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Is a B Language an Asset on the Private Market for Interpreters with less  
Widely Spoken A Languages? - The Case of German A and Italian A  
Interpreters Based in Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland

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**UNIVERSITÉ  
DE GENÈVE**

**FACULTÉ DE TRADUCTION  
ET D'INTERPRÉTATION**

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Is a B Language an Asset on the Private Market for Interpreters with less Widely Spoken A  
Languages? - The Case of German A and Italian A Interpreters Based in  
Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland

Mémoire présenté à la Faculté de Traduction et d'Interprétation

Pour l'obtention du MA en Interprétation de Conférence

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis focuses on the importance for interpreters with German or Italian A languages to offer one or more B language(s), and aims to determine which are the most frequent. The market for less widely spoken A languages, such as German or Italian, is rather restricted, and a B language may be an asset. Interpreting into B is, in fact, increasingly in demand, especially on the private market. As English and French are widely used in conferences, they are the most suitable B languages to enhance the interpreter's profile.

Our research is limited to the private markets in Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. The sample is professional conference interpreters with German or Italian A based in these countries and members of AIIC, or of major national interpreting associations. The method adopted is analytical. The debate on B language interpreting and current market trends are presented, before focusing on the private market and on the role of AIIC in this sector. The core part of our thesis lies in the analysis of the language combination of the sample of interpreters under consideration to determine the prevalence of B languages, and assess which are the most widespread. Data were gathered via information available on the websites of AIIC and of national interpreting associations. These and the curricula of interpreting schools recognised by AIIC and/or working regularly with the European Commission's Directorate General for Interpretation were examined in the attempt to provide a glimpse of the local market situation.



## INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of this thesis outlines the complex and controversial debate about interpreting into a B language. After briefly describing two contrasting approaches – that of the Paris School and the Russian School – it overviews frequently adopted approaches to this issue. This section then presents a number of studies in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of this topic, considering the presumed impact of interpreting into B on quality as well as other factors that may influence performance. Moreover, some characteristics inherent to interpreting into B in consecutive and simultaneous are outlined. Finally, interpreters are given a voice in the debate on B language interpreting; the results of two surveys carried out by Lim (2005) and Gorton (2012) which aim to assess interpreters' approaches to interpreting into B are described.

The second chapter touches upon current market trends. It begins by considering the use of B languages, primarily in Europe; this entails an overview of market sectors in which B language interpreting has traditionally been used, and of those where it appears to become increasingly widespread. The following section focuses on the widespread growth of English as a B language. Finally, some reflections on the specificities of the interpreting market for less widely spoken languages are presented. This is based on the assumption that German and Italian could be considered languages which appear to have a “geographically concentrated” market (Déjean le Féal, 2003:73).

The third chapter, divided into three sections, focuses on the private market; first, the role of AIIC in the establishment and definition of the profession is outlined stressing the impact of its activities in the interpreting world as a whole. Secondly, the AIIC Private Market Sector is described including its structure and functioning. Thirdly, some sectoral trends are mentioned reflecting the evolution of the private market sector over the last decade and highlighting the main features of this particular market segment. Finally, the analysis concentrates on the Austrian and Italian interpreting markets.

In order to determine the extent to which a second active language may help to meet demand on national markets for interpreters whose A language is German or Italian, the fourth chapter examines the language combinations of AIIC interpreters based in Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. The aim of this study is to provide an overview of the language combinations of AIIC members in order to identify a number of trends that are specific to the markets in the aforementioned countries. This analysis – which is presented on a country-by-country basis – uses data on the language combinations of AIIC members, who have to comply with the high “standards of professionalism and integrity” set by the association and “produce evidence of at least 150 days conference work” (Mackintosh, 2005:8) in order to be admitted to the association. The major national interpreting associations in each of these countries are analysed – with a particular focus on language combinations – in order to better understand the national frameworks for conference interpreters. Subsequently, the curricula of interpreting schools recognized by AIIC (AIIC, n.d. [1]) and/or working regularly with the European Commission's Directorate General for Interpretation (DG SCIC, 2014) are analysed in order to provide an overview of the approach to the teaching of B language interpreting in the various institutions. This may also reveal some characteristics that could offer an insight into the market situation in each of the countries considered.

## METHODOLOGY

This thesis revolves around the question of what the importance is for interpreters with German or Italian A languages to offer one or more B language(s) and which B languages are most frequent. Our research is limited to the local markets in Austria, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. The main hypotheses underlying this thesis are three. First, the market for interpreters with German or Italian A seems to be rather restricted, in contrast with that of globally used languages (e.g. English, French or Spanish); it could be of interest for them to work into a second active language (a B language) in order to be more competitive on the market. Second, current market trends seem to suggest a significant use of B language interpreting, especially on the private market, and the demand for interpreters working into B languages is on the rise; consequently, a B language could enhance the interpreter's market value. Third, as English and French are widely used in conferences, they are likely to be the most suitable languages.

The research method adopted is analytical. Firstly, a wide spectrum of approaches to the controversial issue of working into a B language in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting is considered. Subsequently, current market trends related to B language interpreting are explored, before focusing on the private market and on AIIC's role in this sector.

This lays the groundwork for the main focus of our research, namely assessing the prevalence of B language interpreting among interpreters with German and Italian A based in Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. For the sake of this analysis, the language combinations of both AIIC interpreters based in these countries and members of major national associations are examined. This approach is based on AIIC statistics that are reflected in Guichot de Fortis' (2013) assumption that a large majority of interpreters work on the national private market. The major goal of this analysis is to determine the frequency of 'biactive profiles' (Guichot de Fortis, 2007:3) in the sample of interpreters under consideration. The data collection was carried out via information on the language combination of professional conference interpreters available on the websites of AIIC and national interpreting associations.

In addition, the curricula of a number of interpreting schools in this area have been examined. This might provide a glimpse of the local market situation, as the curricula, in relation to the language combinations of these professional interpreters, may reflect national market requirements and the skills necessary to meet them. The gathered data have been analysed and presented mostly in the form of graphs and tables.

## DEFINITIONS

### **AIIC**

AIIC stands for International Association of Conference Interpreters (Association internationale des interprètes de conférence – AIIC). For further information see section 3.1.

### **Interpreting Mode**

The interpreting modes which will be taken into consideration for this thesis are consecutive interpreting (CI) and simultaneous interpreting (SI).

### **Language Combination**

The term 'language combination' is defined by AIIC as "the languages an interpreter uses professionally" (AIIC, 2004). A further distinction is made between 'active' (A, B) and 'passive' (C) languages.

### **A language**

According to AIIC, "the 'A' language is the interpreter's mother tongue (or its strict equivalent) into which they work from all their other working languages in both consecutive and simultaneous interpretation. It is the language they speak best, and in which they can easily express even complicated ideas. It is therefore an active language for the interpreter" (AIIC, 2004).

### **B language**

A "B' language is a language in which the interpreter is perfectly fluent, but is not a mother tongue. An interpreter can work into this language from one or several of their other working languages, but may prefer to do so in only one mode of interpretation, either consecutive or simultaneous (often in 'consecutive' because it's not so fast). It is also considered an active language for the interpreter" (AIIC, 2012c).

As both the A and the B languages are active, AIIC underlines that the latter "can only be acquired after years of hard work and frequent stays in a country of that language" (AIIC, 2004). Furthermore, it will take years of practical experience until a B language "reaches a satisfactory standard" (AIIC, 2004). A B language should be used in "technical discussions where lexical accuracy is more important than style or very discrete shades of meaning" (AIIC, 2004). Although a B language may well be a second active language, it is common to interpret into it exclusively out of the native language.

### **C language**

AIIC defines a C language as "one which the interpreter understands perfectly but into which they do not work. They will interpret from this (these) language(s) into their active languages. It is therefore a passive language for the interpreter" (AIIC, 2012c).

Accordingly, for example, an interpreter with an ABC combination (German [A], French [B], English [C]) will work from French into German (B into A), English into German (C into A) and from German into French (A into B), but not from English into French (C into B).

### **Pivot**

The term 'pivot' refers to an interpreter who "interprets not only for those listening to his/her target language, but also for the other interpreters who take the relay" (AIIC, n.d. [4]). This task is very demanding, as interpreters are aware of the fact that other professionals rely on them completely.

### **Relay**

According to AIIC, "relay refers to double or indirect interpretation into the target language of the audience" (AIIC, n.d. [6]). The speech is "first interpreted into one language, which is then interpreted into a second language" (AIIC, n.d. [6]). Relay is not recommended by the AIIC "because of the risk of errors creeping in as the number of intermediate languages increases", although in some cases other options may not be available (AIIC, n.d. [6]).

### **Retour**

An interpreter offering a 'retour' is working "in both directions using two languages", for example from B into A and from A into B (AIIC, n.d. [7]).

## **1. “Interpreting into B: To B or not to B?”**

### **1.1 Debate on the Definition of B Language**

The debate on the issue of interpreting into B appears to be a Shakespearean controversy, as suggested by the title “Interpreting into B: To B or not to B?” (Lim, 2003). Numerous studies dealing with the topic from a variety of perspectives address this “bone of contention” (Kalina, 2005:27). The definition of B language itself is highly debated in the interpreting world. For instance, Donovan (2005:152) suggests that a B language is a non-native or foreign language mastered at a level which makes it acceptable to a certain language community; it is differentiated from an A language “by its shortcomings or relative weakness [...]. It lacks to a greater or lesser extent in native fluency, flexibility and intuition.” Within AIIC, some argue that the definition of the term ‘B language’ is not clear enough. For example, Guichot de Fortis, AIIC member and senior interpreter at NATO, defines a B language as a “second language, the mastery of which can be assessed at a level slightly below that of a conference interpreter’s mother tongue (say between 5% and 15%...)” (Guichot de Fortis, 2007:2). This also includes C into B interpretation, even though the author acknowledges that not everyone in the profession may agree with this opinion. According to the author, a slight foreign accent and a limited number of mistakes are admissible, as for the audience accuracy, consistency and voice quality are the most important factors. On the document outlining the language profiles in demand for the inter-institutional accreditation test for the European Union, a B is defined as a language “which the candidate masters at a very high level close to mother-tongue and into which he/she can provide fluent and accurate interpretation in consecutive and simultaneous from the A language. This is also called a *retour* language” (European Union, 2014). The DG SCIC provides a more comprehensive definition (DG SCIC, n.d. [1]): a B is a second active language of which the interpreter has complete mastery and in which they work at least from one of their languages. Some interpreters with a B language work in CI but not in SI. A few interpreters work into their B from all their other languages, doing a “second full booth” and, in some rare cases, interpreters have more than two active languages.

### **1.2 Paris School vs. Russian School**

The origins of the debate on B language interpreting can be found in the contrasting positions of the Western school (‘Paris school’), which argues in favour of interpreting into A, and of the Eastern school (‘Russian school’), which promotes interpreting from A into B. As Gorton (2012:62) states, “essentially, the two schools differ as to whether to privilege native production in the target language (TL) or native comprehension of the source language (SL).” There seems to be a broad consensus in the West that “true interpretation [...] can only occur into one’s A language” (Bros-Brann, cited in Gile, 2005:9-10). Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989), among the representatives of the Paris school of thought, argue that the origins of this controversy date back to the introduction of SI. In a study for the Commission of the

European Communities, the two authors base their observations on the recordings of hundreds of CI and SI courses and exercises involving several language combinations, as well as on their professional experience as conference interpreters and in the teaching of conference interpreting. They state that “scientifiquement le cas est clair : dans tous les secteurs du langage on comprend plus qu'on ne peut exprimer. [...] Dans une langue étrangère aussi, on peut comprendre beaucoup plus qu'on ne peut exprimer” (Seleskovitch and Lederer, 1989:135). They highlight that multiple factors seem to confirm that interpreting from a foreign language into A is preferable, as “tous les compléments cognitifs qui interviennent pour donner un sens au discours renforcent encore la capacité de compréhension de cette langue, alors qu'aucun facteur extérieur à la langue ne peut améliorer la qualité d'expression de la langue étrangère utilisée comme langue active en cabine” (Seleskovitch and Lederer, 1989:135). In addition, the authors underline that interpreters working into their mother tongue are always more proficient than interpreters working into a foreign language. Concretely, they argue that “la pratique à son tour a tranché le débat: on a pu observer dans d'innombrables conférences que, à qualité égale d'interprètes, la simultanée en langue A est toujours supérieure à la simultanée en langue B” (Seleskovitch and Lederer, 1989:135). Furthermore, they indicate three reasons why SI should preferably be taught into the student's mother tongue. First, SI is a demanding task performed under pressure, therefore, B language interpreting should be avoided as it implies additional difficulties; when working into A, instead, expression is more spontaneous. Secondly, A language interpreting sounds more natural and can easily be followed by a native listener. Thirdly, as expression in the A language is easier, the interpreting student can be closer to the speaker in terms of décalage; this ensures that the interpretation is complete and the message is fully conveyed. The only case in which the exponents of the Paris school seem to approve interpretation into B is when the number of A language interpreters working from a given language is not sufficient. For example, Seleskovitch (1999) noted that with the European enlargement interpretation into B from less widespread languages would increase and universities would therefore start to teach SI into B. In her opinion, this kind of training should not include languages for which A language interpreters are available; moreover, if teachings of SI into B are introduced right at the beginning of training, students are likely to face more difficulties also in SI into A. This argument might be explained by the fact that the complexity of the learning process of SI does not allow them to focus on expression in a language which is not their A language. Working exclusively into A at the beginning, instead, guarantees that the acquisition of the multiple skills needed for SI is not undermined by this constant worry about expression.

In contrast, scholars adhering to the Russian school argue that interpreting from A into B ensures that the meaning of the original is fully conveyed if the interpreter has adequate mastery of the B language and the necessary interpreting techniques (Szabari, 2002). According to this approach, comprehension is at the heart of the interpreting process and native comprehension the only true guarantee of absolute understanding, even though B language expression might not be flawless. Nonetheless, according to Denissenko (1989:157) “a full or near full message gotten across even if in a somewhat stiff, less idiomatic or slightly accented language serves the purpose much better than an elegantly-worded and an

impeachably pronounced half-message or less". Moreover, the author states that working into a B language is also more economical, since the interpreter does not always have to choose between several solutions and will spend more time on listening and on target language production. In an A language, an interpreter can choose between a great variety of possible options which, under the pressure of SI, may have a detrimental effect on decision-making. On the other hand, one could argue that expression in an A language is more spontaneous and requires less effort; the performance of an A language interpreter therefore tends to be more idiomatic and natural for listeners. However, in some cases this could also be misleading. For example, if comprehension of the source language is incomplete but the rendition of an interpreter working into his A language is fluent and elegant, listeners might believe that the interpretation is fully accurate. This idea is corroborated by Shlesinger (1997:127) who argues that "smooth delivery may create the false impression of high quality when much of the message may in fact be distorted or even missing". These concerns about comprehension could be explained by the fact that during the Soviet era, opportunities for international contact were extremely limited. Accordingly, Szabari (2002:16) states that: "listening comprehension was probably more problematic than speaking as [the interpreter] had no opportunity to gain familiarity with the multitude of native speakers". However, the argument that B language interpreting should be privileged as it ensures better comprehension seems to be of limited relevance today. Especially in Western countries, foreign languages can normally be learned in the country in which they are spoken and the opportunities for future interpreters and professionals to plunge into a foreign language are abundant.

Donovan, a proponent of the Paris school, provides a comparison of the two approaches, arguing that "the interpreter, when interpreting into a 'B' language, has a 'comprehension bonus' [...] but, at the same time, has to deal with an 'expression deficit' [...] in the 'B' language. In 'A' language interpreting, the situation is simply reversed: the interpreter enjoys an 'expression bonus' but can potentially suffer a 'comprehension deficit'" (Donovan, 2011a).

### **1.3 Broader Approaches to the Issue of Interpreting into B**

Beyond this dichotomy "based on a mix of personal experience, ideology and tradition" (Gile, 2005:10), a number of researchers have adopted a more nuanced perspective to this debate. They aim to identify which variables play a role in interpreting into B and compare them with those entailed in interpreting into A. For example, Gile (2005) focuses on the concepts of processing capacity and cognitive load, and argues that these may influence the interpreting performance into A or B languages. According to Gile (2005:12), in CI and SI cognitive load appears to be "the most important factor determining directionality differences in performance". This assumption can be explained by the "Tightrope hypothesis", namely that "interpreters tend to work at levels of cognitive load close to saturation, which explains the numerous errors they sometimes make even when no clear problem triggers such as fast delivery, strong accents [...] can be identified in the source speech" (Gile, 2005:12). Accordingly, it would be preferable to work in the direction which implies the lowest level of processing capacity and cognitive load. The author argues

that interpreting into A could be preferable based on the assumption that comprehension accounts for around 30% of processing capacity whereas production for 70%.

