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Translations for patient safety communication: Vital documents in the Hungarian health sector

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ABSTRACT

Clear communication is essential to ensure patient safety and quality care, and written communication and translated documents play a crucial role in their provision. Therefore, it is critical to create a list of vital documents and to ensure that they are language accessible for patients who do not speak the local language. The purpose of this study is to identify documents created within the Hungarian health sector, which contain health or legal information that may have important implications for patients' health, and are also essential for the provision of safe and high-quality health care, and which would also need to be made accessible to foreign patients. The study involved seven health professionals and a medical lawyer. Data was collected using qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and an online questionnaire. The data obtained was subjected to basic thematic and frequency analysis. The results show that health professionals consider six documents to be vital for Hungarian health care. In addition to this, a few other non-treatment related documents were identified, whose translation would greatly contribute to effective communication with foreign patients. This study provides a solid basis for the creation of an official list of vital documents for the Hungarian healthcare system and can serve as a guide for other linguistic environments as well.

Keywords: vital documents, medical translation, clear communication, patient safety, language assistance

Prevajanje komunikacije za varnost pacientov: ključna zdravstvena dokumentacija v madžarskem zdravstvenem sistemu

IZVLEČEK

Za zagotavljanje pacientove varnosti in kvalitetne nege je jasna komunikacija ključnega pomena, pri čemer igrata pomembno vlogo pisna komunikacija in prevedeni dokumenti. Zato je ustvarjanje zdravstvene dokumentacije in zagotavljanje jezikovne dostopnosti teh dokumentov pacientom, ki ne govorijo lokalnega jezika, posebnega pomena. Namen pričujoče študije je identificirati dokumente, ki so nastali v madžarskem zdravstvenem sistemu, ki vsebujejo zdravstvene in pravne informacije za zagotavljanje varne in visokokvalitetne zdravstvene nege in ki morajo biti dostopni tudi tujim pacientom. V študiji je sodelovalo sedem strokovnjakov s področja zdravstva ter odvetnik, specializiran za medicino. Za zbiranje podatkov so bile uporabljene kvalitativne metode, vključno s polstrukturiranim intervjujem in internetnim vprašalnikom. Dobljeni podatki so bili analizirani z osnovno tematsko analizo in analizo pogostosti. Rezultati kažejo, da so strokovnjaki s področja zdravstva identificirali šest ključnih dokumentov za zdravstveno nego na Madžarskem, hkrati pa so identificirali še nekatere druge dokumente, ki se ne navezujejo na zdravljenje, za katere menijo, da bi njihov prevod veliko prispeval k učinkoviti komunikaciji s tujimi pacienti. Študija predstavlja trdno osnovo za ustvarjanje uradnega seznama zdravstvene dokumentacije za madžarski zdravstveni sistem in lahko služi kot vodilo tudi za druga jezikovna okolja.

Ključne besede: ključna zdravstvena dokumentacija, medicinsko prevajanje, jasna komunikacija, varnost pacientov, jezikovna pomoč

1. Introduction

Clear communication is essential for all patient–provider interactions, regardless of the language spoken. However, when patients and providers speak different languages, the complexity of communication increases significantly due to potential differences in language proficiency, cultural norms and medical terminology. In a multicultural and multilingual healthcare setting, this can result in miscommunication, misinterpretation and the lack of communication (e.g., Harsham 1984; Cohen et al. 2005; Flores 2005; HHS OMH 2013; Regenstein et al. 2013), which can then lead to inequalities in access to health services and a loss of people's trust in the healthcare system. To overcome language barriers, research (Commonwealth of Massachusetts 2001; Park et al. 2005; AHQR 2010; The Joint Commission 2010; Federal Coordination 2011; Baruch and Walker 2013; HHS OMH 2013) suggests, among other things, the development of a Language Access Plan (LAP), if not at a national level, at least at an institutional level. In this document, the institution can specify how language assistance should be provided to patients who do not speak the local language. The document can thus include details on when to use interpreters and who may act as an interpreter (e.g., qualified language mediators, lay interpreters (such as family members or friends), or in some cases, a minor child). Additionally, the document can outline the available forms of interpretation (e.g., in-house or remote).

Regarding translations, an LAP can define which documents need to be translated, into which foreign language(s), and who can provide translations. Through the translation of written documents, healthcare institutions ensure that patients have access to written information which enables them to use the healthcare services available, to better understand their own medical conditions and to make informed decisions about their health. Making documents language accessible for everyone improves the health institution's cultural competency, shows respect for the patient, deepens the provider–patient relationship and increases patient satisfaction (Flores 2005; Park et al. 2005; AHQR 2010; Baruch and Walker 2013; Regenstein et al. 2013).

However, the limited amount of financial and human resources makes it difficult to translate all the documents in use, and thus the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (2003) recommends the collection and translation of the so-called *vital documents*. According to the HHS (2003), "whether or not a document (or the information it solicits) is 'vital' may depend on the importance of the program, information, encounter, or service involved, and the consequence to the LEP person if the information in question is not provided accurately or in a timely manner" (para C). Vital documents are thus those that contain legal or other information that has important consequences if relied upon; that draw attention to patients' rights and available hospital services, programmes and activities; that contain information relevant to the provision of safe and high-quality health care; or that are important or commonly used in the target department or hospital. The documents and other texts that may be considered vital include (The Guide n.d.; Flores 2005; Wu et al. 2007; AHRQ 2010; Hablamos Juntos 2012):

- signage, directions and notices about the availability of interpreter services;
- administrative and legally binding documents (consent forms, client rights, and responsibilities, privacy notices, complaint forms, emergency room release and discharge forms, documents establishing and maintaining eligibility for services, and notices of non-coverage);
- clinical information (prevention and treatment instructions; what to do before, during, and after a procedure or treatment; how to take medicine; and how to perform routine self-care or self-monitoring; medication labels);
- education, health prevention and promotional materials (brochures, fact sheets, pamphlets, promotional flyers and posters, health advisories, and other materials that support treatment programmes (e.g., for chronic disease or mental health); and
- prevention activities (e.g., cancer or high blood pressure screenings).

Many researchers believe that it would be best if these vital documents were translated into patients' mother tongues, but if this is not possible, they should at least be provided in the so-called threshold languages (HHS 2003; California Health Care Safety Net Institute 2005; HHS OMH 2005; Wu et al. 2007; The Joint Commission 2010; Prata 2015; García-Izquierdo and Montalt 2022). What actually constitutes a threshold language should be calculated after assessing the language needs of patients and identifying the languages that are most frequently encountered in a specific healthcare context (HHS 2003). Translating vital documents, monitoring the quality of written communication, making necessary improvements to existing translations or introducing new standards are all essential for clear communication and patient safety (Lindholm et al. 2012; Baruch and Walker 2013). In order to ensure that the translations of these key documents are of a high standard, it is recommended that translation guides are produced to facilitate the translation process and help with quality control (House 1997; Nord 1997; HHS 2003; Hablamos Juntos 2012).

Today, there is no regulation in Hungary that makes it mandatory for any healthcare document to be translated for non-Hungarian-speaking patients, although there are certain acts and decrees that consider oral communication and the role of interpreters. The Ministry Decree 24/1986 (26.VI.) and Article 12(1) – (3) of Act CCXL of 2013, for example, state that people who do not speak Hungarian have the right to free interpretation and translation services, but only in criminal proceedings. According to Act CLIV of 1997 on Health Care, "the patient has the right to be informed in a manner which they understand, taking into account their age, education, knowledge, state of mind and their wishes in this respect, and to be provided with an interpreter or sign language interpreter if necessary and possible." (Magyar Közlöny 1997, Article 8). In the case of language barriers, the interpreter has to be provided by the healthcare provider. With regard to mandatory translations, the *Ministry of Health Decree 30/2005* (*VIII. 2*) states that certain information must be provided in Hungarian only on the labels and package leaflets of medicinal products for human use.

2. Literature review

Two studies report on the availability of documents in foreign languages in the Hungarian health sector. First, Gellér et al. (2012) published a handbook *Access to the Healthcare System for Third-country Nationals*, in which the authors noted that the use of translated documents was not common in health care ten years ago (i.e., in 2012). In their view, the problem stemmed from the fact that public institutions lacked the financial resources to provide this language service. Second, Horváth's (2022) research aimed to explore the strategies and norms of Hungarian health professionals when they inform their foreign patients, especially in written form. A questionnaire survey, completed by 110 health professionals across the country (96 from public institutions and 14 from private institutions), showed that Hungarian health professionals encounter patients of many nationalities and mother tongues in the course of their work, as shown in *Figure 1*. It is important to note that the study was conducted in September and October, 2021 before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. The percentages in *Figure 1* represent the proportion of respondents who said they had encountered patients of the given nationality. As a supplement, *Table 1* shows the Hungarian Central Statistical Office's (Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, KSH) data on foreign nationals residing in Hungary over the last ten years, as well as the statistics before Hungary joined the European Union in 2004.

Table 1. Foreign citizens residing in Hungary (based on KSH 2023).

Continent, country	2004	2012	2022
Europe	**110,915**	**110,122**	**131,431**
including:			
Romania	55,676	41,596	16,601
Ukraine	13,096	11,894	30,707
Germany	7,393	15,834	19,747
Russia	2,244	2,864	4,980
Slovakia	2,472	6,705	16,040
Asia	**14,715**	**24,733**	**55,000**
including: China	6,790	10,114	17,685
America	**2,535**	**4,713**	**7,454**
including: US	1,703	3,060	3,051
Africa	**1,455**	**3,284**	**8,028**
Australia and Oceania	**489**	**509**	**612**
In sum:	**130,109**	**143,361**	**202,525**

Table 1 summarizes the rise in number and distribution of foreign citizens residing in Hungary, with a 41% increase observed between 2012 and 2022, and a 56% increase compared to pre-EU accession. This growing national diversity is evident in the diverse patient population of Hungarian hospitals, as illustrated in Figure 1.

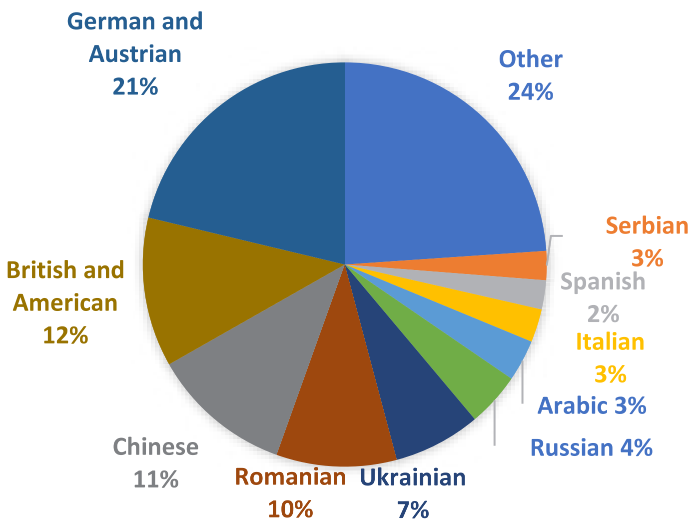

Figure 1. Percentage of foreign nationals in Hungarian hospitals (based on Horváth 2022, 82).

Respondents were also asked about their own perception of the level of English proficiency of the foreign patients they treat. They could choose more than one of the four response options but were also given the opportunity to formulate their own response, as shown in Figure 2. In the *other* category, it was reported that the language skills of their patients varied greatly, with some speaking little Hungarian.

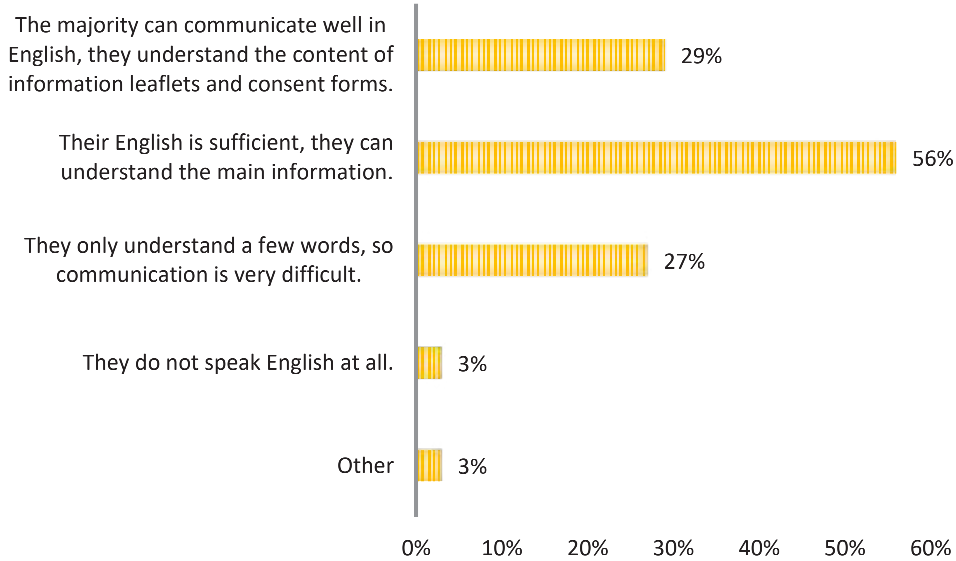

Figure 2. Foreign patients' proficiency in English in Hungarian clinics as seen by health professionals (based on Horváth 2022, 83).

It is important to note that Figure 2 reflects the opinions of health professionals who are not language experts. Although a B2 level language exam has been required to obtain a diploma in higher education in Hungary since January 1, 2013, Hungary's overall proficiency in foreign languages, particularly English, is considered lower than in many other EU countries. According to a 2016 Eurostat survey on language skills, only 42% of Hungarians reported being able to speak at least one foreign language, which is far below the EU average of 65% (European Commission 2021). However, language proficiency can vary depending on factors such as age, education level, and location within a country. It should also be noted that it is not known how the health professionals ensured that patients understood what was said.

Regarding the documents available to non-Hungarian speaking patients in a foreign language at the workplace of the health professionals surveyed, Horváth's (2022) research was limited to the informed consent forms (ICFs) that each patient has to sign before any invasive medical procedure. Respondents were invited to provide longer answers to an open-ended question. Figure 3 shows the responses of 80 out of the 110 health professionals, who responded to the questionnaire. Given that only 72.7% of participants responded, it can be assumed that 30 participants chose not to answer the question because they did not consider it relevant, or they could not give a positive and substantial response to the question of what kind of translated ICFs they had. In the 'other' response option (2%), paramedics reported that in their case the patients give oral consent, so they did not work with written translations.

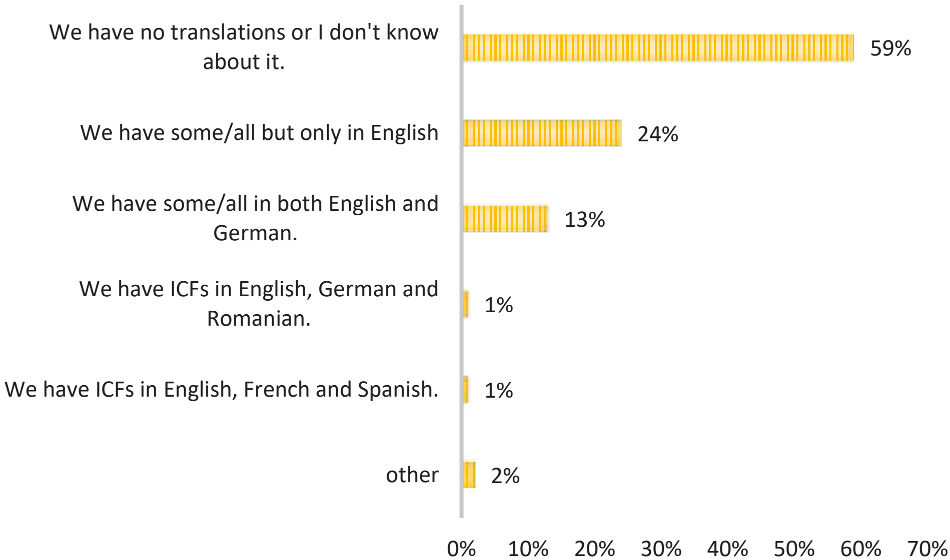

Figure 3. ICFs available in any language other than Hungarian (based on Horváth 2022, 95).

The primary objective of the present study was to explore which documents used in the Hungarian healthcare system are considered by health professionals to be vital for patient safety. A secondary objective of the study was to expand the category of vital documents by eliciting health professionals' views on which other documents – although neither vital nor even treatment-related – contribute greatly to effective communication between the provider and foreign patient, leading to an improvement in the overall quality of healthcare services; and for which reason, the translation of such documents would also be encouraged.

Although I was primarily interested in recording the perspective of healthcare providers, I also consulted a medical lawyer. To achieve the objectives of the study, an online questionnaire was designed and sent to health professionals. In addition to this, semi-structured interviews with representatives of clinics at a medical university as well as with a medical lawyer were conducted. With the interviews, I attempted to obtain a list of the key healthcare documents in the Hungarian context and to establish if and how they differ from the similar list in the United States. Due to the distinct healthcare systems in the two countries (the United States is predominantly a private system with private entities providing healthcare services, while Hungary's healthcare system is primarily a public system with government-provided healthcare services funded through taxes), it was anticipated that Hungarian vital documents would not include insurance or payment-related records.

I conducted the interviews with health professionals and a medical lawyer, i.e. two parties that approach the problem from different angles, with the hope that I would thus get a more complex picture by aggregating the results. Health professionals from six different departments were interviewed. I expected them to identify a relatively large variety of vital documents based on their different medical or health science studies and their hospitals experience. The medical lawyer, however, was expected to identify vital documents which contain information that is crucial for the rights and safety of patients and may lead to significant legal implications if relied upon or ignored, and that hold significant importance in legal proceedings. After collecting interview responses, I formulated questions for the quantitative research, which consisted of an online questionnaire with multiple-choice questions, to which 108 health professionals responded.

In this article, I report on the study which aimed to address the following research questions: 1) What are the documents used in health care that are vital for the success of a treatment and for the health of the patient?; 2) What documents with direct **relevance** to **patients' rights** need to be translated?; 3) What are the non-treatment-related documents that are not vital but contribute highly to the quality of healthcare services and therefore need to be translated?

3. Methods

3.1 Participants and setting

Health professionals in 20 clinics affiliated with Semmelweis University, a prestigious medical university in Hungary, were contacted, but only six clinics responded and were available for appointments. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Hungarian with six doctors and one health professional who holds a degree in health sciences. During one interview, two doctors from a single clinic participated. In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality regarding the sensitive issue of communication with foreign patients, the names of the clinics are not disclosed. The medical lawyer interviewed for the study held both a medical and a law degree and was contacted through the university. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interview was conducted via Zoom Meeting, a videoconferencing platform.

After the completion of the interviews, an online questionnaire on Google Forms was sent out to health professionals, such as the heads of the medical school's clinics, alumni members of the university, current and graduate medical translation students. Snowball sampling was used, and the questionnaire was posted on health professionals' community forums to explore what they consider to be vital documents. Finally, a total of 108 participants from 39 different departments completed and returned the questionnaire. The departments with the highest number of completed questionnaires were obstetrics and gynaecology, anaesthesiology intensive care, paediatrics, and surgery. The respondents were not asked to identify the name of the hospital and the city in which they worked, so that they could stay completely anonymous. Their gender and age were irrelevant for the study, and thus were not collected.

3.2 Instruments of data collection and methods of analysis

To gather insights into which documents are considered vital in Hungarian health care, semi-structured interviews were conducted between December 2021 and May 2022, using Zoom Meetings, a videoconferencing software platform, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The interviews lasted between 20 to 60 minutes. The purpose of the interviews with the health professionals was to explore how Hungarian healthcare institutions communicate with foreign patients in terms of written texts. The interviews consisted of eight pre-prepared guiding questions, including two questions specifically focusing on vital documents and other written texts that would help health professionals communicate with foreign patients. In contrast, the interview with the medical lawyer was brief, lasting approximately 30 minutes, and focused only on the question of which documents they considered vital to patients' rights. The answers received were subjected to basic thematic analysis without using coding.

An online questionnaire on vital documents was also used to collect the opinions of health professionals from different parts of the country on the issue. The study was conducted between April and May 2022. The language of the questionnaire was Hungarian, allowing health professionals to express themselves freely. The questionnaire's aim was to identify which healthcare documents, according to healthcare providers, are vital for patient safety in Hungary. Data collection was done using the snowball technique. The questionnaire was composed of three open-ended questions, two of them on vital documents. These two addressed 1) which healthcare documents professionals consider vital for the success of treatment and the health of the patient, and 2) which documents they consider vital for patient rights. Frequency analysis (Oppenheim 2000) was performed on the data thus obtained. In order to broaden the category of vital documents, the third question of the questionnaire sought to identify the non-treatment-related documents that professionals consider important for effective communication with foreign patients, and that would therefore be useful to translate. An English translation of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

4. Results

The following section first contains the findings obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with representatives from the six clinics and the medical lawyer, followed by the data on vital documents gathered through an online questionnaire completed by the Hungarian health professionals.

4.1 Results of the semi-structured interviews

In their responses to the questions "From a patient's point of view, which medical documents would your department need to translate?" and "What medical documents, texts, and signs would need to be translated for the daily successful functioning of the department and for effective communication?", the interviewed representatives of the clinics from the medical university identified 13 different documents. The most frequently mentioned documents included various consent forms (general consent form, consent form for invasive and non-invasive procedures), patient information sheets, discharge papers (especially the summary section) and house rules. They also emphasized the importance of therapeutic indications (diet, wound care, physiotherapy) and patient education materials. Additionally, they believed that clear information on medication rules and follow-up appointments was needed in a language that is understood by foreign patients. The hospital's website, brochures on available services, and wayfinding signs were also mentioned as items that would need to be available in other languages as well.

During the interviews, the respondents tended to blur the line between the first two questions and simply listed documents that they believed were essential to improve their communication with foreign patients. The analysis of their responses led me to the conclusion that it was necessary to rephrase these questions in the online questionnaire. In the interview with the medical lawyer, I specifically inquired about the documents that are vital in the healthcare system from a patient rights perspective. In response, they identified the following documents: informed consent forms, patient information sheets, discharge papers, in particular discharge summaries, the results of any laboratory or imaging tests, autopsy notes and clinical notes from outpatient clinics as key to patients exercising their right to information and making informed decisions about their health.

4.2 Vital documents for patient safety

In this section, I first clarify how the outcome of my interviews with clinic representatives and the medical lawyer influenced the design of the online questionnaire and provided guidance on how to construct the multiple-choice questions. I then provide the responses to each question. According to the U.S. Health and Human Services, HHS (2003) vital documents are defined as follows: "whether or not a document (or the information it solicits) is 'vital' may depend on the importance of the program, information, encounter, or service involved, and the consequence to the LEP person if the information in question is not provided accurately or in a timely manner" (para C).

Given the complexity of this definition, it was thought appropriate to approach vital documents as documents that are key to the success of treatment and key to the success of the health of the patient. By this, it is meant that patients are aware of their health status, know what treatment they are about to receive, are aware of the benefits and risks, and understand and follow their doctor's instructions, for example regarding medication or post-operative care. On the other hand, vital documents are understood as documents that are meant to ensure that patients can exercise their right to information, have a clearer picture of their health and actively participate in decisions concerning their own health.

As the term *vital documents* does not exist in Hungarian medical discourse, the questions in the questionnaire needed to be clearer and more explanatory. I therefore avoided the Hungarian equivalent of the word "vital" ("vitális") and used the adjective "key" ("kulcsfontosságú") instead. For the purpose of the questionnaire, I have broken down the concept of vital documents into: (1) documents that are key to the success of treatment and the health of the patient, and (2) documents that are key to patient rights.

