Università degli Studi di Padova

Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in
Lingue Moderne per la Comunicazione e la Cooperazione Internazionale
Classe LM-38

Tesi di Laurea

Community Interpreting and Ethics: a qualitative study on accuracy, impartiality and role definition

Relatrice
Prof.ssa Fiona Clare Dalziel

Laureanda
Margherita Dotti
n° matr. 1192273 / LMLCC

Anno Accademico 2020 / 2021

Acknowledgements

Desidero ringraziare la mia relatrice Professoressa Dalziel, per l'entusiasmo mostrato verso questa tesi e per il supporto che mi ha dato, seguendomi con costanza e passione durante tutta la realizzazione di questo lavoro. Il suo ruolo è stato fondamentale.

Ringrazio inoltre tutte le interpreti, mediatrici e mediatori che hanno preso parte a questa ricerca, per avermi dedicato parte del loro tempo e per aver condiviso le loro esperienze con me. Spero che questa tesi possa rendere anche solo in minima parte giustizia al loro lavoro, che svolgono con passione e dedizione.

Grazie ai miei genitori, Patrizia e Giuseppe, per avermi supportato e sopportato in questi (venti)cinque anni, per avermi seguito in capo al mondo e per avermi fatto tornare coi piedi per terra quando necessario. Grazie a Michele, per impartirmi lezioni di vita senza nemmeno rendersene conto. Grazie ai miei nonni e ai miei zii per il sostengo, l'amore e la stima infiniti. Grazie al nostro Oscar, per farmi sorridere sempre.

Ringrazio le mie amiche di sempre, Anna, Elisa, Eva, Giorgia e Sarah, per essere al mio fianco da più di dieci anni e per essere casa, ovunque io sia.

Ringrazio Irene, per ricordarmi sempre quanto valgo.

Grazie a Benedetta, per aver condiviso con me gioie e drammi della vita universitaria (e non) tra Forlì, Gent, Padova e Mosca. Non vedo l'ora di scoprire quale sarà la prossima meta.

Grazie a Simona, per il supporto costante, per le sessioni di studio via Skype, per tutte le risate e i momenti di (i)spensieratezza ma, soprattutto, per avermi dimostrato che ci sbagliavamo, quella sera alle Poste due anni fa.

Ringrazio inoltre il resto della mia famiglia SSLMIT, che è entrata nella mia vita cinque anni fa ed è sempre con me. Ringrazio Erika, Margherita e Michela, le mie prime e uniche coinquiline, per ascoltarmi sempre come in Tina Gori la domenica mattina.

Grazie infine a Clelia, Giulia e Maria, per aver fatto parte di questa esperienza padovana, per le risate e gli spritz. Grazie in particolare ad Anna, la mia ma'am, che da collega è diventata un'amica preziosa, sempre pronta ad ascoltare i miei dilemmi.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Introduction

During my course of study, I have developed a particular interest in the topic of migration and multilingualism. Therefore, when I had the chance to explore the discipline of community interpreting, I found it fascinating and relevant, especially today when more people than ever live in a country other than the one in which they were born (UN, n.d.). Among the types of interpreting, community interpreting is related in fact to the provision of linguistic services to people – migrants, in most of the cases – who experience language barriers in accessing public services, ranging from hospitals to police stations. However, in spite of the fundamental role played by this kind of interpreting, community interpreting is considered to have started to develop as a profession only in the 1990s, when it started to come out of the shadow of other prestigious interpreting settings – such as conference interpreting (Tipton, 2020). As a consequence of its late development, today community interpreting still does not seem to be considered as a recognized profession at a global level, being underdeveloped from the point of view of training, recognition among clients and the public, and working conditions.

Among the elements that determine the professionalization of a specific activity, the development of ethics and codes of ethics plays an important part. The aim of this thesis is to investigate the role of ethics in community interpreting, focusing on three concepts: *accuracy*, *impartiality* and *role definition*. To be precise, I will investigate the role played by ethics and ethical principles in the context of everyday practice by analysing opinions on and insights into this topic, which were provided by community interpreters and linguistic and cultural mediators working in Italy. Other that providing insights into ethics and ethical principles, practitioners' accounts give an idea of the status of community interpreting in Italy.

Moreover, it is important to underline that the choice of focusing on community interpreting in Italy was also key to investigating the status of linguistic services provision in a country subject to massive inward migration flows. Indeed, as will be further explored in the following chapters, due to the arrival of massive inward migration flows, Italy for the first time in 1973 saw its migratory balance become positive and the migrant population in the country start to increase rapidly, reaching peaks in the 1990s and 2000s (Bettin & Cela 2014: 49). Considering that when inward migration flows started to arrive

Italy did not have any formal provision of linguistic services, this work will also focus on investigating this situation today, through the analysis of professionals' accounts.

Research questions and methodology

The first research question that will be discussed in the context of this work is: how ethics and the concepts of accuracy, impartiality and role are perceived by professionals. In order to answer this research question, I will refer to two different analyses which I conducted for this thesis: an analysis of the "Codes of Ethics" corpus and a thematic analysis. Concerning the former, I created a corpus containing eleven codes of ethics for community interpreters, which are used in eleven different countries, and I analysed them in order to identify the frequency in which *accuracy*, *impartiality* and *role* were mentioned, together with the different ways in which they were described. In this respect, it is important to explain that, after analysing the relevant literature on community interpreting, these three concepts were chosen not only on the basis of their frequency, but also because of the ethical dilemmas surrounding them. In fact, although *confidentiality* is equally considered as one of the core principles of community interpreting, appearing in all of the codes of ethics I analysed, there seems to be a general consensus about its meaning (Hale, 2007: 109). For this reason, and because there seem to be only few challenges to the respect of this principle, I decided not to include it in my research.

As far as the thematic analysis is concerned, it was conducted on the data extracted from the interviews that I conducted with six stakeholders working as community interpreters and mediators in Italy, in contexts such as legal settings, offices and schools. Thanks to the exhaustive answers provided by the interviewees, I was able to identify and analyse seven themes regarding professionals' perceptions of ethics and, specifically, of accuracy, impartiality and role. By referring to both the "Codes of Ethics" corpus and the thematic analysis, I will illustrate the role that these ethical principles play both in the context of codes of ethics and in the stakeholders' everyday practice.

The second research question I will discuss is: what challenges exist concerning the respect of accuracy, impartiality and role and how professionals deal with them. To answer this research question, I will present the thematic analysis conducted on the

interviews with the six stakeholders, presenting interview excepts, in order to identify the challenges that professionals meet in the context of community interpreting and mediation activities. The identified themes will then be compared and related back to concepts discussed in the theoretical framework of this thesis. However, other than focusing on the challenges to the concepts of accuracy, impartiality and role, this research question will give me the chance to present and discuss problems related both to the professionalization of community interpreters and mediators, and to the provision of linguistic services in Italy.

With my study in the context of interpreting and migrations, first I wish to investigate the important role played by ethics in this type of interpreting, since the quality of interpretation and mediation may have serious impact on a person's life (Hale, 2007). Indeed, working in the context of public services, community interpreters and mediators are usually migrants' point of contacts with the institutions, negotiating meanings and, breaking down communication barriers. Discussing the challenges related to accuracy, impartiality and role, I will also try to understand whether there is a need for a regulation regarding ethics, training and professional standards in the context of community interpreting in Italy.

Overview of the structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters, including introduction and conclusions. The first chapter of this work will deal with globalization, migration and community interpreting. These concepts are indeed closely connected, as in the context of globalization – seen as a set of phenomena connecting world economics, politics and culture – the movement of people across the globe started to increase dramatically. Subsequently, the chapter will focus on the themes of migration and mobility, focusing on the importance of translation and interpreting in this context. In this respect, migration flows across international borders, which constitute a complex aspect of globalization, are reported to grow continually, triggered by two types of causes – known as "push" and "pull" factors. After providing further data on the phenomenon of globalization today, Chapter One will focus on the importance of linguistic services provision in countries subject to inward migration flows, introducing the concept of community interpreting. Concerning this theme, after

3

presenting the historical development of this activity – ranging from ancient times to the 1950s – the last part of this chapter will be dedicated to the definition of community interpreting and its characteristics: names, modes of delivery and then professionalization and provision. Regarding the latter, a brief overview of the status of community interpreting professionalization in different countries will be provided.

Chapter Two will discuss ethics and codes of ethics, focusing on the concepts of accuracy, impartiality and role. First, this chapter will define ethics on a general level and a professional level, and it will then introduce the concept of codes of ethics for community interpreters. After discussing the role that codes of ethics play in the context of community interpreting and describing the different kinds of documents that are usually adopted, controversies surrounding these codes will be explained, together with their relationship with training. The second part of this chapter will then focus on three specific ethical notions: accuracy, impartiality and role. However, before dissecting each one of these concepts, the result of the analysis conducted on eleven codes of ethics – labelled as "Codes of Ethics" corpus – will be presented.

Subsequently, after verifying the frequency of these concepts across the codes included in the corpus, the principle of accuracy will be analysed. First, accuracy will be described from the point of view of Interpreting Studies (IS) – referring to concepts such as *equivalence,* and focusing on pragmatics. Afterwards, the chapter will focus on the challenges to the respect of the principle of accuracy, which will be divided into three categories: internal challenges in the comprehension phase; internal challenges in the delivery phase; and external and setting-related challenges. Chapter Two will then proceed with the analysis of the principle of impartiality, defining its meaning – both in the context of IS and of the "Codes of Ethics" corpus – and placing it in relation with the notion of advocacy. After this, challenges to impartiality will be discussed: cross-cultural misunderstandings; participants' expectations and pressures; and emotional difficulties. Finally, the chapter will discuss the notion of role: as well as mentioning its meaning in the context of the "Codes of Ethics" corpus, this section will explore the different models in which interpreting is theorized, particularly focusing on that of interpreting as participation and cultural mediation.

In the third and last chapter of this thesis I will present my research and the data collected through the interviews with the six stakeholders working in the field of community interpreting in Italy. First, an overview of the provision of linguistic services in Italy will be provided. After presenting Italy's recent migration history and the first immigration laws, attention will be paid to the figures of community interpreters and linguistic and cultural mediators. Subsequently, after presenting research participants and methodology, I will then illustrate the thematic analysis conducted on the data extracted from the interviews, exploring the seven themes that I identified. As mentioned above, through the interviews that I conducted, I will try to investigate the role played by ethics in the context of community interpreting and, at the same time, to identify the challenges linked to the respect of ethical principles and notions such as accuracy, impartiality and role.