These conclusions pave the way for further research, since processing capacity and cognitive load may also vary in different language pairs “with a net result which can either enhance or reduce the overall or partial difficulty of interpreting” (Gile, 2005:17). Language-pair differences constitute just one of the factors identified by the author which appear to have an influence on the performance of interpreters. However, “this does not mean that the directionality issue is devoid of importance, but its practical relevance may be less important than suggested in “official texts”, and less important than non-linguistic parameters” (Gile, 2005:17).

Another more nuanced approach is presented by Kalina (2005). The author focuses on how interpreting into a B language may affect the quality of interpretation, suggesting that “the question of whether and how output quality is affected by processing direction, i.e. interpreters working into their A language (L1 or mother tongue) or their B language (active working language, mostly L2) can be reviewed from a broader perspective” (Kalina, 2005:36). The author therefore prompts an analytical approach in which different observational techniques are used in order to assess quality in a particular interpreting situation and under specific circumstances. In her project, interpreting is seen as a service and the focus is on output but also on pre-process and post-process activities. Accordingly, the issue of interpreting into A or B should not be tackled in order to determine the superiority of the former or the latter. On the contrary, the author argues that a certain number of factors should be considered when dealing with the impact of directionality on interpreting quality, including language pair, conference setting, interpreting mode, linguistic and cultural background of the users and professionalism of interpreters but also of conference participants and organisers. Kalina (2005) notes that the interpreting strategies adopted may have a greater impact on quality than directionality itself. Stenzl (1989) also argues that more attention should be paid to the strategies applied by interpreters when working into an A or B language and to those adopted in different language pairs. Kalina (2000) provides a definition of the term strategies citing Færch & Kasper (1984:47): “potentially conscious plans for solving [...] a problem in reaching a [...] communicative goal”; the author also categorises interpreting strategies according to their aim, namely comprehension strategies (e.g. anticipation and segmentation of input), text production strategies (e.g. paraphrasing and condensing/expanding information) and global strategies (e.g. memorisation and monitoring techniques). Furthermore, Kalina (2005) stresses the importance of considering interpretation as part of the communication process; therefore, in order to adequately assess the quality of interpretation, one should not forget that the ultimate goal of interpreting is communication and the listener its “raison d’être” (Stenzl, 1989). From a user perspective, Kalina (2005), focuses on the concept of acceptability, arguing that B language interpreting may be more acceptable to listeners of some linguistic communities than of others. With regard to this last factor, for instance, Gile (1990) carries out a survey on interpretation quality whose aim is to assess the perception of a group of French- and English-speaking delegates. The results suggest that the evaluations made by native speakers of a certain linguistic community may tend to be similar, and that cultural differences may influence the users’



assessment of the performance of interpreters. The English-speaking delegates were generally more satisfied with the interpretation quality than the French-speaking delegates; a certain homogeneity emerged within each group as well as different attitudes and expectations, especially regarding B language interpreting, which appeared to be fully accepted by the English-speaking group.

Mead (2005) conducted an experimental study on pausing in consecutive interpreting in order to assess which direction was preferable in terms of fluency (B into A or A into B). All 45 participants (30 students, 15 professional interpreters) had Italian as their A language and English as their B. Each participant had to interpret a taped speech from English into Italian (B into A) and a second one from Italian into English (A into B). Their interpretations were recorded and analysed with an audio file software in order to measure pause duration. Pauses were divided into two categories: silent pauses and filled pauses (e.g. "eh"). The recordings were also discussed with the participants, and they had to find possible reasons for their pauses. For all groups of participants (students and professional interpreters) the overall duration of pauses was higher in English (from A into B) than in Italian (from B into A) and filled pause duration was considerably greater in English. These results might be an indicator that the participants were more fluent in interpreting into their A language (Italian) than into their B language (English). Although these findings cannot be seen as clear evidence that interpreting from B into A is more preferable than from A into B, the author states that pause duration should be improved in the B language, e.g. in training.

#### **1.4 Consecutive Interpreting into B**

The controversy on interpreting into a B language is much more acute when it comes to SI, whereas CI into B appears to be more acceptable. Adopting a cognitive perspective, Gile (2005) focuses on the distribution of processing capacity and cognitive load in CI and SI. In CI, the author identifies two phases: the "listening phase" and the "reformulation phase", the former requiring a greater effort (listening and note-taking) than the latter in terms of cognitive load, processing capacity and memory load. Accordingly, the author suggests that, it might be less demanding for interpreters to work from A into B in CI, as native comprehension is supposed to reduce the effort in the first phase. However, there is no clear evidence of a possible preference for working from A into B in CI. In addition, even though some interpreters who offer a retour work in CI and not in SI (DG SCIC, n.d. [1]), this might be due to the complexity of SI itself and not be related to the possible more favourable conditions described in Gile's hypothesis.

Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) address the topic of CI into B, arguing that working into B in CI can be considered acceptable provided that: the interpreter has adequate linguistic flexibility in their B language; their output is correct, as the message conveyed should match up with the background knowledge of the users. In terms of teaching techniques, the authors argue that training for CI into B should begin only once the basic skills of CI into A are in place. Déjean Le Féal (2005) seems to agree that B language interpreting should be taught only once the interpreting skills into A are consolidated in order to allow students to focus on its specific difficulties especially in terms of expression and linguistic aspects (e.g.

grammar and collocations). Moreover, Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) insist that speeches for training sessions should be carefully chosen and that students should not train with flowery speeches in which style prevails over substance, as “dans une langue B, on risquerait de ridiculiser l'orateur plutôt que de le servir” (Seleskovitch and Lederer, 1989:123). Regarding the type of speech, in fact, many interpreters seem to strongly prefer working into their B when speeches are technical; for flowery speeches, instead, A language interpreting is generally privileged due to greater mastery of style and more spontaneous and natural expression (Gile, 2005). In professional life, however, such speeches cannot always be avoided. If the interpreter encounters one of these speeches, an effective strategy when working into B might be to “KISS (keep it short and simple!)” (Minns, 2002:37). Furthermore, Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) stress that the interpreter's familiarity with the language of the speech and with the subject matter may ensure better output quality and ease listener comprehension. Consequently,

“quand un discours comprend une proportion importante de “fond”, l'interprète qui connaît avec précision les termes transcodables et exprime avec clarté l'argumentation de l'original, peut faire un travail remarquable en B; les quelques maladroites ou fautes dues à la pression du moment, les quelques interférences de sa langue maternelle passeront inaperçues” (Seleskovitch and Lederer, 1989:122)

Godijns and Hinderdael (2005) also argue that the length of time the interpreter lived in the country where the language is spoken and his knowledge of the topic under discussion influence the interpreting performance. The importance of conference preparation cannot be overemphasized, however, it becomes even more valuable when interpreters work into their B as smooth reformulation requires an even greater effort in terms of concept assimilation and ability of expression (Donovan, 2005).

## **1.5 Simultaneous Interpreting into B**

Although CI into a B language seems to be well established (see 1.4), there is still no consensus regarding SI into a B language. The complexity of the simultaneous interpreting process itself is clearly expressed by the “sense of puzzlement regarding the very feasibility of such an activity” during the early stages of SI research (Donovan, 2005:148). The difficulties inherent to SI are partly explained by the results of studies on the work of professional interpreters in SI, which revealed “a linguistically autonomous discourse production”; in these theories “SI is thus viewed not so much as an act of translation as the establishment of equivalent communication” (Donovan, 2005:149-150). Jones (2002:36) also argues that “the more the interpreter is in a position to express the speaker's ideas in their own words, the better will be the quality of communication”. This contributes to explain Seleskovitch's perspective (1999:62) on B language interpreting, namely that:

“the underlying assumption of many of those who advocate interpreting into 'B' is again that interpreting is tantamount to substituting target language words for source language words. It seems obvious that once you know that 'un chat' is 'a cat' you also know that 'a cat' is 'un chat'. [...] When listening to actual interpretation, however, the superiority of an A language over a B language is obvious”.

The “shortcomings” in terms of fluency, flexibility and intuition which characterize a B language “are likely to become more marked under the strain of SI” (Donovan, 2005:152). This might justify the concerns about interpretation quality of supporters of the Paris School – including Dejean LeFéal, Donovan, Seleskovitch and Lederer. Donovan (2005:151) states that early research on the topic carried out in a “geographical and political context in which SI into B was a standard practice” tended to underestimate the implications of directionality. Some authors even argued that native comprehension would ensure a more reliable transmission of content. In a survey on user expectations, Donovan (2005) attempted to assess interpreters' perception of working in SI into B; the author revealed that in their view SI into B involved greater fatigue and stress in comparison to SI into A. Although users may not have noticed a difference in terms of performance, interpreters felt more uncertainty, doubt and dissatisfaction when working in SI into B. The author also notes that several factors that affect the SI into B process – including higher density, complexity or limited redundancy – may decrease the quality of the output. Donovan (2005:147) highlights that “SI in B meets a genuine need on both the institutional and the private market”. The growth of the bilingual market at the national level is one of the main factors responsible for this trend, since interpreters who work in both directions make it easier to organise a team of interpreters and enable the clients to cut costs. Furthermore, *retour* interpreting is increasingly widespread in international organizations, including the EU where interpreters working in the languages of the countries of recent accession generally have to offer a *retour* (Clares Flores, 2014). In the light of these trends, *retour* appears to be considered unavoidable, even though “it remains a second-best solution” as it may delay the transmission of information and have a detrimental effect on precision; in contrast, when interpreting directly into their mother tongue, interpreters seem to “best master technical subtleties and nuances of expression” (Gebhard, 2002). In order to meet this new market demand, Donovan (2005) stresses the importance of developing teaching methods that are in line with market requirements and guarantee adequate quality standards. The author focuses on SI into B from the perspective of interpreting quality and stresses that “care is needed to ensure that SI into B does not become systematic regardless of proficiency in the B language, the risk being that all interpreters with relevant language combinations will come to feel obliged to work into B – or indeed will be bullied into doing so – to enhance their 'market value'” (Donovan, 2005:147). Déjean le Féal (2003) notes the importance of ensuring that the candidates selected by interpreting schools master the skills needed to cope with the extremely complex process of SI into B during the early stages of training. The author discusses the entrance examination process, stating that in comparison to CI, for SI it is more difficult to assess whether candidates who are completely new to its techniques have the required skills, while

ensuring that their foreign language proficiency is solid enough for them to work in SI. In the author's view, ideal candidates are students “who have grown up bilingual or spent many years in the country of their active foreign language”, since they are more likely to have acquired the necessary implicit competence and have developed adequate skills (Déjean le Féal, 2003:65).

## **1.6 Interpreters' Perspective on B Language Interpreting**

In order to give interpreters a voice in the debate on interpreting into B, the results of two surveys among AIIC members are briefly reported. The first one was conducted by Lim (2005) who sent out a survey to 1958 AIIC members. Although the response rate was too low to draw clear conclusions (3.93%; 77 full responses), the results may give us a sense of the use of B languages and of AIIC's interpreters' attitude towards directionality. About 55% stated that approximately 30% of their workload was into B. In terms of preferences, 68% of the respondents said they preferred working into their A language; 8% into B and 25% had no preferences. Among the first group, 56% said this was due to linguistic flexibility, whilst 26% argued that it was easier for them to understand their B language rather than speaking it. For the second group, when asked why they preferred working into B, 55% argued that this was due to better understanding when working from A. Regarding the interpreting mode, 75% stated that it did not influence their decision to work into B; among those who said that it did, 84% preferred not to work into it in SI. Lim concluded that “the general feeling among AIIC members seems to be that one should preferably work into A, but sometimes there is no choice; it's a fact of life; and as long as it is a strong, quality B, it usually does not do much harm” (Lim, 2005:13).

In 2012, another questionnaire was sent via email to 2606 AIIC members (Gorton, 2012). A sample of 279 members was analysed (response rate of 10.7%). The response rate of this survey is considerably higher than that of Lim's (response rate 3.93%); accordingly Gorton's survey appears to be more representative. 277 respondents indicated their language combination; of them, 224 had a B and the majority had English as a B language (62.05%). As for the results, 64.1% report a certain pressure to have a B and 94.9% argue that a B “increases an interpreter's market value” (Gorton, 2012:70). 31.5% were in favour of B language interpreting in contrast to the 16.41% who were not. This pressure could, to some extent, be a constraint for interpreters, who may decide to upgrade a language to a B even without possessing the necessary language skills. At the same time, it could be an incentive for some interpreters to enhance their B language skills in order to become more competitive.

Summarising and comparing the results of these two surveys, one could state that the AIIC interpreters questioned in the first survey clearly favour A language interpreting (68% prefer working into their A language) and the reasons are in line with those promoted by Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) (see section 1.1): greater linguistic flexibility in the A language; it is easier to understand a B language (a foreign language) than to speak it. Furthermore, 84% of the 25% who claim that the interpreting mode is an issue prefer not to work into their B language in SI, which is another principle advocated by the Paris school. A high number of interpreters questioned in the second survey state that there is pressure to

have a B language (64.1%) and almost 95% think that a B language enhances the interpreters' market value. However, one should also take into account that the large majority of them (around 81%) have a B language in their language combination which may have influenced their opinion. Even though the two samples are too limited to reflect a general trend, one could conclude the following: there seems to be a consensus among AIIC interpreters that A language interpreting is preferable but a B language constitutes an important added value.

## **2. B Languages – Current Market Trends**

### **2.1 Developments in the Use of B Languages**

The growing trend to offer a second active language is reflected in the following statistics for the year 2011: of 1541 AIIC interpreters (random sample), 74.5% had at least one second active language (A or B) in their language combination; the percentages for 2010 and 2008 were 65% and 57% respectively (Guichot de Fortis, 2007). Moreover, according to Gorton (2012), 72% of the total number of AIIC members have one or more B(s); in approximately 50% of the cases they have English as a B language. Guichot de Fortis (2007) divides interpreters into two categories: the 'classic profile' (one A language + several C languages) and the 'biactive profile' (two active languages + one or more C languages). Both in international organisations (interpreters working into a B language from less widespread languages) and on the private market, the latter seems to be gaining ground. In Paris, Brussels and Geneva, for example, the biactive profile with an English-French combination is highly requested. In the USA, an AA or AB combination seems to be standard. In Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa and Canada, Ministries and International Organisations are looking for interpreters with the national language and 'active English' in their combination. In Asia, B language interpreting appears to be a reality since the early stages of the interpreting training and in professional practice (Lim, 2003). On the private market, interpreting into a B language seemed to be a *sine qua non* for some languages already in 1998: "no Danish, German, Dutch, Austrian or Italian interpreter could possibly survive (outside Brussels, Luxembourg, Strasbourg, Paris or Geneva) were (s)he not prepared to work regularly into the first foreign language" (Gran and Snelling, 1998:2).

Lim (2003) outlines two essentially different interpreting paradigms. In the prevailing approach in Asian countries, interpreters are expected to work into B generally both in SI and CI; some interpreters working in these bi-directional markets "even feel that if one is unable or refuses to work into one's B, it is probably because the interpreter is incompetent" (Lim, 2003:161). In the Western interpreting tradition, instead, AIIC interpreters mainly work into their A and, according to the author, B language interpreting often seems to be considered "an aberration" by many (Lim, 2003:154). This vivid explanation seems to describe two radically different conceptions, as what is considered to be the norm in one region appears to be an exception in the other. However, one could argue that current market trends in Western countries calls for a more nuanced interpretation of the Western approach to interpreting into B. In the AIIC Professional Standards, it is stated that relay should not be used systematically, unless no other

option exists for a particular language; interpreting into A should therefore be privileged whenever possible (AIIC, n.d. [6]).

According to Lim (2003:151), this prevailing European practice “is a luxury that only Western interpreters seem to be able to enjoy”. However, this statement does not seem to fully reflect the Western market reality. In 2002, Szabari states that interpreting into A is prevalent in big international organisations and at conferences in Western Europe when widespread languages are used. B language interpreting, on the other hand, appears to be more widespread on the private market. It is particularly used “between minor languages and major languages on the one hand, and among minor languages on the other hand” (Szabari, 2002:13). The author specifies that in Central and Eastern Europe, for languages such as Czech, Hungarian and Polish, relay is traditionally used.

