Article scientifique   Article   2024     Published version   Open Access

‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒

# Exploring positionality management in complex interpreting interactions: A simulation method

‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒ ‒

Martin, Conor Henry; Ruiz Rosendo, Lucia

# Exploring positionality management in complex interpreting interactions: a simulation method / Análisis de la gestión del posicionamiento en interacciones con interpretación complejas: propuesta de un método de simulación

**Conor Martin**
*Faculty of Translation and Interpreting, University of Geneva,* Switzerland
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9455-3121

**Lucía Ruiz Rosendo**
*Faculty of Translation and Interpreting, University of Geneva,* Switzerland
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8341-7623

**Abstract:** Interpreting Studies research has considered the challenges faced by interpreters in a variety of contexts. In such domains, interpreters are expected to keep their reactions in check, which means that they must, often unconsciously, confront, understand, and manage their positionality. However, interpreters rarely receive specific training on how to manage their positionality. Against this backdrop, this article will detail ongoing work whose objective is to examine if university-level interpreter training leads to positionality management in graduates. The study aims to use conference-trained interpreters as a lens through which to understand interpreter positionality in the light of the complexities and challenges present in various interpreting contexts. The article focuses on the development of a simulation method, particularly the creation and design of scenarios.

**Keywords:** PSI, interpreter's positionality, demand-control schema, interpreter training.

How to cite this article / ¿Cómo citar este artículo?

**Resumen:** La investigación en el ámbito de los estudios de interpretación ha examinado los retos a los que se enfrentan los intérpretes en distintos contextos. En estos contextos, se espera que los intérpretes sepan controlar sus reacciones, lo que significa que tienen que afrontar, entender y gestionar su posicionamiento, a menudo de forma inconsciente. Sin embargo, durante la formación no se suele enseñar a los intérpretes a gestionar su posicionamiento. El presente artículo describirá un estudio en curso cuyo objetivo es analizar si la formación en interpretación a nivel universitario permite a los diplomados gestionar su posicionamiento. El estudio se centra en el análisis de las reacciones de intérpretes de conferencias para entender cómo gestionan su posicionamiento ante las complejidades y retos presentes en distintos contextos interpretativos. El artículo se centrará en el método de simulación, concretamente en la creación y el diseño de los escenarios.

**Palabras clave:** ISP, posicionamiento del intérprete, esquema de demanda y control, formación de intérpretes.

---

**Information on author contribution (50 – 100 each):**

**Conor Martin**
Conor Martin is a PhD candidate at the University of Geneva and is supervised by Lucía Ruiz Rosendo. This paper details the methodology of the second data collection phase of his doctoral research. The methodology and analysis of this stage, as well as the preliminary stage, were designed by him, in consultation with and under the supervision of Lucía Ruiz Rosendo. For this paper, Conor Martin drafted the bulk of section 2 and the entirety of sections 3 and 4.

**Lucía Ruiz Rosendo**
Lucía Ruiz Rosendo is an associate professor at the University of Geneva and supervises Conor Martin's doctoral work. Together with Conor Martin, Lucía Ruiz Rosendo decided on the scope and approach of the paper. Lucía Ruiz Rosendo drafted section 1 and participated in the drafting of section 2 and 3.1.2, which she thoroughly reworked during the revision. Lucía Ruiz Rosendo supervised the consistency of all sections and the relevance of the references, as well as the aspects to be included in section 4.

---

## 1. Introduction

Interpreting Studies literature is paying increasing attention to interpreting in challenging contexts, and specifically to the role, agency, neutrality, impartiality, and positionality of interpreters in such contexts. Drawing on the consideration that interpreting is a situated practice, existing literature advocates for interpreter training that is specific to the context (e.g. Howes, 2018; Liu & Hale, 2018), equipping interpreters with the skills necessary to balance professional requirements, stakeholder expectations, and personal beliefs. This call stems, in part, from the findings of several studies, according to which, untrained interpreters, identified as the largest group of interpreters in many such contexts, do not always fulfil the requirements and expectations of users and employers (Berk-Seligson, 2009; Hale et al., 2019; Mulayim, Lai & Norma, 2015). Furthermore, the recruitment of untrained interpreters holds back the professionalisation of interpreting and the consistency of standards (Martínez Gómez, 2015). While it is true that context-specific courses do respond to the needs on the ground and, in many cases, provide crucial training, existing literature is silent on the role played by technique-focussed training in conference interpreting provided by universities, and whether this specific training allows graduates to balance expectations.

The methodology proposed in this paper forms part of an ongoing doctoral thesis which seeks to respond to the research question "does university-level conference interpreter training lead to positionality management in graduates?" and the sub questions "are conference-trained interpreters aware of their own positionality?" and "how do conference-trained interpreters manage their positionality in a positionally challenging context?" The study aims to understand whether conference-trained interpreters have an awareness of their positionality and how they manage it, whilst attempting to understand if conference interpreter training influences this. Drawing on Dean and Pollard's Demand-Control Schema (2011), a two-stage qualitative study was conceived, consisting of an initial exploration of different challenging interpreting contexts through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts. This exploration informed the creation of three semi-scripted simulations, allowing for an examination of how conference-trained interpreters react to and deal with challenging interpreting material in light of personal, professional, and stakeholder expectations. The present article describes the development of the simulation method, particularly the context-exploration, design, and execution phases of the development of the scenarios and post-task interview.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Interpreting in challenging contexts

In recent years, interpreting in challenging contexts has received increased attention in Interpreting Studies literature. These contexts include police interviews (Gallai, 2019; Määttä, 2015), asylum hearings (Bergunde & Pöllabauer, 2019; Inghilleri, 2003), human rights missions (Barghout & Ruiz Rosendo, 2022; Ruiz Rosendo, Barghout & Martin, 2021), humanitarian contexts (Delgado Luchner & Kherbiche, 2019; Ruiz Rosendo, 2023), legal proceedings (e.g. Hale, 2014), medical contexts (Gez & Schuster, 2018; Radicioni & Ruiz Rosendo, 2022a, 2022b), military contexts (Ruiz Rosendo, 2020; Snellman, 2016), refugee settings (Jiménez Ivars & León Pinilla, 2018; Todorova, 2016, 2017, 2019), and NGOs (Delgado Luchner, 2018; Tesseur, 2018), among other studies. Research has also been carried out on interpreters who work with victims of trauma (Bancroft, 2017; Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012; Mehus & Becher, 2016; Valero Garcés, 2017), and interpreters' roles within crisis translation

(Federici and O'Brien, 2020; O'Brien & Cadwell, 2017). These contexts are generally, albeit not exclusively, characterised by interpretation outside of a conference booth, high stakes for at least one participant, and often (highly) asymmetrical power dynamics.

The findings of these studies have led scholars to move further away from the conduit model, considering the interpreter instead as an active stakeholder, along the lines of the studies previously carried out by authors such as Roy (1992, 1999), Wadensjö (1992, 1998) and Angelelli (2004). More specifically, the recognition of the interpreter's agency has brought about a re-examination of concepts such as the principles of neutrality and impartiality, which some consider "core tenets" (Delgado Luchner & Kherbiche, 2018, p. 3). These are terms which appear frequently, and at times interchangeably, in literature and in codes of practice (e.g. Balogh & Salaets, 2015; Balounová, 2021; Bancroft, 2005; Phelan, Rudvin, Skaaden and Kermit, 2019; Prunč and Setton, 2015; Snellman, 2016). Other related terms are those of "directly interpreted interaction" and "mediated interaction" (Hale, 2007, 2008; Skaaden, 2019), used to refer, respectively, to an approach where the interpreter renders what the users communicate to each other in the most accurate way possible, versus an approach in which the interpreter acts as a gatekeeper or advocate to one of the parties and makes decisions regarding what to render or not. The discussion of the interpreter's neutrality and agency has also been the focus of studies on conference interpreting. Giustini (2019), for example, found that conference interpreters use their professional skills to affect communication, redressing the traditional division between emotion/reason and reframing the emotions that speakers convey. She also found that interpreters face contradictions between the deontological expectations of remaining invisible and their individual needs to be visible to secure work continuity and avoid self-effacement. Despite this need for visibility, however, interpreters actively engage in invisibility as a demonstration of competence (Giustini, 2023). In their work, interpreters constantly make decisions not just about linguistic choices, but about how to approach challenging content in light of professional standards, stakeholder expectations, and their own positionality, a fundamental notion in this call for new understandings of interpreting ethical principles. To do so, they use "discretionary power", defined by Tiselius (2019, p. 750) as "the ability of professionals to exercise their own professional judgment in carrying out and making decisions within the rules and guidelines governing a profession".