1. Community Interpreting: an overview of the field

The aim of this thesis is to offer a contemporary perspective on the practice of community interpreting and, specifically, on the role of ethics in the context of this profession. This work is based on qualitative research on the perception of the ethics, its principles and codes in the Italian context. However, before exploring ethics in community interpreting, it is first necessary to describe the factors that led this practice to emerge in the 1990s: globalization and migrations flows. Subsequently, after exploring these aspects, the chapter will focus on the history of community interpreting, its definitions and characteristics and, finally, its professionalization.

1.1. Defining Globalization

It is undeniable that, whether we like it or not, the world we live in today is becoming more and more global. Every day we come into contact with different people and cultures, different realities and ways of living and, even without noticing it, we eat food from different continents, buy products created on a global market and connect with people living far away thanks to social media (Tomlinson, 2007: 352). Considering this, it is natural how the term "globalization" is considered to be "the buzzword of the 1990s", even though this word made its first appearance already in the 1930s (Steger, 2017: 1). Almost thirty years later, globalization has remained a controversial topic.

Steger (2017: 1) noted, for example, how several early simplistic impressions of globalization led people to depict this phenomenon as a "ruthless techno-economy steamroller flattening local, national and regional scales", usually considering it as a consequential aspect of a process called "Americanization". The first globalization theories formulated in the 1980s, such as that postulated by the sociologist Tony Spybey, tended in fact to assume that globalization was nothing but a sign of the world's convergence towards an American model of industrial and cultural society (Turner, 2010: 5). However, although the importance of the role played by the United States in the globalization process is undeniable, the concept of Americanization does not seem sufficient to describe the complexity of the globalization process (Steger, 2017; Turner, 2010). Moreover, the attempt to conceive globalization as an idea of a standardized world fails to grasp that the reality we live in is also a "world in fragments" (Geertz, as cited in

Premoli, 2008: 13). The end of the Cold War between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, and the fall of the latter in 1991, caused indeed global chaos and political instabilities: ethnic or religious civil wars, nationalistic conflicts, internal tensions, and so on contributed to create a puzzle of small realities placed in the context of a globalized world (Premoli, 2008: 13).

However, according to Steger (2017: 7), even scholars who do recognize globalizations as a unique and peculiar process find it difficult to consider it as an ensemble of complexities, and thus focus on only one of its many aspects: some argue, for instance, that at the core of globalization lie economic processes, while others tend to consider cultural or political aspects as the main issues related to this phenomenon. As a matter of fact, by taking into consideration just one of these numerous aspects, it becomes easy to wrongfully reduce globalization to one or two domains, ignoring the others (Steger, 2017: 7). Nevertheless, despite some controversies regarding the possible definitions of globalization, research on the topic kept flourishing and, in general, there is some consensus that:

> globalization involves the compression of time and space, the increased interconnectivity of human groups, the increased volume of the exchange of commodities, people and ideas, and finally the emergence of various forms of global consciousness which, for the sake of brevity, we may simply call 'cosmopolitanism". (Turner, 2010:5)

With the aforementioned definition, Turner (2010: 5) argues that globalization is not a unidimensional process and, other than focusing on just one or two aspects, many scholars have tried to determine its main characteristics. James Beckford (2003: 119), for instance, identified five peculiarities of globalization: the growth in frequency and intensification of relations between people, cultures, information and commodities in time and space; the compression of time and space caused by information technology; the act of processing global flows of information, commodities, people, and money; the creation of international institutions and movements; the emergence of ideas of global consciousness such as cosmopolitanism.

1.1.1. Three Faces of Globalization: Economy, Politics and Culture

The first formulations of globalization theories started with an emphasis on the economic perspective (Turner, 2010:4). According to Cronin (2010: 135), globalization in economy

meant the creation of a global market supported by an increase in international trade and productivity and, at the same time, the emergence of information technologies, which transformed the economy: competitiveness, for example, started to depend on the ability to create and efficiently apply knowledge. Knowledge and information, consequently, gained more and more importance, leading to the development of information technologies and communication. In the light of this, Berger (2000: 3) stated that globalization can then be understood as a set of changes that led to the creation of a single global market for goods, services, capital and labour.

With the emergence of a new single market uniting world economies, nation-states saw their role as sole actors in politics diminished, and inevitably started to understand the need to create a global governance, attempting to coordinate countries and people. This urgency not only resulted in the creation of not only supranational economic organizations (e.g. GATT and WTO) and free trade areas (e.g. European Union, NAFTA), but also political ones such as UN, NATO etc. (Cronin, 2020: 215). These organizations, founded after the end of World War II, immediately proved the indispensability of global-scale coordination, leading to the foundation of international organizations located in different fields (Cronin, 2020: 216). The research conducted by the Union of International Association (2018) helps in understanding the scale of this phenomenon: comparing the years 1909 and 2017, the number of international associations significantly increased from 213 to over 37,500 located in 300 countries.

The increasing connectivity that affected economics and politics has inevitably become evident also in many aspects of our everyday lives, as illustrated at the beginning of section 1.1. But how does globalization impact on our culture? Most theories formulated in the 1980s assumed that one of the inevitable consequences of globalization was the "enforcement of cultural standardization", according to which this phenomenon is perceived as a trend leading to homogeneity in the context of human experience (Turner, 2010: 12). This assumption involves a form of cultural imperialism put in place by the spreading of Western culture all around the globe and, particularly, of the American one, resulting in a disappearance of different cultures (Tomlinson, 2007: 372).

On the contrary, contemporary discussions on globalization and culture have focused on the role of local cultures in the context of global processes, considering the hypothesis of

cultural standardization as unlikely. There has been in fact a consensus on the idea that, due to processes such as adaptation and stimulation, "the global/local dynamic will tend to produce a fluid and unstable hybridization of cultures" (Turner, 2010: 8) – a process that Albrow (as cited in Turner, 2010: 8) also described as a "multiplication and diversification of worlds". Consequently, due to this cultural interpenetration and information exchanges, the identities and lifestyles of a country's population tend to take on the shape of aspects peculiar to the country's own culture and the cultures "imported" from other parts of the world (Premoli, 2008: 12-16). In the light of this, it can be suggested that, when discussing the impact of globalization on culture, concepts such as mobility and migration become fundamental.

1.1.2.   Globalization and Migration

Although these two words may be perceived as interchangeable, the terms *mobility* and *migration* differ in their usage with reference to different scopes, as far as public discourse is concerned: the term migration usually refers to less privileged people, while mobility refers to privileged people who benefit from access to travel. While migrants seek opportunities and refuge in new places of the world, mobile people can freely move across borders, benefitting from the chance of a cosmopolitan freedom (Canagarajah, 2017; Inghilleri, 2017). Migration across international borders is probably one of the most complex aspects related to globalization, and it presents itself as a multifaceted phenomenon subject to constant change (Cronin, 2010:147). First of all, migration flows are constantly growing. Cronin (2020: 215), comparing the years 2014 and 2015, reported that the number of international migrants rose from 232 million to 244 million, showing a dramatic short-run increase. Moreover, statistics show that since 1990, the number of international migrants in the global North had increased by nearly 65%, confirming a steady growing trend also in the long run (Cronin, 2020: 215).

Secondly, the causes for migration are various and can significantly alter according to time and circumstances. By the large, it is possible to identify two types of reasons that led people to move from one place to another, and these categories are defined as push and pull factors: the former refer to situations lacking opportunities in the context of social and economic progress that consequently lead people to migrate in order to survive, while

the latter refer to the possibility of enhancing life conditions, following social ideals and dreams of a promise land (Inghilleri, 2017:7). Pull factors were, for instance, the main reason leading Europeans to migrate to the Americas and Australia in the 19th century whereas, today, what constitutes the leading cause of migration is a series of push factors which force people to leave their home countries to provide for their families or to escape political turbulence or persecutions (Canagarajah, 2017: 5; Inghilleri, 2017: 6). In this regard, in order to understand the scale of this kind of migration flows today, it is worth considering that in 2020 the UN High Commission for Refugees (n.d.) registered the highest number of displaced people since the mid-1990s, counting 79.9 million people displaced at the end of 2019 in order to flee wars, persecutions and poverty.

Migration is generally constituted by a combination of pull and push factors, though a predominance of one over the other is not rare and bound to change depending on time and situations, together with the pattern of migration flows. According to Inghilleri (2017: 7), significant shifts in migration patterns took place in the 19th and 20th centuries, during the years after World War II: while from the mid-nineteenth to the first half of the twentieth century millions of people left Europe to migrate to the Americas and Australia largely for economic reasons, at the end of World War II Europe became the main target for migrants coming from extra EU-countries. Inghilleri (2017: 6) identified the trigger of this shift in the geography of migration flows in the decolonisation of Western European countries, which started to recruit people from former colonies in order to employ them as laborers to sustain the growth of European economies.

Later, in the 1980s, a new wave of migration flows of refugees started to take place: the number of asylum seekers coming to Europe from Africa, Asia and the Middle East started to dramatically increase, reaching peaks in the 1990s and 2010s, and resulting in a new 21st century migration wave (Lucassen & Lucassen, 2019: 32). Specifically, Haines (2019: 91) found in conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan the major driving forces of contemporary forced migration. Major conflicts in Iraq and Syria, for instance, pushed millions of people to flee from these areas, making Syria the largest single source of contemporary refugees, with nearly five million people reportedly migrated from the country (Haines, 2019: 95). At the same time, a similar migration pattern can be identified in Africa. According to Haines (2019: 91), the main factors of outward migration flows from Africa, which resulted in millions of refugees fleeing to Europe, are two: war and

genocide in Rwanda and Congo, and new conflicts in previously settled countries such as the Central African Republic. In addition to this, the migration flows originated by these conflicts were in turn identified as the leading causes of the migration crisis in Mediterranean countries, such as Italy and Spain – the initial destinations for refugees aiming toward Northern Europe (Haines, 2019: 91).

Changes in migration patterns and signs of the impact of globalization on migration can be also found by analysing receiving countries' social services. Bischoff and Loutan (2004), for instance, focused their study on the languages required in the context of interpreting services in Swiss hospitals, in an attempt to identify the development of migration flows toward Switzerland. By analysing reports filed by hospitals' intepreting services, the researchers found that the most sought-after languages for interpreting services at the beginning of the 1900 were mainly Portuguese, Spanish and Italian, understanding that most migrants arriving to Switzerland came from European countries. Bischoff and Loutan (2014: 19) then found that the composition of the languages required for interpreting services started to change toward the end of the century: the majority of languages required at the end of the 1990s were no longer languages spoken in Switzerland's neighbouring countries anymore, but languages such as Russian, Turkish, Arabic or Bulgarian. The shift in the composition of language requiring interpreters occurred at the end of the 20th century showed in fact a massive presence of migrants mostly coming from distant locations. This change in migration pattern, together with its consequences in interpreting services, are an example of how migration network extended and, at the same time, show how languages and culture very different from each other can meet and coexist (Cronin, 2010: 137).