Pöchhacker (2004) notes that despite being common on the local and private market, B language interpreting (especially in SI) has generally been discouraged at international organisations. For certain languages, however, it has been used regularly both at the UE and UN, with English as the most common pivot. Accordingly, B language interpreting was practised in Europe already one decade ago and seems to have gained ground both on the institutional and private markets (Donovan, 2005). A major reason for this is the expansion of the European Union and the related growing demand for interpretation from the languages of Central and Eastern European countries. Already in the run-up to the European enlargement of 2004, in fact, these languages began to be used more frequently (Doempke, 2003); as these countries began to participate in international organisations more and more, interpreting into B was becoming more common at all levels, including for institutions and the private market (Szabari 2002). Minns (2002) also argued that the enlargement of the EU would lead to more interpretation into B, until interpreters with largely used A languages (e.g. English, French and German) would be able to work from them.

The language profiles in demand for the 2014 inter-institutional accreditation test of the European Union seem to confirm this prediction (European Union, 2014). For 18 of the 24 official languages, the AB(C) language combination is in demand. Potential candidates of 14 languages must have either ACC(C) or AB(C) and for two booths (Finnish and Maltese) having a retour is obligatory. English appears to be the most common retour (accepted for all the 18 booths for which the AB(C) profile is in demand), followed by French (13), German (12), Italian (7), Spanish (6) and Dutch (1). For Romanian, the list of the languages accepted as retour is not available, though EN is obligatory as B or C.

Retour interpreting might well be a temporary solution while interpreters learn certain languages in order to be able to interpret from them into their A, as suggested by Donovan (2005). However, the use of relays from “less well-known languages” into more “widespread languages” is a well-established practice at European Institutions (DG SCIC, n.d. [2]).



## 2.2 English as a B Language

Since around 50% of AIIC interpreters with a B language have English as their B (see 2.1), this section will take a closer look at this language. Generally speaking, today, a quarter of mankind has at least some basic knowledge of English and the number is raising (Crystal, 1997). In Europe, Latin served as the language of negotiations until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when French became the language of diplomacy (Baigorri Jalón, 1999). English was introduced as a conference language besides French during the peace talks after the First World War. It can be stated that the usage of French in international conferences declined during the last ten years while English is on the rise and has become a lingua franca (Donovan, 2011b).

The AIIC Training Committee (2002) states that today, it is essential for any interpreter to have English as passive or active language in their language combination. The main reason is that many speakers use it as their native language or as a means of communication at international conferences. Kalina (2005:40) also describes English as an “internationally used lingua franca”, a source or target language at a majority of today's conferences. Donovan (2011b) states that bilingual conferences (which use the national language and a second language, usually English) are more and more widespread on the private market; consequently, interpreters may choose to have an AB combination (with English B) in order to work in both directions. Kalina (2005) claims that interpreters are increasingly asked to work into an English B, particularly in bilingual meetings in which only English and the language of the country are used. The author mentions financial considerations and the impossibility to predict the number of speeches held in English or the other language as main reasons for this development. Furthermore, for certain A languages (e.g. Chinese, Japanese and Arabic), “it is a major advantage to have an English B with retour rather than another B language” (Donovan, 2011b:14). As shown in section 2.1, English appears to be the most common retour language also at the European Institutions, followed by French. For these reasons, one could claim that nowadays, an English B is a valuable asset for certain A languages, and seems to be even a must for others. However, the other side of the coin is described by Donovan (2011b): this tendency leads to less work for the English booth which sometimes is replaced by interpreters of the other booths who offer a retour into English (especially on the private market), even if not all of them may have a solid B.

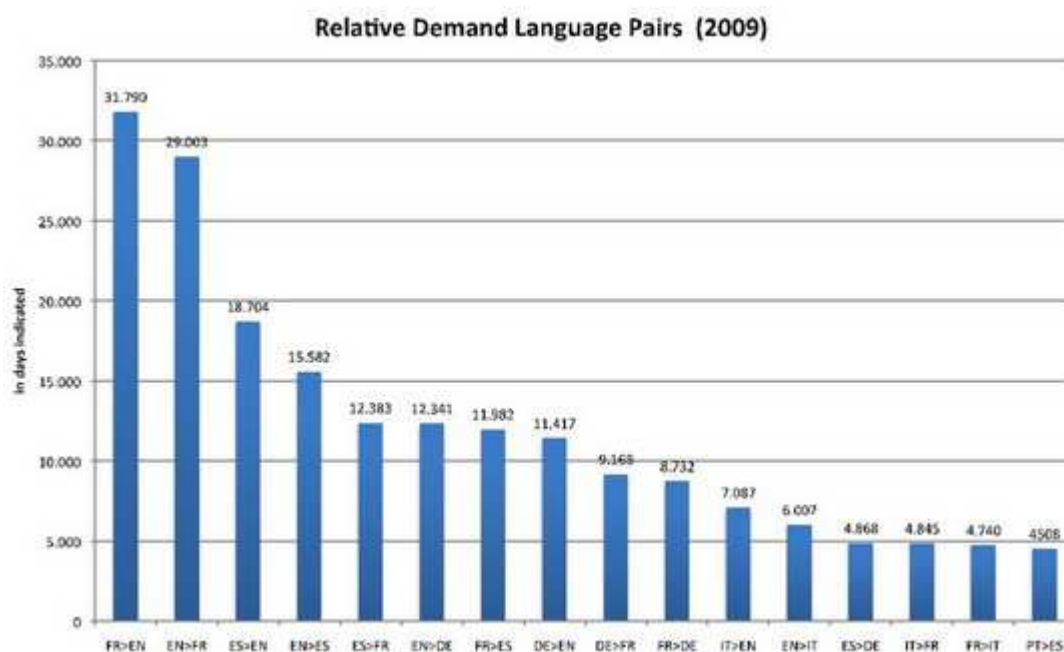
From the interpreter's perspective, it can be argued that interpreting into English (interpreting into an English A as well as into an English B) might be more stressful than working into other languages (Gorton, 2012). The reason for this is that many speakers, even though they deliver their speech in their mother tongue, have an excellent grasp of English and could correct the interpreter at any moment if they are not satisfied with the interpretation. Furthermore, English (A or B) interpreters frequently have to provide relay for other interpreters and thus a large number of other booths rely on them. In contrast, it is interesting to note that some English B interpreters questioned in the second survey in 1.6 favour working into their B language rather than from it. They claim that it is not always easy to understand the wide variety of types of English (both native and non-native) and therefore prefer working into their B;

however, this preference in directionality reflects the personal opinion of some interpreters and might not be relevant to the listeners. From their point of view, it should be stated that in some cases, an English B interpreter even seems to be preferable, namely when the audience is composed of non-native speakers of English (Szabari, 2002). For such audiences, it can be easier to follow an English B interpreter rather than an English A interpreter. Kalina (2005) argues that the high number of non-native speakers of English attending conferences tends to justify the acceptance of English as a B language. The author describes it as a more linear and less idiomatic version of English which appears to be easier to understand in comparison to that of “an English native speaker who delves in the linguistic abundance of his/her mother tongue” (Kalina, 2005:41). Native speakers of English, on the other hand, are accustomed to many types of English, and therefore, they might also be less critical if an interpreter working into an English B makes an error (Gorton, 2012). However, for other B languages the situation might be different; this is, for example, the case with French. In Europe, those listening to the interpretation into French tend to be native speakers. The French generally prefer French A interpreters and might be more critical of French B interpreting. Some even claim that “it would be a brave interpreter indeed who dared encroach on the territory of the French booth” (Page (2006) cited in Gorton, 2012:76). The predominance of English in today's world cannot be neglected and has implications for conference interpreters and for less widely spoken languages (see 2.3). Guichot de Fortis (2013:15) puts it this way: “a conference interpreter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must have English, and at an excellent level. Offering English as a ‘B’ language is an even better card to play.”

### **2.3 The Interpreting Market for Less Widely Spoken Languages**

As far as the status of German and Italian is concerned, Neff (2011) examines language demand by considering the six most widespread conference languages worldwide (source languages) in 2009. Unsurprisingly, English and French account for the highest number of working days for interpreters, 92% and 75% respectively. Spanish follows as the third most frequently used conference language (48.7%). The fourth is German; though it is used less across the globe, it is on the rise in Europe. The fifth language is Italian; although it is only used in Europe, it corresponds to 22% of total days. Portuguese came in sixth (17.6%). The author also considers the most frequently used passive-active language pairs.





As the graph shows, among the sixteen language pairs for which the highest demand was registered worldwide, those including German or Italian are: English into German (6<sup>th</sup>; 12,341 working days indicated) and German into English (8<sup>th</sup>; 11,417); German into French (9<sup>th</sup>; 9,168) and French into German (10<sup>th</sup>; 8,732), as well as Italian into English (11<sup>th</sup>; 7,087) followed by English into Italian (12<sup>th</sup>; 6,007), and Italian into French (14<sup>th</sup>; 4,845) and French into Italian (15<sup>th</sup>; 4,740). For comparison, the language pairs for which the highest demand was registered worldwide were French into English (1<sup>st</sup>; 31,790) and English into French (2<sup>nd</sup>; 29,003). Accordingly, both German and Italian are among the main conference languages; the market demand for these two languages is not comparable, as for German it is almost the double of that for Italian; however, the interpreting market for these two languages appears to be rather restricted in comparison to that of the languages of highest demand (English, French and Spanish).

Furthermore, as for the geographical distribution of German and Italian, some common patterns can be identified. In the European Union, German and Italian are among the six main languages in terms of use and number of native speakers (Ginsburgh and Weber, 2011). For these six languages (English, Dutch, French, German, Italian and Spanish), the authors provide an estimate of the number of native speakers in the EU and worldwide, as well as of the overall number of users worldwide (mother tongue or foreign language). If one compares the number of the native speakers of German and Italian in the EU and of the users worldwide (90.1 and 126 million for German; 57.6 and 63 for Italian, respectively), it could be argued that these languages appear to be rather geographically concentrated, although to a different extent. In these respects, the data related to English (62.3 and 1800), French (64.5 and 169) and Spanish (39.4 and 450) may be telling of their status of extensively used languages worldwide.

Sorrentino (2012) focuses on the role and use of the most common European languages. The author argues that the status of a language can be determined “either from the political strength of the country where the language is spoken or from the business opportunities that the country offers to its

neighbouring partners as well as to people intending to learn a new language” (Sorrentino, 2012:3). As for German, it also was one of the languages of the founding countries of the European Union; in the early stages of the European integration, and especially before the accession of Ireland and the United Kingdom in 1973, the status of German was particularly high. However, its use as working language seems to be more restricted in comparison to that of English and French. In contrast, owing to the demographic, economic and political weight of this language community, it can be argued that German is one of the languages with the highest potential of growth at the European and international level. As for Italian, it appears to be one of the main languages in the European Union; however, it cannot be regarded as a widespread conference language at the international level. The author also states that if the political weight of the country on the international scene declines, as many suggest, this may have a negative impact on some sectors of the market for its language. Moreover, in his view, despite being one of the founding countries of the European Union, Italy not always seems to adequately promote the use of its language at the institutional level, with direct consequences on the national private market.

Déjean le Féal (2003) considers a certain number of quantitative and qualitative implications for interpreters who work into languages of local or regional use, and especially on their impact on interpreters' training. The author argues that “the future need for conference interpreters in a given language will require consideration of that language's staying power” (*Ibid*:73). This is influenced by two main variables, namely the use of the language internationally and its resistance to the increasingly dominant use of English as a lingua franca. The author states that the use of a language on the international scene depends on three factors related to the international actors who speak it as their mother tongue: the extent to which they use their language; the international status they want their language to have and their ability to learn to speak English. As for the second variable, Reithofer (2010:143) argues that “English has undoubtedly come to be the world's most important lingua franca and a sine qua non in most domains of public life”. The increasingly widespread use of English as a language of international communication is a trend that seems to lead to concerns among many conference interpreters. With this unprecedented spread of English as lingua franca, around three quarters of its users are non-native speakers. This has direct consequences on the work of conference interpreters; in an increasingly high number of conferences, in fact, English is either the unique working language or it is used along with the language of the country in which the conference takes place. In this situation, “interpreters seem to be increasingly torn between the increasing difficulty to maintain high quality and the increasing need to display the high quality of their services” (Reithofer, 2010:150). From a qualitative viewpoint, Déjean le Féal (2003) argues that due to the growing use of English as lingua franca, interpretation from and into less widely spoken languages will increasingly “be required only for reasons of protocol on official occasions and otherwise as a luxury convenience made available to speakers and listeners at international conferences”. Accordingly, interpreters must comply with particularly high standards of quality, as the goal of interpreting is not comprehension itself and interpreting is expected to bring added value to the communication process. In Déjean le Féal's view, these trends imply that considerable attention should be paid to the future demand for conference

interpreters and that interpreting schools should take measures in order to adjust their programmes to the realities of the market. In this regard, the interpreting market in German-speaking areas is a case of point. This market is relatively large and has several major centres. However, due to European integration policies, interpreting schools have proliferated in this region over the last thirty years. Since conference interpreting tends to be decreasing on the private market, “the six German and Austrian interpreting schools in particular continue to train new interpreters hand over fist, graduating a new class every year onto the already saturated and steadily shrinking market” (Déjean le Féal, 2003:74). According to Déjean le Féal, it is therefore particularly important to keep in mind that “equilibrium of supply and demand on a geographically concentrated market with a correspondingly limited number of meetings is easily disrupted” (Déjean le Féal, 2003:73). Moreover, the author suggests that the focus has to be put on quality as well as on appropriate teaching methods in order to avoid a negative impact on the profession and on working conditions.

### **3. The Private Market**

#### **3.1 The Role of AIIC**

Since its foundation in 1953, AIIC has been working on the establishment of the profession of conference interpreting (AIIC, 2012b). AIIC is the only global association of conference interpreters that is recognized by institutions such as the EU, UN and Council of Europe and sets high standards in terms of “accuracy in translation, effective communication and professional reliability” (AIIC Italy, n.d. [1]).

AIIC members work in a variety of contexts, including international organisations and the national public and private sector. AIIC includes interpreters with “specific know-how”, “expertise”, “wide-ranging experience” and “qualified knowledge” (AIIC Italy, n.d. [1]). Moreover, AIIC's activities have played a key role in defining the profession, identifying and consolidating standards and laying the groundwork for cooperation with the conference industry (AIIC, 2012b). The definition of A, B and C languages, for instance, “is now the standard used throughout the industry” (AIIC, 2012b).

Collaboration between AIIC and the conference industry is fundamental, since interpreters' insight is crucial to ensure quality interpretation and guarantee an appropriate language distribution and adequate working conditions during conferences. For example, “in cooperation with the International Standards Organisation (ISO) AIIC elaborated the ISO standards for booths and for simultaneous interpretation systems that are now widely used in the conference industry” (AIIC, 2012b). The experience of AIIC members is therefore invaluable in the field of conference organization, favouring the adjustment to the market situation analysed by the Private Market Sector (AIIC Italy, n.d. [2]). Furthermore, AIIC enjoys close relationships with interpreting schools, acting as an intermediary between study programs and the conference industry (AIIC, 2012b).

In order to facilitate the complex task of organizing a multilingual conference or event, clients in the

private sector can turn to consultant interpreters, professional 'service providers' offering a conference organizer the insight of an experienced professional conference interpreter (Lucarelli, 2013). Consultant interpreters can be regarded as 'intermediaries' who identify the conference setting suitable to the needs of the client (language configuration, technical aspects etc.). They also recruit the interpreters required and coordinate the team. The directory of AIIC consultant interpreters is accessible via the AIIC website, and offers clients the opportunity to search for a service provider by name or region.

AIIC has about 3000 members (2013) worldwide (AIIC, 2002). This network also includes regional groups: groups of at least 25 AIIC members whose professional address is in a given region (AIIC, n.d. [3]). An AIIC region is generally a country, though some regions include multiple countries. Each AIIC region is represented in the Council (AIIC's governing body). Regional groupings have a bureau whose activities include organising regional meetings in which issues specific to the area are discussed. Regional meetings allow the AIIC members from the region to formulate their opinions on a variety of subjects in preparation for AIIC Assemblies.