Challenging settings are not devoid of ethical and psychological implications. Bancroft (2017) demonstrates that a significant majority of interpreters working for victims and refugees report being emotionally impacted by their work, affecting their impartiality, and leading to situations of burnout and vicarious trauma. This is compounded when they work in adversarial situations. Interpreters in conflict situations—who already dedicate significant resources to the cognitive and affective demands of their task—can also find themselves having to breach what Tryuk describes as the principles of invisibility, impartiality, neutrality, and faithfulness (2017, p. 191). This habituates them to experiences that fail to conform to their schematic beliefs about their role. In such contexts, interpreters are forced to "confront their personal, political and professional beliefs" (Gallai, 2019, p. 222), i.e. to understand and manage their positionality, which is often visible in and relevant to the interpreted encounter. However, how interpreters develop and engage in such positionality management has not yet been the subject of sustained inquiry.

## 2.2. Challenges to positionality

While these contexts pose multiple challenges to interpreters, including linguistic and other interpreting challenges, of particular interest to this paper are challenges related to the interpreter's positionality. Recognising that it is a broad term, and building on work by Mullings (1999), Ficklin and Jones (2009), Delgado Luchner and Kherbiche (2018) and Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2019), in this article we understand positionality to refer to a matrix of complex, interlinked factors arising from an individual's experiences, background, education and social identity, conditioning their personal worldview and influencing their reactions and behaviours. Positionality responds to changes in external factors (including the work environment) and manifests itself differently in each context depending on other stakeholders (each with their own equally complex positionality). The specific way in which an interpreter's positionality interacts with that of participants in the encounter may result in the interpreter's decisions being influenced by participants, or in the interpreter influencing the encounter itself. We contend that interpreters are expected to minimise such potential influence, in other words, to manage their positionality, regardless of the context in which they work, but particularly where their positionality is challenged. Positionality management, therefore, involves understanding one's own positionality and its impact on decision-making. In interpreting, this goes beyond decisions about linguistic choices, including how to approach the challenging content, how to manage interlocutors, and how to balance personal, professional and stakeholder expectations.

The interpreter's positionality in challenging settings is complex. For example, interpreters who work with migrants using host countries' public services often share the language and culture of the former but live in the host country, which means that they also speak and are immersed in the local language and culture. Some of them are heritage speakers or members of a diaspora; this is often the case of interpreters who speak minority languages. In other cases, the interpreters' culture and main language is that of the host country; they have learned the migrants' languages but do not necessarily understand their culture in all settings. In addition, not all interpreters working in public services are trained as such and are often recruited because they speak the relevant languages. Whilst recourse to such interpreters may be necessary for a variety of (typically linguistic) reasons, these ad-hoc interpreters are often perceived as being unaware of codes of ethics and practice and potentially lacking in the core skills necessary to fulfil their role as interpreters and manage their positionality. It is, however, unclear whether such untrained interpreters are considered problematic because they lack interpreting skills, ethics training, contextual awareness, or all three.

The prevalence of such interpreters, combined with the challenging nature of the contexts in question and the significant impact interpreters can have upon them, has led to calls for context-specific training (Baker & Maier, 2011; Jiménez Ivars & León Pinilla, 2018; Penn & Watermeyer, 2014) and the provision of such programmes is increasingly documented. These calls, in conjunction with the general discourse surrounding untrained interpreters, would appear to indicate that interpreters' difficulties in meeting expectations are the result of a lack of training. Whilst training is, of course, necessary to prepare interpreters for their work, there is evidence to suggest that some of the difficulties that interpreters face are inherent in the context in question (Delgado Luchner & Kherbiche, 2018; Määttä, 2015). Furthermore, calls for training, although welcome, rarely specify whether training is required in interpreting skills, in ethics, in the specific context, or in all three (and if so, to what degree in each case). Additionally, interpreters are expected to manage their positionality when working (or "exercise discretion" (Skaaden, 2019)). Consequently,

even with training, interpreters may still face significant challenges, raising questions as to what training is required for interpreters to help them manage their positionality, and, ultimately, as to whether positionality management that satisfies professional and stakeholder expectations can reasonably be achieved. Where training programmes have been developed, they are often designed to respond to the needs and challenges of a highly specific context or organisation and tend to be delivered in situ. Consequently, these programmes tend to focus on providing training in ethics or in contextual knowledge, in contrast to the interpreting techniques and skills typically taught in university programmes. However, acknowledging that effective and long-standing tertiary-level education is provided in public service interpreting and other interpreting contexts, there is little to no work which considers whether currently available, degree-level interpreter training programmes in conference interpreting skills provide graduates with the necessary skills to manage their positionality in such challenging contexts. Our larger study aims precisely to address this gap by explicitly considering whether training in interpreting, provided by postgraduate qualifications, encourages the acquisition of positionality management in interpreters, even without explicit targeted training in this concept, and asks whether it is reasonable to expect positionality management of interpreters in contexts where their positionality is inherently challenged and put under stress.

## 3. Designing a Methodology

### 3.1. Research context

#### 3.1.1. The Demand-Control Schema

A useful framework to understand how challenges and positionalities interact with the real world is the Demand-Control Schema (DC-S), as put forward by Dean and Pollard (2001, 2011). The schema, adapted by these authors to examine sign-language interpreters from original studies on work, stress and occupational health (Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990), operates on the premise that "any factor in the assignment that rises to a level of significance where it impacts interpreting work" can be classed as a demand (Dean & Pollard, 2011, p. 162), and anything that the interpreter does to respond to that demand can be classed as a control, "recognizing that not responding also is a type of response" (Dean & Pollard, 2011, p. 162). An interpreter can be confronted with a range of demands arising from an array of sources, which Dean and Pollard refer to as a "constellation of demands" (2011, p. 164). These demands are shaped by factors including the interpreter's positionality, the physical characteristics of the encounter, and the other participants (and their positionalities), among others. Crucially, this means that not all interpreters experience demands equally, and that this experience is contingent on the personal and professional background of the interpreter, as well as their personality traits and previous experience and training.

The methodology designed for this study is grounded in this Demand-Control Schema. Whilst the DC-S is just one of several lenses through which to analyse complex interpreting scenarios, this framework was chosen for several reasons: principally, the DC-S recognises the complexity of demands and controls and allows for a closer examination of demands related to the interpreter's positionality compared to other methods; furthermore, whilst it does not exclude them, DC-S does not restrict analysis to an examination of linguistic controls

or interpreting decisions (e.g. omissions, use of first/third person, turn management). We maintain that using an existing framework reduces the proliferation of duplicative terminologies, and therefore use DC-S terminology throughout this paper.

### 3.1.2. Simulations

This paper describes the simulation method used for the main data collection phase of the doctoral study described in the introduction. Simulations have been employed for many years in various fields, particularly in medicine, and are useful where direct observation is not possible (Cook et al., 2011; Dahnberg, 2023; Fernández Pérez, 2015) or where the researcher wishes to control aspects of the encounter (Cheng et al., 2014). Additionally, simulations are often used where a training aspect is present in the study. The simulated scenarios in this study build on previous work in Interpreting Studies using this method, most notably by Gany et al. (2007), Hale et al. (2017), and Krystallidou et al. (2018). Other Interpreting Studies authors who have also used similar approaches in their work are Arumí Ribas and Vargas-Urpí (2017), Hale et al. (2019), Herring (2018, 2019), Tiselius and Englund Dimitrova (2019, 2021), and Iacono and Pasch (2023). More specifically, the re-enactment of real situations was already an input used by Arumí Ribas and Vargas-Urpí (2017) and Hale et al. (2019) in their studies to identify strategies in PSI and assess interpreter performance in police interviews, respectively. Contrary to the latter study, we decided not to compare two groups of participants in that our objective was not to compare trained and untrained interpreters' performance, but to examine how conference-trained interpreters manage their positionality. In particular, Arumí Ribas and Vargas-Urpí's study (2017) shares similarities with our study in its design (see section 3.3 below), although it has a different objective. Similar to our study, Arumí Ribas and Vargas-Urpí had interpreters interpret three dialogues and conducted a retrospective interview with them afterwards. These authors also include in their design a series of "rich points", defined as "speech segments associated with peak demands on the interpreter's problem-solving capacities" (p. 124), with a view to understanding the "strategies" that interpreters use in each case. The "rich points" are similar in nature to our demands, and the "strategies" they examine are similar to our controls.

Our study is also inspired by studies employing post-task interviews using retrospective process tracing methods (see Herring, 2019), which have been mostly used in the field of conference interpreting and much less in PSI (see Herring & Tiselius, 2020, for a thorough examination of these methods and what they entail). Therefore, an interview (see Appendix 2), which followed the same protocol consistently across participants with a scripted set of instructions, was held with the participants immediately after the simulations. The interview focussed on the immediately preceding task to elucidate the participant's processing during their performance. These post-task interviews were used to examine the interpreters' monitoring, defined by Tiselius and Englund Dimitrova (2023, p. 315) as "a cognitive process through which they observe, evaluate, and take actions relating to their own cognitive processing and that of the other participants in the interpreting event".