The first question that participants had to answer was "In your opinion, which documents (e.g., final reports, results, patient information sheets, consent forms) play a key role in the SUCCESS OF THE TREATMENT and the PATIENT'S HEALTH, and should therefore be translated into a foreign language for foreign patients?" The responses were analysed using the frequency distribution, and the results are presented in Figures 4 and 5.

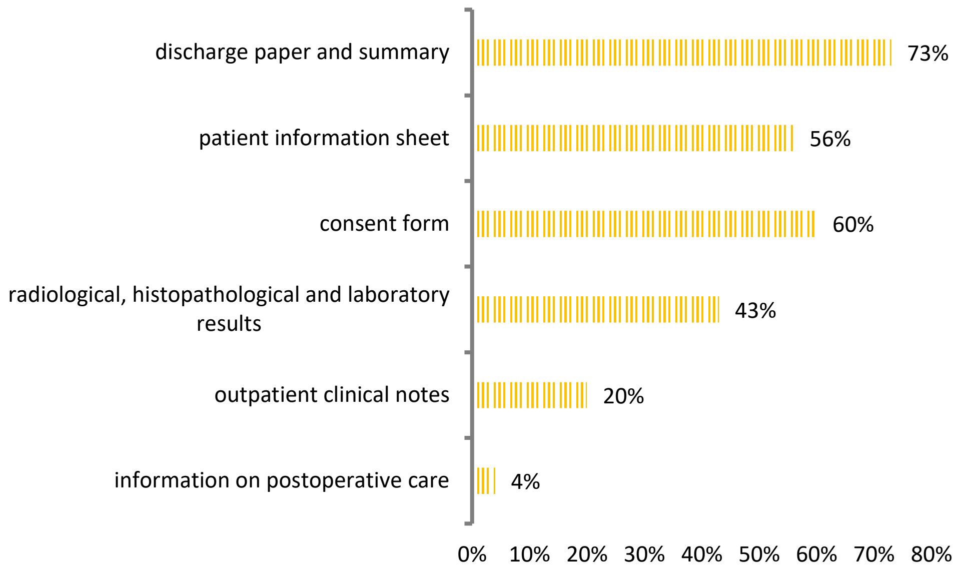

Figure 4. Vital documents for the success of the treatment and the patient's health.

Figure 4 shows the documents most frequently identified by health professionals as vital: 73% of the respondents stated that discharge papers, in particular discharge summaries, are vital documents for the success of treatment and the health of the patient. As the second most important document, consent forms are listed, including general consent forms and consent forms for surgery, examination, anaesthesia or blood transfusion. Next are the patient information sheets, which describe what a patient can expect before, during and after a medical procedure. These documents usually differ from the consent forms in Hungary, which patients read and sign before the procedure. Radiology, laboratory and pathology results were considered vital documents by 43% of the respondents. The documents listed so far were all examples of key documents mentioned in the questionnaire, which possibly affected the respondents' answers, however, some of respondents also named additional key documents that were not provided in the questionnaire. The outpatient clinical note was one of these, which was considered a vital document by 20% of respondents. There were a few participants who stressed the importance of providing information to patients about their post-operative care, including information about available rehabilitation programmes, dietary restrictions or necessary follow-up examinations.

In Figure 5 the votes cast for each document are shown as a proportion of the total responses. In the *other* category, respondents named documents including hospital

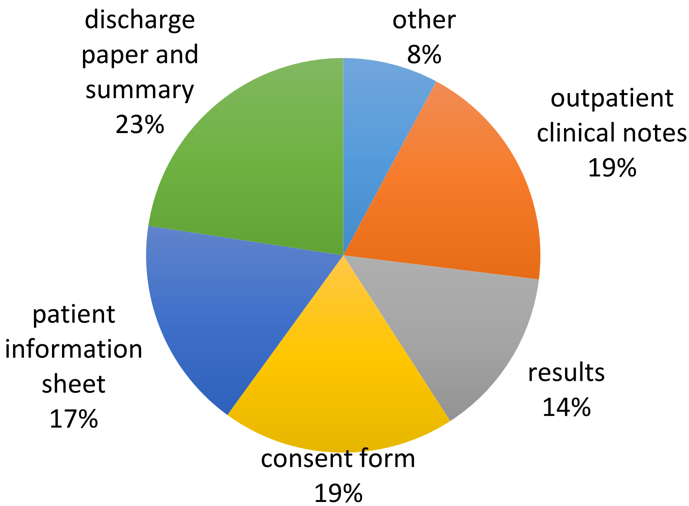

Figure 5. Percentage of vital documents for the success of the treatment and the patient's health.

admission and discharge forms, wayfinding signs, charts, drawings to help with patient communication, referrals, medical histories, patient charts, house rules, treatment plans and quotations. As the questionnaire contained open-ended questions, participants had the chance to express their views in more detail. For example, one respondent stressed that while patients need to be informed in writing about their health condition or about an upcoming intervention, it is even more important for the patient's health or recovery that they understand the written text. This was a clear reference to the literacy and health literacy levels of patients, which is explicitly recommended to be taken into account when making translations (The Joint Commission 2010; Baruch and Walker 2013), and a topic that has been extensively researched (e.g., Hanrahan et al. 2015; Brelsford et al. 2018; Kamaara et al. 2020). A different respondent noted that translations are not necessarily needed for the success of treatment and the health of the patient, but rather, signs, cards and drawings that can establish communication with particular patients, such as those who are intubated or unable to communicate orally.

The second question asked the participants to answer the following: "In your opinion, which documents (e.g., final reports, results, patient information sheets, consent forms) are key from a PATIENTS' RIGHTS point of view and therefore should be translated into a foreign language for foreign patients? There may be an overlap in your answer to the previous question."

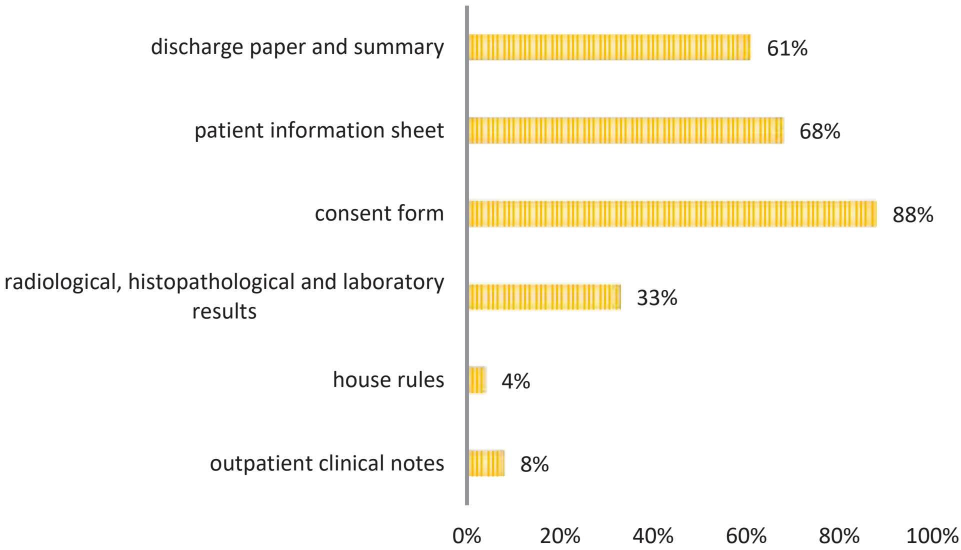

Figure 6. Vital documents for patients' rights.

As presented in Figure 6, the largest percentage of respondents ranked consent forms as a key document for patients' rights. A high proportion of respondents also strongly agreed that discharge papers, discharge summaries and patient information sheets are key documents for patients' rights. Additionally, one in three health professionals considered radiology, laboratory and pathology results as key documents. There was a considerable overlap in the answers to the second and first questions, but some respondents also listed other documents, such as house rules and outpatient clinical notes, which they also considered to be key to patients' rights. Below is a breakdown of what percentage of total responses each document received (Figure 7).

As shown in Figure 7, patient information sheets, consent forms and discharge papers, in particular their discharge summary, account for 78% of the responses. The results of examinations obtained 11% of the responses, while among the *other* category documents such as refusal of medical treatment, documentation of discharge against medical advice, patient chart, treatment plan, quality management system documentation, authorizations, website and wayfinding signs were suggested. The overlap in the responses to the two questions (Figure 5, Figure 7) indicates a consensus among the respondents. Consent forms, patient information sheets and discharge papers, including the summary, emerged as the top-ranked documents from the patients' rights standpoint, aligning with their importance for treatment success. This suggests that healthcare professionals recognize the significance of ensuring these documents and safeguarding patients' rights through translated consent forms.

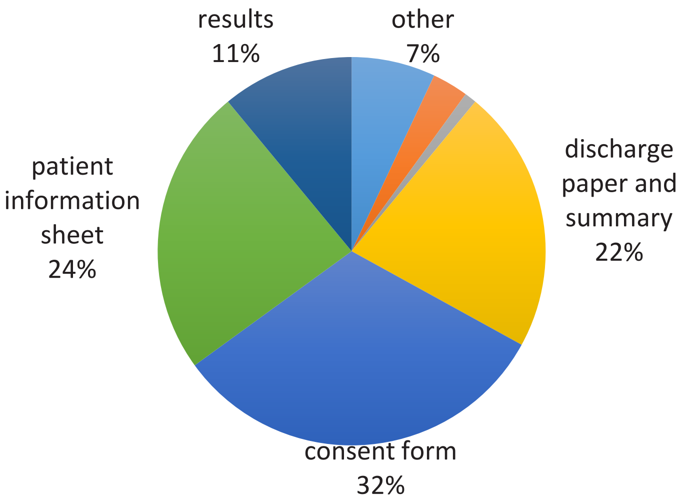

Figure 7. Percentage of vital documents for patients' rights.

If the results of the two questions are aggregated, a list of vital documents used in Hungarian health care is obtained, as shown in Figure 8. In addition to these documents, several other documents were mentioned, but none of them was named by more than one respondent.

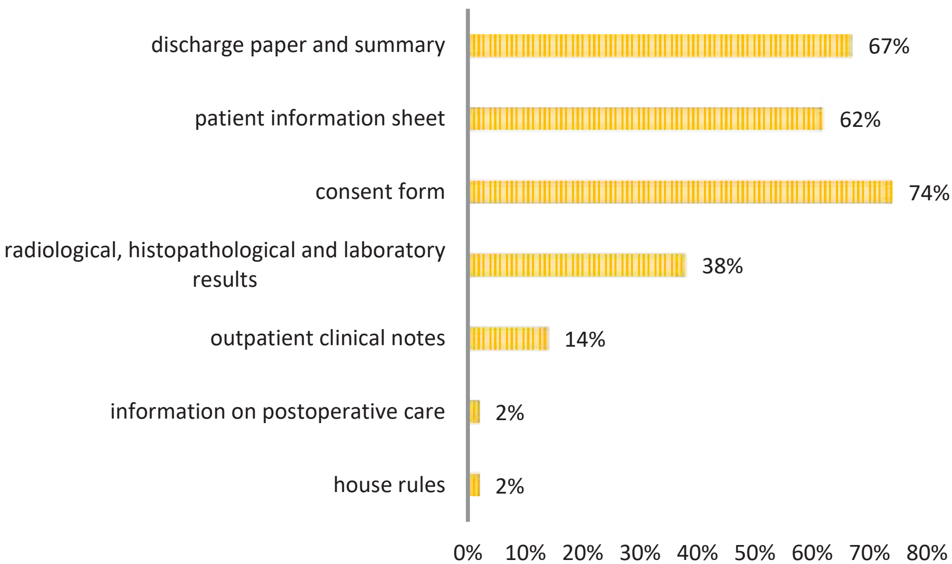

Figure 8. Vital documents for patient safety.

4.3 Other translations that can help improve the quality of health care

The research's secondary objective was to expand the category of vital documents by eliciting documents that are not vital, or even related to treatment, but which contribute to effective communication between the provider and foreign patient, and thus to the overall quality of health services to such an extent that their translation is recommended. Data was collected through the third and final questions of the online questionnaire on vital documents. Participants were asked the following: "In your opinion, which non-treatment related GENERAL INFORMATION and GUIDING DOCUMENTS (e.g.: house rules, website, wayfinding signs, clinic map, parking information) should be translated into a foreign language for foreign patients?" The results are presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Non-treatment related documents to be translated.

As shown in Figure 9, more than 50% of health professionals considered that wayfinding signs, maps of the hospital and departments, the hospital's website and hospital department rules (e.g., the schedule of ward rounds, what to take to hospital upon admission, visiting hours, what food can be brought to the hospital) are documents that should be accessible in translation, as they help make everyday communication easier and contribute to the quality of care. Besides these factors, the participants felt that a useful note for foreign patients would be information on parking facilities. It was also suggested by health professionals that it would be helpful if visiting rules are made available in translation. Many respondents wrote that foreign patients should be provided with different contact details, including doctors, GPs, pharmacies, interpreters, emergency services, patient representation and contact details for complainants. Several respondents also mentioned that financial information should be made available in translation. Such documents include, for example, a list of fees for examinations, information on payment options for EU and non-EU citizens, the process of invoice payment, the address of the bursar's office or information on guarantees.

Beyond the documents shown in Figure 9, other general information documents and wayfinding signs were also mentioned by health professionals as candidates for translation. These included the location and times of the appointments and on-call services, contact details for making appointments, leaflets and wall stickers for wheelchair accessibility, mask regulations, or a sign saying that a lift is not working and where to find another one. Respondents also mentioned some patient education materials, such as information on the duties of the GP on call, a short summary of the department's operations, general information on the Hungarian health system, general information on diseases, information on outpatient care and the patient-admission procedure, what documents are required for patient admission, information on how to make an appointment at various clinics, how to request a referral, how foreign nationals can access the various health services and programmes, and lastly, information on the legal and social security administration possibilities and procedures for patient care.

5. Discussion

The main aim of this study was to investigate, on the one hand, which documents used in Hungarian health care are perceived by health professionals as vital documents for patient safety. On the other hand, the study set out to extend the category of vital documents and identify non-treatment related documents which, although not vital, contribute greatly to effective communication between doctors and foreign patients and improve the quality of healthcare services. As such, the translation of these documents was also recommended by some respondents. This research met both objectives, as shown in Figures 8 and 9.

The results showed that a very high proportion of health professionals consider three types of documents to be vital for patient safety: consent forms, discharge papers and their discharge summaries, and patient information sheets. These documents were considered vital by over 60% of the respondents. In addition to these documents, imaging, laboratory and histopathology results, outpatient clinical notes, information on postoperative care and house rules were also considered vital by between 2% and 38% of health professionals. The most important non-treatment related documents that were not considered vital but still in need of translation were wayfinding signs, the hospital and department map, the hospital's webpage, and the hospital's and/or department's house rules.

6. Conclusion

Identifying vital documents is the initial step in creating a systematic language assistance programme that provides written information for patients who do not speak the local language. This approach can greatly help to better meet the needs of hospitals' diverse patient population and to prevent or minimize the occurrence of adverse events arising from language barriers in multicultural healthcare settings. In Hungary, however, it is unclear which language(s) these documents should be translated into because hospitals do not keep records of patients' nationality or preferred language for discussing health issues. While patients' place of birth may be considered, this data does not necessarily determine their mother tongue or other languages in which they can communicate. One possible solution could be to implement a system where hospitals collect information on patients' language preferences during registration or admission (Regenstein et al. 2013). This could be done through a standardized questionnaire or checklist that is completed by the patient or a family member. Another solution could be to conduct a new survey to map the language preferences of potential patients (their mother tongues or a mediating language such as a *lingua franca*).

To ensure the effectiveness of language assistance, it is crucial that the vital documents on the list receive high-quality translations. One way to achieve this is by using translation guides (House 1997; Nord 1997; HHS 2003; Hablamos Juntos 2012). If a decision is made to translate these documents into a *lingua franca* like English instead of the patient's mother tongue due to resource constraints, it is important to note that only a small percentage of foreign patients in Hungarian hospitals are native English speakers, while others may have varying levels of proficiency. This is reflected in the data shown in *Figure 1* and *2*. To ensure effective communication, readability tests should be included in the preparation of the translation guide.

To enhance language assistance in the Hungarian healthcare sector, a research group was established in autumn 2021 by the Department of Languages for Specific Purposes of Semmelweis University and the Medical Communication and Translation Studies from the University of Szeged. The research group intends to collaborate with health professionals, medical lawyers and potential patients to create the full list of vital documents. The group will subsequently work on generating translation guides, glossaries and sample texts for the identified documents, which may serve as training resources for health care and medical translators and also be made accessible to healthcare institutions.

The present research could thus serve as the basis for a large-scale translation project to improve patient safety in Hungarian hospitals when it comes to communicating with foreign patients. On the one hand, translations would promote effective communication between provider and patient, ensure patients' rights to information, and reduce the number of adverse events resulting from language barriers. The language of the translations should be determined by the institution based on both the nationality of the patients who most frequently come to the clinic and their preferred language for discussing health issues. And finally, it is recommended that the literacy and functional health literacy level of foreign patients should be taken into account when preparing translations.

7. Limitations

This research could be further extended beyond health professionals' perspectives by asking patients which documents they consider the most important in health care and want to receive in a language they understand. Their answers could significantly refine the results obtained here.

Although the integration of a legal perspective was crucial, the list of vital documents could still be improved if several medical lawyers' viewpoints were incorporated. Moreover, it is worrying that the list of vital documents in *Figure 8* does not encompass those that would facilitate communication between pharmacists and patients, where vital information on health is also provided.

Additionally, it would be worthwhile to conduct a specific assessment of the needs of individuals with refugee status among the foreign patient population. There is a strong probability that they may have different preferences in terms of the type of documents required and their preferred language for health care, compared to the respondents in this research.

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About the author

Ágnes Horváth is an Assistant Lecturer at Semmelweis University, a medical university in Hungary. Her main research topic is patient safety communication for people who do not speak the local language. She has published on the legal framework for language assistance in different countries and the measures that have been introduced to prevent adverse events caused by language barriers. Her other major research topic is the identification of vital documents related to patient rights and patient safety in the Hungarian healthcare system, such as informed consent forms, and making them available in a foreign language for non-Hungarian patients.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire on vital documents – Provider's perspective (English translation of the Hungarian questionnaire)

The questionnaire aims to identify which documents are vital, i.e., which are key to the success of the treatment and the patient's recovery; and as a result, which documents should be translated for the benefit of foreign patients. The questionnaire also aims to identify general information and guidance documents whose translation into a foreign language would be of additional help to foreign patients. The questionnaire is voluntary and anonymous. Your answers will be treated confidentially and used for scientific purposes only.

Vital documents in Hungarian health care

What department do you work in?

1. In your opinion, which documents (e.g., final reports, results, patient information sheets, consent forms) play a key role in the SUCCESS OF THE TREATMENT and the PATIENT'S HEALTH, and should therefore be translated into a foreign language for foreign patients?

2. In your opinion, which documents (e.g., final reports, results, patient information sheets, consent forms) are key from a PATIENTS' RIGHTS point of view and should therefore be translated into a foreign language for foreign patients? There may be an overlap in your answer to the previous question.

3. In your opinion, which non-treatment related GENERAL INFORMATION and GUIDING DOCUMENTS (e.g., house rules, website, wayfinding signs, clinic map, parking information) should be translated into a foreign language for foreign patients?

Challenging the monolingual nature of a micro context: A case study of linguistic landscape in Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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ABSTRACT

Investigating a corpus containing 241 images of signage, this article focuses on the linguistic landscape of a small town called Sanski Most in north-western Bosnia and Herzegovina. Using the framework developed by Koskinen (2012), the study was carried out in a micro context researching linguistic landscape in attempt to detect the presence of multilingualism and translation in the mentioned area. The data was analysed to determine the presence of different languages in written form and the translation of commercial and public display signs. The findings indicate that traces of multilingualism in written form can be seen through the presence of different languages, but that traces of translation are very limited. The results show that Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, German, French, Italian, Arabic, Turkish, Latin, Dutch, Spanish, Slovenian, Danish, Albanian, and Chinese were all present in this area. The results also show that the translation in public signage in this area tends to be rather weak and that only 13 signs displayed translation.

Keywords: linguistic landscape, public signage, multilingualism, translation, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Izziv enojezični naravi mikrokonteksta: primer jezikovne krajine mesta Sanski Most v Bosni in Hercegovini

IZVLEČEK

Pričujoči prispevek se z raziskavo korpusa 241 fotografij znakov osredotoča na jezikovno krajino manjšega mesta Sanski Most na severozahodu Bosne in Hercegovine. Na podlagi klasifikacije, ki jo je razvila Kaisa Koskinen (2012), je bila v mikrokontekstu izvedena študija jezikovne krajine, katere namen je bil zaznati prisotnost večjezičnosti in prevajanja na omenjenem območju. Z analizo podatkov je bila identificirana prisotnost različnih jezikov v pisni obliki in prevajanje komercialnih in javnih znakov. Izsledki so pokazali, da je mogoče sledove večjezičnosti v pisni obliki zaznati v prisotnosti različnih jezikov na analiziranih znakih, vendar pa je število prevodov nizko. Rezultati pokažejo, da so bili na območju prisotni naslednji jeziki: bosanski/hrvaški/srbski, angleški, nemški, francoski, italijanski, arabski, turški, latinski, nizozemski, španski, slovenski, danski, albanski in kitajski. Rezultati prav tako pokažejo, da je prevajanje znakov na tem področju razmeroma šibko in da se prevod pojavi le na 13 znakih.

Ključne besede: jezikovna krajina, javni znaki, večjezičnost, prevajanje, Bosna in Hercegovina

1. Introduction

Language is an integral part of our everyday lives and the ability to use it presents one of the most fascinating abilities human beings possess. Language is our tool for communicating, for sharing thoughts, ideas, for expressing our feelings, for understanding the world, for maintaining relationships, and simply for everyday living. Nowadays it has become almost essential to be familiar with at least one foreign language. Or, as Jarc (2020, 241) puts it: "Globalisation has produced not only denser, but also linguistically more complex communication networks. Multilingual interactions are increasingly becoming part of the everyday routines of millions of people". Languages have spread all around the globe and are particularly visible in urban centres. As Cronin suggests "cities are stories they are the accumulation of narratives, photos, historical documents, symbolic sites and anecdotes that together create a sense of place. But each city will tell different stories according to the languages in which these stories are told" (Simon 2021, 24). However, languages are present also elsewhere: "language does not just happen against an urban backdrop, it is part of the city, the barber shop, the market garden, the networks of buying and selling" (Pennycook and Otsuji 2015, 33).

This paper focuses on the presence of multilingualism and translation in written form in public signage in a micro context in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The linguistic landscape of a town called Sanski Most was observed and for the purpose of this article a corpus of 241 images was analysed in order to answer the questions to what degree multilingualism is present in signs in Sanski Most, what languages can be seen in public signs and to what extent commercial and public display signs are translated.

1.1 Linguistic landscapes

Linguistic landscape research usually attempts to identify the evidence of multilingualism in a certain environmental context. If translation can be viewed as a "wide category of language exchange that includes translanguaging, multilingual artistic projects, political activism mediating across global movements, projects of renaming that symbolically territorialize public space, and the shifts in individual identity that are forms of self-translation" (Simon 2021, 16), then translation may become the focus of linguistic landscape research. In fact, linguistic landscapes have emerged as an area of study that has the potential to investigate both multilingualism and translation. According to Michael Cronin (2006), the city presents a space for translation because the multilingual and multi-ethnic space that is nowadays encountered in urban settings is first and foremost a translation space. As Sherry Simon writes: "Urban languages do not simply coexist: they connect, they enter into networks. This means that cities are not only multilingual – they are translational. Translation tells which languages count, how they occupy the territory and how they participate in the discussions of the public sphere" (Simon 2021, 15).

In 1997 the Canadian researchers Landry and Bourhis introduced the concept of linguistic landscape in the context of language planning and ethnolinguistic vitality. According to this definition, which captures the essence of linguistic landscapes, the term "refers to the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region" (Laundry and Bourhis 1997, 23). They further explain that "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government building combine to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region or urban agglomeration" (Laundry and Bourhis 1997, 25).