This situation can be described by using the term "vernacular cosmopolitanism", coined by the sociologist Stuart Hall (2002), who claimed that after globalization it is no longer necessary to travel distant or exotic locations to meet the Other. Indeed, due to the arrival of people from different countries, cultures inevitably get in touch and both migrants and natives live together in multilingual and multicultural spaces, while maintaining their identity (Cronin, 2010: 137). In some cases, significant and sudden changes in migration lead many host countries to face unexpected crisis and challenges. Song (2019: 205), for example, illustrated how significant migration flows forced many countries – such as Italy, Spain and Greece – to redefine themselves: by facing massive flows of inward

migrations, in a short time span those countries have in fact passed from being former sending societies to being receiving immigration destinations and, among other consequences, they now have to come to terms and define concepts such as "difference", "migrant", and "racial hierarchies".

In a globalized era, mobility may become a synonym of freedom for a small part of the world's population, but for many people, such as migrant workers, refugees and other displaced people, it "can signify isolation, desperation, and restricted opportunity" (Inghilleri, 2017: 6). Cronin (2010: 137) explained, for example, that many migrants arriving to the host counties to perform relatively low-skilled jobs, are very likely to experience acute marginalization, social distance and inequalities due to low wages and lack of contacts in the new setting. In addition to this, migration flows may give rise to new tensions and conflicts in politics. Song (2019: 202), for instance, illustrated how political far-wing parties, based on the idea of a relationship between migration and "race", started to express concern about the status of the "white" working class in Western European countries, presenting extreme unmotivated fears about both legal and illegal immigration. According to Song (2019: 205), thanks to the spread of these fears, together with that of ideas such as the one of "being left behind", several far-wing parties managed to gain consent and manage to foment racist dynamics both in Europe and in the United States. In addition to this, dramatic events such as terror attacks in Mumbai, Paris, London and Brussels contributed to reject the idea of globalization as a positive phenomenon in favour to one ever more associated with the necessity of borders, surveillance and control (Cronin, 2020: 216).

1.1.3. Global Linkages: Translation and Interpreting

As illustrated in the previous sections, it is possible to state that globalization has undoubtedly had a significant impact on many aspects of the contemporary world, such as the economy, politics and culture, with obvious consequences on everyday life. But what really makes globalization possible? In order to answer this question, it is worth starting with the definition of globalization provided by the English sociologist Anthony Giddens (as cited in Cronin, 2010: 134), according to whom globalization is the "intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way

that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa". By analysing Gidden's concise yet comprehensive definition, Cronin (2010: 134) noted how the intensification of relations can only occur if distant places are linked with each other, and he pointed out that this linkage is not only to be considered from a spatial perspective. The importance of the development of air travel and new technologies in the 21st century is undeniable: the amount of time needed to move from one place to another on a global scale fell dramatically, and this time-space compression becomes crucial in the context of globalization. However, spatial linkages are not sufficient to establish relations connecting distant localities and people, as they also need to be able to communicate (Cronin, 2010). In the light of this, Cronin (2010: 134) identified another linkage, the linguistic one, stating that "the phenomenon of globalization is literally unthinkable without according a central role to the fact and functions of translation". Despite playing an important role in all the aspects of globalization discussed in sections 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, it is however reasonable to believe that translation and interpreting, which constitute key instruments to enable communication between people speaking different languages, play a particularly crucial role in the context of one specific globalization-related phenomenon, that of migrations.

As discussed in section 1.1.2, migration is a complex phenomenon that sees millions of people forced to face difficult challenges not only during their journey, but also in host countries, where they encounter problems related to prejudice, social inequalities and poor economic conditions. Nevertheless, the first obstacles migrants are inevitably to face are linguistic barriers. Migrating does not only imply a physical movement from a place to another; in fact, people arriving in a new country bring with themselves different cultures and different languages which are often connected to distant and distinct language groups, very different to languages spoken by the host country's neighbouring nations (Cronin, 2020: 216). In this complex encounter between the global and the local, interpreting services are, in most cases, the first and only way for migrants and host country's institutions to communicate with each other. Interpreters act as language facilitators and, at the same time, help to ensure that all parties' interests and points of view are understood. Moreover, a country's provision of interpreting service for migrants seems not only to constitute a useful tool, but also to become a significant sign of a State's respect of principles such as recognition and inclusion of different cultures (Inghilleri,

2017: 31). In particular, according to the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, the presence of interpreting services can be a way through which a country demonstrates different degrees of what he defined as "linguistic hospitality" (Inghilleri, 2020: 329). Linguistic hospitality can be explained by stating that:

> Just as in a narration it is always possible to tell the story in a different way, likewise in translation it is always possible to translate otherwise, without ever hoping to bridge the gap between equivalence and perfect adhesion. Linguistic hospitality is the act of inhabiting the word of the Other paralleled by the act of receiving the word of the Other into one's own home, one's own dwelling. (Ricoeur as quoted in Kearney, 2019: 3)

According to this definition, Ricoeur seems to conceive interpreting and translation not only as linguistic tasks, but also as ethical practices requiring attention and empathy to listen and interpreter the Other's word. Inghilleri (2017: 30) compared the willingness towards the reception of the migrants' language and culture defined by Ricoeur to Immanuel Kant's notion of hospitality. The German philosopher in fact argued in his essay "Toward Perpetual Peace" that when a person arrives to a foreign country, it is his/her right not to be treated as an enemy; interpreting could, in a way, be a tool to address a conversation toward an individual and to create a space of mutual understanding (Kant, 2005). Interpreters become key players determining the degree to which linguistic hospitality is guaranteed. Indeed, interpreting services are key to migrants, as it is almost inevitable for them to resort to interpreters, whether it be in informal everyday meetings or important interactions with institutions (Polezzi, 2012: 348). Polezzi (2012: 348) noted how, since both individuals and communities in the context of migrations move between different languages, interpreting becomes not only an occasional element of their lives limited to the moment of their arrival, but a fundamental instrument enabling them to perform different roles. Therefore, it is legitimate to say that interpreting services play an active role in shaping interactions between migrants and institutions both in official macro-level procedures and micro encounters at the local level. It is reasonable, then, that the most visible outcome of the impact of migration on Intepreting Studies (IS) has been the burgeoning of interest, during the 1990s, in community interpreting – a specific practice conducted in the context of public institutions "where language constitutes a barrier to communication between service providers and migrants, particularly in the context of essential services, such as medical, legal, educational etc" (Runcieman, 2020: 1).

1.2. Historical Perspectives of Community Interpreting

While scholars during the 1990s started to recognize the value of community interpreting in the context of IS, the research field of history of community interpreting has increasingly developed only in the last fifteen years. Although this approach aims at tracing the role played by interpreters throughout history and focuses on the history of interpreting practice in general, it is believed that community (or dialogic) interpreting is to be considered at the centre of this research because of its prominent role since ancient times (Riccardi, 2019: 2). Indeed, in spite of the complexities originating from the scarcity of historical records on interpreting practices, scholars managed to establish that this form of interpreting activity is one of the world's oldest practices (Andres, 2013; Bancroft, 2015) Interpreting and linguistic mediation has been in fact fundamental for centuries and, despite their sometimes-controversial role, interpreters have been crucial to the expansions of empires and trade, to government administration and, in general, every time people speaking different language needed to interact both during wartime and peace time (Giambruno, 2008; Riccardi, 2019).

1.2.1.   Interpreting Practices in Ancient and Medieval Times

The first written reference to interpreting activities comparable to community interpreting comes from the work *Histories*, written by the Greek historian Herodotus in 430 BC (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015:12). Specifically, in the second volume of his work, Herodotus narrates his journey to Egypt and, when describing the visit to one of the pyramids, he recalls the presence of an interpreter who sight translated an inscription in Egyptian, showing how this practice was routine already 2500 years ago; moreover, in other parts of his work, Herodotus reports that the category of interpreters constituted one of the class the society was divided into since the kingdom of pharaoh Psammetichus (664-610 BC), who planned an interpreting training for Egyptian children (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015:13). Interpreters were indeed often used by the pharaohs in context such as trade and military expeditions, since every language apart from Egyptian was considered as "not equal", and therefore, not worth knowing (Andres, 2013:2).

Likewise, the Greeks also considered their language as the only one worth knowing and, therefore, it is no wonder that this population was not willing to learn languages of the foreigners, who were considered barbarians (Andres, 2013:2). However, unlike the Egyptians, Greek leaders did not implement any kind of interpreting training: interpreters in fact were usually people with bilingual parents or foreign children who had learnt Greek after being captivated as slaves (Andres, 2013:3). The Romans, on the other hand, were usually bilingual, as they studied both Greek and Latin. Nevertheless, interpreters were still used in the Roman Empire to communicate with foreigners: by employing interpreters, the Roman leaders put a barrier between their Empire and the other foreign populations, increasing their own importance (Andres, 2013:3). Both the Senate and the Roman court, according to Andres (2013:3), regularly employed interpreters, who assumed a role of great responsibility often having to keep important state secrets, with respect for the same principle of confidentiality that professionals have to respect today. Accordingly, it was not uncommon for interpreters to face extreme dangers in their work as they were often considered likely to betray important secrets; historical accounts by Cassio Dio, for example, reported how Caracalla executed all interpreters who witnessed a secret meeting in order to avoid potential betrayals (Andres, 2013:3).

It is also reported that community interpreters played a fundamental role also in wartime and, even in this case, most of the times interpreters were usually ordinary people such as captives, prisoners, hostages or slaves who came into contact with a different culture and learnt different languages (Riccardi, 2019: 208). An illustrative example of the necessity of recruiting interpreters in wartime is found in the medieval period, particularly at the time of the Crusades, when the Iberian Peninsula was invaded by Muslim troops (711-1492): the continuing war between Muslims and Christians and the incessant captures of prisoners led to the recruitment of linguistic mediators — the *alfaqueques*, whose task was to ransom captives and, at the same time, to facilitate interaction between populations (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015:14). The *alfaqueques* became so important that their role was officially recognized by the law on a national scale in the 13th century (Foz, 1998) and this first attempt to institutionalize the interpreters' role was followed, after the conquest of the "New World", by the establishment of interpreting services by Spanish authorities in colonial America at judicial and executives organs called *Audiencias* (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015:16). Contextually, in 1681 the Spanish government adopted the New Law of the

17

Indies (*Las Leyes de las Indias*), which included fourteen laws aimed at regulating "the qualifications, skills and traits an interpreter should have, how interpreters should interact with the parties to judicial or administrative proceedings, what rights interpreters have as regards the workplace, work hours, and remuneration, and what constitutes ethical behaviour" (Giambruno, 2008:46). These laws, according to Giambruno (2008:48), are particularly interesting as they address many of the issues that are still debated today – such as the ethics – and, at the same time, it constitutes one of the first examples of professionalization in community interpreting.