### 3.2. Participants

This study aims to consider how interpreters manage their positionality by examining specifically the impact of postgraduate training in interpreting skills and techniques, as provided in conference interpreting qualifications. Rooted in the belief that all interpreting is interpreting, whilst not ignoring nor seeking to undermine the specificities inherent in each individual interpreting context and recognising that interpreting encounters which pose a challenge to positionality often fall under the umbrella of PSI, the population we chose to

examine in this study is that of interpreters who have completed conference interpreter training. We refer to such interpreters as "conference-trained interpreters", rather than "conference interpreters" to reflect the fact that the training an interpreter has received does not oblige them to work in that context alone. Whilst this might appear to be a contradiction, our data reveal that, in addition to the fact that many of the challenges present in PSI exist across challenging contexts, many conference-trained interpreters work in PSI contexts, specifically, and in challenging contexts, more broadly, throughout their career. Furthermore, since we are particularly interested in the potential impact of interpreter training, it is worth mentioning that conference interpreting training is, generally, high-level (usually MA) and largely more uniform and homogenous than other kinds of interpreting training. The project seeks to use conference-trained interpreters as a lens through which to understand interpreter positionality in general, particularly in light of the complexities and challenges present in various interpreting contexts. The method proposed here, however, would not require a population of conference-trained interpreters for future studies and could be used to find interesting results with a range of populations.

### 3.3. Procedure

Data collection for the project took place in two phases. In the first phase, we engaged in content exploration to address knowledge gaps. The second and main data collection phase of the project involved having conference-trained interpreters participate in a series of simulated challenging interpreting contexts, where they were called upon to interpret a conversation between two confederates[1] in three PSI contexts. Subsequent to the completion of all three scenarios, participants took part in a semi-structured interview with the first author. The entire methodology is described in detail below.

#### 3.3.1. Stage 1: Preliminary data collection and content exploration

The study's main data collection phase relies on the design of authentic scenarios, within the limits of what is practically and ethically feasible. This follows recommendations from Kadrić, who makes it clear that simulations must have "authenticity and credibility" (2017, p. 6), and is in line with previous studies based on the conduction of role plays, such as Arumí Ribas and Vargas-Urpí (2017). In a similar vein, Delgado Luchner and Kherbiche, speaking about the field of humanitarian interpreting, make it clear that scenario design "requires a deep familiarity with the humanitarian field" (2019, p. 260); in our view, this can be applied to any challenging context. To achieve authenticity in our scenarios, we decided to undertake an initial exploratory stage in order to complement the authors' knowledge base, specifically regarding the kinds of challenging scenarios described in section 2.1. This aimed to address potential knowledge gaps by relying on the deep familiarity which various subject matter experts (SMEs) have with their respective fields. Content exploration consisted of semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 1) with 9 subject matter experts recruited from the personal and professional contacts of the authors. The experts all had experience (as researchers, interpreters, or both) of challenging interpreting contexts. All 9 SMEs were currently or formerly practising interpreters: 2 researched challenging contexts but did not practice in them, 5 researched the challenging contexts in which they (had) practised, and the final 2 SMEs were practitioners only. Their experience covered a range of contexts, including humanitarian interpreting, medical (hospital) interpreting, interpreting in

---

[1]    "Confederates in a research sense are individuals who participate in an experiment, yet are not the ones being observed by the researcher" (Lambertz-Berndt & Allen, 2017, p. 223).

education, police and court interpreting, and field missions for international organisations (on human rights and other matters, including contexts falling into the areas just mentioned). Interviews were conducted in early 2020 via videocall (given the global health crisis), lasted between 1 hour and 1 hour 30 minutes, and were subsequently transcribed with the aid of automatic transcription software (sonix.ai and otter.ai) and post-edited (with the exception of one participant who exercised their right to refuse recording – their transcript was reconstructed from notes after the conclusion of the interview and verified for accuracy by the participant in question). SMEs were asked to provide a general overview of the contexts with which they had experience, including the kinds of individuals working as interpreters in the encounter, the logistics of the proceedings of a typical encounter in that context, and, finally, the challenges in such contexts (typical challenges, difficult challenges, challenges to positionality (bias, desire to intervene, strong emotions)).

Analysis was undertaken to identify the demands present in each interviewee's respective context, with a specific interest in demands on interpreters' positionality (e.g. wanting to provide assistance to people but being unable to do so). Whilst demands related to the act of interpreting were mentioned during the interviews and noted (e.g. negotiating dialect differences in the source language), they are of lesser interest to this study, and therefore will not be discussed in detail. Responses to the interviews were first coded according to the corresponding interview question, and then recoded according to the overarching demand (which we have termed "macrodemands") described in each case. This exercise sought to look at the underlying challenge, ignoring the specificities of the context. For example, the macrodemand "managing one's role in the moment" deals with situations where an interpreter must decide on whether or not to step outside of, maintain or insist on their role, and covers equally, for example, deciding whether or not to accede to requests to summarise / neutralise emotionally difficult material as well as deciding whether or not to make explicit the fact that one participant is uncomfortable with the way the encounter is proceeding despite the fact they have not verbalised it. "Dealing with one's inability to directly help beneficiaries" covers equally interpreters on field missions being surrounded by members of the local population who feel that the organisation the interpreter works for owes or has promised them assistance, and interpreters working in legal or medical contexts where the beneficiary asks the interpreter to influence a decision in their favour. Further explanations are provided in Table 1. Our set of macrodemands was arranged in order of frequency and then collapsed into four higher-level categories confirming the categories of demands described by Dean and Pollard (2001): interpersonal, intrapersonal, environmental, and interpreting demands.[2] The results of this analysis demonstrate that, at a macro level, many demands are common across the various challenging contexts represented by the experts. Whilst the demands might be expressed differently in each context, the underlying demand on the interpreter remains the same. Table 1 (below) contains some of the most commonly mentioned macrodemands and their associated categories. Interpreting demands are not included.

---

[2]    Dean and Pollard refer to "linguistic" (2001, p. 4) and "paralinguistic" (2011, p. 162) demands. Here, we have expanded this category to include demands related to the act of interpreting which are not strictly (para)linguistic, e.g. running out of note paper, not having a colleague present, or not being able to hear the speaker properly, among others.

| Macrodemand | Explanation | Category |
|---|---|---|
| Managing one's role in the moment. | Dealing with situations which may encourage the interpreter to step outside of the interpreter's role (as they understand it). | Intrapersonal |
| Participants' behaviour. | Dealing with any behaviour displayed by participants, including strong emotions, aggression, or incoherence as a result of a lack of education. | Interpersonal |
| Dealing with one's inability to directly help beneficiaries. | Managing situations where interpreters are asked to help a beneficiary and are unable to do so (either practically or otherwise). | Intrapersonal |
| Difficult working conditions. | Long days, poor acoustic conditions, difficult environments, lack of time or material to prepare. | Environmental |
| Creating professional distance. | Dealing with situations where it is easy to become invested in achieving a positive outcome for one or more participants. | Intrapersonal |

*Table 1: Macrodemands and their categories*

Having ordered the demands by frequency, the next task was to design the scenarios. Our aim in this phase was to strive for what Thomas terms as "representation", whereby "findings based on interviews would be expected to convey key features of participants' realities" (2017, p. 30). To do so, we identified which demands could be reproduced or prompted in a simulated context. This was a significant filter: many frequently mentioned demands could not feasibly be reproduced in a simulated context. This was perhaps most obvious for environmental demands (e.g., demands relating to sounds, smells, and physical infrastructure, or the overall feeling of tension and exhaustion that was frequently mentioned by experts), but held true also for demands which might have caused trauma in participants (the latter were adapted to fit within ethical parameters). A further set of demands was classed as unpromptable, i.e. whilst the demands may arise during the scenarios, there was nothing we could include in the script that would definitively prompt that demand for all interpreters. This was often the case for intrapersonal demands, e.g. "dealing with one's inability to directly help beneficiaries", which was referenced by almost all experts but in response to very different stimuli, and could not, therefore, be reliably prompted in our scenarios. Nonetheless, we hoped to capture any such demands through observation of the scenarios and during the post-task interview.

### 3.3.2. Stage 2: Design phase

Three simulated challenging scenarios and a post-task interview were drafted. Scenarios were drafted based on experiences recounted by SMEs in the preceding phase to ensure plausibility. Plausibility was verified in the piloting phase and commented on organically by the majority of participants in the post-task interview. Each scenario consisted of a conversation (via the interpreter participant) between two confederates. One interlocutor in each scenario was a Spanish-speaking "beneficiary", and the other an English-speaking "authority" figure. An additional beneficiary was included in the third scenario to trigger certain controls in the interpreter; this confederate spoke little, and the scenario remained a dialogue between the main beneficiary and the authority. English and Spanish were chosen as both languages are understood by both authors, therefore avoiding the risks of using interpreters to understand data (Ficklin & Jones, 2009). A power imbalance was deliberately created through the roles played by the confederates: the beneficiary was a low-power participant (a detainee, a patient, and a parent in Scenario 1, 2 and 3, respectively) and the

authority a high-power participant, (an NGO representative, a doctor, and a school vice-principal in Scenario 1, 2 and 3, respectively) in line with descriptions provided by experts in the preliminary phase. The power imbalance was reinforced in the dialogue through the narrative of the scenarios, which, in each case, consisted of the beneficiary requesting something from the authority.