A public sign is described as "…a notice on public display that gives information or instruction in a written or symbolic form" (Backhaus 2007, 4). Researchers distinguish between top-down and bottom-up public signs, where top-down public signs refer to official signs placed by the government or related institutions, and the bottom-up signs refer to nonofficial signs put there by commercial enterprises or by private organizations or persons (Gorter 2006, 3). Private signs are created, designed, and placed by civilians or ordinary people and are usually billboards for shops, cafés, restaurants, or other similar service providers. Private signs tend to be a valuable lens into the socioeconomic, ethnolinguistic, and sociolinguistic situation of an area, because they are placed by the civilians of a certain place (Tankosić and Litzenberg 2021, 9). Public signs are placed by local or national governments and include road signs, place and street names, inscriptions on government buildings such as ministries, hospitals, universities, town halls, schools, metro stations, and public parks (Laundry and Bourhis 1997, 26). Public signs generally display the content and language in accordance to government expectations and/or regulations, while private signs tend to be more flexible when it comes to linguistic representations (Tankosić and Litzenberg 2021, 9).

In their study Landry and Bourhis investigated language use in public spaces in Quebec, Canada, and have interpreted their results with regard to language maintenance in a multilingual setting, connecting the linguistic landscape with the theoretical framework of ethnolinguistic vitality. They concluded that "the linguistic landscape is a sociolinguistic factor distinct from other types of language contacts in multilingual settings" (Landry and Bourhis, 1997, 45), and that areas with multilingual and multicultural linguistic landscape provide a good resource for measuring the ethnolinguistic vitality of language groups.

Two other researchers, Jasone Cenoz and Durk Gorter, used the linguistic landscape approach for the study of multilingualism and minority languages; they focused on "the use of the minority language (Basque or Frisian), the state language (Spanish or Dutch) and English as an international language on language signs" (Cenoz and Gorter 2006, 67). In their study they analysed over 975 pictures of language signs. Their findings pointed towards the dominance of the majority languages in public signs. But the results also showed the strong presence of minority languages in public signs, reflecting the wish to preserve them. This study also revealed the informative and symbolic nature of multilingual signage: not only were the signs in different languages used to indicate the language to be used in communication at shops and other businesses, they also reflected the relative power of the different languages (Cenoz and Gorter 2006, 78). For example, the use of Basque is not just informative, but it is also symbolic because it emphasizes feeling of Basque as a symbol of identity. This study confirms that a language can directly contribute to the positive social identity of ethnolinguistic groups (see also Bourhis 1997).

Israeli researchers (Ben-Rafael et al. 2006) used linguistic landscape research in combination with sociolinguistic approaches. Their research compared patterns of linguistic landscape in a number of Israeli cities and small towns, and in East Jerusalem. The study focused on the degree of visibility of private and public signs in the three languages: Hebrew, Arabic and English. Their findings suggest that linguistic landscapes are symbolic constructions of public space that are context-dependent. This means that the linguistic choice in signage is dependent on three different factors; *rational considerations* focusing on the attractiveness of a sign to the public, *presentations of self* aiming at expressing one's of identity through signs, and *power relations* which reflect sociopolitical forces and their relevant interests in signage.

And finally, Kaisa Koskinen (2012) studied linguistic landscapes from the perspective of translation studies. Koskinen analysed the presence of translation on public signage in Hervanta, Tampere, Finland. Koskinen observed 22 cases of translated signage, focusing not only on which signs are translated but also on how translations are produced in the increasingly multilingual town of Tampere. Koskinen also tested whether studying linguistic landscapes from a translation studies perspective would be possible. She concluded that even a small amount of data (22 cases) could provide diverse material to work with, and that in the case of Hervanta, the most multicultural and multilingual area within the City of Tampere, translational assimilation is practiced by using Finnish side by side with the other languages in signage and thus "supporting the immigrants' languages of origin without excluding the speakers of the dominant language" (Koskinen 2012, 90).

Linguistic landscape research has also been done in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first study focused on the city of Mostar, where the linguistic landscape was studied in order to find out to which extent it reflected the languages spoken by the speech community of this city. Grbavac (2013) concluded that "linguistic landscape in Mostar has its specific traits influenced by ethnolinguistic composition, geographical distribution, power relations, prestige, symbolic value, vitality and literacy" (Grbavac 2013, 501). More research in the field of linguistic landscapes was conducted in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, and it focused on the presence of Bosnian, Serbian and English language on public signs in the main streets of these two cities. Lay (2015) hypothesized that the linguistic majority would match the ethnic majority in both cities, and that English would appear frequently in advertisements. The results showed that English is the second-most ubiquitous language in both streets, after Bosnian, and that Serbian was rarely found in signage in either street.

The linguistic landscapes research in Bosnia and Herzegovina was thus conducted in the capital of Sarajevo and bigger cities like Mostar and Banja Luka. In this article, however, we report on research conducted in a smaller urban community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If the previous studies have shown that the capital and bigger cities do have traces of multilingualism and translation in the public signage, a question arises as to whether the size of a settlement or the community impacts the multilingualism present in public signage. In big cities multilingualism may be taken for granted, and it is less known whether the same can be expected in small towns. This article will therefore address the following questions: What is the linguistic landscape of a smaller town? Is it monolingual or do traces of multilingualism and translation appear in its public signs? And if so, in what form? The study reported in this article will shed light on the presence of multilingualism and translation in a micro context within the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Multilingualism is both an individual and a social phenomenon. As Cenoz puts it: "It can be considered as an ability of an individual, or it can refer to the use of languages in society" (Cenoz 2013, 5). In this study I am interested in the latter, in particular in the contexts, circumstances, order, manner and routines of the use of different languages in a smaller urban centre in Bosna and Herzegovina. For the purposes of this paper, only those instances of multilingualism that manifest themselves as the presence of written content in different languages in the same environmental context were investigated.

2. Research design

The focus of this research was to detect multilingualism and translation in public signs in the town of Sanski Most in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sanski Most is located in the north-western part of Bosnia and Herzegovina and about 300 kilometres north-west from the capital Sarajevo. This place is known for its natural sites, such as caves and waterfalls, and the fact that it is one of the few places lying on nine rivers. The town has its own a local government, a hospital, local television and radio station, non-governmental organizations, sports clubs (football, handball, judo), seven primary schools and four secondary schools, two kindergartens, multiple supermarkets, a senior citizens retirement homes and similar. However, due to its relatively small size Sanski Most does not have public transport, universities, theatres or museums. As such it could be described as a typical small town in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Figure 1. Bosnia and Herzegovina map indicating the position of Sanski Most.[1]

As with other settlements in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sanski Most has three official languages that are defined in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ustav Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine), which states the following in Amendment 29:

(1) The official languages of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are: Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. Official alphabets are Latin and Cyrillic alphabet.

(2) Other languages can be used as a means of communication and teaching.[2]

The official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina are observed as one language and this research does not focus on the presence of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian languages separately, but on the presence of other/additional languages in the area.

1 Source of the image - Federalni Hidrometeorološki Zavod Bosne i Hercegovine. Sanski Most was marked on the image by the author of the article.

2 Translation by the author of the article.

2.1 Research questions

The study aimed to shed light on the presence of multilingualism and translation in a micro context and answer the following three research questions.

1. What languages are displayed in the public signage of Sanski Most?
2. To what degree is multilingualism present in the public signage in Sanski Most?
3. To what extent are public signs translated in Sanski Most?

2.2 Methodology

The methodology used in the research reported in this article follows the one developed by Koskinen (2012) that was applied in her studies of the linguistic landscape of Hervanta. The data was gathered with field work and then analysed focusing on linguistic and translational features. Collecting photos of public signage was conducted by walking around with a camera and notebook.

The area covered in the field work was the narrow centre of the town, covering Prijedorska Street (the main street), one part of 17. Viteške krajiške brigade Street, the squares Trg Oslobodilaca and Trg Ljiljana (the areas are indicated in Figure 2). This area was selected for the study because it represents the very heart of the town, where most of the coffee shops and stores are located. It is also the part of the town most often visited by foreigners.

Sanski Most was observed during the summer and autumn of 2022. The summer season was chosen because this is the period when a lot of people visit the town, not only tourists but also people who come from this town but now live abroad (mostly in western Europe) and return for a vacation. In the summer the town thus has thousands more inhabitants than in other seasons, and one can hear people speaking German, Swedish, French, Slovenian, English, Danish, Dutch and other languages, and often also code switching between two languages.

A total of 402 signs were photographed for the purposes of this article. All monolingual and bi/multilingual signs were included systematically. If the same word or phrase appeared more than once I counted each appearance as a separate sign. The next step was to select the signs for the analysis. The following public signs were removed from the analysis:

- signs which were misspelled, because including misspelled signs would add another layer to the research covering the number of misspelled signage and the errors occurring in the displayed content, and that was not the focus of this article,

- signs that contained a proper noun (e.g., a first or second name),
- signs which are on display only for a short period of time (e.g., a poster for some event),
- signs only containing information about the store owners (such as phone numbers, address, web address),
- signs that only contained a brand name (however, signs that contained a brand name and additional text whether monolingual or bi/multilingual were taken into account),
- signs that contained only letters (e.g., M, E, F).

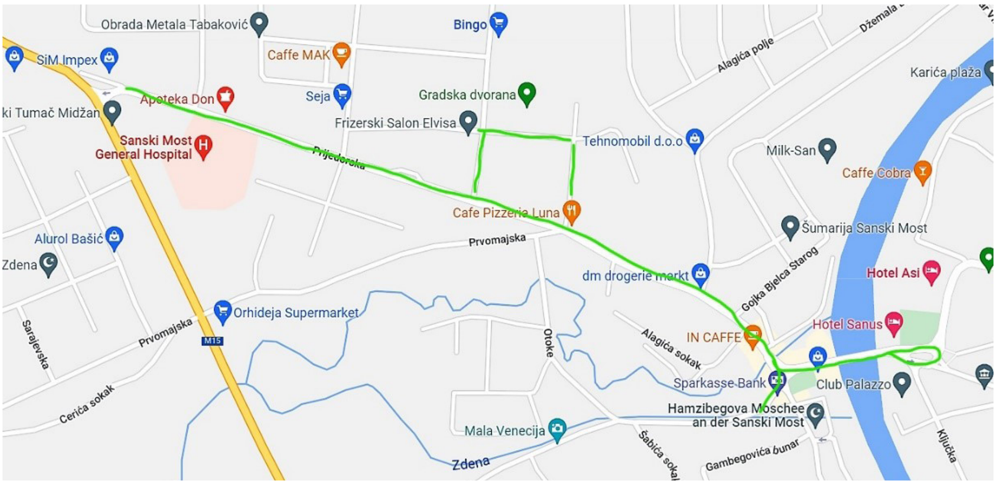

Figure 2. Map of Sanski Most indicating the streets observed for the purpose of this article.[3]

After this initial selection, I ended up with 241 public signs that were further analysed. My primary focus was the analysis of the written content, and I did not attempt to detect the linguistic background or discover the origins of the signage.

The occurrences of different languages were counted and the types of language pairs or combinations appearing on the signs were analysed.

3. Results

Among the 241 signs that were analysed, there were 185 monolingual signs and 56 bi/multilingual signs. Monolingual signs are those that display written content in one

3 Source of the image: https://www.google.com/maps/place/Sanski+Most,+Bosnia+and+Herzegovina/.

language. Bilingual and multilingual signs are those that displayed written content in more than one language. I have also taken into account those signs which may have contained only one word in some other language, for example, *Express izrada ključeva* (*express* belonging to English and *izrada ključeva* to B/C/S[4] [key manufacturing]). Such signs were categorized as bilingual or multilingual.

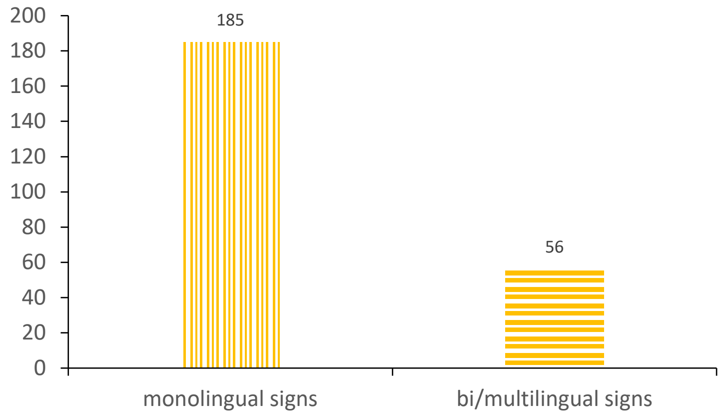

Figure 3. Number of signs.

Bi/multilingual signs were further analysed. There were 46 bilingual signs (signs displaying content in two different languages) and 10 multilingual signs (signs displaying content in three or more different languages).

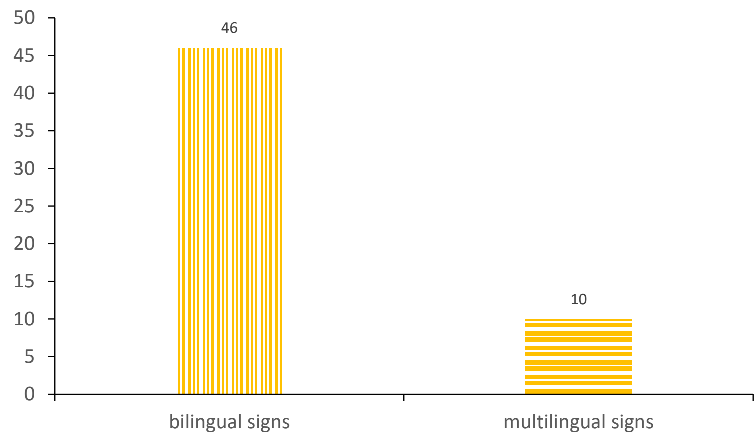

Figure 4. Bi/multilingual signs.

4 This abbreviation stands for Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and will be used throughout the article.

Out of the 56 bilingual and multilingual signs only 13 signs contained a translation. The complete breakdown of the signs in percentage terms is shown in Figure 5.

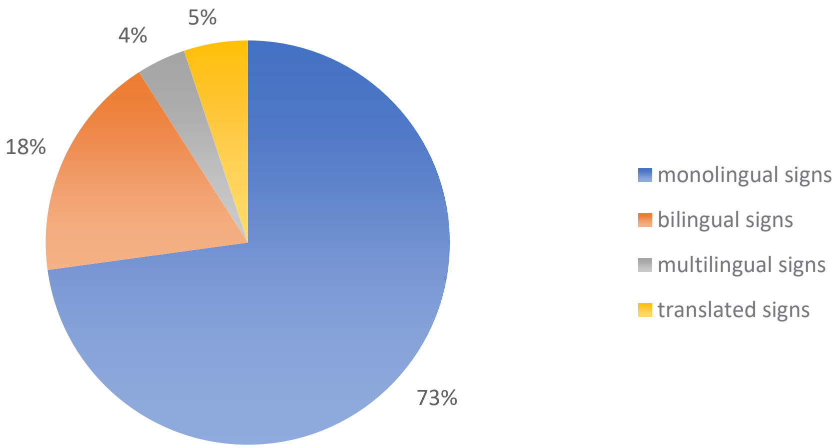

Figure 5. Breakdown of the signs in percentage terms.

4. Analysis

4.1 Presence of multilingualism

The data gathered and analysed show that there are various languages present in public signs in Sanski Most. The following 14 languages were identified: Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, German, French, Italian, Arabic, Turkish, Latin, Dutch, Spanish, Slovenian, Danish, Albanian, and Chinese. The use of these languages differs in monolingual and bi/multilingual signs.

4.1.1 Monolingual signs

The 185 monolingual signs were written in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, French, Arabic, Italian and German. The signs in B/C/S prevail (146, see Figure 8), the second most popular language is English (33, see Figure 7), while signs in other languages are rare – French (2), Arabic (2), Italian (1) and German (1) (see Figure 6).

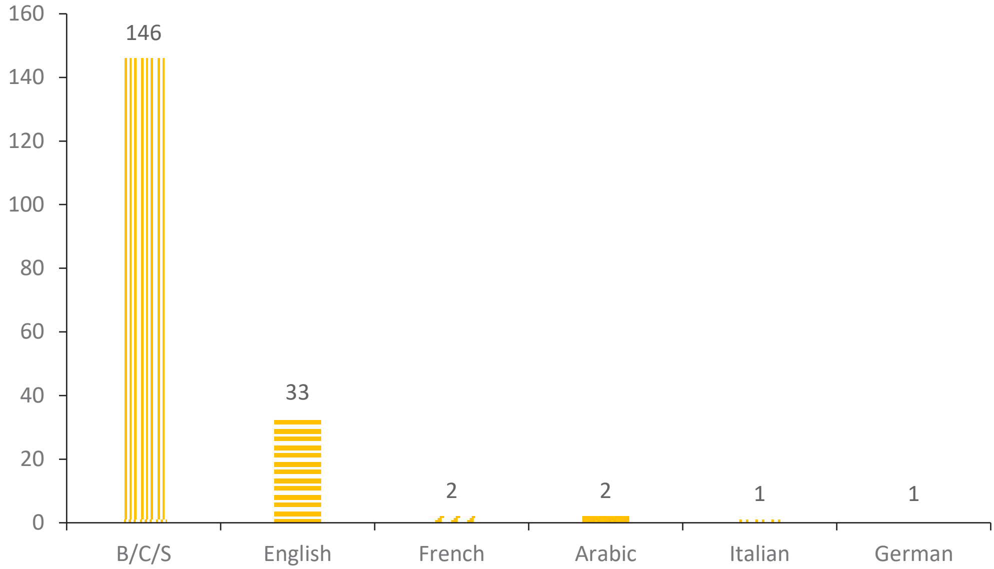

Figure 6. Languages of monolingual signs.

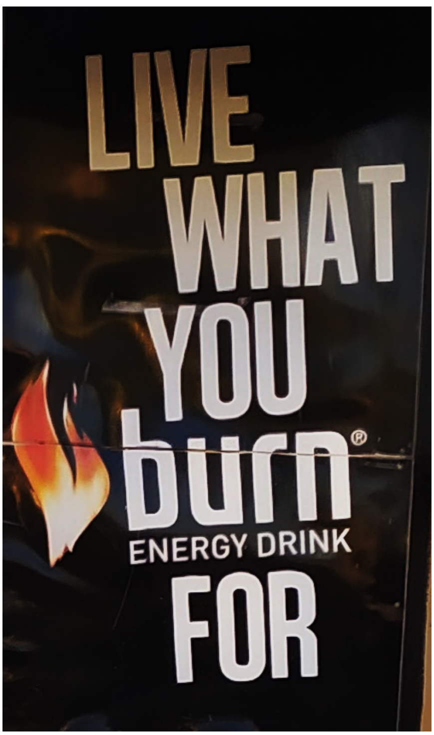

Figure 7. A random monolingual sign in English.

Figure 8. The sign of the public library in official languages.

4.1.2 Bilingual signs

The 46 bilingual signs were written in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, German, French, Italian, Turkish, Latin, Spanish, Slovenian, Danish. The language combinations were B/C/S & English (27) (see Figure 11), B/C/S & Latin (4), B/C/S & German (3), B/C/S & French (2), B/C/S & Italian (1) (see Figure 10), B/C/S & Spanish (1), B/C/S & Danish (1), B/C/S & Turkish (1), English & French (4), English & Italian (1), English & Dutch (1). The combination of the official languages and English language is the most popular, while other language combinations are much rarer (see Figure 9).

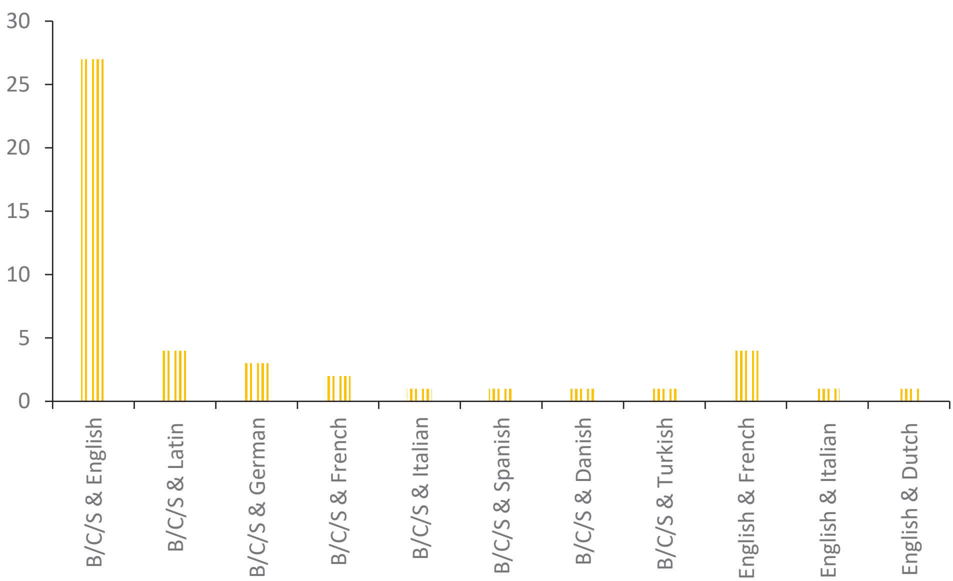

Figure 9. Language pairs in bilingual signs.

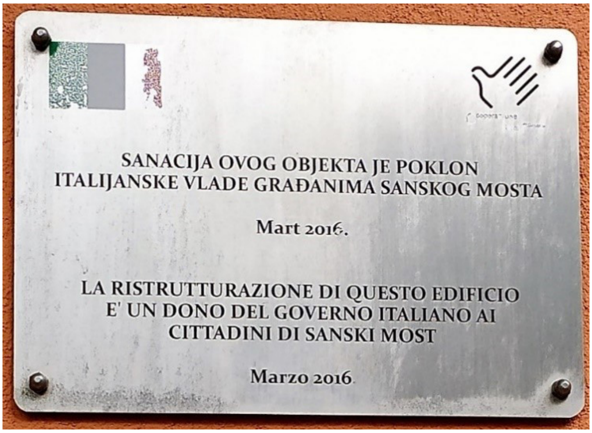

Figure 10. A bilingual sign in B/C/S and Italian.

Figure 11. A bilingual sign in B/C/S and English.

4.1.3 Multilingual signs

There were only 10 multilingual signs in the corpus, which were written in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, German, French, Italian, Turkish, Spanish, Slovenian, Albanian, Chinese. The language combinations were B/C/S – English – German (3), Italian – B/C/S – English (1), German – B/C/S – English – Turkish (1), B/C/S – Albanian – German – English – Italian – Chinese (1) (see Figure 13), B/C/S – Slovenian – English – German – Italian (1), French – English – Spanish (1), French – English – B/C/S (1), Slovenian – English – German (1) (see Figure 12). The most frequent combination was B/C/S, English and German, which appeared in three signs, while the other combinations appeared only once each (see Figure 12).