1.2.2. Interpreters in the Age of Discoveries

As travel flourished, community interpreters and mediators continued to be used in the 14th and 15th centuries during the Portuguese and Castilian explorations to the West African coast. Specifically, community interpreters and mediators' main task was to allow for communication between the explorers and the inhabitants of the new localities in order to establish trade relations and to place territories under political control (Alonso-Araguás, 2016:30). However, Alonso-Araguás (2016: 31) points out that, in this case, interpreters and mediators were people whom explorers and merchants kidnapped on their arrival in new territories, already planning to use them as interpreters for subsequent travels. This strategy was so successful that it became a customary practice in the Age of Discoveries, starting from Columbus' first famous expedition in 1492.

Columbus was well aware of the importance of communicating with the inhabitants of the territories he planned to discover and, therefore, before his first expedition in 1492, he decided to hire an interpreter in his crew: his name was Luis De Torres, and he could speak Spanish, Hebrew, Chaldean, Arabic and a little Latin (Alonso-Araguás, 2016:29). According to Alonso-Araguás (2016:29), planning to reach China and Japan, Columbus hoped that the language covered by his interpreter could be useful for sight-translating diplomatic documents to exchange them with Chinese and Japanese authorities. However, Torres' skills turned out to be useless, as none of the languages he spoke was known by the population he met. Columbus, though, being well aware of the practice of kidnapping natives in order use them as interpreters, had already captured a native Indian from Guanahani Island at the beginning of his expedition: the boy was given the name of Diego

Colòn and, after being brought to Spain to learn Castilian, he was taken by Columbus on his second voyage in 1493 to act as an interpreter (Alonso-Araguás, 2016:29). Alonso-Araguás (2016:30) explains that, like the boy from Guahahani Island, hundreds of children were kidnapped during those years to be used as interpreters, and these abductions, over time, became part of a regular practice. According to Cronin (2000), this practice showed how interpreting was key in cross-cultural and asymmetrical contexts: having native captives on their side, explorers could benefit from a tool of incursion in the Other's territory, as interpreters, other than knowing the language, were also part of the Other's society and culture. Consequently, this trend continued not only during Columbus' expeditions, but also in the subsequent trade-driven Spanish travels to Venezuela and to the Antilles, and also in Cortés' campaigns to South America (1518-1524).

Moreover, it was not rare that interpreters and mediators were young men or women coming from groups of people offered as slaves or servants to the explorers by local populations (Alonso-Araguás, 2016:33). Through this practice one of the most famous interpreters in history was recruited, La Malinche, a young woman who lived during the context of the conquest of the territory of today's Mexico, and emerged as Cortés's main interpreter, becoming "his mouth and ears" (Riccardi, 2019: 208). La Malinche, originally born to an Aztec family, arrived to Cortés as a gift given at the beginning of 1519 by the Maya – from whom she learnt different languages such as Maya and several dialects – and soon became his main interpreter, as well as his lover (Zimanyi, 2015: 2). This extraordinary historical character was key in the context of IS as, studying her role, researchers not only could explore the practice of community interpreting in the Age of Discoveries, but also tackle some ethical issues related to the controversies surrounding the interpreting profession which are, even today, a central issue among scholars.

First of all, according to Zimanyi (2015:2), by analysing visual representations of La Malinche created throughout history, it is possible to highlight elements that constitute a reproduction of the main features of community interpreting, such as the bidirectional nature of the linguistic transfer and the asymmetrical setting, which will be analysed in depth in the following sections. Zimanyi (2015:4) observed that La Malinche is, indeed, usually represented while interpreting one-to-one conversations placed in a central position between two speakers (e.g. Cortés on the left and an Indian leader below on the

right). Moreover, the different positioning of the two speakers clearly indicates a situation of a power imbalance between the participants, typically associated with community interpreting (Valdeón, 2013: 167).

In addition to this, La Malinche has stirred controversies in the context of IS: while some scholars only see her as a "virtuoso of interpretation" (Rosenwald as cited in Valdeón, 2013: 158), others consider her as the ultimate example of a traitor, as she allegedly helped Cortés understanding the culture of the indigenous populations for her own personal interests. Indeed, while La Malinche had an exceptional reputation among the Spanish troops, the natives considered her as a traitor, accusing her of revealing her own people's secrets to Cortés to their disadvantage (Zimanyi, 2015: 12). For this reason, La Malinche, in the derivative form "Malinchismo", is usually associated with the concept of betrayal and, in general, with the tendency to prefer anything foreign (Riccardi, 2019: 209). In this regard, Riccardi (2019: 208) explains that this kind of reputation was not uncommon for interpreters: many of them, in fact, due to their former roles as prisoners or slaves, often aroused suspicions and raised doubts about their loyalty among the people they interpreted for, similarly to what happens today with the questioning of the interpreter's confidentiality and neutrality.

Controversies and ethical dilemmas related to the interpreter's role did not end with the Age of Discoveries. In the 19th century, in fact, interpreters in the United States started to earn a very negative reputation not only because of doubts about their neutrality, but also due to accusation of using their role for their personal gain. These suspicions particularly grew during negotiations between the US government and the native American tribes, when the US government managed to buy Sioux lands at a very low price through the intermediation of interpreters – consequently accused of siding with the United States (Riccardi, 2019: 210). Most of the time, the accusations were true; indeed, by analysing historical reports, Brambilla (2016: 67) argues that US interpreters – usually "half-blood" or people who had been living with natives – built themselves a career using their knowledge for personal gain to help conquering.

1.2.3. The Origins of Modern Interpreting: the rise of conference interpreting

While it is believed that community interpreting constitutes the main and the first form of interpreting practiced throughout history – also subject to some form of primitive institutionalization – the idea of modern interpreting, together with the professionalization of this practice, however started to develop in a different setting, that of conference interpreting (Riccardi, 2019: 206). The Paris Peace Conference held in 1919 at the end of the World War I was in fact the event that symbolically constituted the origin of the interpreting profession, when two of the participants, the US President Woodrow Wilson and the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, asked for interpreters in order to communicate with the French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau; therefore, to meet the leaders' needs, the conference organizers decided to hired people who worked in diplomacy and spoke English and French to use them as interpreters (Riccardi, 2019: 207). From that point on, with the creation of the League of Nations and the ILO, interpreters started to be essential for the functioning of diplomacy and politics (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015: 20).

The years between World War I and World War II were key for the development of the technique of consecutive interpreting which, despite allowing the interpreter to deliver an accurate translation, it was highly inefficient time-wise, as "the duration of the event doubles with each additional language" (Gaiba, 1998:17). For this reason, in the 1920s, new technologies and new interpreting systems started to be tested in an attempt to create an instantaneous interpreting system that could replace consecutive interpreting and, therefore, save time (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015: 20). Experiments started at the League of Nations in 1926 and the first training course in simultaneous interpreting took place in 1928, with the implementation of this technique in the context of ILO conferences in the same year (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015: 20). In simultaneous interpreting, communication occurs through a system of electrical transmission: interpreters hear the original speech through headphones and translate it in the assigned language while hearing it (Andres, 2013: 6). According to Baigorri-Jalón (2015: 20), this technique was perceived both as a sign of modernity, due to the use of microphones and headsets, and both as a metaphor of democratization because everyone was given the chance to speak in their own voice.

However, it was not until the end of World War II, with the Nuremberg trial (1945-46), that simultaneous interpreting started to attract mediatic attention. In November 1945, the Allied Powers created an International Military Tribunal, where judges from Great Britain, the United States, France and Soviet Union presided over the hearing of 22 major Nazi hierarchs (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015: 20). As far as languages were concerned, there were two requirements to meet in order to guarantee the proper conduct of the trials: all proceedings had to be interpreted in a language understood by the defendants, who had the right to a fair trial; the trial had to be conducted as fast as possible, not only to save time and costs, but also to keep the attention of the media (Gaiba,1998: 32). In addition to this, the same rights granted to the defendant had to be granted to the French, English, Russian and American prosecutors and judges too.

Organizers immediately understood that consecutive interpreting was not suitable to meet these requirements. Not only would this technique increase the length of the trial, but it would also lead to linguistic interferences due to the high number of people speaking different languages; consequently, simultaneous interpreting was the chosen technique in the context of the Nuremberg Trial (Gaiba, 1998: 34). Andres (2013: 6) described how interpreters sat in booths containing each three people separated from each other by glass panes, and how, "the English booth for example contained one interpreter who interpreted from German into English, one who interpreted from French into English, and one who interpreted from Russian into English". According to Andres (2013: 7), the efficiency of simultaneous interpreting demonstrated at the Nuremberg trial was key to pave the way to the popularisation of this new technique which started to be employed both in the context of the United Nations in 1947 and in that of the European Union institutions, becoming more and more common in the 1950s.

At the same time, many universities, such as Geneva, Vienna and Heidelberg, decided to create training programs in simultaneous interpreting and, in 1953, some interpreters in Paris decided to associate and establish the *Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence* (AIIC), initiating the professionalization of conference interpreting (Mackintosh, 2006: 3). In this respect, Viaggio (as cited in Furmanek, 2013: 5094) noted that "in 50 years, we have gone a long way towards accomplishing what took medicine, for instance, some 25 centuries to achieve turning into a recognized profession based on a recognized discipline taught at recognized academic institutions", claiming that

conference interpreting became in fact an established and regulated profession. Community interpreting, on the other hand, seemed to take second place both in terms of professionalization and research (Mikkelson, 1996a). Indeed, while the prestigious and recognized practice of conference interpreting became the main focus of IS during the 1950s, community interpreting started to be considered a legitimate field of research only in 1995 in the context of the First International Conference on Interpreting in Legal, Health and Social Service Setting held by Critical Link[1] in Toronto (Pöllabauer, 2012: 6).

1.3. What is Community Interpreting?

In the light of what has been discussed in the previous sections of this work, it is undeniable that community interpreting constitutes an essential field in the context of interpreting practice, playing a fundamental role both in history and in today's globalized world. At the same time, though, a brief analysis of the history of interpreting suggested that, despite its relevance, community interpreting has been overshadowed by conference interpreting, being neglected for a long time by IS.