### **3.2 The Private Market Sector**

AIIC members are generally split into regional groups on a geographical basis, but they can also choose to join 'sectors' that regroup interpreters "who share a common interest [...]. Their terms and conditions are codified in an agreement or convention negotiated between AIIC and their employer"(Garzon, 2008). For example, Mackintosh (2005:5) describes the 'agreement sector' in which "each of the large institutional employers constitutes a sector and members working in a given sector meet to agree the terms of the agreements negotiated between AIIC and that sector". A sector covers a given institutional market which is regulated by "collective agreements governing the remuneration and working conditions of conference interpreters freelancing for the international organizations" (AIIC, n.d. [2]). These agreements concluded by AIIC and apply not only to AIIC freelancers but to all freelance interpreters working for the organizations with which AIIC had entered into such agreements. According to an estimate made by Guichot de Fortis (2013) 90% of the overall number of interpreters worldwide are freelance and 10% are staff interpreters at international organisations or businesses.

Another important segment is the "non-agreement sector", which is referred to as the Private Market Sector (PrIMS). According to the AIIC definition (AIIC, 2001):

"The Private Market Sector shall encompass freelance members and candidates who work for the international private market, the national private and public markets, and the intergovernmental organizations or meetings that are not governed by agreements negotiated by the Association"

This AIIC sector therefore comprises the majority of conference interpreters who work as freelancers for multiple employers "for companies, associations, government institutions and the like" (AIIC, n.d. [5]).

Generally speaking, the private market “covers all interpreting work where the contractual terms and remuneration are negotiated individually between the interpreter (who may be represented by a consultant interpreter) and the client organising the event” (Garzon, 2008). PriMS is undoubtedly the largest AIIC sector in terms of the number of interpreters it includes, the amount of working days it offers and its geographic extension. Moreover, “as a community of interest it is also one of the Association's most dynamic sectors, as shown by the success of its six-monthly meetings” (Garzon, 2008). PriMS meetings take place in order to discuss issues relevant to the actors in this market segment (Mackintosh, 2005:5). These may include “languages in demand, recruitment, working practices, work volume in the market, training of interpreters, use of technological innovations in interpreting, statistical surveys, videoconferences and remote interpreting” (AIIC, n.d. [5]). The Private Market Sector Standing Committee manages the PriMS and creates working groups when necessary. The PriMS can also make proposals to AIIC on issues such as the professional standards or contract conditions. Furthermore, “all resolutions passed by Private Market Sector are transmitted to Council for decision” (AIIC, 2001).

In the private market, the term ‘business clients’ refers to “all clients for whom freelance interpreters work except national/international governmental organisations” (AIIC, 2012a). This term itself might be misleading, as the freelance interpreters active in this segment may work for a range of clients who are not limited to the business community: “they may be associations professional bodies, trade unions, NGOs” (AIIC, 2012a). Generally speaking, this sector encompasses “any body organising a meeting/conference [that] may require interpreters” (AIIC, 2012a). In most cases, business clients employ interpreters for the duration of the event and for short periods (around two or three days).

### **3.3 The Evolution of the Private Market Sector: Sectoral Trends**

Doempke's (2003) highlights several features inherent to the private market and anticipates a number of current trends outlined in chapter 2. The author considers the effects of the enlargement of the European Union on the private market. Written in 2003, the article was published in the year preceding “the largest single enlargement in terms of people, and number of countries”, with the accession of 10 new countries (mainly Central and Eastern European) to the EU (European Commission, 2013). Some effects of the imminent enlargement were becoming noticeable, accentuating certain differences between the European Institutions market and the private market. Firstly, Doempke notes the increasing demand for ‘Eastern and Central European (ECE) languages’. Second, he argues that when a ‘minor’ language is spoken in a meeting, on the private market it appears ever harder to convince clients to recruit a “number of interpreters [that] can easily exceed that of the delegates” especially when the delegate(s) using this particular language may speak for a very limited amount of time (or not at all) (Doempke, 2003). Third, Doempke (2003) highlights the role of English as the dominant international conference language, which is increasingly spoken by non-native speakers for an audience in which non-native speakers of English are generally the vast majority. As a consequence, the English booth tends to be frequently replaced with a retour into English from another booth. Finally, in multilingual events, it may be

particularly hard to “find local interpreters with the right combinations, let alone the best interpreters for a given combination” when meetings are organized late or the working languages are changed at the last minute (Doempke, 2003). Moreover, financial consideration strongly influence conference organizers' attitude towards interpretation.

The “Statistical World Report 2009” overviews a variety of aspects linked to conference interpreting, including “demography, stress, language needs, market demand and workload” (Neff, 2011). This study focuses on the evolution of the interpreting market over a five-year period. The data come from a 2009 online survey whose response rate was relatively high, namely 24,4% of AIIC members worldwide. In “A statistical portrait 2005-2009”, the executive summary of the report available on the AIIC website, Neff (2011) presents “some of the highlights for the private market” which emerged from the data. One of the aspects examined in the report is workload. The Private Market Sector (PriMS) is described as the “most important source of work for interpreters worldwide”, although regional variations exist (Neff, 2011). In Europe, although the PriMS represents an important market (40.7% of the total market), the largest segment is the Agreement Sector (AS), which accounts for 51.3%.

### **3.3.1 The German-Speaking Market: the Case of Austria**

Regarding the general situation of translation and interpreting graduates on the Austrian market, Moisl (2002) states that due to the structure of Austrian businesses – the vast majority are small and medium enterprises – it is very difficult for individuals to be hired exclusively to carry out language-related tasks. Unlike training at university, the distinction between a first foreign language and a second foreign language is not relevant for employers, who may not even know the difference between translation and interpreting. Though nobody will ask a translation graduate to interpret simultaneously, these individuals may well be expected to help out with interpreting when foreign business partners visit. The work of these translators/interpreters may also include tasks requiring some basic commercial expertise.

In her study on the need for foreign languages in large Austrian enterprises, Weber (2008) states that translators and interpreters are members of the permanent staff in only 3% of the businesses, despite the fact that their skills are regularly used in nearly all companies. These language professionals draft brochures, contracts and technical texts, among other tasks. Interpreters are rarely hired for negotiations. The services of translators and interpreters are not only used for ‘exotic’ languages but first and foremost for English and French.

In her MA thesis, Mai notes that in contrast to translators, interpreters in Austria are not regarded as professionals whose work can be done by other people possessing knowledge of foreign languages (Mai, 2009). However, she underlines that it is difficult for interpreters to find permanent employment in Austria (which is not surprising as most Austrian interpreters work on the private market); the only potential employer for German speaking interpreters is the EU (Mai, 2009).

As part of her MA thesis on job satisfaction among interpreters in Austria, Brandstötter (2009) conducted an empirical study of 62 UNIVERSITAS Austria (see 4.1.2.1) interpreters (at that time, the online

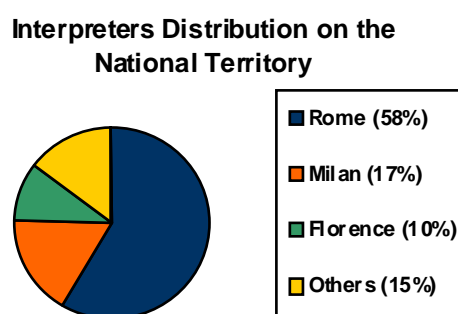
interpreting directory of UNIVERSITAS Austria included a total of 125 interpreters). Although the aim of the questionnaire was to determine whether the respondents were satisfied with their careers as interpreters or not, it also included a question to determine what kind of interpreting tasks they were asked to carry out. The eight different areas were the following:

1. Conference interpreting at international organisations (EU, OECD etc.);
2. Conference interpreting on the private market;
3. Liaison interpreting;
4. Media interpreting;
5. Court interpreting;
6. Interpreting for the police;
7. Interpreting for other authorities (asylum etc.);
8. Healthcare interpreting.

The respondents were asked the frequency with which they worked in each field. The responses clearly demonstrate that almost all respondents (59) work as conference interpreters on the private market. The second most frequent category (51) is liaison interpreting and the third area is conference interpreting at international organisations (44). Since the number of respondents represents half of the UNIVERSITAS Austria interpreters listed in the online directory in June 2009, the results of this empirical study may offer a glimpse of the overall interpreting market in Austria.

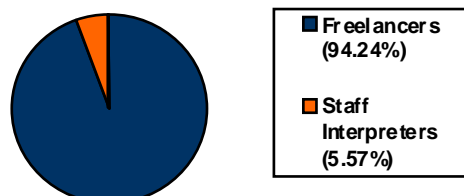
### 3.3.2 The Italian-Speaking Market: the Case of Italy

According to the data provided by AIIC Italia, namely one of the 23 AIIC regional bodies, its members based in the country are around 200 (AIIC Italy, n.d. [1]). In terms of distribution, AIIC statistics show that the three main centres for the number of interpreters are Rome, Milan and Florence.

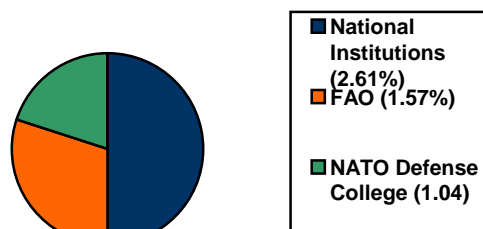


As the following graphs show, over 94% of the AIIC interpreters based in Italy are freelancers, and all the staff interpreters (around 5%) are located in Rome.

**Freelancers/ Staff Interpreters**



**Staff Interpreters**



In Europe, Italy comes in fifth for the number of AIIC interpreters on the national territory. Vitale (2009) provides an overview of the Italian interpreting market; her Master's thesis presents a study based on information provided by 41 institutions, from which data was collected on 710 interpreters with a variety of professional profiles. The data was collected between October 2007 and May 2008. This sample can be considered to be representative of the private market as well as of other sectors examined. The author argues that a large majority of the freelancers based in Italy work on the private market, which is in line with the general tendency among AIIC members worldwide. The largest segment of the Italian interpreting market appears to be the private sector; in terms of language combinations, B languages seem to be used more frequently than in countries where the private market is more restricted. The Italian private market is particularly developed in Northern Italy, whereas in Central Italy a larger number of interpreters work in the public sector for international organizations and national institutions. The private market is less strictly regulated than the institutional market, and as a consequence those who have not graduated from an interpreting school can more easily access this market. Bendazzoli (2010) argues that at international conferences taking place on the Italian interpreting market, the working conditions for interpreters largely differ from those of contexts such as the European Institutions. The author carries out a corpus-based interpreting study; as the name of the corpus suggests (*Directionality in Simultaneous Interpreting Corpus*), the aim of this project is to provide an insight into the issue of directionality. The context chosen is international conferences in the Italian private market which, according to the author, constitutes a particularly adequate framework to explore directionality, as clients generally take for granted the fact that interpreters should be able to interpret in both directions. This requirement can apply to bilingual conferences (English and Italian) as well as for any other conferences where other working languages are involved. Moreover, the Italian private market appears to be characterised by a large variety of events and conference settings requiring interpreters great flexibility. As for interpreting mode, if the working languages of a conference are traditional, widely spoken European languages, interpreters generally work in SI (Vitale, 2009). Whereas when rare languages are involved, CI and liaison interpreting are used more frequently. In line with international trends, SI is the most widespread interpreting mode on the Italian market. However, CI is still used, mainly in press conferences and in small meetings with a limited number of participants.



As far as working languages are concerned, English (both active or passive) is unarguably the most demanded on the national private market (Sorrentino, 2012). French comes second, followed by German and Spanish. The demand for interpreters having German in their language combination is particularly high and steady in business interpreting (often liaison interpreting). In the last few years, in fact, the importance of German industries in sectors including technology, mechanics and energy has considerably grown, leading to an increase in business relations between small and medium enterprises. Institutional relations have also intensified, along with commercial partnerships in the field of telecommunications and of the banking/postal services (PPP public private partnerships). Moreover, the importance of German and Spanish appears to have increased, especially in industrial confederations and in trade unions (Vitale, 2009). Eastern European languages seem to have become more widely used on the Italian interpreting market, a tendency that appears to be related to the European enlargement. The results of Vitale's study (2009) show that interpreters rarely have these languages in their combinations, but those who master them affirm to use them often or quite often. Sorrentino (2012) also focuses on the interpreting private market for these languages; the author argues that two main challenges facing the profession are: inadequate legal regulation and market demand for languages which often are not yet mastered by professional translators and interpreters, due to the intensification of relations with new markets. The author argues that institutional and business relations with Eastern European countries have increased. With the accession of ten new countries to the European Union in 2004, most of which Eastern European, coping with the interpreting demand for their languages has been a challenge at the European institutions level but also on national markets. Finding professional interpreters covering these languages is, in fact, problematic at the national level as well; according to the author, the main reason why this issue is still a reality may be the lack of interpreting programs that include them. Interpreting schools generally tend to privilege traditional European languages with the rare exceptions of Arabic and Chinese. Consequently, this interpreting demand (e.g. for Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Albanian, Serb and Croatian, Slovenian, Czech) on the Italian private market is generally met by second generation immigrants who are not necessarily professional interpreters. In the conclusions of her study, Vitale (2009) suggests that in what appears to be a competitive and restricted interpreting market, for young interpreters it may be important to identify the market sector they aim to work for and adjust their language combination to its specific needs. Aspiring interpreters might choose to add a rare language or the language of an emerging market for which demand can be expected to grow in the future. This idea is corroborated by Guichot de Fortis (2013:15), who stresses the importance of a competitive professional profile: "demand is still firm, but only for those who bring added value". In his analysis, this added value could come in the form of a language combination that includes a 'rare' language or a B language that is not common in combination with one's A. Furthermore, a language combination with two foreign languages does not seem to suffice in current market conditions and English appears to be particularly important both as a passive and active language (Vitale, 2009).

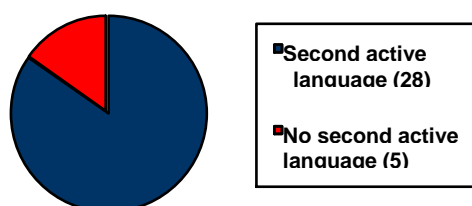
## 4. Country-Specific Section

1. The data for the analysis of AIIC interpreters in Austria, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland was collected on the AIIC website (<http://aiic.net/>) between March 29<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.
2. Some interpreters are included in the total number of interpreters for a given country/city, but as their detailed membership information cannot be accessed, their language combinations could not be taken into account.
3. For this analysis, all combinations including two A languages were counted as AA and all combinations including at least one B language were counted as AB. But obviously all possible combinations including AA or AB were taken into account (such as AAC, AACC, ABB, ABC, ABCC, ABCCC etc.). However, C languages are absent in the graphs as they are not relevant for the scope of this analysis.
4. Some interpreters figure twice in the graphs if they offer both a second A and a B language (combinations such as AAB, AABC, AABCC etc.). In the total number of interpreters for a given country such interpreters are obviously counted as one, but they are counted both as an interpreter having an AA combination and as an interpreter offering an AB combination.

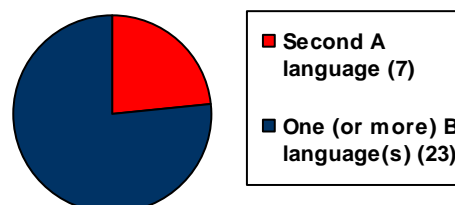
### 4.1 Austria

#### 4.1.1 Language Combinations of AIIC Interpreters

**Second Active Language (AIIC Interpreters Austria)**

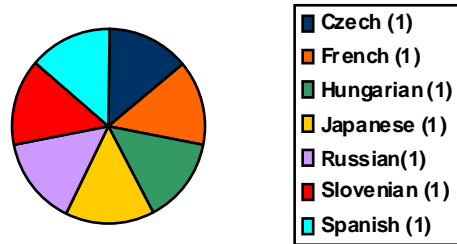


**Second Active Language: A or B (AIIC Interpreters Austria)**



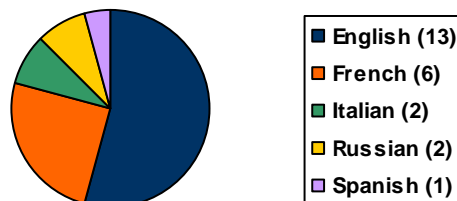
In Austria, there are a total of 75 AIIC interpreters, the vast majority of whom (95%) are based in Vienna. 44% have German as their A language and will therefore be considered in the following analysis. All of these individuals are freelance interpreters, which may have an impact on their language combination and working languages. 84.85% of AIIC interpreters with German A based in Austria have at least one second active language (second A or B) in their language combination. 21.20 % have a second A language and 69.70 % have a B language.