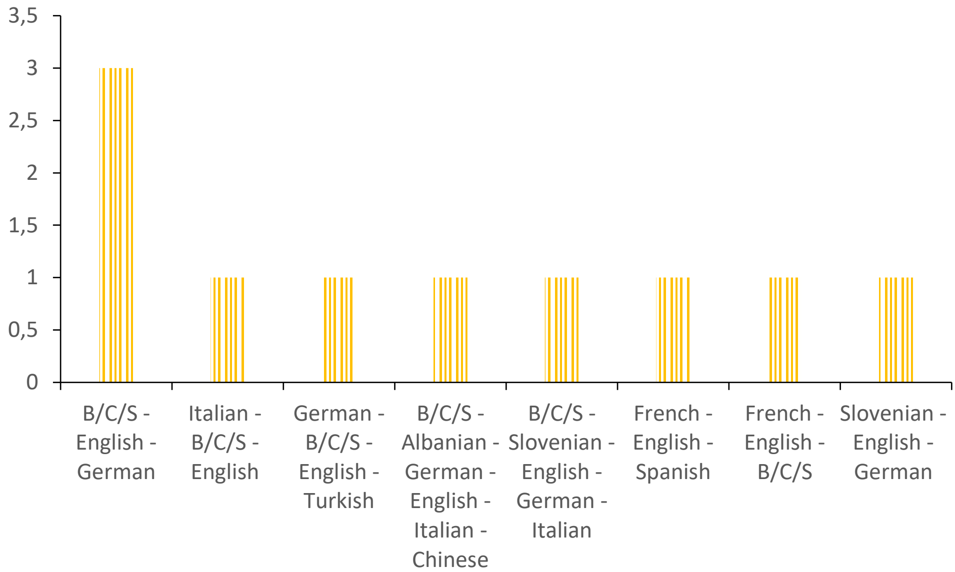

Figure 12. Language pairs of multilingual signs.

Figure 13. A multilingual sign.

Figure 14. A multilingual sign in German, B/C/S and English.

The results presented in the figures above give a clear answer on what languages are visible in the signs on these streets in Sanski Most. It can be seen that 185 signs were monolingual, 46 were bilingual and 10 were multilingual. Even though some languages appear only once or twice they still form a part of this linguistic landscape. The languages identified in the public signs show the linguistic diversity of signage in this town, but despite this linguistic variety the most frequently found languages on public signs are the official languages, with more than half (60%) of the signs written in B/C/S.

The results also show that there is a presence of both bilingual and multilingual signs in the center of Sanski Most, although they are less frequent (23%) than monolingual ones (77%).

4.2 Presence of translation

Translation was detected in the analysed public signs, although it was rare, with only 13 examples (5.39%).

Using the same approach as Koskinen (2012), the source and target languages of the text in the public signs were determined by the visual appearance of the sign. The language appearing first on the sign was thus considered to be the source language. Moreover, if the words on the sign were vertically aligned rather than horizontally, then the language on the left was considered to be the source language.

In the 13 signs that had translated content, 32 cases of translation were identified. If the same content was translated into multiple languages, every translation was counted separately. For example, if the sign displayed the following content:

B/C/S: *Mjenjačnica* → English: *Exchange office* → German: *Wechselstube*,

and it was duplicated or appeared three times, it was counted as three separate translations and not just as one. And if we take the same example, it was considered that B/C/S is translated into English and German, not that B/C/S is translated into English and then English into German.

In most cases the source language was B/C/S and the written content was translated into different languages. Two public signs had German as the source, in one instance English was the source language translated into B/C/S, and in one instance Slovenian was the source language translated into English and German. All other translations were from B/C/S into different languages, with English (13) and German (4) being most frequent (see Table 1 and Figure 15).

Table 1. Number of translations from source to target language.

Source language	Target language	Number of translations
B/C/S	English	13
B/C/S	German	4
B/C/S	Italian	3
B/C/S	Turkish	1
B/C/S	Albanian	1
B/C/S	Chinese	1
B/C/S	Slovenian	1
English	B/C/S	1
German	B/C/S	2
German	English	2
German	Turkish	1
Slovenian	English	1
Slovenian	German	1

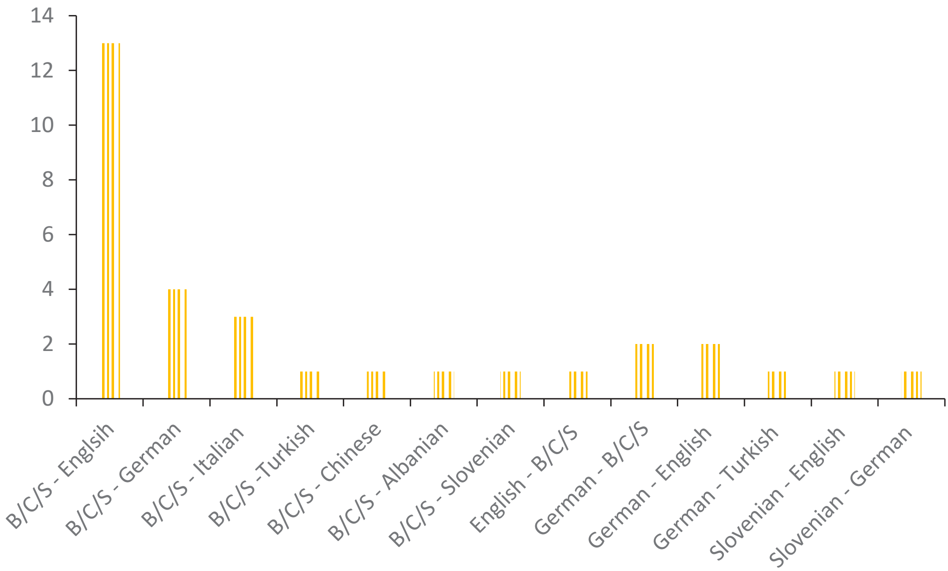

Figure 15. Translations from source to target language.

Translation is visible in both bilingual and multilingual signs where the same information is displayed in two or more languages in addition to the official ones. There are instances of full sentence translations, as can be seen in Figures 16 and 17, but most of the translations were just single word translations, as shown in Figure 19.

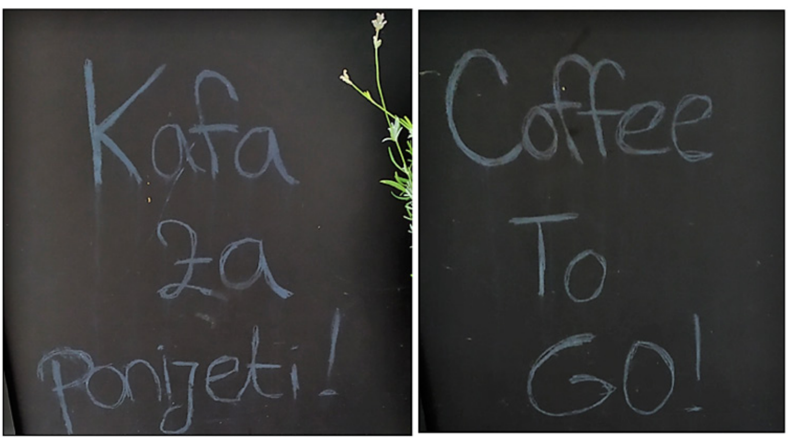

Figure 16. Translation from B/C/S into English.

Figure 17. A bilingual sign containing translation from B/C/S into Turkish.

Figure 18. A sign displaying translation from B/C/S into English and German language and translation from B/C/S into English.

Figure 19. Translation of a single word from Slovene into English and German.

The translations on the signs were usually just single word translations similar to the translations in Figures 13, 14 and 19. Out of the 13 signs only three (i.e., 1.24% of all the analysed signs) contained fully translated sentences.

When we reflect on the translations seen in Sanski Most, it is also important to mention that the signs of local institutions such as the hospital or one of the buildings of the local government or a post office department located in the centre of the town did not show any translated public signs. The sign of the tourism office (see Figure 18) did provide partial translations in relation to some important phone numbers, but the actual buildings had no bilingual or multilingual signs.

The translations in public signs not only have informative purposes, but also reveal a relationship between communities, as is the case with translations into Italian and Turkish (see Figures 10 and 17), where the written content shows the friendly and supportive relations between these two countries.

The results of my study show that even in smaller urban communities, such as Sanski Most, there is a certain amount of multilingualism present in public signs, although it is not very common. The town is not limited to the use of the official languages, and it is not completely monolingual: different languages do find their ways into the everyday lives of those who live in Sanski Most, and people are exposed to them.

5. Conclusion

In this research I studied the presence of multilingualism and translation in signage in the town of Sanski Most in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a total of 241 images of public signs being analysed.

The results showed that multilingualism and translation were both found in signage in Sanski Most, although monolingual signs in the official languages still dominated. While the majority of the signage was monolingual, with B/C/S prevailing, other foreign languages were also found, with English unsurprisingly being the most frequent among them. Unexpectedly, despite the presence of text in different languages, translated signs were a small minority and even when text was being translated, it was mainly single words or phrases.

In the future other parts of the town could also be studied, and an attempt should be made to discover for whom the translations were intended, why some signs had foreign languages instead of the official languages placed first on the signs, whether the foreign language was used just for decorative reasons, and the reasons why some languages were chosen over others. Moreover, misspelled signs could also be included and studied further with the aim of detecting the types of errors that appear, which was not done in this article since the misspelled signs were removed from the data. Finally, it would be useful to learn why the signs of important institutions in this area, such as the post office, hospital or local government buildings, were not translated.

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Expectations of qualified deaf interpreters (DIs): How do hearing interpreters feel about DIs' contribution to the market?

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ABSTRACT

Qualified deaf interpreters (DIs) are starting to enter the sign language interpreting market in Norway. This poses a challenge for both the interpreter profession and interpreting agencies, which have thus far provided work for hearing interpreters offering interpreting services *for* deaf individuals, not *by* them. This explorative study shows that more information is needed regarding the way in which DIs influence the interpreting market. At the same time, hearing interpreters see opportunities for their own professional development when collaborating with DIs, specifically for the improvement of their own linguistic and cultural competences.

Keywords: sign language interpreting, profession, interpreter agencies, qualified hearing interpreters, qualified deaf interpreters

Pričakovanja kvalificiranih gluhih tolmačev: kakšno je mnenje slišečih tolmačev o prispevku gluhih tolmačev na trgu?

IZVLEČEK

Kvalificirani gluhi tolmači na Norveškem začenjajo vstopati na tolmaški trg. To predstavlja izziv tako za poklic tolmača kot za tolmaške agencije, ki so doslej zagotavljale delo le slišečim tolmačem za gluhe posameznike, ne pa tudi delo gluhim tolmačem. V tej pilotni študiji se pokaže, da so potrebne dodatne informacije o tem, kako gluhi tolmači vplivajo na tolmaški trg. Hkrati slišeči tolmači pri sodelovanju z gluhimi tolmači vidijo priložnosti za lastno poklicno napredovanje, zlasti pri izboljševanju lastnih jezikovnih in kulturnih kompetenc.

Ključne besede: tolmačenje za gluhe, poklic, tolmaške agencije, kvalificirani slišeči tolmači, kvalificirani gluhi tolmači

1. Introduction

Sign language interpreting professionals (referred to in this paper as sign language interpreters, SLIs) ensure that deaf individuals in Norway can exercise their right to request and receive interpreting services.

Education and training at a certain level are an essential part of every definition of a profession (see for example Abbott 1988). However, the manner and level of education for SLIs differ in different countries. In Sweden, for example, there are two different paths to becoming an SLI, either by attending university and acquiring a bachelor's degree or through vocational training (De Wit 2020). However, in Norway there is only one way to become a qualified SLI. Since 2002, a candidate needs to acquire a bachelor's degree from one of the three educational institutions offering SLI programmes (Haualand 2018). Initially these programmes all catered for hearing students and were designed to meet the demands now administrated by the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV). NAV is the sole provider of sign language interpreting services, which are divided into 14 agencies across the country. According to NAV's criteria, the SLIs should possess adequate auditory faculty to be able to work for them as qualified interpreters. Hence, the career of a qualified interpreter has not been made available for deaf individuals, regardless of the fact that they have always interpreted within the deaf community (Sander 1993), and that NAV would sometimes use their services as language brokers or relay interpreters.

However, since 2016 due to changes in the educational legislation all Norwegian SLI programmes have also been open for deaf students (Skaten, Urdal and Tiselius 2020). Still, the entrance of qualified deaf interpreters (DIs) on the market was challenged by those who control access to the market – NAV, the related work organization (Haualand 2018), and the hearing interpreters working for NAV. Hearing interpreters hold a powerful position because they are qualified SLIs and thus constitute the interpreter profession. They also may become members of the professional organization, Tolkene i Akademikerforbundet (TiA), which requires formal interpreter education as do NAV's hiring policies. Hence, both hearing interpreters and NAV could be regarded as gatekeepers to the market, now facing a paradigm shift.

The aim of this study was to explore how the gatekeepers are dealing with this new situation. The focus is specifically on the hearing interpreters', as well as the expectations of NAV agency staff (who may also be interpreters themselves) which might impact DIs' access to the market. The main research question of this study is therefore the following: What are the expectations of qualified hearing interpreters regarding the new qualified deaf interpreters entering the market?

The participants of this study were hearing interpreters rather than DIs. By addressing this particular group of interpreters, this study also intended to raise awareness among hearing interpreters by asking them to reflect upon the questions posed to them. This in turn might lead to further discussions on how hearing interpreters working for NAV and members of the interpreting profession think about opening the profession and the market to new members: qualified DIs.

The authors of this article are both hearing interpreters and teach deaf and hearing interpreting students on the same undergraduate degree programme. As "seeing is inseparable from the perspective" (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 9), we acknowledge the fact that our privileged position as hearing members of the SLI community might have biased the questions asked. Furthermore, this might have influenced how we perceived, through our analysis, the expectations the hearing interpreters have of the DIs. Nevertheless, we believe that our proximity to the deaf community, as well as being members of the profession, might have also been beneficial for understanding the processes inherent to the interpreter profession (cf. Bourdieu 2000, 4).

When this article was written, there were no DIs employed at interpreter agencies in Norway, and few hearing interpreters have had experience collaborating with DIs.

2. Background

This section will elaborate on the term *deaf interpreters* and define more in detail who the gatekeepers of the market are.

2.1 Deaf interpreters

There are several researchers that have described what constitutes a DI (see for example Forestal 2011; Adam et al. 2014; Boudreault 2005; Tester 2018). According to Tester (2018, 4), "deaf interpreters are individuals who work as interpreters and are also deaf themselves". The degree of professionalism is not evident in this definition, but Tester (2018, 4) argues that "they are an emerging sector of specialized professionals in the field of sign language interpreting". Our observation shows that this is not yet the case in Norway.

Nevertheless, deaf bilinguals have, for many years, played a role as language brokers within the Norwegian deaf community, a tradition that is also well-documented in other countries (Bauman 2008; Stone 2005). Most of the Norwegian scholarly literature focuses on how deaf individuals have helped hearing interpreters interpreting for deaf immigrants (see for example Olsen 2019; Olsen, Skaten and Urdal, 2018). Interpreters with sign language as their L1 and the experience of being deaf share a sameness with the deaf individuals they are interpreting for. Boudreault (2005, 335) recognizes this as a foundation for efficient communication and for being able to establish a relationship of trust between themselves as professionals and the deaf primary participant. Stone (2005) further argues that DIs hold both a cultural and linguistic competence. This means that they can perceive nuances in the signed language more easily, in the same way that hearing interpreters can perceive nuances in the spoken language (Adam et al. 2014). According to Stone (2005), DIs use their visual competence alongside their inherent understanding of the deaf culture to translate utterances, which makes comprehension easier for deaf individuals.

The Norwegian Association of the Deaf (NDF) asserts that there is a need for the skills that DIs can bring to the market (2015). In addition to this, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' report on the field of sign language interpreting (Agenda Kaupang 2016, 34) states that experience indicates that interpreters who are deaf themselves have better prerequisites for interpreting for deaf individuals, who may have poorly developed Norwegian Sign Language skills.

2.2 The gatekeepers

In this article, we define the work organization, that is the body covering the interpreting agencies (NAV) and the interpreter profession itself, as the two main gatekeepers of the sign-language interpreting market.

Hearing interpreters founded their own professional organization (today the TiA) in 1978. With this, the interpreters could make demands on behalf of the profession (cf. Abbott 1988). The codes of professional ethics for interpreters were then developed, which, as of today, are based on the core principles of fidelity and impartiality (cf. Skaaden 2019). The professional organization claims the area of jurisdiction for the interpreters by defining the tasks of the profession and identifying the individuals who can perform these tasks. The admission to TiA is regulated. To become a member, DIs and hearing interpreters need to be qualified. For SLIs that means that a member has to have a bachelor's degree in SLI in Norway.

Parson (1978) claims that professional practitioners work in collaboration in order to achieve their goals in line with the social mandate they fulfil. In this context, the interpreters' work revolves around offering interpreter services at high standards. Abbott (1988) emphasizes that professions will always change, and that external and internal forces will seek to open or close the jurisdiction of a profession. In this study, these transformative forces are identified as the new professionals, the DIs, who are seeking to enter and expand the profession.

The professional organization in Norway (TiA) together with the work organization (NAV) holds the key to the market. In Norway, NAV is the sole provider of interpreting services, and thus essentially has full control over such services in the country (Haualand 2018).

3. Previous research

In Norway the collaboration between DIs and hearing interpreters is not well documented, which motivated an exploration of the qualified hearing interpreters' expectations for the newly qualified DIs.

In Europe, DIs and hearing interpreters were given equal status in 2017 when the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsli) passed the resolution "The Inclusive Notion of Sign Language Interpreters/Translators" (European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters 2017). This resolution emphasizes that all sign language interpreters should be given access to education, equal status, and the same working conditions, and should be treated equally, regardless of their ability to hear. However, the historic discrimination against deaf individuals is well documented. Humphries applies the term "audism" to describe the hearing privilege, a "notion that one is superior based on one's ability to hear or behave in the manner of one who hears" (1977, 12). Audism is characterized by three dimensions of oppression: the individual, the institutional (structural forms of oppression) and the metaphysical (being human is linked to being able to speak) (Bauman 2004). A contrast to audism is deaf praxis, in which the strengths of the deaf community's language, culture and identity is emphasized (Eckert 2010). From this perspective, the competences of deaf individuals are accentuated. As sign language interpreters, deaf individuals have a linguistic and cultural competence that is advantageous. However, several studies underline that education is required to become a qualified sign language interpreter (De Meulder and Heyerick 2013; Forestal 2011; Stone 2013; Heyerick 2021).

O'Connell and Lynch (2020) found that DIs see themselves as autonomous professionals based on their expert knowledge. However, they struggle with the perception of themselves as interpreters and experience a feeling of exclusion by hearing interpreters. Brück and Shaumberger's (2014) findings suggest that it is important for the development of the DI profession to raise the awareness of DIs' skills and services amongst hearing interpreters, as well as among deaf and hearing members of the public. A study commissioned by the Danish Association of the Deaf (Danske Døves Landsforbund 2015) showed that groups who otherwise rarely use interpreters (such as deaf immigrants, older individuals, deafblind individuals and deaf individuals with other disabilities) requested the services more often when they were able to use DIs. On the other hand, hearing interpreters who participated in the study stated that DIs did not contribute to a better understanding between the parties, while the DIs and the deaf primary participants had the opposite experience.

Stone and Isari's (2018) investigation of court interpreters showed that DIs experienced that some hearing interpreters would distance themselves from them, which then created an impression of a kind of first- and second-class hierarchy of interpreters. The lack of support from hearing interpreters leads to mistrust within the interpreter team, and creates a distinction between an *us* (hearing interpreters) and *them* (DIs). However, according to Tester (2018), the majority of hearing court interpreters reported that they had good experiences when working with trained DIs. This study shows that hearing interpreters mainly choose to work with DIs when the deaf primary participant does not have sufficient sign language skills, is an immigrant, and/or has cognitive challenges.

DIs and ethics in relation to impartiality and trust have also been discussed in the literature. The code of ethics is important for qualified interpreters (Stone 2005), and questions have been raised regarding DIs interpreting for members of the same minority group that they are a part of (i.e. the deaf community). Some deaf individuals have expressed that they fear DIs will be indiscrete (Talks and Skjoldan 2018), even though as professional interpreters they must follow the code of ethics. Stone (2005) proposes that deaf individuals may prefer interpreters who are not members of the deaf community. Still, other studies show that they prefer interpreters they know (well) (Danske Døves Landsforbund 2015).

The reception of DIs was investigated in a study by Skaten, Urdal and Tiselius (2020). They explored DIs' experiences on a joint sign language interpreting programme with hearing students, and how they established themselves as qualified DIs in Finland. The DIs they interviewed described the transformation from not being recognized as interpreters to then becoming qualified interpreters accepted by both hearing interpreters and members of the deaf community.

4. Methodology

A social constructionist approach (Burr 2003) was adopted to investigate the expectations that the market's gatekeepers held towards DIs. The aim was to gain an insight into the historic and culturally specific knowledge that existed about the topic (cf. Burr 2003), and thus an explorative study was conducted. The choice of a social constructionist framework was informed by the authors' aim to address a particular population, namely members of the interpreter profession and the leaders and administrators of the interpreter agencies. The data collection was carried out through a structured online questionnaire that was distributed to this population (cf. Bryman 2012). Information about the project was sent out to all the 14 national SLI agencies and they in turn agreed to forward the information and the questionnaire to their employees and all other interpreters with whom they have contracts. The participants were informed that answering the questionnaire would be anonymous, non-traceable and that they could withdraw their consent at any time.

In total, 144 people answered the questionnaire. It is difficult to estimate the exact percentage of the total population this number represents, given the fact that Norway does not have a body of registered SLI interpreters. Nevertheless, we believe that answers of 144 respondents provide a basis for identifying certain trends. All of the respondents have relevant experience in the field, ranging from half a year to 34 years.

The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions. The questions enquired about the participants' professional background ("What is your background/experience?") and their knowledge and experience with DIs ("What do you know about DIs?" and "Have you collaborated with DIs (with or without education)?"). Questions were also asked in order to gather answers regarding the participants' expectations and the limitations with regard to DIs entering the market, related to assignments ("If you had to administer assignments, can you mention which one you would assign to DIs") and to the market ("Can you name any limitations (economical, organizational or others) that would impact the DIs' access to work?" and "Do you see any possibilities for DIs to add something to the market and the profession? If yes, what might that be?"). Finally, the questionnaire allowed for the participants to add any other comments they might have on the subject. To ensure the validity of the study (cf. Bryman 2012), two pilot studies on a smaller sample of the target group were conducted. After having received constructive feedback, minor adjustments were made. The project was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (825147).

A reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019) approach was applied to identify and report on themes within the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2019, 594) the themes are "creative and interpretive stories about the data, produced at the intersection of the researcher's theoretical assumptions, their analytic resources and skill, and the data themselves". After familiarizing themselves with the data, the authors coded interesting features such as hearing interpreters' expectations and conceptions related to the possibilities and limitations of DIs, and searched for themes. The themes revolved around how hearing interpreters describe DIs and how they describe themselves, the characteristics of an interpreter, the organization of interpreting services involving both hearing interpreters and DIs, and what it takes to include DIs in the existing profession and the market.

A researcher is never a neutral observer (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009), and in this process, our privileged positions (cf. Bauman 2004) as hearing interpreters might have resulted in a bias when identifying the themes, and might have influenced our understanding of the participants' answers and our definition of 'Deaf Interpreter'.

Furthermore, we understand that as interpreter educators, our roles may have also influenced the participants' readiness to take part in the study, as well as their answers in one way or another. With this in mind, we have attempted to reduce this bias by reviewing the themes several times and, in the end, named them as follows: "*We – the qualified interpreters*", "*They – the clients, from the deaf community*", "*Insiders of the profession*", "*The paradox in the service provision*" and "*The gate to the market*".

Three dimensions of audism (Bauman 2004) offer a framework for the analyses. Both the institutional and individual dimensions of oppression proved fruitful for understanding the limitations that DIs encounter in the market. The three dimensions allowed us also to identify and discus the discriminatory practices that construct barriers. However, neither of these dimensions of audism provide a useful tool for identifying the possibilities in the same way. Hence, rather than adopting the whole framework for audism, we have applied selected notions of it.

By asking questions that might encourage the participants to reflect on their own practices and professional development, the study also borrows certain traits from action research (cf. Carr and Kemmis 2003). The focus was on initiating a process of opening the interpreting profession and the market for DIs.

All citations from the participants' responses have been translated from Norwegian into English by the authors, and the italicization has been inserted by the authors to emphasize the use of certain terms by the participants.

