaf community. However, interpreting students still struggle with being ready to work following graduation from both 2- and 4-year interpreter education programs.

In a recent in-house survey conducted at the University of North Florida of a group of 30 graduates from 2-year postsecondary interpreter education programs in the state of Florida, only 50% had any experience interpreting in a real-world setting. The survey indicated that the other 50% of students had only interpreted prerecorded texts; they had no experience dealing with the challenges presented in real or simulated situations or the opportunities offered by being able to ask for repetition or clarification, and so forth. The majority of these students came from face-to-face educational settings, as opposed to distance or online programs. These results point to a critical instructional and experiential area that needs to be addressed in our educational programs.

This article describes an approach to supervised mentorship that can help close this readiness gap, expand student confidence, prepare students for transition to work and encourage the restoration of the role of Deaf community members as cultural guides and gatekeepers. This sequence of mentorship settings can also be used to reinforce the integration of consecutive and simultaneous modes in community practice (Russell, Malcolm, & Shaw, 2008), guide instructors in determining an individual student's readiness for practicum or internship placement, identify the most appropriate fieldwork setting for each student, as well as alert students and potential employers of students' readiness to work.

Preparation for Growing Work-Ready Interpreters

The mentoring experiences posed here are based on the assumption that students will engage in regular, ongoing interactions in a wide range of events with Deaf individuals in the community, both during and after their formal interpreter education. This goal of these types of community engagement support the development of attitudes and behaviours, not based on students' native culture and experiences, but on the language and culture of individuals who are Deaf (Sherwood, 1987, p. 16).

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In addition, such experiences address concerns about the need to connect interpreting students to cultural, social, experiential, and linguistic immersion in the Deaf community, which is sorely lacking in interpreter education based solely in academic settings (Moody, 2011; Shaw, 2013). These suggestions for opportunities for engagement also respond to the critical requirement for interpreting students to gain trust from the Deaf community—trust that must be earned, built, and maintained (Sherwood, 1987). The mentoring strategies outlined below will only close the readiness-to-work gap only if interpreter-education programs expect or them of their students.

Level One: Observing Interpreter Models

It is one thing to read books, study research articles, and delve into all of the theories and approaches to interpretation. It is also critical for students to see “model” interpreters at work and to discuss specific challenges the interpreter encounters in the source language text the choices she makes. However, it is far more instructive to observe and interact with interpreters and consumers in actual interpreting settings. Structured observation allows observers to take notes, observe the dynamics, and meet with the interpreter observed afterward to ask questions about the decisions the interpreter made and what she was thinking at specific points of the interaction. Guided by an instructor, this kind of opportunity, turns theory into reality in a 3-D environment with predictable and unpredictable elements influencing the interpreter’s choices and performance.

Opportunities of this type should be offered at multiple points in an academic program, preferably in a range of public settings (e.g., a church service, an awards banquet, an elementary school play), as well as dialogic settings where appropriate (e.g., doctor’s appointment, job interview, parent–teacher meeting, etc.), ideally including interpretations into both signed and spoken languages. Following each interpreted event, student observers need an opportunity “to climb inside” the observed interpreter’s head. This involves the interpreter(s) and observers discussing observations, asking questions, and posing “what if” considerations. Such experiences support the development of critical thinking skills and the ability to link classroom learning with real-world events, and provides ways to impress on students how the confluence of context and participants influences linguistic and interpreting decision making. The supervising instructor, working interpreters, and where appropriate/ possible, the Deaf and hearing consumers of the interpretation should address issues such as those listed below, because these are required for an effective interpretation and can only be experienced with nonsigning individuals and Deaf individuals in real or simulated interactions.