The scenarios are organised around a series of "control points" (CPs), i.e. an explicit demand requiring the interpreter to employ controls. Each of the scenarios contains four control points, reflecting the macrodemands identified in the content exploration stage. We limited the selection to those demands that could be prompted and feasibly reproduced, in line with the analysis of the preliminary data. A suitable challenging context was chosen into which we would embed the demands; since demands were shown to be common across contexts, a variety of PSI contexts were chosen. The scenario descriptions below (not including the control points) were sent to participants in advance of their participation:

**Scenario 1:** A representative of a fictitious NGO *KeepSafe*, which is concerned about the mental health of detainees, is undertaking a routine meeting with a detainee who has not had access to their child for some time. The detainee is being held in a detention centre and has been detained due to their immigration status in the country. The NGO representative is not a medical nor mental health expert.

CP 1: There is no chair for interpreter.

CP 2: The detainee expresses suicidal thoughts.

CP 3: The NGO representative reacts callously to the detainee.

CP 4: The detainee pleads directly with the interpreter.

**Scenario 2:** A follow-up medical appointment is taking place between a patient and a doctor in a hospital. This is not the first time that these two have met, but it is the first time that an interpreter has been present. In this appointment, the doctor informs the patient that they have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes following a blood test. The doctor explains the diagnosis and will explain the next steps to the patient.

CP 1: The patient engages the interpreter in conversation (unrelated to the consultation).

CP 2: The patient asks the interpreter to explain the doctor's technical language.

CP 3: The doctor asks the interpreter to explain the treatment directly to the patient.

CP 4: The patient confides in the interpreter that they don't have insurance.

**Scenario 3:** Two Latino parents are visiting the vice-principal of their children's primary school to enquire about the possibility of holding an event for Children's Day (*Día del niño*) towards the end of the spring term. The parents have recently moved to the area and are new to the school. Both also belong to a fictitious cultural organisation, *Latinos por el mundo*, and speak to the VP with the organisation's support. Through the organisation, they have requested an interpreter be present.

CP 1: The parents speak over one another.

CP 2: The vice-principal asks the interpreter to summarise a long turn.

CP 3: The vice-principal makes culturally insensitive remarks.

CP 4: One parent interrupts the other.

The success of these simulated scenarios relied on the active participation of confederates as described by Lambertz-Berndt and Allen (2017, p. 223, see footnote 1). Adler et al. also highlight that "confederates play key roles" (2016, p. 358), including setting tone and inducing reactions in participants. 11 confederates (6 authorities, 5 beneficiaries) were recruited and trained. Confederates were recruited from among the professional and personal contacts of the authors, and had a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and positionalities. All but one had experience and/or training in interpreting. In order to increase the authenticity of the scenarios, efforts were made to find confederates who would not understand each other without the interpreter – in the end, whilst all five beneficiaries could speak English well, only one of the six authorities could speak Spanish fluently, one had some knowledge, and four had little to no knowledge of the language. Where confederates might have understood each other, they were instructed not to reveal their knowledge of the other language during the scenarios.

A defining element of the scenarios is that they are semi-scripted but tightly structured. Since the focus of the study was how interpreters manage their positionality, a fully scripted scenario would have limited the extent to which confederates could respond and react naturally to the interpreter. To increase the authenticity of the scenario, we attempted to envisage some controls interpreters may employ so that reactions to these various controls could be addressed during confederate training sessions (see below). Whilst the semi-scripted drafting allowed for authentic interpretation and reactions, it was, as a counterpoint, necessary to ensure that each scenario was tightly structured: not only did we want to ensure that all demands came up in each scenario, we wanted to make sure that each scenario ended clearly and promptly, and thus avoid the "risk of getting distracted by the game" (Kadrić, 2017, p. 6). The result was a script with a series of cues, similar to the approach adopted by Adler et al. (2016). An example of how this drafting and structure was reflected on paper is shown in Figure 1:

**Doctor:**

*If the interpreter conveys that the patient is not insured start here:*

○ Reassure the patient
○ Explain that the hospital has resources on its website and to ask at reception.
○ Say that you know of an association that helps uninsured people living in the country and that you will make sure the patient receives information on that.

*If the subject of insurance is not raised, start here:*

○ Reassure the patient that they will start to feel much better once they start taking insulin
○ Tell them to go to speak to the reception on this floor on the way out and they will organise an appointment with the nurse in an hour or so.
○ Wish them well and thank the interpreter
○ Invite the interpreter to leave – you will bring the patient to reception as you have to go that way anyway

*Figure 1: Excerpt from the confederate script for Scenario 2*

This excerpt is taken from the second scenario, in which a patient (the beneficiary) attends a consultation in which they receive a diabetes diagnosis. As the scenario concludes, the patient reveals to the interpreter that they do not have medical insurance and asks the interpreter whether they should inform the doctor or not. In Figure 1, we see the instructions provided to the confederate playing the doctor (the authority). The doctor's actions are dependent on how the interpreter manages the patient's request: if the interpreter conveys

the lack of insurance, the doctor is to comment on it. If not, it should not be mentioned (even though the confederate is aware that the interpreter has been told). During the confederate training sessions, confederates playing the doctor were instructed not to immediately interrupt discussions between the patient and the interpreter, but, were they to go on for a while, to gently ask what was happening.

Scenarios were immediately followed by semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 2), the purpose of which was to understand and explore the interpreters' reactions and the controls they employed. After filling in basic demographic information (age, sex, country / continent of origin[3], whether they held a conference interpreting qualification, years' experience as a conference interpreter, language combination), participants were subsequently asked whether they had any experience in the (PSI) contexts featuring in each scenario. Initial questions sought to establish the interpreters' general impressions of the exercise, before moving onto questions focussing on each scenario. In each case, interpreters were asked to explain their reaction at each of the control points. If there was no discernible reaction, interpreters were asked what they felt about controls that other interpreters might have employed, in order to understand their views on the interpreter's role and how an interpreter should behave in that situation. The first author was present during the scenarios and lead the interviews (see Section 3.3.4 below). In order to capture "unpromptable" demands, as described in section 3.2, any observable reaction outside of the pre-designed control points was also raised in the interview in order for the interpreter to respond. The interview concluded with an open question for interpreters to share any further comments or questions.

### 3.3.3. Stage 3: Piloting and confederate training

After the design phase, it was important to pilot the scenarios and the interview. The piloting of the scenarios took place in two stages: the first scenario was piloted individually following the initial drafting and prior to continuing with the drafting of Scenarios 2 and 3. This pilot, in which a small number of confederates participated (and played the role of the interpreter), allowed us to correct issues related to the pacing and distribution of control points throughout the scenario, and also to correct the formatting of the scripts so that they were more easily read by confederates. Following this initial pilot, Scenario 1 was substantially re-drafted. The first element of the re-draft consisted of padding out the moments between the control points. The initial script was revealed to be too short and condensed, leading confederates to improvise excessively and lose their place in the script – the extended second version gave the confederates more direction. Scenario 1 contains an outburst from the detainee which came across as artificial and forced in the first draft – the slower-paced second version allowed the confederate playing the detainee time to become naturally frustrated with the interaction. The more natural build-up of the redrafted scenario also created a better contrast against the NGO representative's persistently cold / detached tone throughout.

A second key feature of this scenario is that the detainee struggles to get an answer from the NGO representative about when they can see their child. In the first version, the NGO representative's dialogue was repetitive and vague - the second version included more detail in the prompts (e.g. exactly how long ago the detainee had seen their child) and the idea of the NGO having a mental-health mandate, which allowed us to give context to the

---

[3]  To address confidentiality concerns, participants were given the option to choose with what degree of detail they answered this question.

NGO's insistence on questions falling within that field, creating a more natural dialogue and legitimising the detainee's frustration. The final major element of the redraft involved providing greater instructions to the confederates, who had previously asked questions on the background to the scenario (e.g. was this the first time the detainee had met the NGO, why was the detainee in the centre) and occasionally improvised in a fashion that deviated from the aim of the scenario. This led to the drafting of the scenario descriptions (the confederates received a slightly extended version of what was shared above, including information on the roles they were playing, the tone of the conversation, and the main challenge of the scenario) and to the inclusion of greater specificity in those regards in the script. In sum, the initial pilot showed us that a successful and well-paced scenario requires well-spaced control points, greater specificity in the confederate dialogue (whilst allowing for improvisation), and clear instructions to the confederates regarding the context of the scenario and its aim. Having learnt these lessons, Scenarios 2 and 3 were drafted. The second pilot stage was combined with the confederate training days (Adler et al., 2016). The drafting being found largely satisfactory, only minor changes, such as changing the name of the organisation to which the parents belonged in Scenario 3, were undertaken following the confederate training days.