5. Results and discussion

The results of the study on hearing interpreters' expectations of DIs show that there is a need for more information on how qualified DIs will impact the profession of SLIs. Although some of the participants have worked with DIs without formal or informal interpreter training, the possibility of working with DIs on equal ground is still new to them all. Some resistance to accepting DIs as equal professionals can be identified, which may be an expression of hearing interpreters' privileged professional position. However, the most prominent finding is that DIs are welcomed to the market and the profession because they are regarded as having valuable sign language proficiency and cultural capital to offer.

5.1 We – the qualified interpreters

Qualified DIs are still new to the market in Norway, and from the participants' responses a view of *us* and *them* can be extracted; "we" the qualified interpreters and "them" the deaf relay interpreters. As one participant stated:

> Now that we are becoming a global society, I think relay interpreters might contribute a lot to the market and to the interpreter colleagues (…) I think there will be an increasing need for relay interpreters in the future and *they* have so much to contribute.

Another participant articulated a rather inconsistent view on the need for relay interpreters:

> If there is need for a relay interpreter, it should not be questioned as to whether *they* are to be put on such assignments or not. If a hearing interpreter feels that he or she has the experience it takes to interpret for immigrants on his/her own, and they have the time it takes, it could be up to the [hearing] interpreter to decide.

As there was only one trained DI in Norway at the time this study was conducted, most of the participants' experiences stemmed from working with DIs who did not have an interpreter educational background. This might explain the division made between *us* and *them*.

In the quote above, the participant argues that the hearing interpreters should decide the need for a DI. In the end, however, the power to decide the need for assigning a DI lies with the interpreter agencies. Still, this quote could be understood as evidence of the privilege the hearing interpreters have (cf. Humphries 1977). On the other hand, the participants ascribe DIs the ability to take "the responsibility to explain", which can be understood as linguistic expansion, when needed. This corroborates with the findings of Olsen, Skaten and Urdal (2018), that DIs are ascribed room for conducting their task in a manner hearing interpreters do not consider appropriate for themselves as qualified interpreters. If by this they mean something beyond linguistic expansion, it would challenge the scope of the interpreters' responsibility (cf. Skaaden 2019) as well as the definition of the professions' "special skills" (Abbott 1988, 7).

The results suggest that the perception of hearing interpreters on DIs' status might change with the introduction of educated DIs entering the market. Given their new status, one participant contemplated that: "Maybe [then] there will be no *us/them*". It might be assumed that the term *relay interpreter* will no longer be relevant once deaf and hearing interpreters are able to work on equal terms as qualified. However, the participants did point out several challenges to this change, with professional ethics being one of them. Even though research shows that qualified deaf interpreters would adhere to the same ethics as their hearing colleagues, their professional conduct might be different (cf. Skaten, Urdal, and Tiselius 2020, 22). This ambiguity is reflected in the participants narratives regarding their expectation of DIs. Hearing interpreters might expect the reflection of deaf praxis (cf. Eckert 2010) in DIs' performance, including DIs taking more responsibility for the deaf primary participants in the mediated communication (cf. Skaten, Urdal, and Tiselius 2020). The concept of sameness (Boudreault 2005) combined with the DIs' linguistic competence provides the DI with a different kind of power, as acknowledged by the study participants. However, the DIs' focusing on the deaf party in the mediation might be seen as colliding with the code of ethics, in particular its principle of impartiality (Skaaden 2019; Tolkene i Akademikerforbundet 2020).

On the other hand, it could be argued that "best practice" can be achieved in a team with a DI and a hearing interpreter (Mathers 2009, 6), where the DI is focusing on the deaf party to make the interpretation more "accurate, and both linguistically and culturally more accessible to all parties involved" (Tester 2018, 17). By employing this combined approach, society's responsibility for ensuring deaf individuals' rights could be fulfilled.

5.2 They – the clients, from the deaf community

Deaf people have an individual right to access interpreting services, and are therefore in Norway identified as clients of this welfare service. The concept of "client" therefore appears frequently in discourses surrounding both the interpreter and welfare services.

The division between interpreters and their clients constitutes another, clear distinction between *us* and *them* in the participants' narratives. The participants often referred to the client in the singular, as in this quote: "I would also put a DI on an assignment of which deaf immigrants were the client, for example a person who had recently arrived in Norway." Another participant argued that it could be challenging to use DIs as "the deaf [interpreter] is likely to meet the client in his/her spare time". These responses indicate that rather than there being two parties – the deaf and the hearing participants in the interaction – the interpreters regard the deaf party as the sole client.

The role of being a client and a member of the deaf community versus the role of being a colleague might also pose an issue, as some hearing interpreters consider DIs' proximity to the deaf community as a threat to the profession. One participant argued: "We are not allowed to interpret for people we have a close relationship to. How will this be if there are to be too many DIs?" This can be understood as indicating that hearing interpreters regard DIs not only as colleagues, but also as clients from the deaf community. It questions DIs' ability to be able to draw a boundary between the role of professional and that of a private member of the deaf community, as well as hearing interpreters' concern about DIs' proximity to the deaf community that might challenge their impartiality. One participant said: "In general we need to focus on privacy and impartiality here as much as we do when it comes to hearing interpreters who are also integrated into the deaf society via friendship or family." Being a part of the deaf community seems to then serve as the critical attribution to this issue regardless of whether the interpreter is deaf or hearing. It is interesting that this is problematized here, as most of the spoken language's interpreters are also members of their respective minority. According to Skaaden (2019), if interpreters mix the role of a friend and that of an interpreter they breach the interpreters' professional ethics, namely the principle of impartiality. However, nothing in the professional code of ethics (Tolkene i Akademikerforbundet 2020) indicates that the interpreters' social and cultural background could exclude them from any particular assignment.

Despite that, one participant still stated that DIs should not be given assignments "in which they have too tight a bond to the client". Of course, this could be said for hearing interpreters as well, but this quote expresses a concern that a DIs' identification with the deaf community might challenge their identity as an interpreter. Another participant feared that the DIs "cannot be completely impartial due to the small deaf community etc. Things can easily become too personal". The notion that qualified DIs are fully capable of making their own ethical considerations does not seem to have been acknowledged in these quotes. This could be explained as audism, or understood as a lack of knowledge about the work of qualified DIs (cf. Brück and Schaumberger 2014). Either way, the argument of gatekeepers that the affinity of DIs to the small deaf community might be problematic for their professionalism does not help when it comes to opening the market for DIs.

Another participant contributed a new perspective, that of the need to consider the reaction of the deaf party to a deaf interpreter. They explained that "…it is crucial that we consider what kind of relationship the DI has to the client. Not just when he/she is impartial, but also considering how the client may feel." The consideration of the deaf client, expressed in this quote, might suggest a lack of trust in a DI's professionality. On the other hand, it might also indicate the need for information on DIs and their role as interpreters.

Deaf individuals' reactions to having a deaf interpreter was also discussed in the literature, although without a clear conclusion (cf. Stone 2005). On an institutional level, it is known that interpreter training emphasizes impartiality and the importance of maintaining boundaries between one's private and the professional roles, for both deaf and hearing students. Furthermore, Skaten, Urdal and Tiselius (2020) find that qualified DIs do not experience these multiple roles as problematic. However, it took some time before the deaf community became familiar with the notion of deaf people themselves being qualified interpreters.

5.3 Insiders of the profession

Professions are often faced with changes that can lead to a redefinition of the boundaries as to who is considered an insider and who is not (Abbott 1988). A strong trend within the data showed that education is regarded necessary for DIs to become a qualified interpreter, as De Meulder and Heyerick (2013), Forestal (2011), Heyerick (2021), Stone (2013) and Tester (2018) also highlight. One of the participants in this study points out that being an interpreter requires:

> (…) knowledge about the interpreting process and techniques that are important for both being able to interpret and collaborate with other interpreters. Ethics and impartiality, knowledge, and reflection on the role of the interpreter are also important aspects of interpreting, I think. This includes knowledge and skills that are developed in collaboration with others and requires education.

Formal education is, as noted earlier, required to become a member of the interpreter organization as well as working for NAV. The participants seem to be concerned with the majority society's stance towards the interpreting professions. As one participant put it, 'As for every other professional it is important [for DIs] to gain knowledge with education in order to become professional and to be taken seriously."

When it comes to specific assignments where the insiders would recommend the use of DIs' services, several of the participants indicated interpreter-mediated interactions involving deaf immigrants. As one of them said, "I imagine that a DI may create a common understanding to a greater extent than, for example, me as a hearing interpreter". A prerequisite for this might be a relationship of trust based on the social and cultural capital of the DI as well as the sameness they share with their client (cf. Boudreault 2005). Another participant reported having noticed "a different kind of trust between this person [a deaf immigrant], in an extremely difficult and vulnerable situation, and [the DI] than I think I, as a hearing interpreter, would have established." The findings show that DIs are considered competent when it comes to interpreting between two signed languages (including international signs) and for deaf individuals with cognitive challenges. These are also types of assignments for DIs to take on that were described in the literature (Bauman 2008; Boudreault 2005; Danske Døves Landsforbund 2015; Stone 2005).

By pointing to assignments where the expertise of DIs is preferred, the participants of the study acknowledge the difference between hearing interpreters and DIs. At the same time, however, DIs are excluded when the participants highlight the ability to hear as a requirement for being able to interpret. One participant explained this as follows: "When an interpreter is deaf, this interpreter has a disability which means it is not possible for them to interpret from a spoken language to a signed language. A hearing interpreter is needed." This may indicate that the participant does not fully see how DIs can contribute.

Responses that emphasized the ability to hear as an important attribute of an interpreter might be an articulation of hearing privilege and the oppression of deaf individuals. However, this can also be a representation of the hearing interpreters' feeling that they need to legitimize their position in the profession. As DIs with formal training enter the profession, hearing interpreters might feel inferior to them and see their own position in the market as under threat. They thus defend their position by saying that the ability to hear is a requirement to fulfil the role (cf. Langholtz 2004). As hearing interpreters also recognize the capital and competence of DIs in areas where they themselves lack expertise, this leads to an ambivalence. According to Freidson (2001), this kind of ambivalence is characterized by a tension between their social mandate (offering interpreting services of good quality) and the professional practitioners' own interests (keeping their position). This might then serve as an opportunity for an internal process of change. DIs "seeking new ground" (Abbott 1988, 90) will challenge the existing status quo.

Some of the participants argued in favour of welcoming DIs as colleagues. One of them stated that: "I believe we are thinking too narrowly about what DIs can and cannot do, so it is risky to say anything about this before we have tried it out." This indicates a willingness to learn what DIs can add to the profession. Another participant described their thoughts on the way forward as follows:

> A positivity and acceptance of something new must be developed. This will require a change and adaptation of the workplace. Some methods probably need to be changed, but overall, this could be a good way of showing that hiring DIs is not a problem.

In addition to promoting the viability of deaf individuals becoming interpreters on equal terms, and recognizing them as valuable members of the professional group, this participant also pointed out that incorporating DIs in the profession requires the change of the attitudes and practices of hearing practitioners. As presented above, there are several hearing interpreters willing to do this. According to Langholtz (2004), an increasing recognition of DIs in the market will naturally lead to such a change. The participants further stated that the quality of the interpreting services could improve if the profession actively tried to accommodate DIs. Corroborating Tester's findings (2018), one participant specifically mentioned interpreting in legal settings: "[…] I believe that a team of hearing interpreters and DIs could enhance the quality of the service and better ensure deaf peoples' legal rights."

5.4 The paradox in the service provision

The participants in this study articulated that the conditions set out by the work organization (interpreting agencies) create both opportunities and limitations for DIs. The national interpreting agencies regulate who is admitted into the market and thereby exercise a form of economic and employment control. An exclusion of DIs can thus be seen as institutional audism (cf. Bauman 2004) and be regarded as an instrument of power that creates social differences between those who are allowed access and participation to those resources (in this context, paid work as an interpreter) and those who are not. In this way, the work organization also influences the development of the profession.

How qualified DIs in Norway will be met by the interpreting agencies remains to be seen, but the participants in this study had certain assumptions. In one of the commentaries one of the participants asked whether "the legislation [is] prepared for this [DIs]?" It is difficult to understand exactly which legislation this participant was specifically referring to as the interpreters' attributes are not actually mentioned in the current legislation. On the other hand, interpreting agencies state that the interpreters must interpret to/from a spoken language (NAV 2020), which can be understood as meaning that the interpreter must be hearing. However, this is not explicitly referred to in the legislation that regulates the interpreting services.

Some participants argued for limiting the use of DIs due to an anticipated increase in costs for NAV with regard to hiring a team of a DI and a hearing interpreter. A common assumption is that a DI would be booked in addition to the primary interpreter(s), and hence make the interpreting service more expensive. This was explained as follows: "Having a DI together with a hearing interpreter has an economic significance. Most assignments are performed well by hearing interpreters." Moreover, another participant stated: "Regarding assignments of a certain duration, you may need four interpreters instead of two… it will probably be difficult to defend the use of taxpayers' money for that."

One participant claimed that" "Most assignments function excellently, in my opinion, without a DI. There are often (too) many of us in the various arenas (…) [It would be] needless to add something extra if it already works. Not employment at any cost." If the intention of educating DIs is perceived as a way of giving deaf individuals work rather than to increase the quality of the interpreter services, it is difficult to acknowledge that DIs have a rightful place in the market. Nevertheless, the need for DIs is still expressed by the participants, as DIs can "cover assignments that are not covered today", as one participant put it. However, another participant stated that: "Information must be given about the opportunity to book one [a deaf interpreter]." The data therefore shows that while there are different perceptions about the position of DIs in the work organization, more knowledge is necessary on when DIs are needed and what the added value of DIs can be. Furthermore, the users of the services need more information on how to book a DI.

5.5 The gate to the market

The findings of this study suggest that a lack of knowledge about this new group of professionals is the main obstacle DIs currently face when it comes to entering the market, with one participant stating that "I don't know enough to have any opinion about this topic." It has also been documented that even deaf individuals require more knowledge about professional DIs (Brück and Schaumberger 2014).

Information is therefore required to break down the barriers currently hindering the use of DIs. Furthermore, research shows that both deaf and hearing interpreters must learn how to cooperate (Skaten, Urdal and Tiselius, 2020). This puts a great responsibility on interpreter education, as well as interpreters' organizations and the providers of interpreting services. These institutions should provide information and tools that could facilitate cooperation between deaf and hearing interpreters.

Despite some ambiguities, however, the findings of this study demonstrate that hearing interpreters have high expectations of the DIs, as this quote exemplifies: "Imagine working in a team with a DI? What a development that would mean for us hearing interpreters. It would have been a dream scenario. Discussing translation with a DI, that would have been a dream come true." This study has therefore documented a clear trend: hearing interpreters regard hiring DIs to be an opportunity for their own professional development, as well as for the agencies and services provided. This corroborates the deaf organizations' demands for more competence within the interpreting services. They have long argued that hiring deaf individuals will add linguistic and cultural skills to the market (cf. Norges Døveforbund 2013), and the participants of this study also stressed this. Moreover, by doing this the profession would also be able to fulfil its social mandate to a greater extent.

6. Conclusion

Today, deaf individuals can train to become qualified interpreters at the same level as hearing individuals, and they can be admitted as members of the professional organization (TiA) in Norway. By investigating the opinions of hearing interpreters, administrators and leaders at the national interpreting agencies regarding qualified DIs, this study has focused on the expectations and assumptions that might impact DIs' access to the market.

The findings show that DIs' linguistic and cultural skills could benefit both hearing interpreters and interpreting agencies, and ensure the fulfilment of deaf individuals' legal rights. The participants placed a strong emphasis on how DIs can be more easily understood by deaf parties, and in that respect, could contribute to improving the quality of the interpreting services currently on offer. This could be understood as an expression of the confidence in DIs' expertise.

As discussed in the literature, changes to a profession occur in response to both external and internal factors (Abbott 1988). This study has shown that external factors such as access to interpreter education have influenced DIs' opportunities to become part of the profession. Simultaneously, there is an internal process at play in redefining the interpreters' special skills. Nevertheless, this study shows that the market's gatekeepers do not fully see the potential or need for qualified DIs. This could be interpreted as a result of institutional audism or seen as a reflection of a lack of knowledge about DIs and the advantages of collaboration between DIs and hearing interpreters. Traditionally, interpreting services have been provided *for* deaf individuals. As DIs are entering the market, a deconstruction of barriers currently in place within the work organizations as well as the profession will be required. Such barriers for qualified DIs' access to the market include discrimination against deaf individuals, and these barriers also negatively influence the agencies in fulfilling their social contract with regard to the deaf.

The main trend extracted from the data is that DIs can contribute to improving the competence level within the group of interpreters as a whole and improve the quality of the interpreting services for several groups of primary participants. Whether this potential is going to be utilized or not should be followed up by further research.

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Dialogue interpreting: The point of contact between Translation Studies, Foreign Language Teaching, and Translation for Other Learning Contexts

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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes dialogue interpreting tasks as a tool for introducing the use of the first language in language classes, and argues for integrating translatorial activities into foreign language teaching curricula. In order to test this idea six role-plays were carried out in two Estonian high schools, with Estonian as the language of instruction in one and Russian as the language of instruction in the other. The results show that without prior instruction in interpreting, high-school students demonstrated the use of interpreting strategies during role-plays involving dialogue interpreting, which suggests they possess an innate capability to translate. The author argues that the introduction of dialogue interpreting in the foreign language classroom provides students and teachers with authentic examples allowing them to compare the languages used in the plurilingual societies in which they live and study.

Keywords: language learning, translation for other learning contexts, mediation, plurilingualism, dialogue interpreting

Dialoško tolmačenje na stičišču prevodoslovja, poučevanja tujih jezikov in prevajanja za druge učne kontekste

IZVLEČEK

V članku so predstavljeni raba dialoških tolmaških nalog kot orodje za uporabo prvega jezika pri jezikovnem pouku in argumenti v prid integraciji prevajalskih aktivnosti pri poučevanju tujega jezika. Uporabo prevajalskih aktivnosti pri pouku tujega jezika smo preizkusili v dveh estonskih srednjih šolah, eni z estonščino in drugi z ruščino kot učnim jezikom, kjer se je izvedlo šest iger vlog. Rezultati so pokazali, da so dijaki izkazovali uporabo tolmaških strategij brez predhodne izobrazbe iz tolmačenja, iz česar je mogoče sklepati o obstoju prirojene zmožnosti prevajanja. V članku zagovarjam stališče, da uvajanje dialoškega tolmačenja pri pouku tujih jezikov dijakom in učiteljem z uporabo avtentičnih primerov omogoča, da primerjajo rabo jezikov v večjezični družbi, v kateri živijo in se učijo.

Ključne besede: učenje jezikov, prevajanje za druge učne kontekste, mediacija, večjezičnost, dialoško tolmačenje

1. Introduction

As an Interpreter Trainer and a teacher of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), I have long been interested in points of contact between Translation Studies (TS), Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), and Translation for Other Learning Contexts (TOLC). In this article, I aim to bring these disciplines together by showing how dialogue interpreting tasks can be employed in FLT by exploiting the competences of plurilingual students.

The important role of translation in foreign language acquisition for communicative purposes is recognized in TS, TFL and TOLC, but because applied translation studies and foreign language teaching pursue different aims in terms of the set of skills acquired by the learners (Colina and Angelelli 2017), the use of translation was traditionally restricted in intermediate-level language classrooms (see e.g. Malmkjær 1998). Similar attitudes could also be found among translator teachers, who fear that language learning activities might drive attention from teaching translation as such, which focuses not only on language competence but also on language performance (Colina 2002; Neubert 2000). As for language teachers, the fear of the dangerous first language interference has long been given as the reason for the restriction of translation tasks in the language classroom. Exclusive target language use in language classrooms, cherished by the proponents of Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), and the "monolingually biased" (Kachru 1994, 798) teaching paradigm, have been criticized by Macaro (2001, 544), who emphasized the lack of any "causal relationship between exclusion of the first language and improved learning". According to Kachru (*ibid*), monolingual bias puts instructors in a difficult position where they may encounter difficulties in adapting teaching strategies to the needs of students with multilingual identities because many mainstream applied linguists continue to treat the acquisition of the English language as "an ideally hermetic process uncontaminated by knowledge and use of one's other languages" (May 2014, 4).

Monolingualism in foreign language instruction is being put to the test by globalization and migration. Teachers today frequently find themselves teaching speakers of many different first languages with varied cultural backgrounds in the same classroom, rather than idealized native speakers with the same first language (May 2014; Piccardo and Galante 2018; González Davies 2020). Consequently, a shift has occurred in foreign language instruction from the monolingual to the plurilingual paradigm in language learning, which sheds light on the needs and strengths of speakers who already have several languages in their linguistic repertoire. And indeed, the plurilingual individual "possesses a linguistic capital (seen as a set of linguistic assets), which he or she operates according to the situation" (Coste, Moore, and Zarate 1997).

It has been argued recently that plurilingual competence could be explored and developed within the TOLC approach to language learning. This is because TOLC uses mediating skills in areas other than professional translator training, and promotes the integration of the sociocultural aspect of plurilingualism into the language learning process (González Davies 2020). TOLC thus shares the intentions of the integrated plurilingual approach (IPA) to language learning, which favours "establishing connections to the students' real linguistic repertoire and identities", progressing towards "reimagining [Foreign Language] classrooms as translingual environments" (Anderson 2018, 8). As González Davies (2020, 445) puts it, "TOLC speakers can be described as language users who can apply natural plurilingual practices in an informed way after acquiring translanguaging skills and strategies in formal contexts".

In the context of Estonia, linguistic communities have always been diverse. Up until now, however, foreign language teachers have not been much influenced by this aspect of diversity, because schools use different languages of instruction: some accept Estonian L1 and others Russian L1 children. In 2024 full transition towards Estonian-only instruction will be implemented (Riigi Teataja 2022), and thus foreign language teachers will encounter more students with different first languages in their classrooms.

In Estonia, the language policy is aimed at the preservation of the titular, i.e. Estonian language, but the sociolinguistic situation is quite complex. Estonian is predominantly spoken within the borders of the country, and there is an inevitable need to learn other languages to communicate internationally (Lukk et al. 2017). In addition to this Estonia, which first gained its independence in 1918, and then again in 1991, has spent a long time under foreign control, and therefore bilingualism and the extensive use of foreign languages are widespread, even – and in fact especially – among younger population, with Estonian-English and Russian-Estonian bilingualism, and Russian-Estonian-English trilingualism being rather common (Ehala and Koreinik 2021).

The Russian language predominated in the foreign language curriculum under Soviet rule, with English primarily restricted to a small number of specialist schools. The mandatory teaching of Russian was discontinued after Estonia regained independence in 1991, and English replaced Russian as the most widely taught foreign language. Both the Estonian and Russian-speaking communities use English for employment, leisure, and entertainment (Kruusvall 2015, 80) and its use is very widespread (Karpava, Ringblom, and Zabrodskaja 2021). Today, Russian is spoken as the first language by approximately 30% of the residents of Estonia (Statistics Estonia 2021), and although the Estonian education system is mostly Estonian-language based, some state schools still offer education with Russian as the main language of instruction. This duality of the school system has existed for about seventy years. However, the percentage of high schools using Russian as the language of instruction has been steadily decreasing in recent years (Ivanova and Zabrodskaja 2021).

The dilemma as to whether the first language use should be allowed in EFL classroom has become a significant topic of debate since Estonia decided to use unified curricula, according to which students from both Russian and Estonian as first language backgrounds are supposed to study together. In this article, I argue that dialogue interpreting tasks can be employed in EFL classrooms to enhance plurilingual competence and plurilingualism as a natural form of communication for linguistically diverse societies like Estonia. This can be achieved by building on the competence of "natural translators" (Harris 2017), who have always been present in the country with a long history of foreign occupation and significant migrant population.