- The interpreter’s role and responsibilities to stakeholder communities involved in the interaction;
- The function, experience, and boundary flexibility as a Deaf community ally in an interpreting setting;
- Identification of human dynamics and the influence of the interpreter upon the interpretation;
- Professional/ethical boundaries and choices that support the interpreter’s ability/ flexibility to render an interpretation that meets the consumers’ linguistic preferences while managing the flow of information to optimize message equivalence;
- The interpreter’s ability to understand and convey the meaning and intent in the source language discourse into a dynamic equivalent target-language message, appropriately reflecting genre, register, and culture, and with minimal interference from the source language;
- The interpreter’s ability to follow protocols typical for the specific setting, including managing the physical setting and making appropriate choices to use consecutive and/or simultaneous interpreting mode(s) to transfer meaning; and

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- The interpreter's ability to identify any effects of oppression, discrimination, influence of power and privilege within the event/setting, as well as notable majority- and minority-culture dynamics in the cross-cultural interaction (CCIE, 2014).

Level Two: Interpreting in Mentored, Real-World Scenarios

In the second level of mentoring, students engage in role play scenarios, based on real life situations, and begin to practice interpreting between two people attempting to communicate (Shearer & Davidhizar, 2003). Instructors should prepare scenario guidelines (setting, type of interaction, some general suggestions about information to be used by the actors in the scenario, etc.). These mentored, lifelike scenarios should take place in small groups (ideally, no more than five or six students per group), with one interpreting mentor (typically a certified Deaf or hearing interpreter who works in the community), along with Deaf and hearing actors in each group. The interactions should include spontaneous ASL and spoken English, avoiding memorized scripts of any kind, with the expectation that students will initially use only *consecutive* interpretation mode. Following each role play, the actors and interpreting mentors should share brief comments, questions, and observations with the working and support student interpreters, while other students in the group observe. As student skills evolve, the scenarios should become gradually more challenging and students may be encouraged to use simultaneous interpreting mode for some segments of the role plays. Because research has demonstrated greater accuracy in consecutive interpreting, educators do not want to leave an impression that the more experienced interpreter should work primarily in simultaneous mode. Students and working interpreters should be encouraged to use consecutive interpreting as needed based on the specifics of each interpreting situation.

There are many benefits to this mentoring technique, including:

- "Introducing" students to members of the Deaf and interpreting communities as emerging interpreting students;
- Modeling respect for and including Deaf voice and experience in the education, beyond that of Deaf teachers, and beginning the process of eventual acceptance of new interpreters (Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatrick, 2011);
- Modeling respect for and expectations of national interpreter certification;
- Provision a safe place to practice emerging cognitive-processing skills, including support for the student interpreter to ask for clarification/repetition of something said/signed if needed;
- Practice in taking in and accepting honest feedback from Deaf community members and professional interpreters;
- Opportunities to develop comfort and strategies to work with other students in the role of team interpreter; and
- Occasions to develop comfort working with real people engaged in information exchange and to grasp the significance of how the individuals and topics involved impact an interpreter's ability to mediate cross lingual/cross cultural interactions.

Instructors should give participants in such unscripted, real-world interactions appropriate preparatory information. Below, I provide (a) instructions to the interpreter mentors for each group of students; (b) instructions to the student interpreters who will be working as a team for this particular role play; and (c) instructions for the Deaf and hearing actors with specific information about the scenario.

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(1) Instructions: To the Interpreter Mentor

Thanks so much for volunteering to work with our students during a range of role plays on today. You will be working with a group of five to six students, one Deaf actor, and one nonsigning hearing volunteer. Your role is to observe the working student interpreters in each role play. One will be the “lead” interpreter and the other will be the “support” interpreter. As beginning interpreters, students are expected to use *consecutive interpreting*. The actors and student interpreters have been given some basic information about the situation that is to take place.

Please take notes on the interpretation observed, remembering this is the first or second time these students have worked with Deaf and hearing actors. At the end of each role play, you will take charge of a 5-minute feedback session. Ask the Deaf and hearing consumers to make whatever brief comments they have regarding the experience, then lead the student interpreters through a brief discussion of your observations. Feedback should be truthful while simultaneously balanced and constructive in identifying ways the interpreters could better construct an interpretation that conveys dynamic equivalent meaning between the actors involved.