Confederate training lasted one half day. In order to adapt to confederate availability, three separate sessions were organised. At each session, the first author played the role of interpreter; this avoided putting unnecessary demands on the confederates. Additionally, it allowed the confederates to rehearse how to behave when confronted with different reactions from the interpreter. In each training session, each scenario was rehearsed at least twice – this allowed each confederate to participate in and observe the scenario. Following each run-through, a brief discussion was held to discuss collaboratively how the scenarios could be improved. Furthermore, the training days also provided an opportunity to instruct confederates on how to keep the scenarios on track and on time, as well as how to react to various potential controls from the interpreters. In general, and particularly where they could understand each other without the interpreter, confederates were instructed to react to what they heard from the interpreter, regardless of what the other confederate might have said.

Upon the conclusion of all three training days, the semi-structured interview was planned. A final overall pilot then took place, in which all three scenarios were performed, followed by the interview. For this pilot, one confederate was asked to interpret the scenarios and then participate in the interview. In addition to the presence of the first author, the final pilot was also observed by the second author and two of the experts from the preliminary phase with experience in qualitative research. Feedback was given on both the questions and on the interviewing technique of the first author; the main comments focused on not guiding the interview and leaving more space for the participants to share their opinions. The experts suggested that this could be achieved by asking fewer questions at once, asking questions in as neutral manner as possible, and avoiding adopting an adversarial tone. Experts also recommended interrogating interesting behaviour observed outside of the control points, and for basic demographic information to be asked in advance to save time.

### 3.3.4. Stage 4: Execution

10 interpreter participants took part in the scenarios in early 2023, following ethical approval from the University Commission for Ethical Research in Geneva[4]. Participants had been informed in detail of what was required of them prior to agreeing to participate and signed an informed consent form. Upon arrival at the university, participants completed the three scenarios back-to-back, lasting approximately 30 minutes. Following a short break, participants then participated in the interview, lasting between 20 and 40 minutes depending on the participant. Scenarios took place in an office on university premises (containing a simultaneous interpreting booth for experimental purposes). Whilst many of the physical realities of the scenarios could not be replicated, some small props were available for each scenario (e.g. a folder with the NGO's logo, a copy of the patient's letter). For each of the three scenarios, the interpreter was welcomed in by one of the confederates. The first author observed the scenarios from the interpreting booth out of the direct eyeline of participants. This allowed us to take note of demands which arose, and controls employed by the interpreter outside of the designated control points. Where this occurred, the first author took note in order to follow up with the interpreter during the interview, in line with the recommendations made by experts during the final pilot. Following each scenario, the first author escorted the participant out of the room. After resetting the room, participants were welcomed in for the next scenario. Once the third scenario had concluded, the confederates left the office, and the participant was interviewed by the first author. Both the scenarios and the interview were recorded for audio and subsequently transcribed (using transcription software [sonix.ai](https://sonix.ai) and post-edited by hand). Audio recordings were made uniquely for the purposes of transcription and were deleted after the completion of the transcript. In addition to concerns surrounding data protection, video recordings were not made given that we did not plan to engage in a detailed analysis of the non-verbal communication that took place during the scenario. This, however, would be an interesting avenue to explore in future research.

### 3.3.5. Stage 5: Transcription and Analysis

Following the transcription and post-edition of the scenarios, the text of the transcriptions was arranged into a three-column visual transcription in Microsoft Excel. This approach sought to make the transcriptions visually easier to read and, therefore, facilitate analysis (Figure 2).

---

[4]  For more details see [https://cureg.unige.ch/en/](https://cureg.unige.ch/en/).

| Patient | Interpreter | Doctor | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| | controlar los niveles de azúcar en la sangre. | | |
| CP4: Patient is unsured | | | CP4: Patient is uninsured |
| Ok bueno, muchas gracias. Muchas gracias. Mira, una cosita, yo, lo que es seguro, no, no tengo. Entonces no tengo seguro. Entonces no sé si está bien decirle al doctor que que no tengo seguro o si, ¿qué piensa? ¿que le digo o no le digo? Porque no sé, yo no estoy asegurada. Me da miedo porque todo esto va a ser carísimo. No sé. | | | |
| | Claro. Hombre, eso es... yo sólo estoy aquí para transmitir lo que usted, lo que usted dice, | | |
| Bueno pero ¿usted qué piensa? Ay, no sé. Dígame, porque usted debe saber más, porque es la, o sea, al ser [origen de INT32E], va a saber más qué hacer al respecto. | | | |
| | El médico en general, vela por la salud de sus pacientes. O sea que yo creo que sí se lo dice... | | |
| | | Is everything ok? | |
| | Quiere saber qué pasa ... | | |
| Bueno, está bien. No sé. Bueno, dígale, ¿yo que sé? Dígale, dígale, Dígale. | | | |
| | Uhmm the patient is very worried because she doesn't have health insurance. | | |
| | | Oh, well, there's nothing to worry about, | |
| | No pasa nada porque no tenga seguro. | | |
| | | We have resources on the hospital's website or about insurance and you can also ask reception about this. | |

*Figure 2: Three column transcription*

Figure 2 shows the same excerpt as shown in Figure 1 (from the end of Scenario 2, where the patient reveals they don't have insurance). In this scenario, the interpreter chose to employ the consecutive mode[5]. The transcription is arranged in three columns, with the interpreter's turns indicated in the middle column. Here, text alignment indicates whether the interpreter is interpreting (centre alignment) or speaking directly to one of the participants (right-aligned for the authority, left-aligned for the beneficiary). This alignment allows for the overall flow of the conversation to be clearly established, whilst also making it easier to identify side conversations or other moments of direct engagement with the interpreter. This visual transcription also highlighted control points, so that the interpreter's reaction (or lack thereof) could be quickly identified. Finally, a notes column was included on the right-hand side of the transcript, so that observational notes taken during the scenarios could be included.

Analysis of the data collected is still ongoing. However, an indicative example of the method employed is described here: after the visual transcription was created, the excerpts surrounding the control points were reviewed alongside the related excerpt from the semi-structured interview using Microsoft Excel (this is indicatively indicated in Figure 3).



*Figure 3: Analysis document*

---

[5]   Interpreters were not given any instructions as to whether to use consecutive or chuchotage modes of interpreting. Of the 10 interpreters who participated, 6 used consecutive exclusively, 3 used chuchotage exclusively, and one switched between the two modes.

It is worth restating that this study did not employ close transcriptions nor strict conversation / discourse analysis; the research sought to go beyond a textual transcription of interpreting performance to instead establish:

1. What did the interpreter do (by observation / admission)

2. Why did the interpreter take that course of action (cross-referencing with interview)

3. What lead the interpreter to make that decision (based on interview comments and inference)

4. Any other relevant information

This led to the creation of a table (Figure 4, seen at the bottom of Figure 3) summarising the interpreter's behaviour for each control point.

| What did they do? | Why that action? | What motivated the decision? | Anything else |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acknowledges question | Role preservation (?) | " [it's] very uncomfortable because you don't want to give the wrong advice" | |
| Restates role | | | |
| Provides advice | Want to help (?)[ previous answer] | "I'm positive that a doctor wouldn't report you to the police for something like that" | What caused her to break role here? |
| Switches to 3rd person for several turns | Reason unknown | "I guess it's because she was telling me." | |

*Figure 4: Analysis table for the control point*

As mentioned above, this stage of the analysis is still ongoing. Upon completion of the individual analyses of each interpreter for both planned control points and unplanned demands, we intend to examine the controls employed by the interpreters as a group.

## 4. Conclusion and recommendations

### 4.1. Lessons learned

A number of lessons have been learned from the experience of this methodology so far. In terms of what has worked well, the significant preparatory stage has been shown to be particularly useful. As mentioned, the majority of participants praised the authenticity of the scenarios unprompted, and often commented that they remained convinced despite the fact that the scenarios took place in an office and were clearly not real-life situations with real stakes. In our view, this demonstrates the effectiveness of the substantial preliminary study in grounding the scenarios in reality and would recommend that others looking to engage in scenario creation outside their field of expertise engage in a similar exercise. We would also credit this success to the exhaustive confederate training that took place prior to the execution of the scenarios. The fact that the majority of the confederates were themselves interpreters may have had an impact on this, in so far as they knew how to behave so as to pose a challenge to the interpreter without needing much instruction. The training days and piloting sessions also revealed the weak points of the initial drafting and allowed us to create a more solid and polished final version. In our view, the piloting sessions were essential in ensuring the success of the data collection phase.

Regarding the execution of the scenarios, we learned that despite the preparation described above, not every control point had a significant impact. The final control point (Scenario 3, control point 4: parents interrupt each other) had a negligible impact on almost every interpreter, including those working in chuchotage, to the extent that we removed the questions relating to it from the interview. This may be due to the fact that all participants were conference-trained interpreters with extensive experience in simultaneous interpreting.