### A Languages (AIIIC Interpreters Austria)



When it comes to the language distribution, no clear relation can be found amongst the 'double A' combinations, as each of the seven interpreters has a different combination, pairing German with Czech, French, Hungarian, Japanese, Russian, Slovenian, and Spanish, respectively.

### B Languages (AIIIC Interpreters Austria)



However, there is a clear trend regarding B languages: 56.51% of the interpreters with a B language in their language combination have an English B and 26.09% have a French B. Furthermore, 8.7 % have Italian B, another 8.7% have Russian as their B language, and one interpreter has a Spanish B.

Taking a closer look at the language combinations, it can be stated that a combination including German A + several C languages can be considered as an exception, as only 15.15% have no second active language. Although C languages are not included in the graphs, it should be noted that many interpreters offering a B language also have one or more C language(s) in their combination, with combinations such as ABC or ABCC. On the other hand, an AB combination with no C language seems to be quite rare, and among the small number of interpreters with this combination, German A + English B is prevalent.

Based on these statistics, it seems that it may be an advantage to offer a second active language on the Austrian market. Among B languages, there is a clear trend: the most common second active language is English, followed by French.

#### **4.1.2 National Associations**

##### **4.1.2.1 UNIVERSITAS Austria (Berufsverband für Dolmetschen und Übersetzen, Interpreters' and Translators' Association)**

UNIVERSITAS Austria is a non-political and non-profit association whose goal is “representing the interests of the translation and interpreting professions” (UNIVERSITAS Austria, n.d. [1]). This aim is pursued by various means, including cooperation with private and public bodies in Austria and various publications. The association includes regular members, junior members, honorary members, supporting members and friends of the association. In order to become a regular member, you must hold an Austrian university degree or a foreign degree that can be considered as an equivalent. However, candidates who do not have a university degree in translation or interpretation but who “enjoy a recognized reputation as translators or interpreters due to their professional activities and experience” can become regular members (UNIVERSITAS Austria, n.d. [1]). In any case, decisions on applicants are made by the Executive Board. Members must pay an annual membership fee. In December 2013, UNIVERSITAS Austria had 512 regular members, 194 junior members, 12 friends of the association and 13 honorary members for a total of 731 members. After being a member of the association for at least two years, regular members can ask to be included in the translator/interpreter directory, an online, searchable database open to the public (UNIVERSITAS Austria, n.d. [3]). In order to be included in the directory of interpreters, regular members must prove that they have worked for at least thirty days in a period of two consecutive years. Their application must also be supported by three colleagues who have been listed in the interpreter directory for at least two years.

##### **4.1.2.1.1 Language Combinations of UNIVERSITAS Austria Interpreters**

The working languages of the interpreters listed in the online directory are classified as A, B and C languages (AIIC language classification); in some cases, members may have one or more B/C languages labelled as ‘court-certified’ (UNIVERSITAS Austria, n.d. [2]). The vast majority of the UNIVERSITAS Austria members are based in Vienna. In order to shed light on the different language combinations of UNIVERSITAS Austria interpreters, a sample of 60 interpreters (slightly less than half of UNIVERSITAS Austria interpreters) with German as their A language was analysed. The sample was randomly selected using the online interpreter directory. 96.67% of these 60 members offer a second active language; 10% offer a 'double A' combination and 86.67% offer at least one B language. Furthermore, 21.66% of these 60 interpreters are 'court certified' for at least one of their foreign languages. The interpreters with a 'double A' work with Finnish, French, Italian, Polish, Russian and Spanish, respectively. As for the B languages, 44.22% of the 86.67% offering a B language have an English B, 19.22% have a French B, 11.54% Russian, 9.62% Italian, 9.62% Spanish, 5.79% Hungarian and 1.91% Swedish. With regard to the language combinations of the 60 interpreters in the sample, 41.66% have an ABC combination, 40% offer an AB combination, 6.66% have an AAC, 3.33% offer an

AA, 3.33% an ABCC and 1.66% an ABBC. The 2 interpreters without a second active language have an ACC and an ACCCCC combination, respectively, while 60% of the 40% with an AB combination have English as their B language. In conclusion, offering a second active language seems to be an advantage on the Austrian market, as 58 out of the 60 interpreters in our sample have at least one second active language in their combination.

### **4.1.3 University Curricula**

#### **4.1.3.1 University of Graz (Institut für Translationswissenschaft – Karl-Franzens Universität Graz)**

The University of Graz offers a Master of Arts (MA) programme in interpreting with four different options: (1) Conference interpreting, (2) Liaison and negotiation interpreting, (3) Sign language interpreting, and (4) Interpreting and translating with one foreign language (Universität Graz, 2011). For this analysis, only the first option shall be considered. This programme corresponds to 120 ECTS credits (four semesters) and the only available language combination is ABC. Students who wish to attend this programme must be native speakers of German or choose German as their B language, if they have a native language other than German. In the latter case, for their C language, students have to attend interpreting classes in which they have to interpret from their C language into German (their B language). This means for them that they have to work from a foreign language into a foreign language. Furthermore, students have to possess a C1 level (as per Common European Framework of Reference for Languages; CEFR) in each of their foreign languages; however, no entrance exam is required. Students have to choose two foreign languages – a first (active) foreign language (thus a B language) and a second (passive) foreign language (a C language) – from the following: Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, German, English, French, Italian, Austrian sign language, Russian, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish, and Hungarian. The curriculum includes interpreting theory, CI and SI from the active foreign language and the passive foreign language into the mother tongue, and from the mother tongue into the active foreign language.

#### **4.1.3.2 University of Innsbruck (Institut für Translationswissenschaft – Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)**

The University of Innsbruck offers an MA programme (120 ECTS credits, four semesters) in Translation Studies where students can choose between three different specializations: (1) Specialised translation, 2. Literary and media communication and 3. Conference interpreting (Universität Innsbruck, 2009). For the sake of this paper, only the third area of specialisation will be considered. An entrance exam is not required and students must hold a related Bachelor's degree. The students' language combination includes three languages: the mother tongue or 'language of education' (A language) and two foreign languages (first foreign language (B language) and second foreign language (C language)). The following foreign languages can be studied: German (as a foreign language), English, French, Italian, Russian and Spanish. At the moment, the only A language available is German. However, students who

have another mother tongue can attend this programme if their mother tongue is amongst the optional foreign languages. In this case, German must be their B language and they have to work from C into B as mentioned above. The curriculum includes theoretical courses (such as translation technology and translation studies) and practical interpreting classes. CI and SI are taught from the B and the C language into the A language, and from the A language into the B language.

#### 4.1.3.3 University of Vienna (Zentrum für Translationswissenschaft – Universität Wien)

The University of Vienna offers an MA programme in interpreting with two different options: (1) Conference interpreting or (2) Community interpreting (Universität Wien, 2013). The following analysis will consider only the first option. This programme lasts for four semesters and includes 120 ECTS credits (Universität Wien, n.d.). No entrance examination is required and every candidate must hold a relevant Bachelor's degree. Students must choose three different working languages: an A language (mother tongue), a B language and a C language. German must be either the A or the B language. Students who have German as their B language can attend the programme if their A language is included among the foreign languages offered, namely Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Czech, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Spanish; in such a case, students have to work from their C into their B (German). This programme comprises both theoretical and practical courses including CI and SI from B and C into A and from A into B (Universität Wien, 2013).

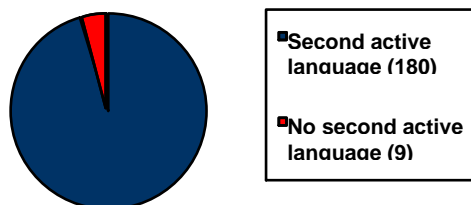
#### 4.1.3.4 Summary Universities

Name of University	Language Combination	Foreign Languages available (German A students)
University of Graz	ABC	Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish
University of Innsbruck	ABC	English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish
University of Vienna	ABC	Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Czech, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish

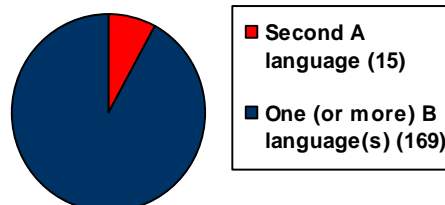
## 4.2 Germany

### 4.2.1 Language Combinations of AIIC Interpreters

**Second Active Language (AIIC Interpreters Germany)**

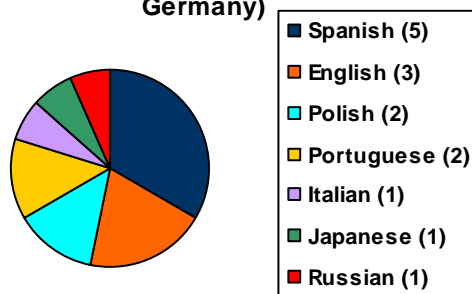


**Second Active Language: A or B (AIIC Interpreters Germany)**



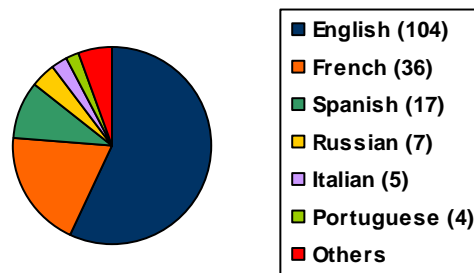
There are 309 AIIC interpreters based in Germany, and the three cities with most members are Berlin (27.2%) Munich (16.4%) and Frankfurt am Main (10.7%). 61.2% of these 309 AIIC interpreters have German as their A language and will be considered in the following analysis. Like those interpreters based in Austria, nearly all of them work as freelancers, which could have an impact on their language combinations. 95.24% of all AIIC interpreters with German A based in Germany have at least one second active language (second A or B) in their language combination. 7.93% have a second A language, while 89.42% offer at least one B language.

**A Languages (AIIC Interpreters Germany)**



Taking a closer look at the 'double A' combinations, one third have a German-Spanish combination, 20% offer a German-English combination, 13.33% offer German-Polish and 13.33% offer German-Portuguese. The remaining AAs pair German with Italian, Japanese and Russian.

**B Languages (AIIC Interpreters  
Germany)**



The most common B language is English, accounting for 61.54%. The next most common B language is French, with 21.30%. The third B language is Spanish (10.06%), followed by Russian (4.13%), Italian (2.96%) and Portuguese (2.37%). The remaining 10 B languages could be classified as ‘less widespread B languages’: Chinese, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Korean, Polish, and Swedish; only one interpreter works with each of these B languages.

Only 4.76% of German A interpreters have a combination without a second active language. These interpreters often have a combination with German A + three or more C languages. That said, it clearly seems to be an advantage to offer a second active language on the German market, and as we have seen, in many cases this means having an English B. Though C languages fall outside the scope of this analysis and do not figure in the previous graphs, a brief glance at the different language combinations of the German A AIIC interpreters based in Germany reveals numerous interpreters with an AB combination (A: German, B: English), but with no C language(s). One could therefore argue that there is a high demand for interpreters working in both directions (German into English and English into German) on the German market.

## **4.2.2 National Associations**

### **4.2.2.1 BDÜ (Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators – Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V.)**

The BDÜ was founded more than 50 years ago and has over 7.500 members, representing 80% of all professional translators and interpreters in Germany and making it the biggest association of translators and interpreters in the country (BDÜ, n.d.). The BDÜ's Federal Association is located in Berlin and includes 13 Constituent Associations, such as the “Verband für Konferenzdolmetscher e.V. (VKD)” for conference interpreting. The BDÜ's main goals include regulating the profession, improving training and creating standards for the work of interpreters and translators. Furthermore, the BDÜ organises various events and encourages its members to collaborate with one another. The BDÜ is a member of the ‘Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs’ (FIT) and the ‘Conférence internationale permanente d’Instituts universitaires de Traducteurs et interprètes’ (CIUTI). In order to become a full member of the



association, applicants must hold a university degree in translation and/or interpreting or have worked in the field for several years. The BDÜ offers an online search engine to find translators or interpreters offering a particular language pair; potential clients can select the option “mother tongue ability required” for the source or target language (BDÜ, n.d.). There are three kinds of interpreters: “interpreter (for oral communication of spoken words), sworn interpreter (for interpreting in court, registry office, etc.) and conference interpreter (for simultaneous interpreting at conferences or similar events)” (BDÜ, n.d.).

#### **4.2.2.1.1 Language Combinations of BDÜ Interpreters**

The working languages of the conference interpreters listed on the BDÜ online directory are not classified as A, B and C languages, and the only indication that can be found is ‘mother tongue’ for the interpreter’s native language (BDÜ, n.d.). However, the different language pairs covered by an interpreter are indicated. In this analysis, an interpreter working from and into a given language will be considered as having this languages as a B language. For the sake of this analysis, the language combinations of a sample of 60 (as for UNIVERSITAS Austria) BDÜ members were examined in detail. The randomly chosen interpreters are all listed in the online directory as conference interpreters with German A. 98.33% of these individuals work with a second active language (5% have an AAC combination and 93.33% offer at least one B language). The members with a 'double A' in their combination have Italian, Danish and Greek as their second A. For the B languages, 62.5% work with an English B, 17.86% French, 14.29% Italian, 7.15% Spanish, 1.79% Dutch and 1.79% Swedish. These interpreters offer the following language combinations: 43.33% have an ABC combination, 38.33% AB, 6.66% ABCC, 5% ABB, 5% AAC and 1.66% offer an ACCC combination. Thus a relatively large number of interpreters (38.33%) offer German + one B language but no passive language; 91.31% of these 38.33% have an English B. A German-English AB combination therefore seems to be quite common amongst BDÜ conference interpreters. As 98.33% of the 60 randomly chosen BDÜ interpreters have a second active language in their combination, we can conclude that it might be important to offer a second active language on the German market.

#### **4.2.2.2 ATICOM (Fachverband der Berufsübersetzer und Berufsdolmetscher e.V.)**

For more than 10 years, the ATICOM association has brought together professional translators and interpreters (ATICOM, n.d. [1]). The organisation aims to represent their interests and interface between members and potential employers suchs as companies, authorities or institutions . ATICOM is based in Bonn (ATICOM, n.d. [2]). The various taks of ATICOM are set out in its statutes and include organising training and educational events; providing public information about the translation and interpreting profession; promoting the German language; raising awareness about quality; cooperating with training institutions; and promoting intercultural understanding (ATICOM, n.d. [3]). In theory, all interpreters and translators can become members of ATICOM provided that they can prove that they are qualified to work

in these professions (i.e. that they hold a relevant university degree) (ATICOM, n.d. [2]). Applicants without a university degree in translation or interpretation can also become members if they can demonstrate many years of professional experience. ATICOM members must pay an admission fee as well as annual fees. The ATICOM website includes a searchable directory which can be used to find an interpreter or translator (ATICOM, n.d. [1]). Potential clients can search by language pair, location or a name. For the purpose of this analysis, only the members listed as conference interpreters are taken into consideration.

#### **4.2.2.2.1 Language Combinations of ATICOM Interpreters**

The languages of the conference interpreters are not classified as A, B and C languages, but the mother tongue and the different language pairs covered by the interpreter are indicated. If an interpreter works from and into a foreign language, it will be considered a B language for the sake of this analysis, unless it is listed as a second mother tongue, in which case it will be considered an A language. According to ATICOM search tool, a limited number of ATICOM members work into German (regardless of the language pair). Members whose language combination includes German as B language as well as interpreters with German A + sign language are not included in this list. The remaining 8 interpreters all have a German A language; 1 interpreter has a 'double A' combination (German-Portuguese). As for B languages, 4 offer English B, 3 Spanish, 2 French, 1 Arabic and 1 Italian. All of the ATICOM conference interpreters with German A have at least one B language in their language combination.

#### **4.2.3 University Curricula**

##### **4.2.3.1 Saarland University (Angewandte Sprachwissenschaften sowie Übersetzen und Dolmetschen – Universität des Saarlandes)**

Saarland University offers an MA in conference interpreting which corresponds to 120 ECTS credits (four semesters) (Universität des Saarlandes, n.d. [2]). Students who wish to enrol in this programme must certify a C1 level in two foreign languages (as per CEFR) and must pass an aptitude test (Universität des Saarlandes, n.d. [1]). Students can choose between German and French as their mother tongue (A language). They must also choose two foreign languages, a B and a C language. German As can choose between English, French and Spanish, while French As can study only one possible language combination: French (A), German (B), English (C). The curriculum includes theoretical and practical classes, and CI and SI are both taught from C and B into A, and from A into B (Universität des Saarlandes, n.d. [2]).