1.3.1. Defining Community Interpreting

Given its historical development and its neglected position in the IS, it is then no wonder that there are still many controversies surrounding the concept of community interpreting, starting from its definition. This form of interpreting has indeed been defined in many ways, ranging from an informal practice of interpreting performed by ad hoc interpreters to a formal profession conducted by trained interpreters (Ciordia, 2017). However, in spite of these discrepancies, there still seems to be some consensus on the defining aspects of community interpreting since, as a whole, most definitions usually refer to this interpreting form as an practice that supports access to community services in the context of public institutions (Bancroft, 2015: 219).

For instance, in the context of the Critical Link Conference held in Canada in 1995, community interpreting was defined as a practice enabling "people who are not fluent

---

[1] The Critical Link network, which was created in 1992 in Canada, today works as a non-profit organization for the advancement of the field of community interpreting in the social, legal and health care sectors.

speakers of the official language(s) of the country to communicate with the providers of public services so as to facilitate full and equal access to legal, health, education, government and social services" (Carr *et al.* as cited in Ciordia, 2017). Similarly, sixteen years later, Shlesinger (2011: 6) stated that "community interpreting serves to enable individuals or groups in society who do not speak the official or dominant language to access basic services and communicate with service providers". Then, in the same way, community interpreting is described today as a practice that "encompasses bilateral spoken and signed language interpreting in different domains such as health and social care, and in different settings such as prisons, schools and asylum tribunals" (Tipton, 2020: 79).

These three definitions – temporarily distant from each other – seem to validate Bancroft's (2015) view, according to which there seems to be consensus in defining community interpreting as a practice that allows someone who does not speak the same language spoken by the institution to obtain access to services in different fields. However, in spite of this general consensus, there are scholars who define community intepreting in different ways and focusing on different aspects of this practice.

Mikkelson (1996a: 126-127, emphasis in original), for example, argued that "community interpreters provide services for *residents of a community*, as opposed to diplomats, conference delegates, or professionals travelling abroad to conduct business". Other than focusing on the form of interpreting practice itself, Mikkelson (1996a) seems to define community interpreting only on the basis of the recipient of the interpreting service who are, in this context, members of a community. Moreover, analysing the second part of the definition, Mikkelson (1996a) appears to be comparing community interpreting to the long-established practice of conference interpreting, whose recipients are, in fact, delegates working in the context of an international conference or meeting who, in turn, seem to elevate the interpreters' own status (Hale, 2007: 27). In addition to this, Hale (2007:29) highlighted other parameters used to define community interpreting: Pockhacker, for example, defines community interpreting in relation to the setting, associating it with the context of institutional, public service settings. According to Gentile, Ozolins and Vasilakakos, on the other hand, the main defining characteristic of community interpreting is believed to be the directionality of the activity – one interpreter who perform the interpreting service in both directions (Hale, 2007: 30).

In other cases, community interpreting appears to be associated to ad hoc interpreting (Dueñas, González et al.,1991), strengthening the idea that this kind of interpreting activity is mainly conducted by untrained volunteer interpreters. In the light of this connotation, we seem once again to be witnessing to a sort of polarization, where the alleged lack of professionalization in community interpreting is implicitly opposed to the long-recognized profession of conference interpreters (Pöllabauer, 2012: 1). In this regard, taking into consideration this imbalance between community and conference interpreting, several scholars tend to perceive the latter as a residual field, existing only in relation with the former (Ozolins, 1998; Roberts, 1997). As a consequence, it can be argued that community interpreting seems to carry a slightly negative connotation (Pöllabauer, 2012:1). Mikkelson (1996a: 124), for example, stated that this interpreting practice constitutes "the least prestigious and most misunderstood branch of the interpreting profession" and, likewise, Gentile (1997: 117) described community interpreting as the "Cinderella" of interpreting, underlining its condition of neglect.

1.3.2.   One profession, many names

Controversies over community interpreting do not seem to be limited to the definition of this practice, as there seems to be a lack of consensus about the very name of this interpreting activity. Bancroft (2015: 218), indeed, states that there are several different terms used to refer to this kind of interpreting activity and, at the same time, highlights the possibility that even the same term can have different meanings in different countries.

As a whole, it can be stated that "community interpreting" is the most common term used to describe this kind of interpreting activity (Bancroft, 2015: 218). The term, indeed, gained popularity as an international term after being coined in the 1970s in Australia – one of the first country to professionalize community interpreting – and it is used to refer to interpreting services provided in public institutions such as police station, immigration offices, schools, health-care facilities etc. (Hale, 2007:30). As a consequence, terms like health, medical, health care, mental health, education, social and legal or court interpreting can all be considered as hyponyms of community interpreting (Mack, 2005: 6). Moreover, Hale (2007:27) mentioned the existence of activities, such as interpreting in the field of business or tourism which, despite being dialogical and therefore similar to

community interpreting, are not seen as hyponyms and are classified as a third category of intepreting practices. In addition to this, after many controversies, "community interpreting" was chosen by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) language subcommittee to be used in the title of the first international standard for the profession – the ISO International Standard 13611[2], in press as of 2014 (Bancroft, 2015: 219). However, despite the popularity gained by the term community interpreting, its use may either be neglected or substituted by other terms, depending on the country.

English-speaking countries, for example, such as Australia and the USA, seem to prefer not to use this label in favour of the unmarked form "interpreting", only opting for adding an adjectival form when making comparisons with conference interpreting or when talking about different interpreting settings (Ozolins, 2010: 200). In this respect, Bancroft (2015: 219) explains that this choice constitutes the consequence of a concern according to which the term "community" could be associated with untrained or unprofessional interpreting. British institutions as well seem to have some preoccupation regarding the word "community", as it could allegedly be associated with the concept of "European Community" and, for this reason, they decided to adopt the term "Public Service Interpreting" (PSI) (Bancroft, 2015: 218).

Other terms such as dialogue and liaison interpreting, just like "community interpreting" are considered to be overarching terms for a variety of non-conference interpreting activities, and they are used to emphasise the bidirectionality of the type of activity, rather than the settings in which it is conducted (Pöllabauer, 2012; Tipton, 2020). In addition to this, Mack (2005:6) identified other terms "such as "triangle", "bidirectional" and "bilateral interpreting", which seem as well to underline the type of activity conducted, while Gentile (1997) indicated also the variants "three-cornered" and "contact interpreting".

As regards non-English speaking countries, Pöllabauer (2012: 2) highlighted the tendency to borrow English terms – mainly "community interpreting" – or to use English labels to coin loan words such as *interprétation communautaire* in France or *interpretación comunitaria* or *interpretación (e traducción) en los servicios públicos* in Spain. However, it appears that in countries such as Italy, together with loan words such as *interpretazione*

---

[2] https://www.iso.org/standard/54082.html

di comunità or *interpretazione dialogica*, exists a wide range terms used to describe this type of interpreting which are related to the semantic field of mediation and used in combination with several adjectives *(mediazione linguistica, culturale, inter-culturale, socioculturale)* (Mack, 2005: 7). According to Mack (2005: 7), the semantic field of mediation also appears to be very common in the English language and, when used specifically in the interpreting context, the term "mediation" seems to become a 'passe-partout' word or a hypernym. However, analysing the Italian interpreting context, it could be stated that, in fact, the term "mediation" is used to indicate a great number of activities ranging from interpreting and translating to negotiating the relations between immigrants and institutions, including all the various aspects of community interpreting. (Mack, 2005: 8). In this respect, regardless of the country, Gavioli (2020: 503) argues that the relation between the concept of community interpreting and that of mediation seemed to lead to a considerable debate in IS; indeed due to the association of the concept of mediation with the notion of advocacy, the coexistence of these two terms question the concept of the interpreter's role, which will be further analysed.

1.3.3.   Modes of Community Interpreting

As far as the mode of interpreting is concerned, community interpreting seems to lack the same kind of predictability characterising conference interpreting, conducted using the simultaneous technique with the aid of technological equipment (Hale, 2007: 31). Indeed, in terms of mode of delivery, community interpreters tend to use not only one, but three different modes during the interaction: short consecutive, whispered simultaneous interpreting (*chuchotage*) and sight translation (Tipton, 2020).

Bancroft (2015: 227) argues that consecutive interpreting constitutes the mode par excellence in community interpreting. Indeed, due to the possibility of interpreting during the speaker's pause, interpreters are able to deliver an accurate performance, especially in the case of short consecutive mode, where "each turn is relatively short, and is determined by the previous turn" (Hale, 2007: 10). Moreover, according to Bancroft (2015: 227), the speaker's pause gives the interpreter more opportunities to assess the complexity of the speech without noises and, for this reason, consecutive interpreting is generally synonym of clear communication.

Chuchotage, on the other hand, is used to a limited extent and with different purposes. Tipton (2020: 80) argues that, for example, this interpreting technique is often used in the context of court interpreting; since courts hearings require the participation of multiple speakers, the interpreter usually chooses the *chuchotage* mode, where the interpreter is placed in close proximity to the speaker to interpret in a whispering voice. However, as a whole, *chuchotage* is often chosen also "during speeches, meetings, educational or training programs and small conferences" and "in any situation where consecutive mode proves inadequate due to constraints of time" (Bancroft, 2015: 227).

Finally, sight translation, which is the oral translation of a text, constitutes a fundamental practice in in community interpreting as, very often, interpreters are required to translate documents – police reports, legal documents, prescriptions etc. – that are necessary to a successful outcome of the interpreting session (Pöllabauer, 2012: 2). In the light of this, it can be stated that community interpreters know how to use, at a minimum, three modes: consecutive, simultaneous and sight translation (Hale, 2007: 31).

1.3.4. Settings

Taking into consideration the definitions of community interpreting proposed in section 1.3.2, it is clear that the main characteristic defining this interpreting practice is its aim to facilitate the access to services for migrants or, in general, people who do not share the language spoken by the institution providing the service (Bancroft, 2015). However, it is key to understand that community interpreting can also be defined by the many specializations and settings in which this activity is conducted, as proposed by Pochhacker (Bancroft, 2015; Kalina, 2015).

The main specializations encompassed community interpreting are medical, mental health, educational, social and legal specializations which, in turn, include different settings: health care intepreting can be conducted, among others, in private practices, hospitals or clinics, and legal interprenting can be conducted in courtrooms, police stations or prisons (Hale, 2007: 32). As regards social settings, these can include a wide range of services, from local council to homeless shelters, while the educational setting usually includes schools at all levels (Bancroft, 2015: 221). In the light of these settings, it is clear that community interpreting may be performed in the context of a wide range

of events however, despite existing an evident diversity among these events and settings – for example between a court hearing and a medical consultation – there are also similarities that are common to all community interpreting specializations (Jacobsen, 2009: 157). Other than taking place in an institutional context, the speech events in the sphere of community interpreting are usually triadic and, apart from the interpreter, they involve two participants: one is generally a professional working for an institution (e.g. a lawyer, a doctor, a judge etc), whereas the other is a non-professional who does not speak the institution's language and, therefore, detains less power than his/her interlocutor (Jacobsen, 2009: 158-159). These elements seem not only constitute the characteristic aspects of community interpreting, but also appear to be the source of setting-related differences that lie between community and conference interpreting.