(2) Instructions: To the Lead Student Interpreter and the Supporting Interpreter Student

Event and Prep: You will be interpreting between a hearing second grade teacher at City Elementary School and the Deaf parent of a student in this teacher’s class for a routine parent–teacher meeting. In your prep, you Google the teacher’s name and discover s/he is a first year teacher, having just graduated with a teaching certification from State University. You are not familiar with parent–teacher meetings, so you should Google to find information about topics you might encounter. You recognize the name of the parents when given the assignment because this is a family you have interacted with at various Deaf community events. You have met the parents and their three children, all of whom sign fluently.

Directions:

- You are to check in with the teacher upon arrival. Make introductions and explain your role if needed. Do the same with the Deaf parent when s/he arrives.
- Be sure to agree with your support interpreter how you will indicate the need for a cue, where you will each be placed during the interpretation, and how you will handle introducing yourself to the teacher and Deaf parent.
- As practiced, you will be using *consecutive* interpreting throughout the role play.
 - LEAD INTERPRETER: Don’t be afraid to ask for clarification of something said/signed from your support interpreter or the teacher/parent. Remember to relax, breathe, and focus. Remember, perfection is not the goal. You can only learn and grow by making mistakes and figuring out how to avoid making the same mistakes next time.
 - SUPPORT INTERPRETER: Pay close attention to everything said/signed and be ready to give the lead interpreter a “feed” when asked. If a *critical* error, addition, or omission is made, alert the lead interpreter so s/he can determine what kind of correction to make. Finally, remind your interpreting partner that the goal is use of *consecutive* interpretation if s/he starts continually using *simultaneous* mode.

(3) Instructions: To Actors

Event: Routine parent/teacher meeting

Location: City Elementary School, Second grade classroom

Directions: Familiarize yourself with the information below for your character. Don’t try to memorize anything. Be as natural as possible: Make up whatever names you want to use; draw on your personal background and experience. Use humour, clichés, or whatever is natural to you and your personality. Please speak directly to each other and rely on the student interpreter to mediate communication between the two of you. If you don’t

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understand something, ask for clarification. If you believe something you have said/signed has been miscommunicated, make corrections or clarifications.

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INTERPRETER should check in with the hearing teacher – Deaf parent will arrive soon

TEACHER (Hearing)	PARENT (Deaf)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is your 1st year teaching• You have never met a Deaf person• You are curious about raising children who can hear, the use of signed language, etc. <p>CONCERNS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child's speech seems delayed—you are wondering what exposure this child has to spoken English at home and elsewhere• Child is socially inappropriate:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ touching other children to get their attention○ ...making faces at the teacher and other children when listening to them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ You are a stay at home single parent, have 3 children, all hearing with ASL as their first language▪ You are active in the Deaf community and your children socialize primarily with Deaf children or other CODAs▪ You know your child<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ is creative and uses advanced linguistic structures in ASL○ reads at grade level○ is sociable and outgoing but has limited social experience with non-Deaf/non-CODA kids <p>CONCERNS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the teacher know anything about the norms and culture of families headed by Deaf parents?• How can you support the success of your hearing child in this class?

Level Three: Engaging in Mentored Fieldwork

The final phase of better preparing students to move from the classroom to the community is mentored fieldwork. You might think of this as “mock internship,” giving students opportunities to interpret in real, as opposed to mock, situations with supervision from the instructors. In this phase, as students take their final interpreting classes before internship, instructors should schedule a minimum of one opportunity per month in which students interpret in public situations with the support of a qualified faculty member. Depending on a range of factors, there may or may not be Deaf consumers present, but an interpreting instructor must be present. Possible interpreting situations are events found at most universities, community organizations, public libraries; it might be an event sponsored by a local service club or organization, a presentation regarding specific issues, a panel discussion on a controversial topic, or a discussion of the history and evolution of a particular population or issue. Prior to the event, students should be required to (a) gather and share information for preparation, (b) determine where interpreters will be placed in the venue, and (c) determine how teams will be set up and how turn-taking will be managed. The instructor may observe the entire interpretation or may choose to take one or more turns teaming with student interpreters in order to model the appropriate approach to the work and to support students' work. A debriefing session should be held immediately after the end of the event in which the experience is discussed, notes shared, and everyone checks in on what they learned from the experience.