The distinction between translation tasks aimed at developing the competences of professional translator and Translation for Other Learning Contexts (TOLC), as proposed by González Davies (2012) and intended as a tool for learners to "become competent plurilingual speakers as they progress from the natural to the expert translator level" (González Davies (2020, 447), inspired me to explore dialogue interpreting role-play as a task in FLT. I propose to answer are two main research questions. First, how can dialogue interpreting role-play help learners to raise plurilingual awareness within the practice of "natural translation" skills as well as raise their agency as speakers of different languages (Piccardo and Galante 2018)? Second, how can we use translatorial activity to promote "identifying, analysing, teaching, learning and assessing particular practices within a wider spectrum of operating across and within several linguistic codes" (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2022, 12)?

The hypotheses I aim to test with the case studies presented in this article are that using dialogue interpreting role-play in the foreign language classroom gives language learners an opportunity to demonstrate and compare various linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of their first and foreign languages, as well as experience the process of interpreter-mediated communication and the use of particular interpreting strategies. In this scenario, the task of the teacher is to find the most effective way of teaching the language while considering the linguistic diversity and range of abilities of the students. Dialogue interpreting role-play in the foreign language classroom may give students an opportunity to use their first language, interpret each other's statements through a common language, and later analyse their performance. Furthermore, recordings or notes taken during the task can provide the teacher with authentic material for class discussions about the differences and similarities between the languages in general, and the meanings of particular words and phrases in a particular speech act context. Such analysis could raise learners' awareness about the reasons for communication barriers (Laufer and Girsai 2008, 697) and help them uncover the ways of building rapport with an interlocutor.

2. Dialogue interpreting tasks in the foreign language classroom

The data presented in this article are based on my MA research (Maadla 2022), which focused on dialogue interpreting tasks as a way of using two plurilingual learning strategies, code-switching and interpreting, in foreign language teaching. Such tasks fall into the category of "translanguaging", where students carry out specifically designed tasks to develop plurilingual, pluricultural and communicative skills through language mediation (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2022). The CEFR companion volume (Council of Europe 2020) mentions mediation skills and intercultural competence, and points to translation as a key skill for achieving language learning goals by dealing with languages in contact. However, the mediation skills used in foreign language teaching do not involve just employing translation in classroom, but also entail a broader perspective that aims to create the conditions for students to learn how to mediate, without requiring them to demonstrate interpreting skills (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2022).

Dialogue interpreting is defined by Mason (1999, 147) as "interpreter-mediated communication in spontaneous face-to-face interaction". Rebecca Tipton and Olgierda Furmanec (2016, 6) outline the importance of the mutual openness of the interlocutors within the process of interpreter-mediated dialogic interaction that promotes "equal, balanced and respectful communication". While the use of interpreting tasks in the language classroom has not yet been researched extensively, some studies have been made. For example, Prieto Arranz (2002) gave an account of the use of dialogue interpreting tasks within the fourth year English language groups in English Philology at the University of Oviedo, in Spain.

In addition to promoting respectful communication, dialogue interpreting tasks also provide learners and teachers with authentic course material, which could be used for investigating the interactional aspects of L1 and L2, and for analysing the use of L1 and L2 in specific contexts depending on the communicative task and the roles of the participants in interaction. Dialogue interpreting tasks thus help the students see the gaps between L1 and L2 and identify instances where mediation could be needed to promote understanding. The value of authentic materials has been widely recognized (Kramsch 1993; Nunan 2012; Celce-Murcia et al. 2014) within the communicative paradigm of language learning, where learners engage in tasks that are viewed as "a goal-oriented communicative activity with a specific outcome where the emphasis is on exchanging meanings, not producing specific language forms" (Willis 1996, 36). With the use of authentic material learners are provided with exposure to the language as it is used in real-life situations.

Moreover, and especially in the multicultural context of Estonia, the use of dialogue interpreting tasks in FLT could develop plurilingual communicative skills, described by González Davies (2017, 125) as "an appropriate use of natural plurilingual practices (e.g. translation, code-switching or an informed use of the L1) to advance inter-linguistic and intercultural communication". To test this claim, a production-based case-study was conducted in which learners were encouraged to engage in dialogue interpreting tasks in classroom settings. After being presented with prompts with different pieces of information, the students were asked to interact with each other in different languages in order to complete the tasks.

3. Case study

3.1 The study

To answer the research questions, I analysed the overall performance of students who were engaged in dialogue interpreting as a TOLC activity in a plurilingual classroom, and assessed the suitability of the task as a way to introduce authentic material in the classroom and use it for class discussion on issues related to interpreter-mediated communication. I was particularly interested in whether students would use their natural plurilingual practices, in particular students who have not received any prior training in dialogue interpreting. The latter thus fall in the category of "natural translators", described by Harris (2017) as individuals who translate without any formal training and rely on their intuition instead of adhering to established translation norms and strategies. Specifically, I looked for instances of strategies typical for interpreting such as compression, explicitation, coordinating communication and self-repair, as well as instances of translation errors, interactional code-switching, and mediation through the pragmatic features of concession and politeness. Schmidt's "noticing hypothesis" (1990, 1992) draws attention to the importance of developing L2 learners` ability to recognize the pragmatic aspects of language (L1 and L2) and provide them with the analytical tools they need to arrive at their own generalizations concerning contextually appropriate language use. These activities are designed to make learners consciously aware of differences between the native and target language speech acts. The rationale for this approach is that such differences are often ignored by learners and go unnoticed unless they are directly addressed (Schmidt 1992). With regard to the choice of interpreting strategies, I relied on my own experience as an interpreter trainer.

3.2 Student population

The study was conducted among 12 eleventh grade students (i.e., approximately 17 years old) of two Tallinn schools with Estonian as the medium of instruction (role-plays 1, 2, 3, and 4), and six eleventh grade students with Russian as the medium of instruction (role-plays 5 and 6). In the school with Estonian as the medium of instruction, the students had started learning English in the second grade as their first foreign language and had four lessons of English a week. In the school with Russian as the medium of instruction, English as a first foreign language was introduced in the first grade along with four lessons a week of Estonian as the second language.

The linguistic repertoire of the students was not tested for the purposes of this study due to the exploratory nature of the work and, more importantly, because I did not want to influence the students' use of a particular language when performing the task by preliminarily discussing or surveying the students' competence in any of the languages. Table 1, below, describes the system of language instruction in both schools.

Table 1. System of language instruction in the schools where role-plays were conducted.

Language of instruction	Second language	First foreign language	Second foreign language
Estonian	-	English	Russian
Russian	Estonian	English	

3.3 Method

After discussing the experiment with the teacher in charge of the class activities, the following main aims in the lesson plan were defined:

1. to practice language mediation,
2. to take different roles in conversations.

After the warm-up activities the students were invited to participate in the role-play, where they could choose between three roles:

- the "parent" or the "teacher", who do not share a language,
- the "interpreter" who would enable communication.

After choosing their role, the students received a prompt with the description of their role in the conversation. The "teacher's" role-play prompt told the student to conduct a tactful meeting with the parent. The "parent's" prompt, in contrast, encouraged the student to quarrel with the "teacher" and read: "You think that your kid is perfect, and the teacher is wrong". Students were not restricted in their choice of language used in the role-play, in order to promote first language use.

The lesson was organized following a lesson plan with the overarching aim of practising language mediation through dialogue interpreting, while simultaneously addressing the socio-pragmatic aspect of politeness or tactfulness. The only language used by the teacher throughout the session was English. The students were asked to form groups and to voluntarily take the roles of "interpreter", "teacher" and "parent". The role of the "interpreter" was previously introduced by showing a short video about interpreters, created under my supervision as part of the LIFE project at Tallinn University (available at https://elu.tlu.ee/en/projects/synergy-between-interpreter-and-public-official). Malmkjær (1998, 6) suggests that translation would be far more beneficial in language teaching if the activities students engage in during their class were similar to those performed during the actual practice of translation. In the light of this, a parent-teacher study conference was selected as the setting for the task in order to maximize the authenticity of the context and provide students with a recognizable role to act out during the role-play. The students were asked to pretend that neither of them understood each other's language. This instruction helped us highlight how the "interpreter's" input was instrumental to the success of communication. If the "interpreter" was fluent in both languages, the students were free to speak either of the languages they studied. The students were handed the prompts for their chosen role of "teacher" or "parent". The "interpreters" did not receive a prompt. The prompts included topics to be addressed during the conversation. It was separately stated that the "teacher" should remain polite and tactful, and that the "parent" was supposed to express disagreement with the "teacher's" statement. This instruction was meant to check whether the student "interpreters" would take the role of a neutral agent or the role of mediating facilitator of communication (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2022, 14). After giving the necessary instructions, the session started, and the interpreter-mediated conversations were audio-recorded.

Students recorded the role-play using the Vocaroo online-recording software (www.vocaroo.com) and sent the links after the sessions. Recordings were transcribed and analysed manually to find evidence of the following:

1) interpreting strategies of compression, explicitation, coordinating communication and self-repair, and instances of translation errors;

2) interactional code-switching;
3) mediation of pragmatic features of concession and politeness.

The main unit of analysis of the students' speech were conversational turns.

4. Results

The results are presented according to the features typical of dialogue interpreting outlined above. Gloss translations of utterances in Estonian and Russian were done by the author of the article and are provided in italics.

4.1 Interpreting strategies

With the exception of one turn, in all of the 43 turns students followed the instruction of giving the "interpreter" an opportunity to interpret even if the interlocutors understood the message. The languages chosen by the students for the role-plays were Estonian, Russian and English, which is not surprising given their linguistic backgrounds and the spread of foreign languages in the country. However, it was interesting that one group from the school with Estonian as the language of instruction chose to talk in Russian (parent) and English (teacher). The turns by the Russian-speaking "parent" were mostly grammatically and stylistically erroneous, though understandable. The "interpreter" also struggled to interpret the English-speaking "teacher" because of the poor use of language. Three other groups from the same school chose Estonian and English as the language medium. It is also notable that in the school with Russian as the main language of instruction one of the two groups chose to speak in three languages: Russian-speaking "parent" talked to an Estonian-language "teacher" through an English-speaking "interpreter". The "interpreter" was able to produce clear statements despite the stress of using a foreign language to mediate between two other foreign languages.

The "interpreters" compressed their turns by omitting adjectives *(little, some, well)*, prepositional phrases of location (*at school*) and discourse organizing markers *(next question*). Professional interpreter training always includes exercises on compression, where trainee interpreters are taught "how to identify the most relevant parts of a speech and sum up its main arguments and macrostructure" (Kalina 2019a, 74). Interpreters are also taught to use the translation strategy of explicitation, which is an attempt by the interpreter to explain incomprehensible items of conversation or those lacking an equivalent in the target culture (Kalina 2019b). Moreover, Gumul (2006) claims that explicitation in interpreting is often an unconscious procedure. This was evident from the observed role-plays, because in several turns, as exemplified in

Example 1, the "parent" provided additional explanations in their translation, thus assuming the role of explicitator-mediator and trying to shift the focus away from criticism of individual personalities towards blaming the generalized institutional environment of the school for the misfortunes of the student.

Example 1

> Parent: Ee Anton on väga energiline poiss ja ma iga päev teen kindlaks et ta läheb õigel ajal magama nii et ma ei selline asi ei tohiks juhtuda ja Anton on väga tähelepanelik minu teada nii et ma olen kindel et ee **probleem on teiepoolne**.
>
> *Ee Anton is a very energetic boy and every day I make sure he goes to bed on time so I know this kind of thing shouldn't happen and, as far as I know, Anton is very attentive so I'm sure the* ***problem is on your side****.*
>
> Interpreter: Aa ee the parent insists that Anton is a very energetic boy and he makes sure that he goes asleep at the right time ee every day in… also that he is very attentive and so she or he should not have trouble in school, which means that **problem comes from the school** not from the house.

The interpreter is traditionally seen as an "invisible link" who is not supposed to alter the discourse, genre, or register of the text they are interpreting (Torikai 2009; Ozolins 2016). Therefore language teachers who intend to use dialogue interpreting tasks in their classroom are advised to familiarize themselves with the position of the interpreter as a language mediator (Bazani 2019, 5). The role-plays clearly highlighted the importance of prior instruction about the interpreter's role, and of the norm instructing the "interpreters" to interpret in the first person. For example, one of the participants in the study made the following comment: "The role of the interpreter was challenging – does the "interpreter" have his or her own 'voice' and describes what has been said, or do they use the first person when delivering translations?" (Maadla 2022). A specific difficulty also originated from the gender neutrality of the Estonian language, where one pronoun is used to identify both genders. The interpreters attempted to clarify their delivery by adding the name of the person referred to, as in Example 2, making a repair preceded by the word *no* (*ei* in Estonian).

Example 2

> Teacher: Well, yes but there are also some other difficulties that **I** noticed with her while **she** is in school though for example **she** works a lot slower

> compared to everyone else not saying that **she** is not smart but compared to everyone else she works very much slower
>
> Interpreter: Ok. põhimõtteliselt et **ta** näeb nagu teist probleemi, et **Anna** siis töötab natukene aeglasemini, kui teised õpilased et ta ütleb et **ta ei Anna** ei ole tark aga et lihtsalt töötab natuke aeglasemalt
>
> *Ok. Basically that **he/she** sees as another problem that **Anna** then works a bit slower than the other students that **he/she** says **he/she** no **Anna** is not smart but that just works a bit slower.*

A similar strategy is used by another "interpreter" who does not speak in the first person, but uses reported speech.

Example 3

> Teacher: Let's talk about it in mail like through mail lets like at, yeah. OK
>
> Interpreter: Õpetaja soovib teile pärast sõnumina sellist seda teemat edasi arutada
>
> *The teacher would like to discuss this topic afterwards via messaging*

Sometimes students used the self-repair strategy, common in L2 production. In Interpreting Studies the criteria of fluency include variables such as repairs, pauses, self-correction, fillers, hesitation, and repetition (Lee 2015). Repairs may be overt or covert (Levelt 1983), signalling the correlation between working memory capacity and cognitive load. However, in the present research the amount of repairs was minimal and the only instance is presented below.

Example 4

> Interpreter: How she getting fives without **no extra help? With no extra help.**
>
> Teacher: … **Are you**? Ehm **do you** know about it?

According to Wadensjö (1998), interpreters are involved in coordination of communication by performing "interaction- orientated" translation. This occurs when they translate according to contextual information, and their translation influences another turn the interlocutors are making. Alongside this process, interpreters manage the turn system by asking for clarification, stopping the participants to let them translate if the amount of input is too great, or something needs clarification. Hale (2007, 11) suggests that interpreters need to consider "features additional to propositional content, such as markers of register variation, hesitations, discourse markers, repetitions and backtracking", and argues that "if the interpreter aims to maintain such features, then the speakers will be given the opportunity to react to the message as it is presented to them, rather than receive a censored or edited version from the interpreter". In the following examples (5 and 6), the "interpreter" interfered to help the "parent" find a word to describe the situation. The "interpreter" also started her next turn through interfering with a longer utterance. Evidence shows that students switched roles and helped each other in finding suitable words and expressions.

Example 5

> Parent: Aga minu meelest Anna ongi see on selline laps kellele meeldib väljendada oma … (pause)
>
> *But I think that Anna is such a child who likes to express her…*
>
> Interpreter: (interferes) **Arvamust**?
>
> *Opinion?*
>
> Parent: **Arvamust** (laughs) ja see ongi selline see ekstravertse inimese omadus et ta ta grupis võtab selle liidri rolli ja räägib teiste ees ja minu arust on minu laps on ikkagi nagu perfektne. [**Vabandust aga** …]
>
> *opinion (laughs) and this is such a quality of an extravert person that he he takes this role of the leader and speaks in front of others and I think that my child is still like perfect [**I´m sorry but** …]*
>
> Interpreter: [**She is sorry**] but she thinks that her daughter is perfect the way that she is and is like her thing to be like extravert aa and be the ruler of the group

In the next case the "interpreter" is also helped by another participant who whispers the word he forgot.

Example 6

> Teacher: (Laughs) She doesn't listen attentively in class so that she often misses the point of my speech and other important announcements
>
> Interpreter: она не слушает меня внимательно ээ а также она (laughs) не не ловит не

She does not listen to me attentively ee and also she (laughs) does not not get not

Teacher: (Whispers) **улавливает суть**

(Whispers) ***get the essence***

Interpreter: ***улавливает*** *суть моих э э*

get the essence *of my*

4.2 Interactional code-switching

According to Gumperz (1982), interactional code-switching discourse functions include quotations, addressee specification, interjections, reiteration, and messages. Saville-Troike (2003) distinguishes eight different functions of code-switching: softening or strengthening requests or commands, intensification/elimination of ambiguity (repetition), adding humour, using direct quotations and repetitions, making ideological statements, addressing lexical needs, excluding other listeners, and strategies of avoidance and repair. Not all of these strategies were found in the analysed case studies. Instances of interactional code-switching were found in the Estonian-Russian mediation (see examples 7, 8 and 9) in the school with Estonian as the main language of instruction. It was evident that a lack of linguistic resources in Russian as a foreign language compelled the student to repair the delivery with insertions in Estonian.

Example 7

Parent :Ну что такое ну что такое я нее хочу **uskuda** тебя не хочу этоо это не как это может быть Анна такая нет яая я не taha **uskuda**

So what's wrong so what's wrong I don't want to believe (in Estonian) I don't want that that it's not like it can be Anna so no I don't want to believe (in Estonian).

Example 8

Interpreter: Но она ничего не думает в классе и-э она не ээ **keskenduma** ээ в классе и-э ээ ээ она не ээ ээ да

But she doesn't think anything in class and-eh she doesn't eh ***pay attention*** *(in Estonian) eh eh eh eh eh yes*

Example 9

> Interpreter 1: Ты надо учить на –аа t**o be et olla** дорогая человек и-ээ käima в школа
>
> *You have to learn* ***to be*** *(in English) to be (in Estonian) darling man ee to go (in English) to school*

Discourse markers included "okay", "like", and "well". There were no instances of Estonian or Russian discourse markers inserted into English turns, but "okay" is clearly used as a discourse marker in Estonian and English speech. "Н*у*" (well) was used as a coordination marker in Russian-language turns by the Russian-English "interpreter" in the EFL classroom.

4.3 Mediation through pragmatic features of concession and politeness

The "interpreters" resorted to mediation several times, for instance in Example 10, where the "interpreter" attempted to soften the illocutionary force of the original utterance. Mason (2019) explains this mitigation as the desire of interpreters to save their professional face when they are in danger from distancing, indirectness or aggression, and as their wish to ensure rapport-management within the conversation.

Example 10

> Teacher: Okay then we have nothing else to talk about. Get out of this class! And take your child with you
>
> Interpreter: Meil ei ole enam mitte midagi arutada. Palun lahkuge klassist ja võtke oma laps endaga kaasa.
>
> *We have nothing more to discuss. Please leave the class and take your child with you.*
>
> …
>
> Teacher: Get out! (laughs)
>
> Interpreter: Lahku palun
>
> *Please leave*

The perception of politeness in communication between adults in Estonian and Russian is reflected in the use of the formal (*teie, вы*) or non-formal (*sina, ты*) second-person pronoun in communication. In the Russian-English role-play exemplified in Example 11 it is clear that this feature of social interaction in the Russian-speaking community is unknown to both the Russian-speaking "parent" and the mediating "interpreter" from the Estonian-language school, as the "parent" constantly uses the non-formal *ты* instead of the formal *вы,* which would be considered inappropriate for a teacher-parent conversation in Russian culture. The conversation that starts with the polite *здравствуйте* seems to be unconsciously copied by the parent, who also later fails to use the polite form of address, the same as the "interpreter".

Example 11

> Teacher: So eh your daughter isn't eh very good eh in her eh schoolwork?
>
> Interpreter: Твоя дочь очень плохо учИтся.
>
> Your [informal] daughter is doing very poorly in school.

In the Estonian-English role-plays, the formal you *(teie)* in Estonian is mostly used in the interpretation. The signal of a polite request (*please*) is sometimes lost, however, in most cases it is translated. In the next example the "interpreter" uses *would* to translate the polite form of address into English, where there is no lexical distinction between the formal and informal second person pronoun as it is in Russian. The English-speaking "teacher" attempts to smooth the communication, which is an important aspect of politeness, using downgraders that could alter dispreferred speech acts by expressing the negative meaning indirectly through expressions like *just, just in case, a bit, a few, one thing, rather, scarcely, a little*, and others. There were cases where such markers were omitted, but also instances when the intent to smooth communication was expressed (Example 12) by the use of the downgrading Estonian marker *nagu*, which is specific to Estonian-language discourse.

Example 12

> Teacher: So I myself like always overview what the other students are doing and I've noticed that people who are with them in the groups or with Ana in the group are always a little bit down and kind of feel like Ana is taking too much control
>
> Interpreter: Ee (laughter) inimesed kellega ta siis ühes samas grupis on tunnevad annavad endale palju kontrolli olukorra üle ja nad tunnevad hästi nagu välja jäetuna.
>
> *The people he's in the same group with feel like they're giving themselves a lot of control over the situation and they feel well like left out.*

In the case of English-Estonian, English-Russian and English-Russian-Estonian mediation in EFL classroom, the students displayed an intuitive ability to use interpreting strategies (without prior instruction) without negative L1 transfer or intrasentential code-switches. However, in the cases of English-Estonian mediation, students struggled with understanding the role of the interpreter, and were largely unaware of the norm of using the first person in interpreting. The students taking the role of interlocutors and "interpreters" mostly successfully demonstrated the ability to produce as well as interpret politeness and concession markers. In some cases, however, the illocutionary force of the utterances was mitigated.

As seen in all the above examples, it can be concluded that the role-play provided the students and the teachers with authentic material that could be used to investigate interactional aspects of L1 and L2 and the use of interpreting strategies. Furthermore, the task was received positively by the learners, as laughter was rather common: the "interpreter" laughed in 17 turns, the "teacher" in nine and the "parent" in six. However, it is also possible that laughter was a coping strategy, which was not specifically assessed in this study.

5. Conclusion

Having analysed the instances of the use of the interpreting strategies of compression, explicitation, coordinating communication and self-repair, the results show that the chosen role-play provided sufficient conditions to get authentic material into the foreign language classroom, which stimulated further discussions about barriers to communication stemming both from differences in language systems and the context of communication. It also provided the students with different ways of overcoming these barriers with the use of interpreting strategies. Through the role-play and the subsequent discussions the students' awareness about plurilingualism was raised, as was their agency as speakers of foreign languages.

The role-plays, as presented above, showed that translatorial activity may be used to promote a different approach to classroom activities by enabling the students to use different languages within the same activity. The students proved to be "natural translators", and the "interpreters" in the role-plays clearly demonstrated the use of interpreting strategies. Assessment of both the self-repairs and the use of pragmatic markers showed that the students could intuitively identify differences in sociolinguistic or socio-pragmatic conventions and adjust their communication accordingly. It is interesting that in one instance the students chose to mediate between three languages that they were proficient in, using English, Estonian and Russian (reflecting the trilingual context of the Estonian capital), and were able to perform successfully.

The limitations of the study include the failure to consider learners' agency, and it remained unclear whether they used the interpreting strategies consciously or unconsciously. Moreover, the learners were not individually tested for language proficiency levels. Pre-testing could add an insight into the influence of possible bilingualism on interpreting performance and enable us to identify "natural translators" and better-performing "interpreters". However, as stated before, in this experiment I wanted to create conditions for spontaneous interaction and give the students an opportunity to voluntarily choose the roles they played. Another limitation was that several students decided to read the phrases from the prompts they were provided with, which was a restrictive factor for authentic language production.