Additionally, we had designed the scenarios with consecutive interpreting in mind, although we did not specify a modality to the interpreters. Consequently, some interpreters had brought note paper to the scenarios whereas others had not. In particular, we had not expected interpreters to employ *chuchotage*. Given that the choice of modality is itself a control, we decided not to prevent interpreters from doing so once they started, and those who did were asked about it in their interview. However, the observation of the scenarios revealed that impact of the control points varied according to the modality chosen by the interpreter – direct engagement with the interpreter was generally more of a disruption when the interpreter chose *chuchotage*, whereas the request to summarise the long turn (Scenario 3, control point 2) no longer had any effect, since the interpretation was, essentially, simultaneous. *Chuchotage* also proved an additional complication for transcription, as the automatic transcription software employed struggled with the simultaneous voices. Transcription for these interpreters was, therefore, done manually, and was more laborious. Despite this, we believe that allowing interpreters to choose their modality was the right approach and look forward to sharing how this impacts demands when the analysis is concluded. Researchers in the future who would prefer greater control over the proceedings may wish to consider the interpreters' modality choices in scenario design, specify the preferred modality to interpreters prior to participation, or have confederates be ready to correct interpreters who do not choose the intended modality (see Herring, 2018).

## 4.2. Final remarks

Within Interpreting Studies literature, increasing mention is made of the need for context-specific training to ensure that interpreters working in challenging contexts can meet expectations and manage their positionality. Whilst training is essential to equip interpreters to do their job, it is easy to fall into the trap of considering training to be a panacea for all issues; however, little attention is paid to the impact of existing training, including training in conference interpreting, nor to the real-world feasibility of training (via simulation or other methods) for positionality management. Furthermore, to our knowledge, (with the exception of Hale et al., 2019), there are no existing studies that evaluate, be it through field observations or simulations, the tangible impact of training, including context-specific training, on interpreting performance, in general, nor on positionality management, in particular.

The present paper details the simulation methodology of an ongoing doctoral study into interpreter positionality management. The larger study seeks to address the gap in the literature surrounding the impact of training and seeks to establish if any relationship can be found between positionality management and existing training, in this case training in conference interpreting. Specifically, the study seeks to adopt an innovative approach to identify the way in which conference-trained interpreters manage their positionality has been informed by the training they have received. The method detailed here builds on existing simulation literature in Interpreting Studies, whilst considering simulation techniques used in other fields and contributing innovative elements in terms of the research questions asked, the authentic communication reflected in the scenarios, the control-point analysis framework, and the macrodemands identified in the content exploration stage. We expect that these innovations will allow for a more accurate assessment of how interpreters manage their positionality in simulated challenge contexts and to what degree this relates to their training as well as providing researchers with a robust method to use in future studies.

We hope that this discussion will lead to interesting future research. Learning from the fact that many of the most frequently mentioned macrodemands are difficult to feasibly reproduce in a simulated context, we recommend that a future methodological study, in line with existing work in the field of Medicine, be carried out to investigate how simulations, among other techniques, can be used for interpreting training, and specifically for training positionality management. We further recommend that scholars consider what elements of positionality management *cannot* be addressed in training. Finally, we would encourage other researchers to make use of the methodology shared in this paper to consider how different populations of interpreters manage their positionality in similar simulated contexts. We hope to contribute further to this discussion in the future following the analysis of the data arising from the simulated scenarios.

## References

Adler, M. D., Overly, F. L., Nadkarni, V. M., Davidson, J., Gottesman, R., Bank, I., Marohn, K., Sudikoff, S., Grant, V. J., & Cheng, A. (2016). An approach to confederate training within the context of simulation-based research. *Simulation in Healthcare: The Journal of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare, 11*(5), 357–362.

Angelelli, C. V. (2004). *Medical interpreting and cross-cultural communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Arumí Ribas, M., & Vargas-Urpí, M. (2017). Strategies in public service interpreting: A roleplay study of Chinese–Spanish/Catalan interactions. *Interpreting, 19*(1), 118–141.

Baker, M., & Maier, C. (2011). Ethics in interpreter & translator training: Critical perspectives. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, *5*(1), 1–14.

Balogh, K., & Salaets, H. (Eds.). (2015). *Children and justice: Overcoming language barriers: Cooperation in interpreter-mediated questioning of minors*. Cambridge/Antwerp/Portland: Intersentia.

Balounová, Z. (2021). Neutrality in public service interpreting. Rethinking the role of public service interpreters. *Verba hispanica, 29*, 13-29.

Bancroft, M. (2005). *The interpreter's world tour: An environmental scan of standards of practice for interpreters*. California: The California Endowment.

Bancroft, M. (2017). The voice of compassion: Exploring trauma-informed interpreting. In R. Tipton & C. Valero Garcés (Eds.), *Ideology, ethics and policy development in public service interpreting and translation* (pp. 195-219). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Barghout, A., & Ruiz Rosendo, L. (2022). Developing interpreter competence: Training interpreters servicing UN field missions. In L. Ruiz Rosendo & M. Todorova (Eds.), *Interpreter training in conflict and post-conflict scenarios* (pp. 63-74). London: Routledge.

Berk-Seligson, S. (2009). *Coerced confessions: The discourse of bilingual police interrogations.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Bergunde, A., & Pöllabauer, S. (2019). Curricular design and implementation of a training course for interpreters in an asylum context. *Translation and Interpreting, 11*(1), 1-21.

Bontempo, K., & Malcolm, K. (2012). An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Educating interpreters about the risk of vicarious trauma in healthcare settings. In K. Malcolm & L. Swabey (Eds.), *In our hands: Educating healthcare interpreters* (pp. 105-130). Washington DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Cheng, A., Auerbach, M., Hunt, E. A., Chang, T. P., Pusic, M., Nadkarni, V., & Kessler, D. (2014). Designing and Conducting Simulation-Based Research. *Pediatrics, 133*(6), 1091–1101.

Cook, D. A., Hatala, R., Brydges, R., Zendejas, B., Szostek, J. H., Wang, A. T., Erwin, P. J., & Hamstra, S. J. (2011). Technology-enhanced simulation for health professions education: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA, 306*(9), 978–988.

Dahnberg, M. (2023). Role play as a means of training and testing public service interpreting. In L. Gavioli & C. Wadensjö (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Public Service Interpreting* (pp. 292-308). London: Routledge.

Dean, R., & Pollard, R. (2001). Application of demand-control theory to sign language interpreting: Implications for stress and interpreter training. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, 6*(1), 1–14.

Dean, R. K., & Pollard, R. Q. (2011). Context-based ethical reasoning in interpreting: A demand control schema perspective. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 5*(1), 155–182.

Delgado Luchner, C. (2018). Contact zones of the aid chain: The multilingual practices of two Swiss development NGOs. *Translation Spaces, 7,* 44-64.

Delgado Luchner, C., & Kherbiche, L. (2018). Without fear or favour? The positionality of ICRC and UNHCR interpreters in the humanitarian field. *Target, 30*(3), 408-29.

Delgado Luchner, C., & Kherbiche, L. (2019). Ethics training for humanitarian interpreters working in conflict and post-conflict settings. *Journal of War & Cultural Studies, 12*(3), 251-267.

Federici, F., & O'Brien, S. (Eds.). (2020). *Translation in cascading crises*. London: Routledge.

Fernández Pérez, M. M. (2015). Designing role-play models for telephone interpreting training. *MonTI, Special volume, 2*, 259-279.

Ficklin, L., & Jones, B. (2009). Deciphering "voice" from "words": Interpreting translation practices in the field. *Graduate Journal of Social Science, 6*(3), 108-130.

Gallai, F. (2019). Interpreting ethics in fragile environments. *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, *12*(3), 220–235.

Gany, F., Kapelusznik, L., Prakash, K., Gonzalez, J., Orta, L. Y., Tseng, C.-H., & Changrani, J. (2007). The impact of medical interpretation method on time and errors. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, *22*(S2), 319–323.

Gez, Y. N., & Schuster, M. (2018). Borders and boundaries: Eritrean graduates reflect on their medical interpreting training. *The European Legacy*, *23*(7–8), 821–836.

Giustini, D. (2019). "It's not just words, it's the feeling, the passion, the emotions": An ethnography of affect in interpreters' practices in contemporary Japan. *Asian Anthropology, 18*(3), 186-202.

Giustini, D. (2023). Embedded strangers in one's own job? Freelance interpreters' invisible work: A practice theory approach. *Work, Employment and Society, 37*(4), 952-971.

Hale, S. (2007). *Community interpreting*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Hale, S. (2008). Controversies over the role of the court interpreter. In C. Valero Garcés & A. Martin (Eds.), *Crossing borders in community interpreting. Definitions and dilemmas* (pp. 99-123). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Hale, S. (2014). Interpreting culture. Dealing with cross-cultural issues in court interpreting. *Perspectives*, *22*(3), 321–331.