Another benefit of mentored fieldwork is that the students just behind those who are preparing for internship can attend and observe their upper-class colleagues, see how things work in preparation for their own experiences in the following semesters and listen to the debriefing session. This is an effective strategy to help these students develop their observational, reflective and assessment skills.

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Level Four: Internship

Finally, interpreting students should engage in an intensive internship or field placement, working under the supervision of certified interpreters in a range of settings. Such an experience should start only after interpreting instructors and identified members of the Deaf community have agreed that the student is linguistically and culturally ready. Student expectations should be the same as those held for professional interpreters working in the setting(s) involved, including preparation, pre-interpreting discussion with the team/supervising interpreter, working appropriately in the roles of working and supporting interpreter, and a debriefing session after the event. The supervising site interpreter should be familiar with the CCIE Standards 6.0 and 7.0 listed above and be able to include these critical elements in dialogue with the interpreting intern.

Students should begin the experience with some observation, moving fairly quickly to share work with the supervising interpreter and finally working alone in the setting while being observed/supported by the supervising interpreter. At the University of North Florida, students completing a 4-year degree in interpreting are required to engage in 200 hours of supervised interpreting—meaning “hands in the air”—in their final semester. Depending on the number of hours per week, this can range from 6–10 weeks of supervised internship. Because students don’t always have enough stamina initially to take a “full turn” as a team interpreter, they may begin by taking 10-minute turns and slowly increasing their interpreting time as their supervisor deems them ready.

Conclusion

It is critical that the readiness-to-work gap in interpreter education be closed. This can only be accomplished with adequate, supervised hands-on practice and appropriate involvement of Deaf community members and professional interpreters in safe actual or simulated real-world settings. Experiences should include observations of certified interpreters followed by discussion between the observing students and the observed interpreter. These observations could continue in each semester throughout the 4-year academic program. In the first few semesters, students should participate in 2 to 3 days (suggested once a month) of simulated role plays, involving Deaf and nonsigning hearing actors and a certified interpreter mentor in each group. Mentored fieldwork in real settings with students interpreting should follow the simulated situations, supervised by a qualified instructor. Finally, students should engage in a minimum of a 200-hour internship, fully supervised by certified interpreters. Throughout each level of fieldwork, care should be taken to lay a foundation of understanding of the lived experience of Deaf individuals in a hearing-dominant, audist culture. This should build respect for Deaf community members and eventually the foundation of trust between emerging interpreters and Deaf individuals.

Acknowledgments

Appreciation is expressed to the many Deaf community members and professional interpreters in Jacksonville, Florida, who have participated in the evolution of the supported fieldwork described in this article. In addition, the author expresses appreciation to the teaching faculty and interpreting students at the University of North Florida who participated in the development of the activities and standards described herein.

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Interpreter output in talking therapy

Summary of thesis.

Jan Cambridge¹

Abstract

This thesis investigated current praxis among professional interpreters working in psychiatric outpatient clinics. Four clinical encounters were filmed and analyzed using thematic analysis, and post hoc satisfaction questionnaires were completed after the interviews. Two clinicians and eight certified and registered interpreters (working between English and either Punjabi or Urdu) were interviewed with part of the interpreters' interview consisting of responses to dilemma vignettes. A Delphi process validated responses to these vignettes. Four clinical encounters at routine appointments in psychiatric outpatient clinics were filmed and analysed using thematic analysis; post hoc satisfaction questionnaires were used after the filmed interviews. The complexity of interpreters' work was revealed in the breakdown of the components forming the impartial interpreting model. Taking the model as the cognitive framework for observation of practice provided depth of insight into the whole communication event. A tension between doctors' and interpreters' understandings of each other's roles and professional needs revealed that each believed themselves to be helping the other, when in fact they were working against each other. The impartial model was seen to be in use, but only in part, and interpreting practitioners were revealed to consider close interpreting and the full impartial model as not appropriate for mental health clinics, but only for courts of law. There were noticeable gaps among the interpreters in their education and training for this work. The clinicians declared a lack of training on working with interpreters, and this was evidenced in the course of their interviews. This thesis highlights the complexity of need that faces the profession of public service interpreting especially in terms of standardizing both training and praxis.