It is not my intention to contest the widely accepted distinction between approaches used in language pedagogy and those in interpreter training. Nevertheless, the opportunity to create a dialogue between the fields of professional language practice in translation and educational language practice in foreign language learning should not be neglected. It is my sincere belief that using both fields in an interdisciplinary way is critical to overcoming the monolingual bias of language classrooms and foster intercultural awareness among plurilingual language learners (and teachers!), while simultaneously steadily developing mediation skills through tasks that provide the learners with an opportunity to investigate their own language production comparatively in L1 and L2. The common misconception "I know languages, therefore I can translate" (Zlatnar Moe, Mikolič Južnič, and Žigon 2017) can be overturned by introducing dialogue interpreting tasks into the foreign language classroom, providing that the teachers get acquainted with the notions of "translation" and "mediation" as scaffolding tools in L2 learning, and learn how to use interpreting strategies in interpreter training. Dialogue interpreting tasks, as shown in this research, could offer a basis for analysing and appreciating the differences and commonalities of the languages that students learn or use in their daily lives in multilingual states in multilingual Europe. The use of dialogue interpreting in FLT also highlights the undoubtedly important role of interpreters as professionals with a distinctive skill-set and knowledge about the languages and cultures they mediate.

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Gender equality and/or inequality? Female and male translators in a Swedish digital encyclopaedia of translators

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a study of publicly available *Svenskt översättarlexikon* 'The Swedish Encyclopaedia of Translators' (SwET 2009), most probably the first digital encyclopaedia of translators. The study is situated in the fields of the sociology of translators, (literary) translator studies, and translation history, and focuses on how female translators are described, characterized and evaluated in the version of SwET from 2022. Three research questions are addressed in the paper: (1) What is the ratio of entries presenting female and male translators in the SwET? (2) What is the quantitative treatment of the partners in the sub-category "Translator Couples"? (3) And what are the descriptions, characterizations and evaluations of the partners in that sub-category? In response to the three RQs, the same three situations emerge: (a) gender equality and inequality, (b) gender equality, and (c) gender inequality. Possible explanations for the results reported are presented and discussed. Finally, proposals for future studies of digital translator encyclopaedias are presented.

Keywords: sociology of translation, literary translator studies, external translation history, female translators, Svenskt översättarlexikon

Enakost in/ali neenakost spolov? Prevajalke in prevajalci švedske digitalne enciklopedije prevajalcev

IZVLEČEK

V prispevku je predstavljena študija *Svenskt översättarlexikon* 'The Swedish Encyclopaedia of Translators' (SwET), ki je morda sploh prva digitalna enciklopedija prevajalcev na svetu in je javno dostopna od leta 2009. Raziskava sodi na področje sociologije prevajanja, študij (književnih) prevajalcev in zgodovine prevajanja. Študija se osredotoča na opise, karakterizacijo in evalvacijo prevajalk v SwET iz leta 2022. V prispevku so naslovljena tri raziskovalna vprašanja, in sicer, (1) kakšno je razmerje med gesli, ki obravnavajo prevajalke, in gesli, ki obravnavajo prevajalce, (2) kakšna je kvantitativna obravnava partnerjev v podkategoriji »prevajalski pari«, in (3) kakšni so opisi, karakterizacije in evalvacije partnerjev v tej podkategoriji. Pri vseh treh raziskovalnih vprašanjih se pojavijo tri iste situacije: (a) spolna enakost in neenakost, (b) spolna enakost in (c) spolna neenakost. Predstavljene in obravnavane so možne razlage za dobljene rezultate. Nazadnje so predstavljeni predlogi za nadaljnje študije digitalnih enciklopedij prevajalcev.

Ključne besede: sociologija prevajanja, študije književnih prevajalcev, zunanja zgodovina prevajanja, prevajalke, Svenskt översättarlexikon

1. Introduction[1]

Translation has played an important role in Sweden since at least the 14th century, and it remains important to this day (Kleberg 2012). Svahn (2020, 15–18) concludes her summary about "Translation in the Swedish context" with the claim that "translation as a phenomenon assumes an important position in Swedish society today" (Svahn 2020, 16). Two factors that may be of importance for translators and translations in a specific society are "gender and sexual orientation […]" (Chesterman 2009, 16). For example, during the 18th century it was considered quite acceptable for women to translate from, for instance, English, French and German, into Swedish. In contrast, translation from Greek, Latin and Hebrew was "considered off limits for women in Sweden as in other European countries" (Akujärvi 2018, 33).

Gender and sexual orientation may also function as a "framework for translator-centered research" (Kaindl 2021, 15). This study of female translators is based on the concept of 'gender' as a socio-ideological construct (cf. Santaemilia Ruiz 2011, 25) in the digital encyclopaedia entitled *Svenskt översättarlexikon* 'The Swedish Encyclopaedia of Translators´, henceforth SwET. The SwET focuses on Swedish and Finland-Swedish translators translating into Swedish, and provides descriptions, characterizations and evaluations of translators' professional work from the Middle Ages onwards in a specific context (cf. Kleberg 2012). The study focuses on how posterity – in this case the authors of articles in the SwET – describes, characterizes and evaluates translators included in the encyclopaedia. Contemporary assessments of translators, as well as assessments formulated by persons other than authors of the SwET articles, are included in some of the texts, and such assessments may also be of interest for future research.

The main title of this article – "Gender equality and/or inequality?" – requires a definition of the concept 'gender equality'. Here, the definition formulated by the state agency Swedish Gender Equality Agency (SGEA 2023) is applied: "[g]ender equality means that women and men have the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities in all areas of life". Gender equality is not only a matter of gender equal ratio, but also of attitudes, norms, values and ideals "that affect the lives of women and men in many areas of society" (SGEA 2023). In this case, the male and female translators included in the SwET.

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Section 2 of the article presents the SwET, research questions and research setting. In section 3, the research design is introduced. Section 4 presents and discusses the results of the analysis. The concluding section 5 summarizes the results of the study. To indicate that translators are in focus, references to articles in the SwET are made with the prefix "SwET" and article title heading, i.e., "SwET Cilla Johnson, 1911–2002". All translations from Swedish into English in the article were done be the author.

2. The SwET, research questions and research setting

Section 2 presents the SwET, the research questions and the research setting for the current study.

2.1 The SwET

The SwET has been publicly available since 2009 and was hosted by Södertörn University, Stockholm, between 2009 and 2018 (Kleberg n.d.). Since spring 2018, the SwET has been part of the Swedish Literature Bank at the University of Gothenburg. The encyclopaedia project was theoretically inspired by Pym's appeal for "Humanizing Translation History" (2009) (Kleberg 2012, 72–73), and its result, the SwET itself, is described as "a database of bio-bibliographical articles about Swedish and Finland-Swedish translators from the Middle Ages to the present" (Kleberg 2012, 71). The overall goal for the SwET is to present "[i]n principle, all important translators into the Swedish language […]", but has so far only managed to include the presentation of deceased persons (Kleberg n.d.; cf. Kleberg 2009 and 2012).

The top menu of the encyclopaedia is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The top menu of the SwET on 15 June 2022.

Together with the logotype "SÖ", and the title "Svenskt översättarlexikon", three categories of articles are to be found. The first is bio-biographical articles devoted to individual translators, labelled Translators ("Översättare"). The second one, Themes ("Tema"), deals with different themes, for instance, indirect translation, translation of Japanese literature into Swedish, and translation of popular songs. The third category, Prizes (“Priser”), presents various prizes for translators with Swedish as a target language and/or a source language (Kleberg n.d.). The top menu also shows the possibilities to make chronologically delimited searches (“Kronologi”) and to identify connections between translator/s and language/s (“Språk”). SwET thus covers translations made from the language of the original work and translations done via another language, functioning as the source language for the translation to the ultimate target language, i.e., Swedish. Links to the Swedish Literature Bank (“Litteraturbanken”) and the Facebook page of the SwET are available. Finally, a general search option (“SÖK”) is offered (cf. Kleberg 2009, 173).

The current guidelines for authors of SwET articles offer information about the scope, structure, and content of articles together with a few formal guidelines.[2] Furthermore, the guidelines describe the articles in the Translators category in the following way: an article consists of “a comprehensive biography, a characterization of the translator’s work and its importance for its time and for today, a full bibliography of all the translator’s published works, including performed but not printed scripts for plays, and a portrait of the person” (Kleberg 2012, 73). There is, however, no generally available information about the principles for the selection of translators or themes to be included in the SwET (Vainiomäki 2017, 6).

According to Kleberg (2009, 181), there are, however, three more precise categories of translators that are relevant for the selection of translators presented in the SwET. These are: [1] “translators of high-prestige literature, ‘canonical translators’ […]”, [2] translators who work in the background, called “mass-producing low prestige translators […]”, and [3] “translators who have exceeded genre boundaries”. Landqvist (2019, 1–2) suggests that [1] might be viewed as important translators, since they translate high-prestige literature and their translations are, therefore, regarded with high esteem, while [2] might be regarded as important translators, since their translations of low-prestige literature may attract many readers, and thus their work is more widely read (cf. Lindqvist 2021 on a number of possible ‘star translators’ into Swedish). One tentative interpretation of [3] is that these translators are regarded as important because they exceed genre boundaries and also translate non-literary texts, e.g., non-fiction and popular science texts, and/or multimodal texts, e.g., song lyrics and comics, since articles on such topics are included in the SwET.

2 The guidelines were sent in the form of an attachment titled *Manusanvisningar för artiklar i Svenskt översättarlexikon 11 november 2015* by e-mail from editor Nils Håkanson, Svenskt översättarlexikon, to the author on November 28, 2019, as well as in the e-mail message itself.

Kleberg (2009, 181) thus attempts to clarify the meaning of "all important translators into the Swedish language […]" (Kleberg n.d.). However, Kleberg's delimitation of "potential candidates", here with the proposed categories [1]–[3], to be included in the SwET entails a certain amount of ambiguity.

2.2 Research questions

No explicit information about the selection of female and male translators in the SwET is available. It is, however, well known that translating into Swedish became an increasingly common occupation for women in the 19th century, although many of the female translators before the 20th century are unknown today (Hjelm-Milczyn 1996, 173–94; Furuland 2007, 442, 448, 453). It is also well known that female translators in Sweden have not always been given recognition or fair financial compensation for their work (Håkanson 2021, 249). Given this background, it is of great interest to clarify how the 2022 version of the SwET, released more than ten years after the launch of the encyclopaedia in 2009, describes, characterizes and evaluates female translators. This study is operationalized using the following three research questions:

> RQ (1) What is the ratio of entries about female and male translators in the SwET, and how can the ratio be explained?
>
> RQ (2) How are the partners in the sub-category Translator Couples (i.e., two translators living together), included in the SwET categories Translators and Themes, treated from a mainly quantitative perspective?
>
> RQ (3) How are the partners in the sub-category Translator Couples, included in the SwET category Translators, described, characterized and evaluated from a mainly qualitative perspective?

The use of the verbs "describe", "characterize" and "evaluate" in RQ (2) and RQ (3) is motivated by Kleberg's description of articles in the Translators category. As stated in sub-section 2.1, these SwET articles are to contain a *description* of the translator in question (a comprehensive biography, a full bibliography of the translator's published work, a portrait of the translator), a *characterization* "of the translator's work" and an *evaluation* of "[the] importance [of the translator's work] for its time and for today" (Kleberg 2012, 73).

2.3 Research setting

Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in translators and their roles in societies (cf. Pym 2009, 32; Paloposki 2013, 217), while Kaindl (2021, 24) underlines that “the history of a society – and translation is part of society – cannot be understood without the life of the individual. We need to understand both”. In my opinion, and in accordance with Dam (2013, 18), (Literary) Translator Studies is best viewed as a particular strand of Translation Studies, focusing on translators as agents in society (cf. Chesterman 2009, 13; Kaindl 2021, 3).

The study presented here is a contribution to the sociology of translators (cf. Wolf 2007; Chesterman 2009; Zheng 2017). The study also belongs to the field of translation history (cf. Rundle 2021). More precisely, it is a study of external translation history that examines a number of research questions, among them “who were the translators, where they worked, in what conditions, what was translated, from which languages *et cetera*” (Paloposki 2013, 232; see Frank 2004, 808–10, and Pięta 2016, 357–58, on external vs. internal translation history). Several ambitious printed works that focus on translators as actors, especially with English, Finnish, French, and Spanish as their respective target languages, are presented by Kaindl (2021), Paloposki (2021) and Rundle (2021).

Turning to translators with Swedish as their target language, Milczyn-Hjelms (1996) offers an overview of Swedish fictional translators until 1900 and Håkanson (2021) presents a history of translation, translations, and translators. Literary scholars also pay attention to translations and translators in Sweden. Hansson’s study (1982) of the printed translated literature in the 17thcentury includes a study of the translators in question. Furuland (2007), in her PhD on publishers, authors, and fiction booklet series in Sweden 1833–1851, also pays attention to translators. Torgerson (1982), in his PhD, focuses on translations and translators of prose fiction into Swedish during three five-year periods (1866–1870, 1896–1900, 1926–1930), while translators of prose fiction into Swedish 1866–1900 are studied in Torgerson (1996). Examples of biographies on individual Swedish translators are the biographies on the male translators Carl August Hagberg (1810–1864) and Lars Arnell (1781–1856), and the female translators Catharina Ahlgren (1734–1810) and Gunnel Vallquist (1918–2016) (Monié 2008; Monié 2013; Björkman 2006; Dahl 2021).

Among digital resources with a focus on translators, the SwET is perhaps the very first digital encyclopaedia of translators (Kleberg 2012; Kaindl 2021, 15; Paloposki 2021, 73–74). The SwET has given inspiration to other digital encyclopaedias treating translators into Danish, Dutch, German, Norwegian, both Bokmål and Nynorsk, and Turkish (Landqvist 2019, 21–22; Kaindl 2021, 15–16; Paloposki 2021, 74). Previous studies of the SwET were conducted by Vainiomäki (2017) and Landqvist (2019, 2022), and the SwET is an important resource for Håkanson (2021, 5, 329–30).

3. Research design

The SwET provides the primary material for this study. The total number of published articles in the encyclopaedia by 15 June 2022 was 494, and any possible later updates have not been considered. As stated in sub-section 2.1, the articles in the SwET are divided into the three main categories Translators, Themes, and Prizes. The number of entries in each category is 419, 52 and 23, respectively.

The secondary material for the study consists of two other Swedish digital resources. *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon – The Biographical Dictionary of Swedish Women, SKBL,* gives "access to 2,000 biographies of women who actively contributed to Swedish society" (SKBL). A number of these women have made their contributions to society as translators, either as their main occupation or as one of their occupations. The Swedish Library Information Service *LIBRIS*, "the joint catalogue of the Swedish academic and research libraries [..]", is relevant to find information about translators included in the SwET and/or the SKBL (LIBRIS 2022a; cf. Kaindl 2021, 25, on bibliographic resources and translation studies).

The procedure used to make it possible to answer RQ (1) is a standard one; the number of female and male translators in the SwET version from 15 June 2022 was counted. As pointed out in section 1, the Swedish state authority SGEA (2023) underlines that gender equality is not only about the gender equal ratio, but also attitudes, norms, values and ideals. In order to answer RQ (2) and RQ (3), the SwET version must, therefore, be examined from a more qualitative perspective.

The SwET focuses on translators' professional activities, but translators' private conditions are also described (Vainiomäki 2017, 68). One frequent type of information is that of husbands, wives and/or partners. At present, all "Translator Couples" presented in the SwET, i.e., two translators living together, have lived in heterosexual relationships (Landqvist 2019, 15–16). To identify Translator Couples, henceforth TrCs, in the encyclopaedia, keyword searches with truncated forms were conducted: "giftermål*" – "marriage; matrimony", "make*/maka*" – "spouse/s" and so on (cf. Landqvist 2019, 15–16). The Swedish keywords and English translations are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Swedish keywords (truncated forms) and their translations into English, in alphabetical order based on the former.

Swedish keywords	English translations of keywords
fru*	wife
giftermål*	marriage; matrimony
hustru*	wife
maka* (sg), makor* (pl.)	wife/s; spouse/s
make* (sg), makar* (pl.)	husband/s; spouse/s
partner*	partner
relation*	relation; relationship
sambo*	partner; cohabitant
separation*	separation
skilsmässa* (sg), skilsmässor* (pl.)	divorce/s
äkta maka* (sg), äkta makor* (pl)	wife/s; spouse/s
äkta man* (sg), äkta män* (pl.)	husband/s; spouse/s
äktenskap*	matrimony; marriage

The procedure to identify TrCs – and analyse the SwET articles in question – can be labelled as a content analysis, more specifically an inductive content analysis, where "the researcher might start from broader themes or *research questions* when analysing the material, the text is coded directly, with categories growing out of that coding" (Boréus and Bergström 2017, 24, 26, italics added). The analysis focuses on words and phrases that are used to describe, characterize and evaluate the females and males in TrCs (cf. Boréus and Bergström 2017, 26). The analysis was performed manually with a double coding "to ensure intrasubjectivity, i.e., the correlation between one´s own coding of the same texts at different points of time […]" (Boréus and Bergström 2017, 28–29; cf. Boréus and Bergström 2017, 46–49, on the pros and cons of content analysis).

The content analysis procedure performed in this study focuses on how the work of female and male translators and the possible collaboration between the partners in TrCs is described, characterized and evaluated. According to Boréus and Bergström (2017, 48), content analysis can be fruitful in studies of "power, politics, oppression […]", in this case how female and male translators, who live together, are described, characterized and evaluated. The procedure chosen will, thus, make it possible to answer RQ (2) and RQ (3).

4. Results and discussion

This section is structured in terms of RQ (1)–RQ (3) and divided into sub-sections 4.1–4.3.

4.1 Female and male translators in the SwET

As stated in sub-section 3.1, by 15 June 2022 the total number of published articles in the SwET was 494. Among the 419 individuals in the Translator category are 124 females and 295 males. The sub-category TrCs in the Themes category adds five Translator Couples, and thus five female and five male translators. The total number of individual translators in this study is therefore 429, or 129 females and 300 males (30.1% and 69.9%).[3]

However, it must be noted that several translators, in addition to the 429, appear in certain articles in the Translators category. For example, Mauritz Boheman's many translations during 1889–1902 "would be easier to understand if we can assume that his wife Ezaline Boheman was involved in them […]" (SwET Mauritz Boheman, 1858–1908). As stated in the SwET article, Ezaline Boheman also translated independently, and three translations are registered in LIBRIS, including Rudyard Kipling's children's book *Kim* (1901). The Swedish translation was first published in 1901, the 5th edition published in 1933, and an audio recording was released in 2016. (LIBRIS 2022f)

Table 2 presents information about the 129 female and the 300 male translators in the SwET who were active during the periods 1437–1699, 1700–1799, 1800–1899, 1900–1999 and 2000–2022. A number of the 429 translators were active in two centuries, such as Walborg Hedberg. During the 19th and 20th centuries, she translated literary works by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy and Maksim Gorky, among others, into Swedish (SwET Walborg Hedberg, 1859–1931). Therefore, the total number of female and male translators in Table 2 is not identical with the number of individual translators in this study – 129 females and 300 males.

Table 2. Female translators (FT) and male translators (MT) in the SwET, active during the periods 1437–1699, 1700–1799, 1800–1899, 1900–1999 and 2000–2022, absolute figures and percentages.

Main categories	FT 1437–1699	MT 1473–1699	FT 1700–1799	MT 1700–1799	FT 1800–1899	MT 1800–1899	FT 1900–1999	MT 1900–1999	FT 2000–2022	MT 2000–2022
Translators	–	9	4	25	39	117	105	200	9	27
Themes	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	5	1	1
Total, FT and MT	– (0.0%)	9 (100.0%)	4 (13.8%)	25 (86.2%)	39 (25.0%)	117 (75.0%)	110 (34.9%)	205 (65.1%)	10 (26.3%)	28 (73.7%)

3 All percentages are given to one decimal place.

Table 2 shows a very clear dominance of male translators in the SwET before the 19th century, with 34 men out of a total of 38 translators (89.5%) for the years 1437–1799. From the 19th century on, however, female translators account for a greater number and proportion of translators in the SwET. During the 19th century, the number of women is 39 of 156 (25.0%) and during the 20th century, 110 of 315 (34.9%). For the last period, 2000–2022, the number of female translators is 10 of 38 (26.3%; cf. Lindqvist 2021, 146, 149, on a group of 15 Swedish possible 'star translators', active 1990–2015, with 12 women and three men). Four complementary possible reasons that may explain the male dominance in Table 2 are proposed.

The first possible reason concerns the encyclopaedia as such, mainly the principles for including translators in the SwET, as discussed in sub-section 2.1. In addition, the principles for dealing with TrCs in individual articles in the Translators category or together in an article in Themes are not provided and are not evident (cf. sub-sections 4.2 and 4.3).

The second possible reason for the male dominance is that knowledge concerning female translators from the earlier periods may be scarce (Furuland 2007, 441–42). For instance, the SwET article about Carolina Wancke begins laconically with the statement "Little is known about the translator Carolina Wancke" (SwET Carolina Wancke, 1808–1879). Bachleitner (2013, 173) highlights two other reasons why such knowledge may be limited. Female translators may have published anonymous translations and may even have used male pseudonyms or non-gendered (cf. Torgerson 1982, 96–97). One example of the second situation is Ellen Wester, who "appeared under the pseudonym E. Weer" (SwET Ellen Wester, 1873–1930).

The third possible reason for the ratio of female and male translators in the SwET over the centuries focuses on translators' situation and conditions in Swedish society. As shown in sub-section 2.2 and Table 2, female translators became more common in Sweden from the 19th century on. They mainly translated from English, French and German, as many women were able to learn these languages in their homes, while their opportunities to learn Latin, Greek and Hebrew through formal education were limited (Akujärvi 2018, 32–33). Only three female translators of ancient literature into Swedish before 1800 are identified by Akujärvi (2018, 32, 46) – Maria Gustava Gyllenstierna, Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht and Anna Maria Lenngren – and all three are included in the SwET.

Hansson (1982) states that the printed translated literature in Swedish during the 17th century comprises a total of 318 works. These were translated by 160 known or identified individuals. All 160 were men, slightly more than half of them were clergymen and the most common source languages were German and Latin (Hansson 1982, 9–16). There are, however, a few female translators who were active before the 19th century who could have been included in the SwET. Three examples are Anna Fickesdotter Bülow/Bylow (1440s–1519), Catharina Gyllengrip (d. 1669) and Anna Catharina Wefwerstedt (1704–1753), translators of religious texts from Latin, German and Danish respectively (Hjelm-Milczyn 1996, 24; Berglund 2018; Hjelm-Milczyn 1996, 32; LIBRIS 2022d; Forselius 2018).

According to Torgerson (1996), the proportion of female translators, including those who used identified pseudonyms, among translators of prose fiction into Swedish increases from the 1880s onwards. These female translators mainly translated texts in the genres "'love and romance', 'bourgeois everyday life', 'entertainment' and 'moralizing story'" (Torgerson 1996, 14–15). As shown in Table 2, this "feminization" of the profession of translators in Sweden continues during the 20th century, and the profession is now dominated by women (Svahn 2020, 39; Lindqvist 2021, 146).

The fourth and final possible reason for the male dominance in the SwET, especially before the 19th and 20th centuries, is that female translators have performed work for which male translators have received recognition and financial compensation (cf. Bachleitner 2013, 177; Håkanson 2021, 249). For instance, Gunnar Örnulf published about 50 translations of books for children and young people, mainly during the 1910s, but "[t]here are good reasons to suspect that several of these were entirely or partly done by his wife". Three independent translations by Gerda Örnulf were published in 1913. The Örnulfs married in 1911 and divorced in 1919 (SwET Gunnar Örnulf, 1888–1935). LIBRIS reveals that the majority of Gunnar Örnulf's entries in the database until 1919 are translations, while he is mostly registered as an author in the entries from 1920 onwards (LIBRIS 2022g). The three translations by Gerda Örnulf are not to be found in LIBRIS.