Hale, S., Martschuk, N., Ozolins, U., & Stern, L. (2017). The effect of interpreting modes on witness credibility assessments. *Interpreting*, *19*(1), 69–96.

Hale, S., Goodman-Delahunty, J., & Martschuk, N. (2019). Interpreter performance in police interviews. Differences between trained interpreters and untrained bilinguals. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 13*(2), 107-131.

Herring. R. (2018). *"I could only think about what I was doing, and that was a lot to think about": Online self-regulation in dialogue interpreting* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Geneva.

Herring, R. (2019). "A lot to think about": Online monitoring in dialogue interpreting. *Translation, Cognition & Behaviour, 2*(2), 283-304.

Herring, R., & Tiselius, E. (2020). Making the most of retrospective process tracing in dialogue interpreting research. *Fitispos International Journal, 7*(1), 53-71.

Howes, L. M. (2018). Community interpreters' experiences of police investigative interviews: How might interpreters' insights contribute to enhanced procedural justice? *Policing and Society, 29*(8), 887-905.

Iacono, K., & Pasch, H. (2023). Facing social, emotional and technological challenges in the virtual interpreting classroom. *FITISPos International Journal, 10*(1), 48-68.

Inghilleri, M. (2003). Habitus, field and discourse: Interpreting as a socially situated activity. *Target*, *15*(2), 243–268.

Jiménez-Ivars, A., & León-Pinilla, R. (2018). Interpreting in refugee contexts. A descriptive and qualitative study. *Language & Communication*, *60*, 28–43.

Kadrić, M. (2017). Role-playing exercises. In UNHCR Austria (Ed.), *Handbook for Interpreters in Asylum Procedures* (pp. 6-11). Vienna: UNHCR Austria.

Karasek, R. (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 24*(2), 285–308.

Karasek, R., & Theorell, T. (1990). *Healthy work: Stress, productivity, and the reconstructing of work life.* New York: Basic Books.

Krystallidou, D., Remael, A., de Boe, E., Hendrickx, K., Tsakitzidis, G., van de Geuchte, S., & Pype, P. (2018). Investigating empathy in interpreter-mediated simulated consultations: An explorative study. *Patient Education and Counseling*, *101*(1), 33–42.

Lambertz-Berndt, M., & Allen, M. (Eds.) (2017). *The Sage encyclopedia of communication research methods* (Vols. 1-4). London: SAGE Publications.

Liu, X., & Hale, S. (2018). Achieving accuracy in a bilingual courtroom: The effectiveness of specialised legal interpreter training. *The Interpreter & Translator Trainer, 12*(3), 299–321.

Määttä, S. K. (2015). Interpreting the discourse of reporting: The case of screening interviews with asylum seekers and police interviews in Finland. *Translation and Interpreting, 7*(3), 21–35.

Martínez-Gómez, A. (2015). Non-professional interpreters. In H. Mikkelson & R. Jourdenais (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Interpreting* (pp. 429–443). Abingdon: Routledge.

Mehus, C. J., & Becher, E. H. (2016). Secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction in a sample of spoken-language interpreters. *Traumatology*, *22*(4), 249–254.

Mulayim, S., Lai, M, & Norma, C. (2015). *Police investigative interviews and interpreting: Context, challenges, and strategies.* Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Mullings, B. (1999). Insider or outsider, both or neither: Some dilemmas of interviewing in a cross-cultural setting. *Geoforum, 30*, 337-30.

O'Brien, S., and Cadwell, P. (2017). Translation facilitates comprehension of health-related crisis information: Kenya as an example. *The Journal of Specialised Translation, 28*, 23-51.

Penn, C., & Watermeyer, J. (2014). Features of cultural brokerage in interpreted child psychiatry interactions: a case of paradoxical practice. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, *8*(3), 354–373.

Phelan, M., Rudvin, M., Skaaden, H., & Kermit, P. (2019). *Ethics in public service interpreting*. London: Routledge.

Prunč, E., & Setton, R. (2015). Neutrality. In F. Pöchhacker (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (pp. 273-275). London: Routledge.

Radicioni, M., & Ruiz Rosendo, L. (2022a). Interpreting in times of Covid-19: Cultural mediation as a means of effective multilingual communication. In F. Federici & S. O'Brien (Eds.), *Translation in times of cascading crisis* (pp. 237-252). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Radicioni, M., & Ruiz Rosendo, L. (2022b). Learning dynamics between cultural mediators in humanitarian healthcare: A case study. *JoSTrans, 37*, 139-159.

Roy, C. (1992). A sociolinguistic analysis of the interpreter's role in simultaneous talk in a face-to-face interpreted dialogue. *Sign Language Studies, 74*, 21-61.

Roy, C. (1999). *Interpreting as a discourse process*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ruiz Rosendo, L. (2020). Interpreting for the Afghanistan Spanish Force. *War & Society, 39*(1), 42-57.

Ruiz Rosendo, L. (2023). Interpreting in humanitarian negotiation. In C. Declercq & K. Kerremans (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Translation, Interpreting and Conflict* (pp. 131-143). London: Routledge.

Ruiz Rosendo, L., Barghout, A., & Martin, C. H. (2021). Interpreting on UN field missions: A training programme. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 4*, 450-467.

Ruiz Rosendo, L., & Persaud, C. (2019). On the front line: Mediating across languages and cultures in peacekeeping operations. *Armed Forces & Society, 45*(3), 472-490.

Snellman, P. (2016). Constraints on and dimensions of military interpreter neutrality. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, 15*, 260-281.

Skaaden, H. (2019). Invisible or invincible? Professional integrity, ethics, and voice in public service interpreting. *Perspectives, 27*(5), 704-717.

Tesseur, W. (2018). Researching translation and interpreting in non-governmental organizations. *Translation Spaces, 7*(1), 1–19.

Thomas, D. R. (2017). Feedback from research participants: Are member checks useful in qualitative research? *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *14*(1), 23–41.

Tiselius, E. (2019). The (un-) ethical interpreting researcher: Ethics, voice and discretionary power in interpreting research. *Perspectives, 27*(5), 747-760.

Tiselius, E., & Englund Dimitrova, B. (2019). Asymmetrical language proficiency in dialogue interpreters: Methodological issues. *Translation, Cognition & Behaviour, 2*(2), 305-322.

Tiselius, E., & Englund Dimitrova, B. (2021). Turn-taking in dialogue interpreting– coping with cognitive constraints. *Cognitive Linguistic Studies, 8*(2), 328-355.

Tiselius, E., & Englund Dimitrova, B. (2023). Monitoring in dialogue interpreting. Cognitive and didactic perspectives. In L. Gavioli & C. Wadensjö (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Public Service Interpreting* (pp. 309-324). London: Routledge.

Todorova, M. (2016). Interpreting conflict mediation in Kosovo and Macedonia. *Linguistica Antverpiensia*, *15*, 227-40.

Todorova, M. (2017). Interpreting at the Border: "Shuttle interpreting" for the UNHCR. *Clina, 3*(2), 115-129.

Todorova, M. (2019). Interpreting for refugees: Empathy and activism. In F. Federici & C. Declerq (Eds.), *Intercultural crisis communication: Translation, interpreting, and languages in local crises* (pp. 153–173). London: Bloomsbury Academics.

Tryuk, M. (2017). Conflict. tension. aggression. Ethical issues in interpreted asylum hearings at the Office for Foreigners in Warsaw. In C. Valero-Garcés & R. Tipton (Eds.), *Ideology, ethics and policy development in public service interpreting and translation* (pp. 179-194). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Valero-Garcés, C. (2017). Ethical codes and their impact on prison communication. In C. Valero-Garcés & R. Tipton (Eds.), *Ideology, ethics and policy development in public service interpreting and translation* (pp. 105-130). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Wadensjö, C. (1992). *Interpreting as interaction. On dialogue interpreting in immigration hearings and medical encounters*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Linköping University.

Wadensjö, C. (1998). *Interpreting as interaction*. London: Routledge.

# Appendix 1:
# Content Exploration Questions

### Step 1: Introduction

**Consent form** – right to withdraw including right to recordings (just audio).

**Description of study** – brief overview of the nature of the study, and how their participation fits into the study as a whole. *Stress:* this is not an ethnography, case study, or other study of their context. *Avoid:* too much discussion of how the study will be run (that is not their expertise).

**Overview of interview –** reminder of the topics to be discussed, define the "challenge context" – *key point* – I want detail but do not need specifics (sensitive content).