Findings

The National Health Service employs predominantly minimally trained (or untrained) interpreters, who are nonetheless expected to handle very complex message exchanges. In the interactions observed, all interpreters were the fundamental gatekeepers. Untrained or minimally trained interpreters do not use any model of delivery, even partially, nor are they aware of the interpreters' professional code of conduct. They are not affiliated to any professional bodies of interpreters. These interpreters are willing, keen to be helpful, but ignorant of the healthcare system, doctors' procedures and goals, or of their own interlocutor role. The key theoretical concept in the thesis is that a performance model is necessary to give coherence and discipline to the communicative work of the interpreter. The impartial model is clearly laid out in the code of conduct laid down by the The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) and its accompanying guide to good practice (NRPSI, 2011)

The impartial model represents and explains the ethics and working practices of the professional interpreter to trainee interpreters, and to the clients and professionals that interpreters work with. The thesis also stresses the need for professional training.

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Cambridge: Summary of Thesis

The study employed a Delphi panel to discuss what was observed in the recorded interactions. The five panelists on the panel consisted of conference and public service interpreters (n=4) and one very experienced member of the Chartered Institute of Linguists who had contributed to the interpreting profession by leading the development of codes of conduct, setting examinations, amongst others. Four out of the five panelists did not believe that cultural briefing (adding contextual social and cultural information without reference to the patient) was an appropriate thing for interpreters to engage in.

On the whole both the interviewed and observed interpreters displayed a lack of professional education as set out in the idealized models and academic and professional literature. They showed very little awareness of interpreting theory nor of the interpreting model. They only implemented this model in part, and the parts they chose to implement were not consistent across the sample. Interpreting in any medical field requires a broad and deep knowledge of the vocabulary of peoples' lived lives in both languages. Most of the interpreters observed would benefit from formal language training to bring both their languages up to a professional level. More importantly however, there appeared to be no understanding among the interpreters observed as to why mental health clinicians phrase questions in a specific way, and why it is important to respect both form and wording of the question. It was also clear that the interpreters had a great need for formal, systematic training in interpreting techniques: clear diction, competent note taking, and training in the consecutive mode, whispered simultaneous mode and sight translation.

For interpreters who have had appropriate professional training, applied linguistics is the bedrock of what they do: it is the anatomy and physiology of communication. The thesis revealed a double helix, taking both clinician and interpreter down the pathway from good intentions to suboptimal performance. This included interpreters just wanting to help Limited English proficient clients; a lack of sufficient theoretical underpinning to promote good practice by clinician and interpreter; lack of mutual insight into professional goals and needs; lack of a requirement for interpreters to undertake mandatory continuing professional development; and lack of revalidation of interpreters' fitness to practice at set intervals.

The interviewed interpreters distinguished between the manner in which they would need to interpret before the courts, and a looser, freer, simpler use of language in mental health care to express an overall message. However, the psychiatrists who were interviewed said they wanted a more forensic style of close interpreting as required by the courts. In my view, it is not tenable to suggest that the community members for whom they interpret in court would deserve a lower standard of service when they suffer from (mental) illness.

The influence of institution and state

There are other influences impacting on service delivery across language and culture. At micro level, training and mutual understanding within the multidisciplinary team have a negative impact on interpreter output. At macro level the unregulated market makes training as a public service interpreter unattractive. An unregulated market means there can be no real accountability of interpreters because of the low level of expectation among clinicians. By definition, interpreters' services cannot be reliably evaluated by those employing them or using their services, because each speaks only one of the languages concerned and no bilingual record is made of the conversation. Any interpreter must thus be taken on trust, potentially putting patient, clinician and institution at risk. It would therefore seem appropriate to only use the services of interpreters who are listed on the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI), as this means they have satisfied nationally agreed registration criteria for qualifications, signed a code of conduct, have passed security checks and are subject to a disciplinary code.