4.2 "Translator Couples" in the categories Translators and Themes

Articles belonging to the sub-category "Translator Couples", TrCs, appear in the SwET categories of Translators and Themes. Table 3 provides information about the three alternative options identified: both partners in a couple are treated in separate articles in Translators or a joint one in Themes; an article in Translators is dedicated to a female translator and her male partner is acknowledged; and an article in Translators is devoted to a male translator and his female partner is acknowledged.

Table 3. TrCs in the SwET (n=45): absolute figures and percentages.

Main categories	Articles about a female and a male translator	Articles about a female translator	Articles about a male translator
Translators	10	6	24
Themes	5	–	–
Total	15 (33.3%)	6 (13.3%)	24 (53.3%)

Table 3 shows that the total number of articles about TrCs is 45. Of these, 15 can be said to reflect an equal relationship, since both partners are treated in Translators (10) or Themes (5). The situation when an article in Translators is devoted to only one party, the male (24) or female partner (6), can be said to reflect a less equal relationship. A gender equal relationship is thus found in 15 TrCs (33.3%) and an unequal one in 30 (66.7%). All TrCs are active during the 20th century and/or the 21st century, and they translate from other languages than the classical languages of Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. This reflects the situation noted in sub-section 4.1 about women, men, and translation in Swedish society from the 19th century onwards. However, scrutinizing the results of the content analysis reveals different patterns for the categories of Translators and Themes. The relationship between the men and women in the ten TrCs in Translators can be described as equal, unequal, or non-existent.

An equal relationship is exemplified by Maj and Paul Frisch: "Together the couple did several translations […]." Maj Frisch (1918–1980) translated both fiction and non-fiction, while Paul Frisch (1918–2011) focused on non-fiction. Both spouses translated from Danish, English, German and Norwegian, but Paul Frisch had a specific competence in one source language, since Norwegian was his mother tongue (SwET Maj Frisch, 1918–1980; SwET Paul Frisch, 1918–2011). The Frisch couple worked together and separately, they translated from the same source languages and their translation assignments had partly the same focus.

An example of an unequal relationship between the partners in TrCs is provided by Cilla and Eyvind Johnson. Cilla Johnson translated fiction from Danish, English, and Norwegian, both high- and low-prestige literature, and she also "initially helped her husband with translations that he had undertaken mainly for financial reasons [...]" (SwET Cilla Johnson, 1911–2002). Eyvind Johnson was an author, a member of the Swedish Academy, a recipient of the 1974 Nobel Prize in Literature and a translator of fiction in Danish, French and Norwegian (SwET Eyvind Johnson, 1900–1976). The Johnsons collaborated in some cases, but Cilla Johnson mastered current source languages better, produced many more translations and received prizes for her work (SwET Cilla Johnson, 1911–2002).

There are also TrCs where there was little or no collaboration between the partners, since the spouses focused on different translation assignments or translated from different source languages. These situations are exemplified by Brita and Johannes Edfelt and Karin and Alfred Jensen, respectively.

Brita Edfelt was a translator of English and German fiction, with an emphasis on German prose, and Johannes Edfelt was a poet, an editor of collected volumes of prose and poetry and a member of the Swedish Academy. He translated English, French, and German poetry, especially German (SwET Brita Edfelt, 1908–2006; SwET Johannes Edfelt, 1904–1997). The Edfelts translated partly from the same source languages, were awarded prizes, but focused on different genres. This fact is reflected in their joint translations of some of Bertolt Brecht's plays. Brita Edfelt described their collaboration as "Johannes took care of the poems; I took care of the rest" (SwET Brita Edfelt, 1908–2006).

Karin Jensen translated Danish, English, French, German, and Norwegian fiction and non-fiction and texts intended for adults and young people. She is especially renowned for her translations of the Canadian writer L.M. Montgomery's books in the Anne of Green Gables series (SwET Karin Jensen, 1866–1928). Alfred Jensen was a translator, an author, and a journalist. He translated from Slavic languages, both older and contemporary literature, prose, poetry as well as texts representing other genres (SwET Alfred Jensen, 1859–1921). The Jensens translated from different source languages, focused on different types of assignments, and received appreciation for their work, but only Alfred Jensen was awarded prizes for his translations (SwET Karin Jensen, 1866–1928; SwET Alfred Jensen, 1859–1921).

The five TrCs treated in joint articles in Themes had close working relationships, like Maj and Paul Frisch above, but these TrCs fulfilled translation tasks of different types and the partners sometimes had various complementary skills. The following three TrCs illustrate the different situations that were identified.

The spouses Ruth Bohman (1913–2011) and Ivan Bohman (1902–1970) were responsible for the second Swedish translation of Karl Marx's *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (1969–1978). Ivan Bohman translated volumes 1–2 and Ruth Bohman completed the translation of volume 3, a translation much discussed and widely used (SwET Ivan och Ruth Bohman). The Bohmans worked on the same extensive source text and had a mutual political commitment that lay behind their work. Maibrit Westrin (1924–2022) and Per Anders Westrin (1924–2003) translated the weekly Disney comic magazine *Donald Duck & Co* 1957–1981. The spouses translated mainly from English but also from other languages and had complementary skills. Per Anders Westrin was a schoolteacher, a psychologist, and a journalist, while Maibrit Westrin was a university teacher of French. Their translations were widely read, and they have been characterized as linguistic innovators in Swedish (SwET P A Westrin). The spouses Ivo Iliste (1935–2002) and Birgitta Göranson Iliste (b. 1947) translated modern Estonian literature. Iliste, who was born in Estonia and lived in Sweden from the age of 15, first made "a rough translation covered with question marks and comments. Then Göranson went through and cleaned up the manuscript and refined the nuances, after which the translators jointly compared the translation, sentence by sentence, with the original" (SwET Ivo Iliste och Birgitta Göranson Iliste). Like the Westrins, Ivo Iliste and Birgitta Göranson Iliste utilized their complementary competences, here related to the source and target languages.

4.3 "Translator Couples" in the category Translators

Table 3 and the SwET articles commented upon in sub-section 4.2 depict almost gender equal relationships between the partners in the 15 TrCs. However, unequal relationships are also found, since 24 articles are devoted to male translators and six to female ones. The descriptions, characterizations, and evaluations of individuals in unequal relationships are analysed in this sub-section, in relation to the rather vague general ambition for the SwET (see sub-section 2.2).

Included in Table 4 is an examination of the articles about TrCs in the Translators category, based on formulations signalling gender equality or gender inequality. Examples are "the spouses translated together", "they translated jointly" and "the translation was done in collaboration between the spouses" in which it is assumed that they show an equal working relationship, at least on the surface text level. Formulations such as "she acted as her husband's assistant" and "she helped her husband with the translations" are assumed to show an unequal relationship.

Table 4. TrCs in Translators: formulations expressing gender equality and gender inequality, absolute figures.

Formulations expressing	Articles about a female and a male translator	Articles about a female translator	Articles about a male translator
gender equality	8	4	15
gender inequality	2	–	9
Total	10	4	24

Table 4 shows that linguistic expressions of gender equality, on a text-surface level, dominate in all three categories of articles. An example in the first category is Maj and Paul Frisch in sub-section 4.2, and one in the second is Brita Björkbom, who translated three books together with her husband Carl and about 20 books on her own (SwET Brita Björkbom, 1906–1969; LIBRIS 2022c). The figures in Table 4 do not, however, tell the whole story about how female and male translators in TrCs are described, characterized and evaluated. In the case of the third category, where only the man in a TrC is treated in an article, formulations of the type "together" may instead express gender inequality, since the woman in question (so far) is only mentioned in the article about her partner. Two examples are the TrCs Karl G. and Lilian Fredriksson (1) and Gösta and Erna Knutsson (2):

(1) They lectured together, travelled together, wrote, and translated together. (SwET Karl G. Fredriksson, 1941–2015)

(2) From 1957, he often did his translations together with his wife Erna. [– – –] Pretty soon she also became a translator in her own right. (SwET Gösta Knutsson, 1908–1973)

Such examples show that the articles in question must be scrutinized in detail. Based on the information in the SwET and LIBRIS, Lilian Fredriksson and Erna Knutsson deserve more attention than they have so far received in the encyclopaedia, either in terms of separate articles in Translators or together with their husbands in Themes (LIBRIS 2022h; LIBRIS 2022e).

There are a few formulations that express an unequal relationship with respect to the woman in a translator couple being judged as the more competent translator. As shown in sub-section 4.2, one such notable example is Cilla Johnson. However, there are no similar formulations in the second category in Table 4, where only the woman in a translator couple is treated in an article. This applies, for example, to Brita Björkbom in relation to her husband Carl above. In the case of the third category, it is, however, rather common for women to be described, characterized and evaluated as assistants to their translating male partners, at least on a text-surface level.

One example is Barbro Järv's contribution to her husband Harry's translation from German of Hermann Broch's *The Death of Vergil* (1966). Harry Järv's translation work "required all his spare time for three years – and Barbro Järv's work to type the translation" (SwET Harry Järv, 1921–2009). A second example is Maud Hultenberg's contribution to her husband Hugo's translations. A daughter of the Hultenbergs has claimed that her mother never translated independently "during my father's lifetime". This claim is, however, contradicted by the SwET description in (3):

(3) Together with his wife Maud, he [Hugo Hultenberg] translated into Swedish nearly three hundred works by authors such as Stefan Zweig, Herman Melville, Anatole France, Sinclair Lewis, Maeterlinck, Romain Rolland and Rabindranath

Tagore, plus popular science works, biographies and political literature. (SwET Hugo Hultenberg, 1870–1947)

According to LIBRIS, the Hultenbergs also published a joint translation for young adults (1909) and Maud Hultenberg translated two young adults' books (1910, 1913) (LIBRIS 2022i).

The women in question are portrayed as mere assistants of their husbands. Nevertheless, the women mentioned in articles in the Translators category may be very important for their husbands' translations. For example, Birgitta Milits is said to have played a crucial role in her husband's work, especially his translation of the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg* (1999): "It was not without considerable assistance from his wife Birgitta that Milits managed to find the right language level in Swedish" (SwET Alex Milits, 1932–2012). However, Birgitta Milits is not mentioned in the information LIBRIS has about Alex Milits (LIBRIS 2022b). In the case of Ruth Edlund, it is reported that she tried to reduce her own importance for joint translations with her husband Mårten – and perhaps also her importance for the translations published under her husband's name (4):

(4) Mårten and Ruth Edlund's names appear together on seven translations between 1951–1960, most of which were detective novels, but given the husband's incredibly high output, there is reason to suspect that his wife made several contributions. In a previously mentioned interview with [Axel] Liffner [1954], however, it is only claimed that Ruth Edlund is her husband's "permanent assistant" and that she would not like to "hear about, let alone mention, her involvement". (SwET Mårten Edlund, 1913–1987)

It must be emphasized that it is not clear how much freedom SwET article authors enjoy and how the SwET research editor(s) have handled, and handle, articles in progress (cf. sub-section 2.1). Quantitative data on translations carried out by the partners in TrCs can be assessed from bibliographies in SwET articles, sometimes supplemented by information in LIBRIS. This applies for instance to the Fredrikssons and Knutssons. However, readers of the SwET may find it more difficult to assess how justified qualitative judgements about partners in specific TrCs are. Sources for the judgements are sometimes given, e.g., the Hultenbergs and Edlunds. In other cases, no such information is offered, for example, about Barbro Järv's and Birgitta Milit's contributions.

5. Conclusion

The main title of this article is "Gender equality and/or inequality?". In relation to the three RQs formulated, three situations emerge: (a) gender equality and inequality, (b) gender equality and (c) gender inequality.

Regarding RQ (1), gender inequality is obvious in the 2022 SwET, i.e., situation (c), and this is most striking for the periods 1437–1699 and 1700–1799. The ratio of female translators in the SwET increases from the 19th century and onwards. Four possible complementary reasons for these quantitative results are presented above, along with examples to support them.

As far as RQ (2) is concerned, two situations emerge; gender equality and inequality in the 2022 SwET, i.e., situation (a). There are some TrCs in the Translators and Themes categories where both the female and male translator in a Translator Couple are treated in the 2022 SwET, i.e., situation (b). However, there are several TrCs where an article is dedicated to the woman or the man, situation (c), but predominantly the man. Three types of professional relationships in TrCs are identified and discussed as equal, unequal, and non-existent.

With regard to RQ (3), both gender equality and inequality in the 2022 SwET emerge, i.e., situation (a). A number of women and men in TrCs in Translators are described, characterized and evaluated in an equal way, situation (b). In other cases, one of the partners is the main focus, situation (c), and typically the man. Several women who are mentioned in articles about their translating male partners may, however, be more important as translators on their own and/or as collaborating translators than is apparent in the 2022 SwET.

Based on the results, three proposals are presented for a more gender equal SwET, and these might also be useful for future studies of other translator encyclopaedias.

The first proposal is that more female translators should be identified and included in the SwET. As shown in section 4, resources such as the SKBL and LIBRIS can be of help here. This study also draws attention to women who are mentioned in articles about their partners. Therefore, existing articles in the Translators category may be developed into joint articles about TrCs in Themes or new articles about the females in question may be added in Translators.

A second proposal concerns translators and sexual orientation. As noted in sub-section 3.2, all TrCs in the 2022 SwET live or lived in heterosexual relationships. It is, however, not unreasonable to assume that there are translators in the SwET with other sexual orientations. Today, LGBTQI+ perspectives can be included in Translation Studies (cf. e.g., Baer and Kaindl 2018), and in some cases additional information about translators' sexual orientation may be relevant. One possible case is Eva Alexanderson (1911–1994), an author and a translator of works by, for instance, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir (SwET Eva Alexanderson, 1911–1994). According to the SKBL, Alexanderson came out as a lesbian in 1969, perhaps one of the first well-known Swedes to do so (Lindeqvist 2018). Both the SwET and the SKBL state that Alexanderson's personal life, including her sexual orientation, were of importance for her own books, but nothing is said about any possible implications for her translation tasks.

A third suggestion concerns the categories Prizes and Translators in the SwET. Svahn (2021, 264) stresses that it would be highly relevant to study the recipients of translation awards in Sweden from a gender perspective, such as what translators are deemed worthy of such awards, and is there a possible connection between awards and articles in the Translators category of the SwET? Another possibility concerns translators of literature for children and young people. For example, all translations and adaptations of L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) into Swedish, published between 1909 and 2018, have been performed by women (Vogel 2021, 1). What role do female translators play for translation of this type of literature, and what attention does the SwET pay to translators of literature for children and young people?

Finally, I would like to express a personal hope, which is that the present study gives inspiration to future studies of digital translator encyclopaedias since such resources offer many possibilities for translator-centred studies. I am convinced that such encyclopaedias may tell us much about translators as important agents in society.

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SwET = Svenskt översättarlexikon ´The Swedish Encyclopaedia of Translators´. https://litteraturbanken.se/översättarlexikon.

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Book review

Kanglong Liu AND Andrew K. F. Cheung, eds., *Translation and Interpreting in the Age of COVID-19*

**Singapore: Springer, 2023, 347 pp. Hardcover:
ISBN 9789811966798, e-book: ISBN 9789811966804.**

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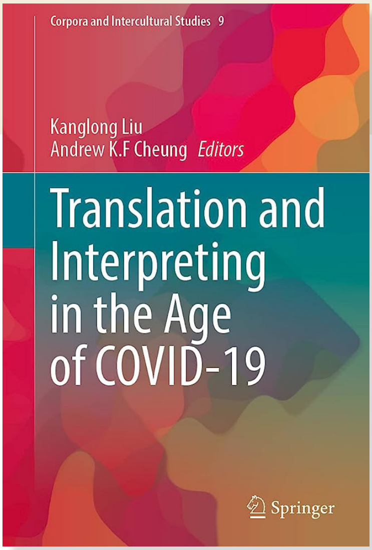

There is a plethora of scholarly literature assessing the multitude of far-reaching impacts brought on by the COVID-19 global pandemic (Declercq & Federici 2020; Gössling et al. 2020; Shrestha et al. 2020; Sikali 2020). Undoubtedly everyone, including the readers of this review article, has witnessed the spillover effect of the pandemic on the social, economic, political, psychological, familial, and interactive planes of our existence. The difficulties and challenges experienced by our individual households are felt in our everyday lives. It makes sense to focus our gaze on the more negative side of the story—but not to see the other side of our shared memories, when lockdowns and disruptive years made it easier for us to be constantly reminded of our human connections in this increasingly globalized world. Against this background, the interdisciplinary book reviewed here serves to bridge this gap and direct us toward more balanced perceptions of the obvious challenges and the hidden opportunities to reshape our world through the empowering and uniting force of languages embedded in translation and interpreting activities on institutional and personal dimensions.

The volume has a clear three-part structure. Part 1 concentrates on the reconceptualization of translation during COVID-19. Each chapter under this section covers a specific aspect or type of translation in COVID-19 communication. The type genres explored in this part include news reports, official documents, government regulations, and public communication in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual settings. The themes discussed in these chapters are stance mediation in human translation and evaluation of machine translation. In Chapter 1, Liu and Li scrutinize the Chinese–English translation of metaphors in news headlines in mainstream news outlets. Drawing on stance analyses of conceptual metaphors, framing strategies, and attitudinal graduation in COVID-19 reporting in the *Global Times* and *The Economist*, the authors highlight the embedded tension between China and the United States explicated by differences in narratives regarding health prevention measures, which reflects the fact that translation is often perceived as a politically and ideologically charged activity. In Chapter 2, Gu takes a comparative approach to examine multilingual versions of texts translated by government institutions and the private sector in public health communication. The author emphasizes the important role translation has played in promoting public health in multicultural contexts. In Chapter 3, Cheung critiques the general perceptions of Chinese translation in the United Kingdom. By shedding light on the existence of other Chinese language variations in written communication, the author underscores the importance of engaging the traditional Chinese audience in public health communication. In Chapter 4, Siu evaluates the quality of COVID-related machine translation and showcases the usefulness of machine translation in public health emergencies.

Part 2 concentrates on the reconceptualization of interpreting during COVID-19. This part adopts a context-specific approach, with each chapter addressing a particular aspect of interpreting activities embedded in a given mode or setting (consecutive or simultaneous), incorporating balanced perspectives of service users and service providers, both institutional and individual. The issues addressed in this part include 1) teamwork on virtual platforms, 2) technical configuration, 3) humanitarian interpreters in crisis communication, 4) institutional interpreting admission exams at the United Nations, and 5) location and presence, interpreting from home or a hub. In Chapter 5, Cheung assesses the accuracy of numbers in remote simultaneous interpreting. Drawing on interpreting performance data collected from an experiment, the author finds that hub-based interpreters perform better than home-based interpreters, as evidenced by the skillful use of approximation strategies when dealing with numbers. In Chapter 6, Buján and Collard investigate conference interpreters' perceptions of remote interpreting. Drawing on survey data collected from 849 respondents from nineteen countries, the authors reveal new and flexible methods adopted by interpreters to handle remote interpreting assignments because many interpreters in the private market have voiced positive views on the future of remote simultaneous interpreting as a "necessary evil" that will remain (7). In Chapter 7, Diur and Ruiz Rosendo evaluate the changes in admission tests for conference interpreters at the United Nations. Based on archival analysis and personal experience, the authors conclude with a context-specific description of challenges related to working in COVID-impacted institutional settings. In Chapter 8, Ruiz Rosendo and Radicioni shift attention to COVID-afflicted humanitarian aid settings. The authors pique readers' interest by enriching the understanding of the emerging area of translation and interpreting studies. In Chapter 9, Seresi and Láncos elucidate the inner working of teamwork in remote simultaneous interpreting between human interpreters. Drawing on interview data, the authors identify the tendency of non-engagement or collaboration in this particular mode, considering technical difficulties and operability. However, interpreters have also been capable of devising alternative coping strategies for competent and ethically aware performance. In Chapter 10, Giustini explores the sociological aspect of technology-enabled remote interpreting activities in response to COVID-19. Drawing on analyses of industry sources and market surveys, the author invites critical reflection on technology-mediated communication by drawing several emerging issues to readers' attention.

Part 3 touches on the teaching aspect of translation and interpreting during COVID-19. The themes and topics explored in this part include 1) students' perceptions and experience in hybrid classrooms, 2) space, power, social presence, and culture-related multimodal learning, 3) educational design, learning activities, and assessment in remote learning and teaching mode, 4) preferences of instruction mode for graduate-level programs: in-person versus remote, 5) technology-empowered teaching design using the application Gather, and 6) computer-assisted interpreting tools. In Chapter 11, Liu et al. evaluate students' perceptions of hybrid teaching during COVID. By analyzing survey and interview data, the authors find that most students could benefit more in hybrid mode, despite technological limitations. In Chapter 12, Tsai and Fan propose the notion of social presence in translation and interpreting teaching by exploring students' perceptions of online learning experiences. In Chapter 13, Hodáková and Perez conduct a case study of educators and learners at Slovak universities. Using survey and interview instruments, the authors reveal the strengths and limitations of the remote teaching mode in translation and interpreting studies. In Chapter 14, Sawyer investigates graduate students' attitudes toward in-person and remote learning. Based on focus group studies, the author shows that students prefer the preservation of an online component because the online mode provides more flexibility for them to manage their studies. In Chapter 15, Ho and Zou explore the feasibility of implementing technology-assisted educational design in online consecutive and simultaneous interpreting teaching. By using the proximity-based platform Gather, the authors found that most participants expressed positive views regarding the use of features to overcome the limitations of Zoom and other video-conferencing platforms. In the last chapter, Zhao reviews the role of computer-assisted interpreting and training applications in pre-task and in-task learning activities and points to the future use of assistive technologies in teaching settings and beyond.

The book is written in a very accessible style with academic rigor. With a diverse readership in mind, one clear strength of this book is its culturally and linguistically inclusive approach to emerging trends in professional activities and teaching settings, marked by the versatile use of methodological tools. The book boldly embraces linguistic diversity and cultural-geographic inclusion, including Slovak, Chinese, and English and language variations in North America, Europe, and Asia.

The book contributes to the reconceptualization of translation and interpreting activities embedded in crisis communication and the redesign of teaching in training and formal education settings. Conceptually, the edited volume highlights the less-articulated social commitments, civic engagements, and responsibilities of translation and interpreting as a tool to promote social justice and linguistic equity in ethnically and culturally diverse societies. For example, the stance embraced by many contributors to the book is the role of translation and interpreting as a catalyst for social changes in public health communication. This role is manifested through appropriate translation and interpreting activities conducted by competent and ethically aware professionals in a culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive manner. The benefits created by advocating the social function of translation and interpreting become evident in increased public health awareness, enhanced pandemic preparedness, and mitigated risks in some regions.

Methodologically, the contributors to this volume show the immense potential resulting from the cross-fertilization of research methods in neighboring disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. These instruments and tools include but are not limited to corpora, ethnographic interviews, anthropological inquiries, and critical discourse analysis.

From the teaching perspective, several educator-scholars in translation and interpreting studies have enriched the understanding of technology-assisted teaching experiences in various formats of course delivery: online, face-to-face, or hybrid. By highlighting immediacy, privacy, intimacy, and democracy in technology-enabled co-teaching and learning experiences, the contributors have shared their views on the necessity of technological familiarization and orientation toward soft or transferrable skill-building in the educational context. For example, a common perspective held by the authors is that future translators and interpreters will no longer merely be language professionals with employable language knowledge and specialized expertise that enable them to work in different modes (consecutive or simultaneous) and modalities of interpreting (audio-only or audiovisual), particularly in remote settings. In global pandemic communication, many conference interpreters must include time-management skills because interpreters might be requested to work remotely across different time zones for live speeches and pre-recorded speeches. Therefore, the book leaves readers with some critical reflections on re-imagining their role as human translators in the post-pandemic world, which is operating under constant advances in artificial intelligence and automation.

Because of its discussion of these issues, this book is a useful reference for educators, linguists, present and future translators and interpreters, scholars, and researchers in applied linguistics, translation and interpreting studies, global development, social justice, and beyond.

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