First of all, due to the wide range of specializations included in community interpreting, the register used in this form of interpreting practice is never fixed, and it can drastically vary depending on the setting in which the activity is conducted (Hale, 2007: 31). While Conference Interpreting is tendentially conducted in the same setting and the register tends to be formal or semi-formal, community interpreters are likely to face a wide range of registers, ranging from highly formal registers to coarse language or slangs (Hale, 2007; Pöllabauer, 2012). Moreover, conference interpreters' main task is to interpret monological semi-planned speeches, whereas community interpreters have to translate parts of unplanned speech delivered by the participants in a dialogical context (Pöllabauer, 2012: 2-3).

Secondly, community interpreters, unlike their colleagues working in the Conference field, interpret for two clients at the same time, with the obligation to help them equally, without being biased (Wadensjö, 2001: 37). The different status of the two speakers, where the migrant or member of the minority group tendentially ignores how the institution works, originates an interaction characterized by power asymmetry. Consequently, being in the middle of this interaction, the community interpreter is required to handle tensions existing between two parties, who often have conflicting goals (e.g. a defendant and a judge) (Pöllabauer, 2012: 4).

Finally, while conference interpreters generally have to deal with academic, scientific or political speeches interpreted from a booth far from the speaker, community interpreters

are placed in proximity to the speakers, who often discuss sensitive topics like violence or illnesses (Jacobsen, 2009; Pöllabauer, 2012). With regard to this, Garber (2000: 19) explained that by interpreting private and significant issues of everyday individuals, community interpreters' practice "carry even more risk and more responsibility than conference interpreting", since their performance is likely to affect a person's life, both in a negative or in a positive way. Indeed, as Smirnov (as cited in Hale, 2007: 26) stated, "it is not the life of an interpreter, but that of his client that may become a price paid for a poor rendition".

1.3.5.   Professionalization and Provision

In the light of what has been discussed in the previous sections, it is undeniable that the actual practice of community interpreting, which has played a fundamental role throughout history, constitutes the oldest form of interpreting practice. However, if we consider community interpreting from the point of view of professionalization, this interpreting practice is a "profession in its infancy" (Mikkelson, 1996b: 1). Specifically, Mikkelson (1996b) described community interpreting as a field in need of discipline and professional structure. Indeed, still today, the provision and the professionalization of this practice worldwide appear to be very heterogeneous and uneven (Tipton, 2020: 80) in all three aspects of professionalization identified by Furmanek (2013): academization (education and a body of research); identity (professional associations and trade unions); and standardization (a system of norms, code of ethics, accreditation, and legislation).

According to Pöchhacker (1999), this heterogeneity in the development of community interpreting professionalization from country to country is not surprising. Indeed, since professionalization seems to depend on a country's different characteristics, such as an increasing diversity of languages - usually going and in hand with the increase in immigration flows - and a positive political and institutional attitude toward immigration and multilingualism, it is no wonder that the professionalization of community interpreting constitutes a local phenomenon (Ozolins, 2010). In respect of this, Ozolins (2010: 197) identified a tendency according to which, in countries with a "historic immigration-based society (largely from New World countries)" and a robust

immigration policy, community interpreting professionalization is more advanced when compared to traditional non-immigrant countries.

Therefore, Australia, with its massive immigration flows of non-English speaking immigrants and its subsequent multilingual society, became the "flagship country" of community interpreting professionalization. In the 1970s, after years of *ad hoc* interpreter's practice, the Australian government established a state community interpreting provision, followed by the creation of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) in 1977 and, finally, by an interpreters' association (AUSIT), which was founded in 1987 (Pöchhacker, 1999: 131-132). In the same period, during the 1970s, professionalization is the USA was triggered, in this case, by the introduction of an anti-discriminatory law – the Court Interpreters Act. This Act constituted the beginning of a professionalization process, which has developed differently in each US State (Pöllabauer, 2012: 4). However, pioneering countries in the professionalization of community interpreting are not only to be found among New World countries, but also among European countries not subject to immigration flows (Ozolins, 2010: 197). Sweden, for example, stood out for creating a scheme for accreditation for community in 1976, marking a decisive step forward in the professionalization of community interpreting (Pöchhacker, 1999: 132).

As of today, these pioneering countries, which started the professionalization process in the 1970s, maintain leadership in all sectors of professionalization and were however followed by other countries. The United Kingdom, for example, stood out in the context of training and accreditation: after establishing a training system for community interpreting at college level during the 1980 and raising awareness among public service institutions, created, in 1994, a Register of Public Service Interpreters to list professionals possessing a Diploma in community interpreting (Pöchhacker, 1999: 133). With this regard, Ozolins (2010: 204) explained how non-English speaking countries such as Italy and Spain have recently started to implement university education in community interpreting. However, it is important to notice that the sole existence of training courses seems not to be enough to encourage practitioners to undertake such courses "where there is often little or no difference in pay to contract interpreters according to their qualifications or experience" (Ozolins, 2010: 208).

On a whole, although several countries have seen a significant advancement in the professionalization of community interpreting, the disharmony in the approach adopted by different countries seems to have caused a slowdown in legislation making beyond national boundaries in the field of this interpreting form. Community interpreting indeed has only recently been placed at the centre of international cooperation, particularly in the context of the European Union. One recent example is the European Directive 2010/64/EU[3] of the European Parliament and of the Council on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings, which establishes common minimum rules for European Union countries on providing interpreters in the context of criminal proceedings. Despite focusing only on one specific setting of community interpreting, the legal one, this directive aims to guarantee official recognition for community interpreters (García-Beyaert, 2015: 54) and, therefore, constitutes a real milestone in the professionalization of community interpreters on a region-based level[4] (Katschinka, 2014: 105-106).

In addition to this, other key players in the harmonization of community interpreting professionalization at the European level are professional organizations such as the European Network of Public Service Interpreting and Translation (ENPSIT), created in 2013 with the aim of standardizing community interpreting. To be precise, ENPSIT's focus is to professionalize community interpreting while, at the same time, highlighting the insufficiency of the Directive 2010/64/EU due to its limitations to legal interpreting (Remael & Carroll, 2015: 2). In addition to this, as far as the international level is concerned, the implementation of the international standard ISO 13611:2014 can be considered to be a significant step forward in the professionalization of community interpreting (Bancroft: 2015). Indeed, this international standard is an attempt to provide an overview on community intepreting and its settings, as it constitutes an attempt to explore the rights and duties of those who provide and use the service. However, although

---

[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32010L0064&from=EN
[4] It is worth noticing that, although Directive 2010/64/EU is the first EU Directive entirely dedicated to interpreting, in the context of the EU law the right to interpretation is mentioned in other also in other fields. In the Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection, for instance, according to Article 15, paragraph 3, letter c, asylum seekers are entitled to request the assistant of an interpreter during their personal interview on their application for international protection (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0032&from=IT)

it is undeniable that the standard can be useful for new practitioners and policymakers, Remael and Carroll (2015: 3) underlines the superficiality of these guidelines, which appear inadequate to provide specifics indications in terms of practice or professional qualities. According to Remael and Carroll (2015: 3) the international standard, like the Directive 2010/64/EU, seems to highlight, but not explore the most controversial and urgent issues related to the professionalization of community interpreting, such as the topic of ethics, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

2. Ethics in Community Interpreting: a focus on accuracy, impartiality and role

The first chapter of this thesis presented an overview of community interpreting, first exploring the origins of this activity and its characteristics, and then focusing on its professionalization. Starting from the concept of professionalization, this chapter will discuss the role of ethics in community interpreting, focusing on the use of codes of ethics, highlighting their characteristics and taking into consideration controversies surrounding these documents. Subsequently, after presenting a quantitative analysis on different codes of ethics and identifying the concepts of accuracy, impartiality and role, this chapter will discuss these three principles.

2.1. What do we Talk about when we Talk about Ethics?

When we talk about ethics, it is very likely that the first things that come to mind are concepts belonging to the field of philosophy or, more in general, to that of values and human behaviour. Ethics is, in fact, often associated with the sphere of human behaviour and human actions, and can have a double meaning: on the one hand, ethics can be the cause of human action, constituting an ideal standard every person should follow; on the other hand, ethics may be identified as an instrument aimed at preventing damages by forbidding the actions that may cause harm to others (e.g. do not bear false witness) (Kalina, 2015: 3)

According to Rudvin (2019: 26), the aforementioned meanings of ethics are constituted by normative processes which have been at the centre of macro-disciplines, such as theology and philosophy, since Ancient times. Indeed, ethics has been the basis of many theological doctrines such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity, which are based on principles such as the so-called "Golden Rule", according to which one must treat others as one wants to be treated (Kalina, 2015: 3). Similarly, moral philosophers, ranging from the Ancient Greeks to Kant, have focused on the creation of norms aimed at solving life dilemmas, so that people act in the best interest of individuals and society (Rudvin, 2015: 397-398). In this regard, Rudvin (2019: 28) underlined that, according to a philosophical perspective, the aim of ethics is to determine the difference between what is "good" and what is "bad", so that individuals can co-exist in a society "causing the least possible damage and doing the greatest possible 'good'" in the context of both private and public

life, such as in professional fields. However, as far as the professional sphere is concerned, individual responsibility plays a particularly fundamental role, having a considerable impact on others (e.g. users of the service provided by the professional) and leading to potential clashes between the individual and society. Rudvin (2019: 28) defined this contraposition as an ethical dilemma that is likely to arise "when a potential action or decision based on a private or a cultural norm contravenes the rule of the profession, institution or nation/state". Therefore, it is reasonable to say that ethics constitutes a fundamental element in professional contexts.