#### **4.2.3.2 Heidelberg University (Institut für Übersetzen und Dolmetschen – Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg)**

The MA in conference interpreting at the Heidelberg University corresponds to 120 ECTS credits (four semesters) (Universität Heidelberg, n.d.). All students work with an ABC combination, German As can choose two foreign languages (a B and a C language) from English, French, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish (Universität Heidelberg, 2012). Candidates with one of these languages as their A language must choose German as a B language and English as a C language. In order to be admitted to this programme, candidates must prove C2 proficiency (as per the CEFR) in both the B and the C language and must pass an aptitude test (Universität Heidelberg, n.d.). The curriculum includes theoretical and practical classes, with CI and SI from the C and B language into the A language, and from the A language into the B language (Universität Heidelberg, 2012).

#### **4.2.3.3 University of Mainz (Fachbereich Translations-, Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft – Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz)**

The University of Mainz offers a two-year MA (123 ECTS credits) in conference interpreting (Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz, n.d.). A languages available include Dutch, English, French (only every two years), German, Greek, Italian and Russian. German As can choose between an ABC and an ACCC with the following B and C languages: Dutch, English, French, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese (C only), Russian and Spanish. For English As, the only combination available is English (A), German (B), French (C). Students of all other A languages also must choose an ABC combination with their mother tongue (A) + German (B) and English (C). The consecutive and simultaneous classes of this programme include interpreting from B and C into A, and from A into B (for an ABC combination) and from C into A (for an ACCC combination).

#### **4.2.3.4 Munich University of Applied Languages (Hochschule für Angewandte Sprachen – Sprachen & Dolmetscher Institut (SDI) München)**

The MA in conference interpreting of the SDI Munich lasts for three semesters and corresponds to 90 ECTS credits (SDI München, n.d. [2]). Students must choose an A, B and C language from the following: Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish (SDI München, n.d. [3]) . Applicants must demonstrate a C1 level (as per the CEFR) for the B language and a B2 level for the C language (SDI München, n.d. [2]). Furthermore, potential candidates must prove that they have lived in a country where their B language is the national language for at least three months and must pass an entrance exam in order to be admitted. In this programme, CI and SI are taught from the B and the C language into the A language and from A into B (SDI München, n.d. [1]).

#### **4.2.3.5 Cologne University of Applied Sciences (Institut für Translation und Mehrsprachige Kommunikation – Fachhochschule Köln)**

The Cologne University of Applied Sciences offers a two-year MA programme (120 ECTS credits) in conference interpreting (Fachhochschule Köln, n.d.). Students can choose between an ABC and an ACCC combination. The A language must be German; English, French and Spanish are available as B or C languages. In order to be admitted, candidates must demonstrate a strong knowledge of their languages and pass an entrance examination. Both CI and SI are taught from B and C into A, and from A into B (ABC combination) and from C into A (ACCC combination).

#### **4.2.3.6 Leipzig University (Institut für Angewandte Linguistik und Translatologie – Universität Leipzig)**

Leipzig University's two-year MA in conference interpreting corresponds to 120 ECTS credits (Universität Leipzig, 2014). Students (all of whom must be native speakers of German) must choose one B language and one or two C languages (ABC or ABCC) from among English, French, Russian and Spanish. To be admitted to the programme, students must pass an entrance examination; demonstrate C1-level proficiency (as per the CEFR) in their B and C language(s); and hold a phoniatric certificate proving that their voice is suited for interpreting. CI and SI include interpreting from B and C into A and from A into B.

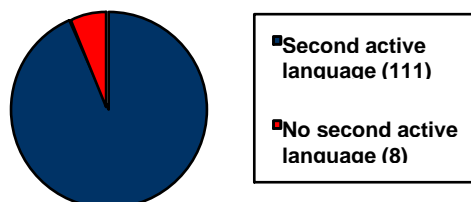
#### **4.2.3.7 Summary Universities**

<b>Name of University</b>	<b>Language Combination</b>	<b>Foreign Languages available (German A students)</b>
Saarland University	ABC	English, French, Spanish
Heidelberg University	ABC	English, French, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish
University of Mainz	ABC or ACCC	Dutch, English, French, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese (C only), Russian, Spanish
Munich University of Applied Languages	ABC	Chinese, English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish
Cologne University of Applied Sciences	ABC or ACCC	English, French, Spanish
Leipzig University	ABC or ABCC	English, French, Russian, Spanish

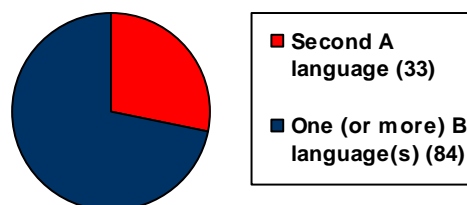
## 4.3 Italy

### 4.3.1 Language Combinations of AIIC Interpreters

**Second Active Language (AIIC Interpreters Italy)**

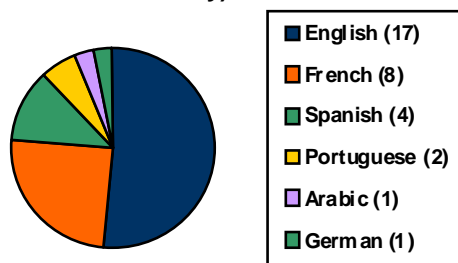


**Second Active Language: A or B (AIIC Interpreters Italy)**



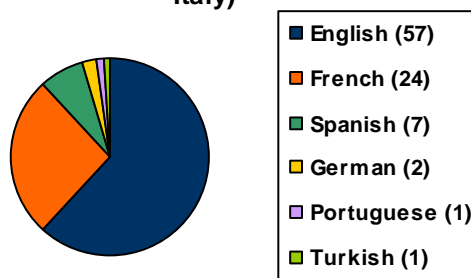
The total number of AIIC interpreters based in Italy is 185. For the purpose of this study, however, only the AIIC interpreters with Italian A were considered. Of the 185 AIIC interpreters based in Italy, 64.32% have Italian A. An overwhelming majority (93.27%) have at least one other active language: 29.73% of these have a 'double A' combination and 75.68% offer at least one B language. Therefore, almost one third of AIIC interpreters with Italian A based in Italy have a second A language and more than two thirds offer at least one B language.

**A Languages (AIIC Interpreters Italy)**



As for the language distribution among the AIIC interpreters with two A languages, 51.52% offer English; 24.24% French; 12.12% Spanish; 6.06% Portuguese; 3.03% German and 3.03% Arabic.

**B Languages (AIIC Interpreters Italy)**



With regard to the language distribution of B languages, English is by far the most common language,

offered by 67.86% of AIIC interpreters with a B. This is followed by French (28.57%); Spanish (8.33%); German (2.38%); Portuguese (1,19%) and Turkish (1,19%).

Consequently, we can see that a vast majority of AIIC interpreters with Italian A based in Italy offer a second active language (A or B). In fact, 93.27% of them offer another A or one or more B languages. The percentages of such interpreters with a 'double A' or one or more B languages are 29.73% and 75.68%, respectively.

English is by far the most common second active language, offered by 51.52% of the members with 'double A' and 67.86% of the interpreters with at least one B language in their language combination. French is the next most common second active language, accounting for 24.24% of the interpreters with double A and 28.57% offering one or more B languages. The other languages (second A or B) that appear in the language combinations of the AIIC interpreters taken into consideration are Arabic, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Turkish.

#### **4.3.2 National Associations**

##### **4.3.2.1 AITI (Associazione Italiana Traduttori e Interpreti – Italian Association of translators and interpreters)**

Founded in 1950, the AITI is the oldest association of translators and interpreters in Italy (AITI, n.d. [1]). It also has the greatest number of members of any such national organizations – with some 900 members as of 2013. The AITI's official headquarters is in Rome and the association has various regional offices (AITI, 2012). AITI members have a wide range of professional profiles and expertise (AITI, n.d. [1]). The AITI is also the only Italian association that is part of the International Federation of Translators, an international network of translators, interpreters and terminologists which brings together over 100 national associations of language professionals in 55 countries. The goals of this association include promoting the profession; ensuring appropriate legal regulation; quality assurance; exchanging with other associations of translators and interpreters, especially in Europe; and identifying and promoting the most suitable training programs. AITI is active at a regional, national and international level.

In terms of organisation, the AITI is divided into commissions for various professional categories (e.g. the Court Translators and Interpreters Commission or the Interpreters Commission). AITI membership offers multiple advantages, including access to information, professional contacts and a solid framework for professional development. In return, members must subscribe to AITI's statute, regulations and code of conduct (AITI, 2012). One major requirement to ensure quality of service is continuous training. According to article 8 of the admissions regulations, AITI interpreters are part of two subcategories: conference interpreters (who work in CI, SI and chuchotage at conferences and formal meetings) and interpreters (who work in a variety of contexts including industry, business, court and community settings) (AITI, n.d. [2]). Candidate interpreters and conference interpreters must demonstrate a certain degree of professional expertise and pass an examination. To be admitted to the organization,

candidates must fit one of three profiles: they can either (1) hold an MA from a recognized interpreting school; (2) hold a BA from a recognized interpreting school and document two years of professional experience in this sector; or (3) hold a secondary school diploma and document at least five years of professional experience in this sector.

Candidate conference interpreters can choose between a SI or a CI exam. For the SI exam, speeches are fifteen minutes long and candidates are tested working from and into a foreign language. Candidates select the language combination and the subject domain for the examination, and are informed of the topic fifteen days before the exam. Alternatively, candidates can take a CI exam in which they are required to interpret fifteen-minute speeches from and into a foreign language. Similar to the SI exam, candidates choose language combination and domain, and the topic is provided fifteen days before the exam.

#### **4.3.2.1.1 Language Combinations of AITI Interpreters**

The AITI members database is accessible via the association's website (AITI, n.d. [3]). Potential clients can search for an interpreter by name, region, qualifications (interpreting mode, e.g. liaison interpreting/ CI / SI); specialization (domain/sector, e.g. economics or law), A language and language pair (source language and target language). For the sake of this analysis, only those conference interpreters with Italian as an A language are considered; consequently, search criteria included mother tongue (Italian) and qualification (conference interpreters working in both CI and SI). The search revealed 48 AITI members fitting these criteria. For each of them, the search tool displayed: region; name; mother tongue; working languages and qualifications.

In the working languages section, a distinction is made between active and passive languages. However, active languages are not coded as second A or B languages. All 48 members had at least one active language (in addition to Italian A). Of these, 85.42% have English as an active language; 35.42% work into French; 18.75% into German; 8.33% into Spanish; 4.16% into Russian. In addition to all the aforementioned languages, passive working languages also include Portuguese and Dutch. It therefore appears that the language combinations of this group of interpreters tend not include 'rare' languages.

With regard to the interpreting mode, it may be of interest to note that not all interpreters work in both CI and SI (according to the information provided in the 'qualifications' section). 18.64% of the Italian A interpreters working in SI do not work in CI. Moreover, 17.24% of the Italian A interpreters working in CI do not work in SI. As for those working only in SI, 90.91% have one or more active languages in addition to Italian (54.55% have one second active language; 36.36% have two other active languages and 9.09% have 3). Among those working only in CI, 90% work with at least a second active language (40% interpreters have 1 second active language, 40% have 2 other active languages, and 10% have 3).

Almost all AITI interpreters with Italian A have English and French (active or passive) in their language combinations. Other languages which frequently appear are German and Spanish; a limited number of interpreters have Dutch, Portuguese or Russian in their language combinations.

#### **4.3.2.2 Assointerpreti (Associazione Nazionale Interpreti di Conferenza Professionisti - Italian Association of Conference Interpreters)**

Assointerpreti is an association of professional conference interpreters who work in CI, SI and chuchotage (Assointerpreti, n.d.). Assointerpreti members agree to comply with the requirements and quality standards set out in the association's official documents, namely its By-laws, Rules of Procedure, Charter of Regional Groups and Code of Conduct and Professional Practise (Assointerpreti, 2008). New members are admitted at the regional level. In order to be considered for admission to the association, potential candidates must provide proof of at least 100 days of professional experience in accordance with Assointerpreti standards. In addition, Assointerpreti members apply to add new languages to their language combinations.

The association also offers an internship programme for young professionals who hold an MA in conference interpreting. Interns are offered the opportunity to attend conferences where they can hear Assointerpreti members work and dummy booth whenever possible. Interns take part in this programme until they have accumulated 50 working days (including real working days, dummy booth and conference attendance). At the end of the internship programme, interns can then apply for the association as full candidates. Assointerpreti members must participate in professional development activities to strengthen their professional skills (e.g. language proficiency; extra-linguistic knowledge and field-specific knowledge). A commission is in charge of professional development.

##### **4.3.2.2.1 Language Combinations of Assointerpreti Interpreters**

An Assointerpreti member database is available on the association's website (Assointerpreti, n.d.). It is possible to search for interpreters by region, name and language pair. When searching by language pair, the search tool provides a list of Assointerpreti members including their name, locations and indicating whether the interpreter works in one or both directions in a given language pair. An individual page for each interpreter displays their complete language combination and mother tongue.

For the purpose of this study, a search for all conference interpreters with Italian A based in Italy was conducted, filtering by language pair (from any language into Italian). The search produced a list of 137 interpreters. The language combination of 105 was taken into consideration, since the 27 interpreters who are not native speakers of Italian and the 5 Assointerpreti candidates were excluded from the study. Among the 105 interpreters, all have at least one second active language. English is the second active language of 59.05%, French of 29.52%, German of 9.52%, Spanish of 7.62% and Danish and Russian of 0,95% (of one interpreter each).

Four different types of language combinations can be found among this group. First, some members have a language combination with A + one second active language: this corresponds to 52.38%.

Second, the language combination of around 9.52% is A + two additional active languages. All of them work in both directions in three language pairs. The most common language combination in this category



is Italian A + English and French (active languages). The three active language pairs are: IT<>FR; IT<>EN and EN<>FR (this is the language combination of 80%). The profiles of the remaining 20% only differ because of the languages they include: one interpreter has Italian A + English and German (active languages) and one has Italian A + French and Spanish (active languages). In addition, some interpreters also offer one or more passive languages from which they may work into their mother tongue exclusively or into one or more additional active languages as well. The large majority of the interpreters that belong to this category therefore also work into and from their additional active languages (including B<>B). Whereas only one interpreter who has a language combination with A + two additional active languages works in both directions between mother tongue and the additional active languages but not between the two additional active languages (Italian<>English and Italian<>Danish but not English <> Danish).

Interpreters in the third category offer Italian A + one active language + C(s). In this category, interpreters work from A into B and B into A as well as from one or more Cs into A. This category includes 9.52% of the total sample: 50% of them have Italian A + active English (Italian <> English) + French C (French > Italian only); 20% Italian A + active English (Italian <> English) + German C (German > Italian only); 20% Italian A + active German (Italian <> German) + English C (English > Italian only) and 10% have Italian A + active English (Italian <> English) + Dutch C (Dutch > Italian only). All the interpreters of this category have one C.

The language combination of the interpreters in the fourth category does not differ from the one of the third (A Italian + one active language + C(s)). However, these individuals work not only from C(s) into A but also from C(s) into their additional active language. Of the 105 total interpreters, 22.86% have this profile. The most common profile (of 29.17%), is Italian A + active English + French C (French into English and Italian); followed by Italian A + active French + English C (English into French and Italian), of 20.83%. Other interpreters with this profile have language combinations with different Bs and Cs: 16.67% have active French (with Spanish and English C; Portuguese and Spanish C; English and Russian C or Spanish C); 12.5% have active English (with French and Spanish C or Spanish and Portuguese C); 8.33% have active German (with French and English C or French C); 8.33% have active Spanish (with English or French C).

Some interpreters share features of two or more categories. An example is Italian A + active English + Dutch, French, Romanian, Portuguese and Spanish into Italian (A) as well as French and Spanish into English (second active language). Therefore, in some cases interpreters work from some of their C(s) into their second active language(s) but from other C(s) only into their mother tongue.