### Step 2: Sociodemographic questions

*These questions seek to understand the profile of the SME, and principally regarding their direct exposure to the context in question, as well as any training or experience in interpreting.*

| Participant Code | Gender (M/F/O) |
|---|---|
| Age (roughly) | Current Profession |
| Years working | Nationality |
| Languages | |

• With what kind of challenge context specifically do you have experience?
• Is it through your current profession that you were able to gain access to the context? If not, how did you gain access?
  ◦ *if access profession is "researcher":* Have you ever worked in this context directly?
  ◦ *if current profession is not the access profession*: How long did you work in the profession that gave you access to this context?
• What kind of interpreter training have you received?

### Step 3: The context itself

*These questions are meant to help me understand the context, but still with an aim to creating the simulation. Remind SME that the purpose here is to collect information about the context that will inform the creation of a simulation [details about context > how they experienced the context]*

• What is the profile of interpreters in this context? (break down into main components – specific focus: nationality, languages, language level, gender, age, training, experience)
  ◦ Does this profile have an effect on how they are received by the users / others in the work-context?
• How are interpreters described in these contexts? (interpreter, mediator etc)
• How do these interpreters fit into the hierarchical structure of this context (vis-à-vis beneficiaries, stakeholders etc).
• Is there a power relationship between the users in this context? If so, can you describe it?
• Do users trust the interpreter / each other? Does this have consequences on the encounter? How?
• Do interpreters ever work for the same users on more than one occasion?

- Do interpreters working in this context follow / have access to a particular code of ethics and practice? If so, are the provisions respected?
    - *If Codes of ethics are available to interpreters*: Are users aware of what codes of ethics require of interpreters?
- What do users expect of interpreters in this context? (Advocacy, impartiality, mediation, intercultural mediation …)
- Are interpreters expected to perform tasks beyond interpreting? (paperwork, getting coffee, other tasks)

## Step 4: Logistics

*These questions will help with the physical coordination of the simulation.*

- What is the typical layout of the room / space in which interpreting usually takes place?
- How does an encounter begin?
    - Does the interpreter have contact with participants before the meeting?
    - who enters the room first?
    - Is the interpreter introduced or must they do that themselves?
- Where does the interpreter typically position themselves?
- How many people are typically present in an encounter?
    - Are all present involved in the conversation?
    - Are side conversations (*be ready to describe what you mean by this*) potential occurrences?
        - *If yes*: What typically happens? How are they resolved?
- How does an encounter conclude?
    - Who leaves when?
    - When does interpreter leave?
    - Does interpreter have contact with participants post-hoc?
    - How long does an encounter typically last?

## Step 5: Content

*Again this aims to help specifically with the scripting. Explain to SMEs that the aim is to have a general idea of what might be discussed in an interaction, and the manner in which that might be discussed*

- Please remind me of the specific mandate of the institution / organization with which you are / were connected?
    - Given this mandate what would be a standard scenario that would be interpreted?
    - In this scenario, what would be a typical topic of conversation?
    - Do encounters follow a script of any sort? If so, what is it (loosely)?
    - What kind of language is used by users? (formal and institutional vs dialect or informal, repeated language, intelligible language)

## Step 6: Challenges

*This section is key, but the information might well come up in other questions. Kinds of challenging elements may include: language used, intrinsic nature of the context, lack of training on the part of the interpreter / users, ideological mismatch. Introduce this section by distinguishing between typical / common challenges and difficult / very impactful challenges. The simulations will ideally contain a mix of both elements.*

Non-Positionality Challenges

- What are the most **typical** challenges faced by interpreters in these contexts?
  - What is the source of these challenges?
  - Are these challenges resolved? If so, how?
  - What is the consequence of these challenges on the rest of the encounter?
- What are the most difficult challenges faced by interpreters in these contexts?
  - What is the source of these challenges?
  - Are these challenges resolved? If so, how?
  - What is the consequence of these challenges on the rest of the encounter?

Positionality Challenges

*Make it clear that even if they don't intervene, the feeling of wanting to is important. Don't be afraid to probe these answers more.*

- Have you ever felt compelled to intervene in an encounter, outside of your usual responsibilities?
  - Did you intervene?
  - *if yes:* What lead you to intervene in this way?
  - *if yes:* How did you feel before and after the intervention?
- Have you ever felt disturbed / uneasy / angry as a result of what was taking place in the encounter?
  - How did you react to this feeling?
  - Did this feeling lead to an intervention?
- Have you ever been conscious of a potential bias on your side (towards one or both of the users) before the beginning of an encounter?
  - Were you aware of why you held this bias?
  - Did this influence your approach to the encounter? How / why?
- Have you ever realised midway through an encounter that you were reacting to one or both users in a way you wouldn't have expected? (dislike, rooting for one user)
  - Were you aware of what had caused this reaction?
  - Did this influence how you continued the encounter? How / why?
- Have you ever realised only after an encounter that you had showed bias or reacted unexpectedly to one or both users?
  - Did this cause any action on your part? What / Why?
- Have you ever had to go against what was "expected" of you in order to stay true to yourself?
- Does the interpreter themselves constitute a challenge for the users? Why (not)?
  - Would the meeting dynamic be different without an interpreter present? What is your reason for saying so?

## Step 7: Extra questions

*These are the questions from step 3 which might best kept to the end of the interview in order to guarantee better time distribution.*

- Do interpreters have an interaction with users outside of the interpreted context? If so, can you describe it?
- What languages are typically used in this context? Are vehicular languages used?
- What role do interpreters usually adopt (advocacy, impartiality, mediation, intercultural mediation)
- How is turn-taking managed?
  - Who speaks first?
  - Who manages turns?
  - What happens if someone speaks "out of turn"?

**Step 8: Conclusion**

*It's always polite to conclude things properly!*

**Thank** the SME for their participation but **do not stop the recording.**

**Remind** the SME about the possibility of withdrawing consent

**Confirm** that the SME is still happy to review the eventual simulated context script.

**Finish interview.**

# Appendix 2:
# Post-task Interview Questions.

## Demographic and professional information (collected through form)

| Participant Code | Do you hold a Conference Interpreting Qualification? |
|---|---|
| Age | Years working as CI |
| Sex | Language Combination? |
| Country / Continent of Origin | |

*Oral question:*

Have you any experience working in the sort of contexts covered in the scenarios?

- ◦ If so, how much experience?
- ◦ Which contexts specifically?

## Scenario questions

*Tell participants that you will be moving on to questions about the scenarios. Don't use the term "control points" or other technical research terminology. Your interest here is not so much on interpreting technique but on how the participant felt and on what they felt was difficult or challenging. The human element.*

• Before we look at aspects of the scenarios individually, would you like to share your general impressions of the activity?

Scenario 1 – the detainee

- ◦ How did you find the experience?
- ◦ How did it make you feel, in very general terms?
- ◦ Did you find this scenario challenging?
    - ▪ If so, in what way?

*I'd like to take you through some specific points of the scenario:*

• **CP1:** *only if they did not take a chair.* Did you notice there was no chair?
• **CP2:** *suicidal comments*: Did you notice that the detainee revealed suicidal feelings? Did you think about the best way to address the situation? Why did you do …?
• **CP3:** *callous responses*: Did you notice that the NGO rep provided very callous answers? Did you think about the best way to address the situation? Why did you do …?
• **CP4:** *direct engagement*: How did it feel when the detainee spoke to you directly?
• **Observation (if applicable)**: I noticed that you … - what was going through your mind at that time? Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it?

Scenario 2 – the diabetic

• How did you find the experience?
• How did it make you feel, in very general terms?
• Did you find this scenario challenging?
    - ◦ If so, in what way?

*I'd like to take you through some specific points of the scenario:*

• **CP1:** *engagement.* I noticed that you did / did not engage with the patient while waiting on the doctor – was that a choice? Can you talk me through it?
• **CP2:** *request explanation*: I noticed that you did / didn't provide the explanation yourself. Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it? How did it feel when the patient spoke to you directly like that?
• **CP3:** *Doctor request: speak freely:* I noticed that you did / didn't provide the explanation yourself. Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it? How did it feel when the doctor spoke to you directly like that?
• **CP4:** *request advice*: I noticed that you did / didn't … . Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it? How did it feel when the doctor spoke to you directly like that?
• **Observation** : I noticed that you … - what was going through your mind at that time? Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it?

Scenario 3 – Children's day

• How did you find the experience?
• How did it make you feel, in very general terms?
• Did you find this scenario challenging?
     ◦ If so, in what way?

*I'd like to take you through some specific points of the scenario.*

• **CP1:** *Talking at the same time.* I noticed that you did / did not interrupt the parents – was that a choice? Can you talk me through it?
• **CP1.5** *Long turn.* I noticed that you did / did not interrupt the long turn – was that a choice? Can you talk me through it?
• **CP2:** *request summary*: I noticed that you did / didn't summarise. Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it? How did it feel when the Vice principal asked that of you?
• **CP3:** *tone* ?
• **Observation** : I noticed that you … - what was going through your mind at that time? Was that a choice? Can you talk me through it?

**Final questions**

• Which scenario did you find the most difficult?
• Who won the negotiations?
• Is there anything else you would like to share?