2.1.1.   Ethics and Professional Life: a fundamental relationship

According to Gentile, Ozolins and Vasilakakos (1996: 56), ethics and profession are "inextricably linked" because, as stated in the previous section, ethical norms guide professionals – individuals performing specialized functions for others in the society – to adopt exemplary behaviour when relating with colleagues and clients (Parsons: 1978: 40). In addition to this, other than indicating a set of admissible behaviour, norms may also become a yardstick for professional quality assurance (Kalina, 2015: 67). As a consequence, the perception of professional ethics as a sign of quality assurance constitutes a tool to develop clients' trust and strengthen professionals' reputation while, at the same time, helping to establish their sense of professional identity (Skaaden, 2019: 150). Therefore, ethics seems to constitute a key element in the context of professionalization, whose development is also guaranteed by organisational aspects such as education and training. Education and accreditation, for example, in the form of licences and qualifications obtained through training, testify professionals' ability and skills and are indeed essential both for clients, who see them as a guarantee of quality, and professionals, who see their skills recognized (Skaaden, 2019: 186). In addition to this, Skaaden (2019: 194) explains how education leads professionals to reflect on their activity and to prepare themselves to face dilemmas. Moreover, accreditation – often considered to be the ultimate form of professionalization – may also be seen as a form of protection for professionals, as it allows only trained practitioners to perform a specific activity (Skaaden, 2019: 194).

Specifically, ethics plays a particularly important role in professions where the client's well-being may be dramatically affected by the professional's performance (Gentile et al., 1996: 57). In the list of professions included in this category, together with popular ones such as that of doctors and lawyers, we also find community interpreting. Indeed, as already discussed in Chapter One, community interpreters' performance can have a dramatic impact on users and, therefore, given the nature of this profession, ethics and norms are important elements that are worth further discussion.

2.2. Ethics in Community Interpreting: the role of codes of ethics

Professional ethics and norms are included in specific types of documents, issued by professional organizations or associations, which are usually divided into three different categories: codes of ethics, codes of conduct and standard of practice (Bancroft, 2005; Phelan, 2019) According to Bancroft (2005: 14), while codes of ethics and codes of conduct are usually binding short documents focusing on ethical principles, standards of practice are described as longer, non-binding, informative guidelines that are specifically linked to a profession, aiming at its promotion. In this regard, in some cases, codes of ethics and codes of conduct are complementary, as the latter provide detailed explanations and expected behaviour in the light of the generic principles stated by the former (Phelan, 2019). However, in most cases, these terms are used interchangeably and, in general, it can be stated that the term "code of ethics" is often used as an umbrella term when describing a set of written ethical principles related to a profession. In this regard, because this work focuses on the analysis of ethical principles regardless of the type of documents they are written in, the umbrella term "codes of ethics" will be used.

According to Tseng (1992: 49), "the enforcement of the code of ethics is crucial because it functions externally as one of the bargaining chips to earn public trust and internally as an indispensable tool for internal control" and, similarly, Phelan (2019: 87) considers codes of ethics both as a sign of the professionalization of interpreting and an instrument used by interpreters to reflect on ethical issues. More specifically, the sign-interpreter Neumann Solow (1981: 39) explained that a "code of ethics protects the interpreter and lessens the arbitrariness of his or her decisions by providing guidelines and standards to follow". In addition to this, Hale (2007: 103) stated that codes of ethics can become the

practitioners' guide on how to correctly behave, usually insisting on principles learnt during university and professional training courses. Nevertheless, when such compulsory training is absent, codes of ethics can also become the only source of regulations and principles.

2.2.1.   Differences among Codes of Ethics

Although it is possible to state that all codes of ethics for interpreters and translators share the same purpose and aim, many scholars, analysing documents from different countries, found that these documents differ significantly in various aspects (Bancroft, 2005; Hale, 2007; Phelan, 2019). First of all, codes of ethics worldwide tend to be different in length. According to Phelan (2019: 92), codes can vary from one to seven pages, reaching peaks of twelve pages – as it is the case of the code of ethics issued by the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT). In this regard, scholars like Ozolins (2015) and Baixauli-Olmos (2017) explained that this lack of uniformity, other than depending on the type of text analysed (e.g. standards of practice are usually longer), has to do with the scope of the document: codes written for a specific interpreting field, in fact, tend to be longer, while those referring to the general field of community interpreting, or addressing both interpreters and translators, are usually shorter.

Secondly, the scope of codes of ethics has also an impact on their content (Baixauli-Olmos, 2017: 11). Although researchers found that most codes of ethics share some common principles – which will be further analysed in the next sections – the content of each code of ethics seems to vary on the basis of the interpreting field it addresses, providing more or less examples of one principle or another (Baixauli-Olmos, 2017; Hale, 2007). Baixauli-Olmos (2017) highlighted, for example, how codes of ethics created by healthcare interpreters' associations, such as the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), tend to focus on cultural issues, while codes created for the field of legal interpreting are more likely to underline principles such as accuracy and rendition (Phelan, 2019: 93). Moreover, Phelan (2019: 105) argued that some codes – such as the one adopted by the National Register of Public Service Interpreting (NRPSI) in the United Kingdom – seem to focus particularly on potentially controversial issues where interpreters could have troubles deciding on how to act; the code, for example, discusses

some "grey areas" and clarifies when interpreters should intervene in the interaction, for example to ask for clarification or to clarify if one of the two parts allegedly did not understand parts of the speech.

2.2.2.   Controversies surrounding Codes of Ethics: the function of training

In the light of what has been discussed in the previous sections, it is clear that professional ethics constitutes an important element in the research field of community interpreting. However, while ethics is universally accepted as fundamental and useful for community interpreters, codes of ethics are not exempt from criticism (Phelan, 2019: 108).

First of all, according to Hale (2007), many scholars – such as Wadensjö, Barsky, Kaufert and Putsch, and Jacobsen – argued that codes of ethics are likely to be inapplicable, as they are felt to describe impossible and unrealistic tasks requiring, for instance, practitioners to interpret literally or to be completely invisible. In this regard, Phelan (2019: 109) highlighted the criticism expressed by scholars such as Mayoral Asensio (as cited in Phelan, 2019), who considered codes of ethics as completely useless due to their alleged detachment from reality. Similarly, albeit to a lesser extent, Rudvin (2006: 8) stated that codes of ethics seem to follow a prescriptive paradigm and, therefore, they tend to be rather conservative, as well as presenting interpreting as a mechanical practice without granting sufficient attention to cross-cultural, sociological and ideological issues and, in general, to the complexities of community interpreting. These features are also found at the centre of the work of Moira Inghilleri, whose research field includes complex interpreting settings such as war zones, courtrooms and asylum courts (Phelan, 2019: 109).

In the light of the complex moral and conflictual dilemmas that may arise while working in these specific settings, Inghilleri (2012) considered that codes of ethics, with their general principles, are likely to prevent interpreters from taking ethical decisions which are suitable for the context they are working in. Inghilleri (2012: 49) goes on to argue that, in several community interpreting contexts, interpreters are in fact likely to face dilemmas not covered by codes of ethics which should, therefore, be replaced by new ethical paradigms that consider conflict as "an inevitable condition of discourse rather than a temporary state of affairs that can be resolved in rational, discursive activity

through communicative reason". Finally, a similar opinion was expressed by Angelelli, whose work mainly focuses on healthcare interpreters (Phelan, 2019: 110). Indeed, Angelelli (2008: 164) also seems to criticize the prescriptivism of codes of ethics which, in her opinion, do not provide interpreters with instruments to face the complexities of community interpreting.

However, other scholars such as Baixauli-Olmos (2017: 12) present a different view. After analysing different codes of ethics, he argued that guidelines and principles written in these documents are in fact not to be understood literally and can, therefore, be useful if considered as "open, adaptive, fluid, progressive, dynamic and changing entities" to be applied using common sense and professional judgement acquired through training. In the light of this, it can be stated that training seems once again to be an essential element for practitioners. Indeed, thanks to training, interpreters develop the professional skills needed to apply codes of ethics correctly (Hale, 2007: 103). Moreover, according to Phelan (2019: 88), training constitutes a unique chance for practitioners to discuss codes of ethics and their application, while reflecting on their role.

Nonetheless, the provision of training in the field of community interpreting, at a global level, appears to be very uneven. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter One, the professionalization and, therefore, the provision of interpreting training in most countries seems to be almost non-existent or underdeveloped (Ozolins, 2000) Universities seem, for example, to struggle to guarantee adequate training in the field of community interpreting, mainly offering courses focused on translation and conference interpreting (Phelan, 2019: 88). In this respect, Bancroft (2015: 228) found that one of the main problems in the provision of academic community interpreting training is the pragmatic difficulty of providing courses for rare languages, usually replaced by generic programs that do not allow language-specific practice opportunities. In addition to this, even taking into consideration non-academic programs, the available community interpreting training is still not sufficient (Bancroft, 2015).

According to Hale (2007: 159), the lack of community interpreting courses is part of a vicious circle – caused by a low degree of professionalization in the field of community interpreting – in which the poor remuneration of interpreters and the non-compulsory nature of interpreting training lead practitioners to decide not to invest on training and,

consequently, to a lower demand of this courses, causing a shortage of supply. Hale (2007: 163), indeed, identified a trend according to which, even when training is available, many practitioners choose not to undertake it, considering that the poor remuneration of the job, together with the poor working conditions, is not worth the time and money spent on these courses. As a consequence, this situation is likely to have a negative impact on the quality of interpreting which, in the absence of training and, therefore, of improvement, "will remain static or deteriorate" (Hale, 2007: 147). Moreover, taking into consideration the correlation between training and ethics expressed by Baixauli-Olmos (2017), it is natural to state that the unavailability of training may lead to the inappropriate application of ethical principles.

In addition to this, the absence of training not only prevent practitioners from correctly applying ethical principles, but it also constitutes an obstacle to the encounter between interpreters and codes of ethics as, without a certification, many practitioners are ineligible to join interpreters' associations, which are usually creators and promoters of the codes (Phelan, 2019: 88). Indeed, according to Phelan (2019: 109), it is likely that a considerable number of practitioners hired by the institutions are untrained (or ad hoc) interpreters and, therefore, are totally unaware of the existence of codes of ethics. Non-professional interpreters are indeed people who – as bilinguals – perform interpreting practices without undertaking prior specific training. According to Martínez-Gómez (2020: 370), the employment of ad hoc interpreters is generally associated with community interpreting as, very often, interpreters in this field are selected taking into consideration their bilingual skills and their immediate availability, in spite of their lack of awareness about ethics (Martínez-Gómez, 2020: 372). Furthermore, according to Angelelli (2008: 166), the high employment of untrained interpreters also has a negative impact on the quality of the codes of ethics themselves. Indeed, most of the empirical research at the basis of these documents was conducted on the performance of untrained interpreters, leading to inaccurate results. In this regard, Phelan (2019: 110) stated that, indeed, that "just as it would clearly be undesirable for a code of ethics for teachers to be based solely on research on the work of untrained teachers, so is it undesirable to base a code of ethics for interpreters on the work of untrained interpreters".