#### **4.3.2.3 ANITI (Associazione Nazionale Italiana Traduttori e Interpreti - Italian National Association of Translators and Interpreters)**

The ANITI was founded in Milan in 1956; it is currently one of the main Italian associations of translators and interpreters (ANITI, n.d. [1]). The ANITI endeavours to ensure that the profession is recognized and legally regulated in Italy, and also establishes connections with language, translation and interpreting schools. Furthermore, the ANITI conducts professional development; ANITI members are required to obtain a certain number of credits by attending training events, seminars or courses (ANITI, 2004). This system aims to ensure that members' professional skills continue to develop and that users receive quality service (ANITI, 2006). Prospective ANITI members (for interpreters) must hold a diploma from an interpreting school (or equivalent) and must demonstrate at least 300 hours of work experience (for interpreters). Members are divided into a number of categories, including translators, liaison interpreters, simultaneous interpreters, consecutive interpreters, and recognized court translators/interpreters. The language combination of ANITI members appears on the list of ANITI members as well as on the membership card they receive annually. This language combination can be modified provided that adequate documentation to this end is furnished.

Article 10 of the ANITI Code of Conduct states that members must not accept jobs for which they are not fully qualified (ANITI, 2013). In such cases, members are required to explain why they cannot accept a job offer so that clients can turn to another qualified professional interpreter.

##### **4.3.2.3.1 Language Combinations of ANITI Interpreters**

The ANITI member database is accessible on the association's website (ANITI, n.d. [2]). The search tool allows you to find an interpreter based on specialization (e.g. economics or chemistry), region, nation, name, qualifications (e.g. liaison interpreter or conference interpreter) and language. ANITI interpreters' language combinations are described in terms of their mother tongue and active/passive language(s).

For the purpose of this analysis, the tool was used to create a list of interpreters based in Italy with Italian A who work in CI and SI. A total of 9 ANITI members fit this profile. Of these, 5 interpreters have a second A language: 2 English; 2 French; 1 Slovenian. As for B languages, 4 interpreters have English as a B language; 2 Spanish; 1 German. Therefore, almost all ANITI interpreters fitting this profile have a second active language (A or B). Only one interpreter's language combination does not include a 'double A' or a B language (Italian A - English C - French C - German C), while one interpreter has a 'triple A' language combination (Italian, English and Dutch). The working languages represented therefore are English, Dutch, French, German Slovenian and Spanish. As for the interpreting mode, 2 of these interpreters seem to work in SI but not in CI (both of these have at least another active language (one has a 'double A' while the second has two additional active languages). According to the 'qualifications' mentioned on the directory, ANITI Italian A interpreters who work in CI but not in SI are 4: 2 of them have 3 other active languages, one has one other active language and one only passive languages.

### **4.3.3 University Curricula**

#### **4.3.3.1 University of Bologna (Scuola di lingue e letterature, traduzione e interpretazione – Università di Bologna)**

The University of Bologna offers an MA programme in interpretation in Forlì, which corresponds to 120 ECTS credits (4 semesters) (Università di Bologna, n.d. [1]). Students must pass an entrance examination to be admitted, and the programme is capped at thirty-four students per year. Candidates are required to demonstrate sufficient proficiency in their mother tongue and a C1 level in their foreign languages as defined by the CERF (Università di Bologna, 2013). Candidates choose two foreign languages. The foreign language pairs available are: English – French; English – Russian; English – Spanish; English – German; French – Russian; French – German; Spanish – French; Spanish – German; German – Russian (Università di Bologna, 2013/2014). The language combination offered is ABBC. The first year curriculum includes language and linguistics classes as well as interpreting techniques classes for the five foreign languages (English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) (University of Bologna, n.d. [2]). In the second year, students select conference interpreting courses from and into their B language and from their C into their mother tongue; these are advanced classes that allow students to further develop the basic interpreting techniques acquired during the first year.

#### **4.3.3.2 University of Trieste (Scuola Superiore di Lingue Moderne per Interpreti e Traduttori (SSLMIT) – Università di Trieste)**

The SSLMIT offers a two-year MA programme (120 ECTS credits) combining two different options: specialized translation-interpreting and conference interpreting (Università degli studi di Trieste, n.d.). The curricula of these two options differ, though some courses overlap. For the purpose of this analysis, only the conference interpreting curriculum, which focuses on the acquisition of SI and CI techniques and on interpretation theory, will be considered.

Students must pass an entry examination to be admitted to this programme (Università degli studi di Trieste, 2013/2014). For the conference interpreting option, students may choose between ACCC and ABC. Italian is the only mother tongue (A language) available in this programme; Arabic, English, French, German, Serbian and Croatian and Slovenian are offered as B and C languages. Under certain circumstances students may choose one of the languages from the translation-interpreting option (English, French, German and Russian). The guidelines for the entrance examination set out definitions of A, B and C languages for the conference interpreting curriculum. The definition of an A largely corresponds to AIIC's definition, while a B language is defined as an active foreign language in which one is fluent, both actively and passively – despite having a more limited ability to use the full spectrum of registers. Students work actively into a B language from their active language(s) and C language(s) in both CI and SI. A C language is defined as a foreign language that one understands completely; students interpret from their C language(s) into A and B language(s) in both CI and SI. The conference

interpreting curriculum includes: CI and SI from two C languages into A (Italian); for the ABC language combination, students also work from Italian into B in both CI and SI and for the ACCC language combination, students work from the third C into Italian both in CI and SI (Università degli studi di Trieste, n.d.).

#### **4.3.3.3 Scuole Civiche Milano – Istituto superiore per interpreti e traduttori (ISIT)**

The ISIT offers an interpreting MA programme in conjunction with the University of Strasbourg (120 ECTS credits) (ISIT, n.d.). The ISIT aims to train conference interpreters working from at least two European foreign languages into Italian and from Italian into a foreign language in CI and SI who are able to comply with the standards set by EU Institutions and AIIC. Languages offered include Dutch, English (which is compulsory), French, German, Russian and Spanish.

Prospective students must pass an entrance examination to be admitted to the course (ISIT, 2012/2013). Students must choose a B language, generally English, and a C language from among the languages offered. By the end of the CI courses, students are required to interpret a 10-minute speech in CI from their two foreign languages into Italian and from Italian into their B; their work must use appropriate terminology and register and be fluent and highly accurate. By the end of the SI courses, students are required to interpret a 20-minute speech in SI from their two foreign languages into Italian and from Italian into their B; again, work must use appropriate terminology and register and be fluent and highly accurate. The programme also includes a written translation module as well as a number of courses including international organizations and international law.

#### **4.3.3.4 Università degli Studi Internazionali di Roma (UNINT) – Facoltà di interpretariato e traduzione**

This university was founded in 1996 as the “Libera università degli studi San Pio V” (UNINT, n.d.[5]). In 2013, the current name was chosen in order to mark the international vocation of this institution. The Faculty of Interpreting and Translation is part of the CIUTI (International Conference of the University Institutes of Translators and Interpreters) as well as the EMT (European Master's in Translation) network (UNINT, n.d. [3]). The university offers an MA in interpreting and translation (120 ECTS credits); students can specialize in parliamentary and conference interpreting or business and community interpreting (UNINT, n.d. [1]). For this study, only the interpreting curriculum will be considered. The interpreting curriculum includes consecutive and simultaneous courses which are taught both into and from the student's active foreign language(s) (UNINT, 2013/2014). Language pairs offered include: Italian-French, Italian-English, Italian-German, Italian-Russian, Italian-Arabic, Italian-Chinese. Teaching methods, requirements and final examinations may differ in each course and language pair (UNINT, n.d. [2]). Interpreting students generally have a language combination including two foreign languages; however, they can choose a third foreign language as an option. The Faculty of Interpreting and Translation also offers a 60 credit post-graduate program in conference interpreting into English as a B language (UNINT,

n.d. [4]). Its aim is to meet the growing demand for professionals who are able to cover both directions in several market sectors. In 2013/2014, this course was offered for the eighth time.

#### 4.3.3.5 Summary Universities

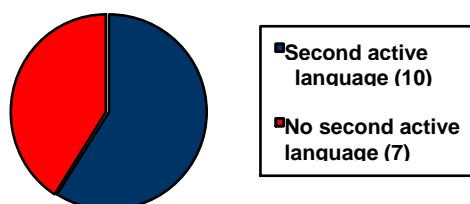
Name of University	Language Combination	Foreign Languages available (Italian A students)
University of Bologna	ABBC	English, French, German, Russian, Spanish
University of Trieste	ABC or ACCC	Arabic, English, French, German, Serbian and Croatian, Slovenian, Spanish
Scuole Civiche Milano	ABC	Dutch, English (compulsory), French, German, Russian, Spanish
Università degli Studi Internazionali di Roma (UNINT)	ABC(C) or ABB(C)	Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian,

#### 4.4 Switzerland

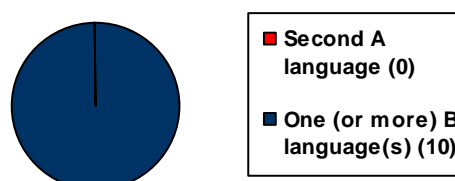
##### 4.4.1 Language Combinations of AIIC Interpreters

##### 4.4.1.1 Italian A AIIC Interpreters

Second Active Language (AIIC Interpreters Switzerland, Italian)

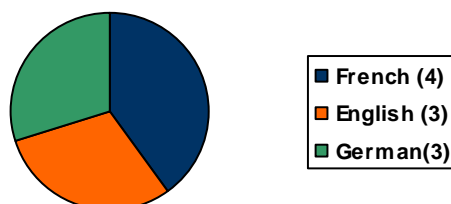


Second Active Language: A or B (AIIC Interpreters Switzerland, Italian A)



The language combination of Italian A AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland has been analysed, as Italian is one of the four official languages. Of the total 287 AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland, 5.92% have Italian A. 58.82% of them offer a second active language; no member has a 'double A' combination, all of them offer a B language.

**B Languages (AIIC Interpreters  
Switzerland, Italian A)**

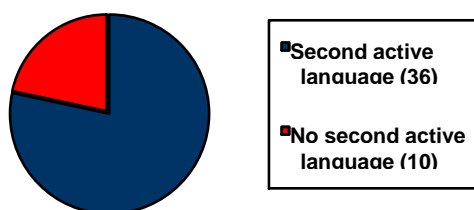


Of the members whose language combination includes a B language, 40% have a French B, 30% have an English B, and 30% have a German B. These results reflect a rather even distribution between two official languages of Switzerland, French and German, and an increasingly widespread international language, English.

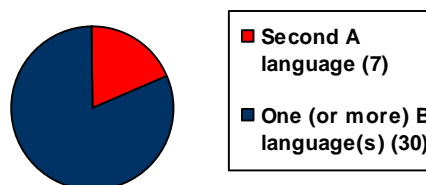
A certain number of conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. The number of AIIC interpreters with Italian A is extremely limited in comparison to the total number of AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland (5.92%). Secondly, a considerable number of these individuals (58.82%) offer a B language. However, this percentage is far lower than the percentage of Italian A AIIC members offering one or more B languages in Italy, namely 75.68%. In terms of language distribution, the presence of French and especially of German as B languages appears to be relatively more common in Switzerland (where they are official languages) than in Italy.

#### 4.4.1.2 German A AIIC Interpreters

**Second Active Language (AIIC  
Interpreters Switzerland, German A)**

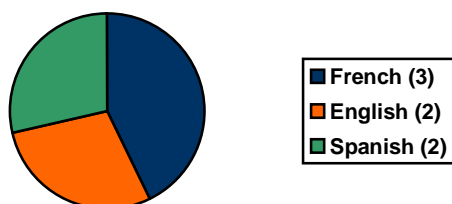


**Second Active Language: A or B  
(AIIC Interpreters Switzerland,  
German A)**



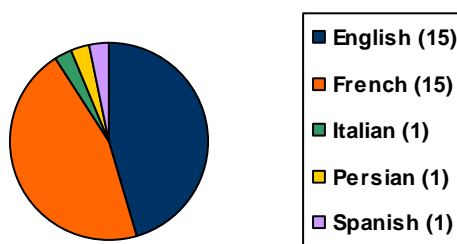
German As make up 16.03% of the 287 total AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland; 78,26% offer a second active language. Of these German A AIIC members, 15.22% have a 'double A' and 65.22% offer one or more B language(s).

### A Languages (AIIC Interpreters Switzerland, German A)



As for the 'double As', 42.86% have French, 28.56% have English and 28.56% Spanish.

### B Languages (AIIC Interpreters Switzerland, German A)



Of those who have a B, 45.45% offer an English B and 45.45% a French B. The other B languages that appear in the language combinations of German A interpreters are Spanish, Italian and Persian (one interpreter each).

As for conclusions that can be drawn from this data, 16.03% of the AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland have German A. This percentage may appear to be relatively low when one takes into consideration that German is an official language of Switzerland and its most widely spoken language (64.9%) (Confédération suisse, n.d.). However, these figures are not surprising if one considers that "twenty-six International Organisations have their Headquarters in Geneva" (where 83% of all Swiss AIIC interpreters are based) including one of the Headquarters of the United Nations (AIIC, 2010).

Out of the 16.03% German A AIIC interpreters, 45.45% have English B and 45.45% have French B. The most widespread B languages in this group are therefore English and French.

#### **4.4.2 National Associations**

##### **4.4.2.1 ASTTI (Associazione Svizzera dei Traduttori, Terminologi e Interpreti – Schweizerischer Übersetzer-, Terminologen- und Dolmetscher-Verband - Swiss Association of Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters)**

Created in 1966, the ASTTI is an association which brings together more than 400 translation, terminology and interpretation professionals (ASTTI, n.d.). Its main purposes is to protect the professional, legal, economic, social and moral interests of its members (ASTTI, 2012). It also aims to enhance the professional status of translators, interpreters and terminologists; promote adequate training and professional development; favour contacts among members, with other associations in the field and with governmental or non-governmental organisations. Moreover, the ASTTI organizes professional development programs to ensure that its members continue to grow professionally throughout their career. The association helps forge relations between potential employers, language professionals and the conference industry. The ASTTI ensures that proper working conditions are guaranteed and that users receive quality services.

In order to guarantee that ASTTI members comply with its standards, strict admission requirements involving an accurate assessment of each candidate's competence are in place. To be admitted to the organization, candidates must demonstrate perfect mastery of working languages and sufficient knowledge of the chosen area of specialization (ASTTI, 2005). The target language is generally the professional's mother tongue or native language. Interpreter candidates must have obtained a diploma from an interpreting school a maximum of three years before the application and must have worked regularly in the interpreting modes they apply for. The candidate's work experience must be appropriately documented. Moreover, candidate conference interpreters must also present an AIIC certificate of membership or documentation demonstrating that the candidate worked for at least 20 days in the 36 months preceding the date of application. The Admissions Commission may require the candidate to take an examination to verify their competence.

##### **4.4.2.1.1 Language Combinations of ASSTI Interpreters**

The ASTTI website offers a database which can be used to search for interpreters by name or language pair. By selecting a specific member, more detailed information can be accessed, including qualifications (translator or interpreter and interpreting modes), specializations (e.g. law or economics), contact details and working languages. Regarding the language profile of each interpreter, no distinction between the type of active language (mother tongue or second active language) seems to be made; only the language pairs and the direction(s) offered are displayed on the website.



#### **4.4.2.1.1.1 ASTTI Interpreters with Italian A**

Only 5 interpreters work into Italian from other languages. Of the 5 interpreters, 4 are conference interpreters, while one ASTTI member works exclusively as a liaison interpreter. Almost all of the interpreters have a second active language (only one interpreter has an ACCC language combination with Italian A + English, French and German C). Two interpreters (one of which is a liaison interpreter) have two active languages (German/Italian and French/Italian). The remaining two interpreters have three active languages (French, German and Italian).

In terms of language distribution, the languages included in the combinations of the 5 members are English, French, German and Italian. Accordingly, ASTTI interpreters seem to cover English along with French, German and Italian (the three most widely spoken official languages in Switzerland), though one interpreter offers the three official languages but does not offer English.

#### **4.4.2.1.1.2 ASTTI Interpreters with German A**

The list of ASTTI interpreters working into German includes 27 members, though only the language combinations of the 13 conference interpreters that met the criteria were examined. 92.31% of these members have at least one second active language; 66.67% have 3 active languages while 33.33% have 2 active languages and 1 member has no additional active languages. The most widespread additional active language is French (66.67%); followed by Russian (25%) and Italian (16.67%). The three other active languages represented are English, Polish and Spanish, one interpreter each. English, French, German and Italian were the most common source languages; three interpreters also work from Spanish and three from Russian. Of those working from Russian, one member works from Polish and Ukrainian while another works from Lithuanian.