In medical settings, interpreters are gatekeepers to intricate and vital message details, resulting in a position of great influence. In view of the vulnerabilities outlined in this thesis, I believe what Stanley Baldwin described in 1931ⁱ as "power without responsibility" to be an unidentified risk in all medical settings. Interpreters lacking any affiliation to a nationally recognized professional body and not listed on the NRPSI are not bound by any known ethical or disciplinary code.

Cambridge: Summary of Thesis

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ⁱ *Stanley Baldwin served three terms as the Prime Minister of Britain between 1923 and 1937. He used this phrase in a speech attacking the press.*

Book Review

Reviewed by Jo Anna Burn¹

Hale, S., & Napier, J. (2013). *Research methods in interpreting: A practical resource*. London, England: Bloomsbury. ISBN 978-1-441-6851-1 (pbk.) 267 pp.

(Series: Research methods in linguistics.)

This book is a blessing both for students making their first tentative steps into the world of research and also for more experienced academic staff who may be supervising dissertations and theses for the first time. It is a clearly written, step-by-step guide designed to demystify the often arcane field of linguistics research. Although the book is aimed primarily at students and practitioners of interpreting studies, it could also be an excellent resource for students of other disciplines. The authors are two of the most respected academics in the interpreting field, Sandra Hale from the University of New South Wales, and Jemina Napier from Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. The authors are educators as well as researchers, and the book is peppered with exercises for the reader to attempt at home, as well as clear explanations of research terms and methodologies.

Research Methods in Interpreting is essentially a practical guide to negotiating the different stages of conducting a research project. It is laid out in logical progression from first thinking about doing research through to disseminating research findings. In the first chapter, the authors tackle choosing research questions, selecting a research philosophy, and identifying suitable methodology and data collection with interpreters. The section on research philosophies is particularly good, with clear diagrams and tables explaining in a few succinct pages what wordier tomes can take chapters to discuss.

Chapter 2 takes the reader through the process of writing a critical literature review and includes a section on avoiding common pitfalls for the novice researcher. It also deals with designing a research proposal and obtaining ethics approval. The authors even include a suggested research proposal template and sample information sheets and consent forms for participants.

In Chapters 3 to 6, the authors discuss key research methodologies. Chapter 3 focuses on using questionnaires in research and includes questionnaire design and analysis of data. In Chapter 4, the authors tackle ethnographic research and includes a section on some of the key ethnographic interpreting studies. The authors then go on to discuss the relative merits of the qualitative data collection methods of focus groups, interviews, and case studies. Chapter 5 focuses on discourse analysis as a tool to analyze different types of interpreting data: monologic, dialogic, simultaneous, consecutive or even to analyze discussions about interpreting. The authors include a useful section on transcription that outlines the key issues surrounding transcribing interpreted discourse, and the chapter ends with a discussion of corpus-based discourse analysis and interpreting corpora. Chapter 6 covers experimental methods in interpreting research, including the development of hypotheses, defining variables, random assignment, interpretation of results, and reliability and validity.

In Chapter 7, the authors demonstrate the application of various quantitative and qualitative methodologies to interpreter education research. The chapter begins with a discussion of key adult education theories before moving on to an overview of research into interpreter education and assessment. Alternative research methods are discussed, including the historical/documentary approach, role-plays, and action research. The authors include a number of abstracts to illustrate the different possible approaches to researching interpreter pedagogy.

The final chapter deals with different writing structures appropriate to the different methods of disseminating research findings. It includes a discussion of the relative merits of a thesis which follows the traditional thesis structure as opposed to a thesis by publication. The authors advise the readers on targeting appropriate journals, submitting conference abstracts, delivering professional development presentations, and disseminating knowledge through other means. There is even a section on writing grant applications.

This is a surprisingly readable and wonderfully practical guide to conducting a research project. The focus is on research into spoken or signed interpreting, but the information can equally be applied to other fields of linguistic research. The writers are to be congratulated on producing such an excellent research guide, sure to be of value to students, emerging researchers, professional practitioners, and interpreter trainers alike.

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