Consequently, one could state that the language distribution in Switzerland tends to differ from the distribution in the other countries considered herein. It would appear that the three active languages of Switzerland – French, German and Italian – are more widespread. Of the 13 interpreters considered, 76.92% have both French and German in their language combination and 23.08% have French, German and Italian. English is included in the language combination of 84.62% of the 13 members, confirming the widespread use of English as conference language. However, the percentage of active English in the sample considered (7.69%) is far lower than in the other countries considered, where English is frequently an additional active language. This again seems to be due to the more frequent use of the three official languages of Switzerland.

### **4.4.3 University Curricula**

#### **4.4.3.1 University of Geneva (Faculté de traduction et d'interprétation (FTI) – Université de Genève)**

The University of Geneva's MA in Conference Interpreting (90 ECTS credits) offers a variety of CI and SI courses (University of Geneva, n.d.). In order to be admitted to this programme, candidates must demonstrate linguistic proficiency in a relevant language combination as well as strong background knowledge of current affairs. Furthermore, candidates must pass a written and oral entrance examination which assesses the candidate's aptitude for conference interpreting. Languages offered include Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish. In the study regulations, an A language is described as the student's mother tongue and is used as a source and target language in both CI and SI (University of Geneva, 2013). The University also offers a 'B consecutive' option, where an active language is used as a source language in CI and SI and as target language in CI. A C language is a passive language used as a source language in both CI and SI. A student's language combination must include one or two active languages and one to three passive languages. Furthermore, a distinction is established between widely used languages (which are regularly employed in international conferences) and those which are currently not widely used in international forums.

The language combinations available are:

- A1-A2;
- A1-A2-C;
- A-B (The A-B language combination must include a language that is not widely used.);
- A-B-C;
- A-B-C1-C2;
- A-B consecutive-C;
- A-Bconsecutive-C1-C2;
- A-Bconsecutive1-Bconsecutive2;
- A-C1-C2;
- A-C1-C2-C3.

Therefore, A, B and B consecutive are active languages. With a language combination including two As or an A and a B, a student works from A into A or B in both directions in CI and SI. With a B consecutive, a student works into the B language in CI but does not work into it in SI. Therefore, what differentiates a second A language from a B language is the fact students do not work from C(s) into B/B consecutive.

#### 4.4.3.2 Zurich University for Applied Sciences (Institut für Übersetzen und Dolmetschen (IUED)– Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften)

Zurich's University's School of Applied Linguistics offers an MA programme (90 ECTS credits, three semesters) in conference interpreting (IUED, n.d. [1]). The aim of this programme is to train future professionals who are able to “compete – and remain competitive – in the challenging field of multilingual communication” (IUED, n.d. [3]). Both CI and SI courses are taught, and the University offers ABC and ACCC language combinations. Students interpret from the B and C language into A and from A into B. German, English, French, Italian and Spanish are offered as A, B and C languages, though, German must be included in each of the student's language combination. Other possible B or C languages are Dutch, Portuguese, Romanian (C only) and Russian. These languages can only be chosen in combination with certain mother tongues. Other language pairs may be available if these are in demand. In order to be admitted to this program, candidates must pass a practical interpreting aptitude test. Candidates must also have a certain level of familiarity with several fields specific to the German-speaking region (the economic, social, and political spheres) and sufficient background knowledge related to countries in which their mother tongue and foreign languages are spoken (IUED, n.d. [2]). For the Conference Interpreting and Professional Translation programme, candidates must demonstrate linguistic proficiency in both their mother tongue and in at least two foreign languages.

#### 4.4.3.3 Summary Universities

Name of University	Language Combination	Foreign Languages available
University of Geneva	AA AAC AB* ABC ABCC AB(consecutive)C AB(consecutive)CC AB(consecutive)B(consecutive) ACC ACCC	<b>(A, B or C languages)</b>  Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish
Zurich University for Applied Sciences	ABC or ACCC	<b>(German/Italian A students)</b>  Dutch, English, French, German/Italian, Portuguese, Romanian (C only), Russian, Spanish

\*The A-B language combination must include a language that is not widely used.

## **4.5 Data Interpretation**

### **4.5.1 Austria**

Among the 33 German A AIIC interpreters based in Austria, 84.85% have a second active language in their combination; 21.20% have a second A language and 69.70% have at least one B language. English is the most frequent B language (56.51%), followed by French (26.09%). It should also be noted that many Austrian AIIC interpreters with a second active language offer a C language. A random sample of 60 UNIVERSITAS Austria interpreters found largely similar results, though even more interpreters offer a second active language (96.67%); 10% offer a second A language whilst 86.67% offer at least one B language. English is the most common B language (44.22%), followed by French (19.22%). Furthermore, it is also interesting to note that the large majority of both AIIC and UNIVERSITAS Austria interpreters is based in Vienna. However, this fact might not be surprising if one bears in mind that Vienna is listed among the cities with the largest market for conference interpreters (Guichot de Fortis, 2013). In summary, a vast majority of German A interpreters in Austria who are members of AIIC or UNIVERSITAS Austria offer a second active language; English is the most widespread B language, followed by French.

In all three Austrian universities training conference interpreters, students must choose an ABC combination including CI and SI from A into B. Universities have therefore clearly prioritized the need for a retour; this is likely to reflect local market needs. While at the University of Innsbruck the available foreign languages could be classified as rather common conference languages (English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish), the University of Vienna and Graz offer also some less widespread languages (e.g. Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Hungarian, Slovenian) which could be of interest for a career at the European Institutions. However, the Austrian MA programmes seem to be conceived primarily for the private market, as no Austrian university offers an ACCC combination, the prerequisite for the accreditation test for the German booth at the European Institutions (European Union, 2014). As shown in section 3.3.1, nearly all UNIVERSITAS Austria interpreters surveyed state that they work as conference interpreters on the private market, which might allow conclusions to be drawn about the overall professional situation of conference interpreters in Austria.

Considering the above, it can be assumed that a B language with retour is an asset for German A interpreters working on the private market in Austria, especially an English or French B.

### **4.5.2 Germany**

In Germany, 95.24% of German A AIIC members offer a second active language along with German; 7.93% offer a second A language while 89.42% offer at least one B language. English is the most common B language (61.55%), followed by French (21.30%) and Spanish (10.06%) which – rather unexpectedly – is also the most widespread second A language (one third of all AA combinations are German-Spanish). A random sample of 60 BDÜ interpreters reveals similar trends: 98.33% interpreters

offer a second active language. 5% have a second A language whilst 93.33% offer at least one B language. The most common B language among members is English (62.5%), followed by French (17.86%). It should also be noted that many AIIC and BDÜ interpreters with a B language offer an AB combination (often German A + English B) with no C language. This could be explained by the fact that the German interpreting market is said to be “highly bilingual” (Gorton, 2012:68) and for interpreters working on such markets, it could be of interest to cover both directions in order to be more competitive. The 8 ATICOM conference interpreters represent a small sample that may be less representative. Nevertheless, it should be noted that all of them offer at least one B language. In summary, trends among German A AIIC interpreters in Germany and BDÜ members are in line with those in Austria: a significant percentage of interpreters offer a second active language, and English and French are the most frequent B languages.

In three of the six German universities considered (Saarland University, Heidelberg University, Munich University of Applied Languages), students must choose an ABC combination; in two (University of Mainz, Cologne University of Applied Sciences), students may pick an ABC or ACCC combination and in one university (Leipzig University), ABC and ABCC combinations are available. A B language is therefore compulsory in four of the six universities. In all universities students work from their A into their B language both in CI and SI which might be a hint of the local market situation. The offered MA programmes seem to prepare students either more for the private market (ABC) or mainly for the institutional market (ACCC). While three universities (Saarland University, Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Leipzig University) offer a limited number of common conference languages (English, French, Spanish (+ Russian for Leipzig University)), the other three offer a greater number of languages including some 'exotic languages' (e.g. Chinese, Japanese) and less widespread languages (e.g. Greek, Polish). It is also interesting to note that foreign language proficiency (as per the CEFR) for admission to an MA in conference interpreting varies. Depending on the university, students must have a C2 level both in the B and C language (Heidelberg University), a C1 level both in the B and C language (Saarland University, Leipzig University) or a C1 level in the B language and a B2 level in the C language (Munich University of Applied Languages). Other universities state that their students need to have a sound knowledge of their foreign languages (Cologne University of Applied Sciences) with no further specifications. However, these differences regarding foreign language proficiency are remarkable and it appears questionable that a B2 (upper intermediate) level in a C language is sufficient for a future conference interpreter.

Summarising the above, it can be stated that the analysed language profiles of professional conference interpreters based in Germany seem to indicate, in combination with the university curricula, that a B language with retour might be an advantage for the local market. English and French appear to be the most suitable B languages.

### 4.5.3 Italy

Of the AIIC Italian A interpreters based in Italy, 93.27% have at least one additional active language. 29.73% of these offer a 'double A' combination, while 75.68% offer one or more B languages. The most widespread B language is English (67.86%), followed by French (28.57%).

The data gathered among members of major Italian national associations show similar trends: almost all the members of the three associations have at least one additional active language. Of these associations, AITI and Assointerpreti bring together respectively 48 and 105 interpreters with the profile under consideration; accordingly, the sample of these two associations appears to be more representative in comparison to the one of ANITI (9 interpreters fitting the criteria). All the members of both AITI and Assointerpreti have at least one additional active language. As for the language distribution of B languages, English is the most widespread (AITI 85.42%; Assointerpreti 59.05%), followed by French (AITI 35.42%; Assointerpreti, 29.52%).

All Italian interpreting schools offer an ABC language combination. In the University of Trieste's MA programme, students can choose an ABC or ACCC language combination. At the University of Bologna, students must have an ABBC language combination and ABC at the ISIT. In the MA offered by the UNINT, students must work with at least two foreign languages (both of which may be active) and can also choose a third foreign language. The UNINT also offers a 60 credit post-graduate program in conference interpreting into English as a B language in order to meet the increasing demand for interpreters offering a B language, especially on the national private market.

Accordingly, the Italian interpreting schools considered, either offer a choice between a 'classic profile' (one A language + several C languages) and the 'biactive profile' (two active languages + one or more C languages), or students are required to have at least one additional active language. It can be argued that this second approach can be more private-market oriented, as in the institutional sector interpreting from B/C into A is generally privileged. The foreign languages offered by these institutions generally are traditional European languages, namely English (compulsory at the ISIT), French, German and Spanish. The number of more rare conference languages offered is rather limited: Arabic (University of Trieste and UNINT), Chinese (UNINT), Dutch (ISIT), Russian (offered in all the 4 programmes), Serbian and Croatian (University of Trieste) and Slovenian (University of Trieste).

On the Italian market, B languages are extremely widespread; the vast majority of interpreters examined herein offer at least one additional active language. Among AIIC members this percentage is already significant, but even greater within national associations. In addition, most Italian universities seem to require a B language. Accordingly, it can be argued that a B language can be a valuable asset, especially on the national private market.

#### 4.5.4 Switzerland

Among the 17 Italian A AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland, 58.82% have a second active language. This is a B language for all 10 interpreters. 40% of these offer a French B, 30% an English B and 30% a German B. Therefore, a clear majority has a second active language, though neither English nor French appears dominant. Rather, the two other official languages of Switzerland, French and German, appear to enjoy a status comparable to that of English.

Among the 46 German A AIIC interpreters based in Switzerland, 78.26% have a second active language; 15,22% of these individuals have a double A and 65.22% one or more B languages. English and French are the most widespread B languages; 15 interpreters work into each language.

The number of ASTTI interpreters with active Italian fitting the criteria of this study is rather limited (5). Four of the five offer at least one additional active language; the last has an ACCC language combination. Two of these individuals have two active languages while two have three active languages. With regard to ASTTI members with active German, 92.31% have at least one additional active language. English is in the language combination of 84.62%, though active English (7.69%) appears to be far less widespread. The most common active language is French (66.67%). As for language distribution, the most frequently offered languages are French, German and Italian (official languages of Switzerland), along with English. These are the languages offered by members with active Italian. Among ASTTI members with active German, Russian appears to be relatively widespread as both an active and passive language.

At the University of Geneva's MA in conference interpreting, students can have one or two additional active languages (including 'double A', B consecutive and B retour options) or passive languages only (ACC or ACCC). At the IUED, students can similarly choose an ABC or ACCC language combination.

The market in Switzerland therefore differs from the markets in the other three countries considered in this thesis. This may be largely due to the presence of four official languages (of which French, German and Italian are the most widespread), and to domicile (the number of individuals growing up or living in a geographic region where another official language is spoken is particularly high). These three languages appear to be more frequent in Switzerland than in Austria, Germany and Italy, especially as additional active languages (A or B). The predominance of English is confirmed, since it is a working language of almost all interpreters in both categories (active German and Italian). That said, an English B is slightly less common in Switzerland than on the other three markets considered.

## CONCLUSION

The main aim of this thesis is to provide a snapshot of trends around B language interpreting on national private markets in German- and Italian-speaking countries. In an attempt to gather empirical data, this thesis analysed the language combinations of AIIC members based in the countries under consideration, described major national associations – with a particular focus on the language profiles of their members – and overviewed the curricula of recognized interpreting schools in the region.

Chapter one focuses on the long-standing debate about interpreting into a B language and the multiple approaches to this issue. It would appear that CI into B seems to be generally accepted, whilst SI into B remains controversial. On some markets and for certain languages, the ‘biactive profile’ (Guichot de Fortis, 2007:3) can be considered the norm. In contrast, the prevailing approach in Western European countries – and particularly on the institutional market – appears to favour interpreting into the A language (Szabari, 2002). That said, “Western European free markets are not quite so rigid in requiring interpreting into the A language” and interpreters report that they often must work in both directions in order to meet market demand (Szabari, 2002:13). Despite these controversies, interpreting into a B language appears to be a market reality in the private but also increasingly in the institutional sectors. Finally, interpreters’ perspectives about working into a B language is introduced describing the results of two surveys among AIIC members. As they demonstrate, the majority of respondents argue that offering a B language makes an interpreter more competitive although, according to a considerable number of interpreters, A language interpreting is preferable.

Chapter two touches on current market trends related to B languages. Some markets are described as ‘highly bilingual’ and require interpreters to offer a retour. Although interpreting into the A language is generally preferred in the European institutions, interpreting into B seems to be on the rise in the 28-member European Union. Amongst B languages, English appears to be increasingly widespread. Subsequently, a number of considerations are made about the interpreting market for languages that are mainly spoken locally or regionally, as German and Italian, though to a different extent. This section outlines some specificities of these market conditions, namely the fragile “equilibrium of supply and demand” and the need for interpreters with these A languages to comply with even higher quality standards (Déjean le Féal, 2003:73).

Chapter three defines the private market, describes its main features and presents AIIC’s role therein, highlighting how the organisation cooperates with the conference industry and its efforts to serve as the voice of interpreters who work in this sector. A global view of the evolution of the private market sector over a five-year period and a brief outline of the market situation in Austria and Italy follow. Based on these, the trends outlined in chapter two appear to be largely confirmed.

The main focus of this thesis is the frequency of B languages on the local markets in the German- and Italian-speaking regions of Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. In chapter four, in order to assess the importance for interpreters with German or Italian A languages based in these countries to offer an additional active language, the language profiles of members of AIIC and major national associations



were examined. The following conclusions can be drawn: globally, the vast majority of the interpreters considered in all four countries offer at least one additional active language. In Austria, Germany, and Italy, English is the most widespread B language, whereas official languages of Switzerland are equally or more common than English in Switzerland. Furthermore, all universities granting Master's degrees in Conference Interpreting offer the possibility for students to have a B language; indeed, the majority of these universities require that students have a B language, and students work into the B language in both CI and SI in most cases.

In conclusion, firstly the market for interpreters with German or Italian A appears to be rather restricted, and geographically concentrated; a B language could be regarded as a valuable asset on the private market of the countries under consideration. Second, B language interpreting seems to be a common practice on the private market, and has also been gradually spreading in the institutional market. Third, English and French are the most widespread B languages in the sample of German and Italian A interpreters active on the national markets in Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. These trends emerge from the analysis of literature on this topic, and are reflected by the high proportion of interpreters with this language profile working on the markets considered, and by the curricula of major interpreting schools in the four countries.

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