2.3.Three important ethical notions: accuracy, impartiality and role

In the light of what has been discussed in the previous section, it is clear that ethics constitutes a complex yet fundamental research field in community interpreting. Specifically, codes of ethics, with their differences and peculiarities, provide researchers with several insights and enable them to analyse this topic from different points of views. Scholars such as Bancroft (2005), for example, analysed the structure of a wide range of code of ethics used in different countries worldwide, while others, like Schweda-Nicholson (1994), focused on their content. As far as this thesis is concerned, the following sections will focus on ethical principles and, specifically, on the way they are conceived by different scholars. To be precise, the aim of this work is to analyse the principles of accuracy and impartiality, and the concept of role as, according to Hale (2007: 107), they constitute three of the most controversial principles discussed by scholars. Moreover, the principles of accuracy and impartiality have been classified by Skaaden (2013) as core ethical principles in the context of community intepreting. In addition to this, both Hale (2007) and Schweda-Nicholson (1994), analysing respectively 20 and 16 different codes of ethics, found that these principles are present in almost every code of ethics analysed. To be precise, Hale (2007:106) found that the principle of accuracy appeared in almost all codes of ethics (12 out of 16), while that of impartiality appeared slightly less frequently (11 out of 16) and it is not explicitly explained. The concept of role, on the other hand, is mentioned in only 6 of the 16 codes of ethics analysed by Hale (2007: 106).

2.3.1.   The "Codes of Ethics" Corpus

Before focusing on the analysis of the concept of accuracy, impartiality and role, the presence of these principles in different codes of ethics has been tested in order to establish whether the tendency identified by Hale (2007) has changed. This analysis was conducted on 11 codes of ethics, both general and setting-specific, including nine national codes, one European code and one international code (see Table 1). After creating the "Code of Ethics" Corpus I analysed it with the help of AntConc, a corpus analysis software. As far as accuracy and impartiality are concerned, since these concepts are usually referred to with precise words (e.g. accuracy or accurately), it was possible to

identify them by extrapolating occurrences using AntCon, and then to indicate their presence or absence in each code of ethics (see Table 2). However, as regards the concept of role, the analysis was conducted differently. The concept of role is, in fact, rarely indicated by specific words, and it is not traceable by simply performing an analysis on occurrences. For this reason, the concept of role in each code of ethics was identified manually, highlighting the portions of texts referring to this topic (see Table 3). Here are the results of this analysis which showed, similarly to the findings in Hale (2007), that the concepts of accuracy and impartiality appear in almost all codes of ethics (both in 10 out of 11 codes), while that of role is less present (6 out of 11).

	Acronym	Country	Document type	Year	Words
Associazione Italiana Interpreti e Traduttori	AITI	Italy	Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct (for translators and interpreters)	2013	1581
Australian Institute of Interpreters &Translators	AUSIT	Australia	Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct (with sections specific to interpreters)	2012	4596
Chambre Belge de Traducteurs et Interprètes-Belgische Kamer van Vertales en Tolken	CBTI	Belgium	Code of Conduct (for translators and interpreters)	n.d.	760
European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association	EULITA	European Union	Code of Ethics (for translators and interpreters)	2013	987

International Medical Interpreters Association	IMIA	International Association	Code of Ethics (for interpreters)	2006	6419
Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association	ITIA	Ireland	Code of Ethics (for interpreters)	2009	1352
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators	NAJIT	USA	Codes of Ethics (for translators and interpreters)	2016	1169
National Council on Interpreting in Health Care	NCIHC	USA	Code of Ethics and Standard of Practice (for interpreters)	2004 (C.E.) 2005 (SoP)	11556 5090
National Register of Public Service Interpreters	NRPSI	UK	Code of Conduct (for interpreters)	2016	2505
Suomen kääntäjien ja tulkkien liitto	SKTL	Finland	Code of Ethics (for interpreters)	2016	207
Trinor	Trinor	Spain	Code of Ethics (for translators and interpreters)	2013	1270

Table 1 Information about the "Codes of Ethics" corpus

	Accuracy	Impartiality
AITI	✓	✓

AUSIT	✓	✓
CBTI-BKVT	×	×
EULITA	✓	✓
IMIA	✓	✓
ITIA	✓	✓
NAJIT	✓	✓
NCIHC	✓	✓
NRPSI	✓	✓
SKTL	✓	✓
TRINOR	✓	✓

Table 2 Accuracy and Impartiality

	Role
AITI	It is the task of translators and interpreters to ensure written and oral communication between speakers of different languages.
AUSIT	Code of Ethics: • Interpreters and translators play an important role in facilitating parties who do not share a common language to communicate effectively with each other. • Interpreters and translators maintain clear boundaries between their task as facilitators of communication through message transfer and any tasks that may be undertaken by other parties involved in the assignment. • Even where such other tasks are mandated by employment arrangements, practitioners insist that a clear demarcation is agreed on between interpreting and translating and other tasks. For this purpose, interpreters and translators will, where the situation requires it, provide an explanation of their role in line with the principles of this Code.
CBTI	×

EULITA	Legal interpreters and legal translators thus play an essential role in all efforts to ensure the equality of citizens in justice-related communications.
IMIA	×
ITIA	The primary aim of the community interpreter should be to facilitate communication between two persons who do not speak the same language. Therefore a community interpreter: • should never act on behalf of the user and should never speak on behalf of either party. • is not employed by the beneficiary and should not act as their advocate. While a community interpreter is expected to have a general understanding of the cultural background of both parties s/he is not a cultural expert and should be wary when offering cultural advice. If asked to provide a written translation of a document, a community interpreter should refuse this task, as this is the role of a translator, and not an interpreter
NAJIT	The function of court interpreters and translators is to remove the language barrier to the extent possible, so that such persons' access to justice is the same as that of similarly-situated English speakers for whom no such barrier exists.
NCIHC	The essence of the interpreter role is encapsulated in the value of fidelity.
NRPSI	×
SKTL	×
TRINOR	×

Table 3 Role

2.4. Accuracy

As has been discussed in the previous section, the principle of accuracy appears in 10 out of the 11 codes of ethics analysed, and it is no wonder that accuracy appears so frequently in the context of community interpreting. Indeed, as we have seen in Chapter One, this ethical principle plays a fundamental role in community interpreting, since accurate or inaccurate interpreting performance may have a positive or negative impact on the lives of the recipient of the service (Hale, 2007). For this reason, according to Pöchhacker (2004: 141) accuracy is often considered to be one of the core principles of ethics in

community interpreting and, in general, the main demand in an interpretation session. Therefore, before exploring the principle of accuracy in community interpreting, it is important to understand how this concept is perceived in relation to interpreting as a whole.

2.4.1. Accuracy: interpreting, translation and the notion of equivalence

Interpreting, just like written translation, is considered to be a translational activity characterised by immediacy, as it "is performed 'here and now' for the benefit of people who want to engage in communication across barriers of language and culture" (Pöchhacker, 2004: 10). It is logical, then, that the main elements of interpreting activities are a temporary source-text – presented only once – and a target text that has to be produced in a short amount of time (Kade, as cited in Pöchhacker, 2004: 10). Nevertheless, in spite of this and other differences, the activities of translation and interpreting share many similarities and, therefore, it is not rare that important concepts explored in Translation Studies (TS) are also applied in the context of IS. In this respect, as far as accuracy is concerned, much literature about this principle revolves around the notion of *equivalence* which, having been at the centre of Translation Studies for years, started to be applied to the field of interpreting in the early 1990s (Munday, 2012: 58; Pöchhacker, 2004). According to Hale (2007: 4), equivalence is a general term indicating the relationship between the source and the target texts, and the various approaches to this notion seem to mirror the different connotations carried by the principle of accuracy. Hale (2004: 22) described, in fact, two polarizing trends in IS: according to scholars such as Herbert (1952) and Barsky (1996), source and target texts should be equivalent at the content level and, therefore, accuracy means maintaining the propositional content regardless of style or register; on the other hand, according to scholars like Wells (1991), accuracy lies in literal (*verbatim*) interpreting, especially in legal contexts, suggesting that equivalence is achieved when the formal features of the original text are preserved. However, according to Hale (2007: 6), both these polarized positions seem to suggest an incorrect perception of interpreting, which should never be intended as a "word-matching exercise" or a simple message translation.

Commenting on the concept of equivalence, Harvey et al. (as cited in Hale, 2007: 6) explained that equivalences need to be intended as subjective, as "the translator remains ultimately the only arbiter of the imagined effects of both the ST and the TT", and the more he/she is aware of the language and the culture of the participants, as well as of the settings, the more accurate the translation will be. Indeed, according to Wadensjö (1998), interpreting is not simply translating a message from one language into another, but it can be described as performing actions on behalf of other speakers. Moreover, shifting the focus to community interpreting, Wadensjö (1998) highlights the fact that dialogue interpreting is constituted by a "chain of utterances" created at the same time by different authors and, in this regard, Hale (2007: 6) explains that accuracy in community interpreting should not only be linked to the literal meaning of words, but should take into account all the participants in the interaction, together with the context they are placed in. On the whole, according to Hale (2007: 6), in order to achieve accuracy community interpreters should first understand the utterances, and then formulate a speech in the target language which should "reflect the author's intention and achieve a similar reaction in the listeners as the original might have".

In the light of this, scholars such as Baker (as cited in Major & Napier, 2012: 4) states that accuracy should not only be based on content and lexicogrammatical equivalence, but also on pragmatics, which is a discipline that "refers to the meaning of words in context, to the appropriate use of language according to tongue, culture and situation" (Hale, 2004). Similarly, a great number of scholars (Berk-Seligson, 1990/2002; Hale, 2007; Hatim & Mason, 1997) conclude that equivalence should in fact be considered from the point of view of pragmatics and that, as far as accuracy is concerned, message and intention constitute the core of this principle (Hale, 2004: 26). In other words, taking into account the speech act theory formulated by Austin (1962) and Searle (1975), community interpreters' goal would be to produce an utterance (locutionary act) aimed to reproduce the speaker's intentions (illocutionary act) and, therefore, to cause in the speaker the same reaction that would have been produced by the original utterance (Hale, 2004: 25). Consequently, it is possible to state that, in order to guarantee accurate interpreting performances, it is fundamental to consider the manner in which the speech is delivered – style, tone, register, politeness and hedging (Pöchhacker, 2004: 144) expressed through various markers indicating "register variation, hesitations, discourse markers, repetitions

and backtracking" (Hale, 2007: 10). According to Hale (2007: 10), these aspects are key to express the speaker's intention and the truth of his/her statements, other than revealing information about his/her education, geographical origins, membership to a social group. In this regard, discourse style is particularly crucial in settings such as the legal one – where the speaker's statements are subject to evaluation – and, therefore, it is no surprise that accuracy is one of the main aspects investigated in the field of legal interpreting (Hale, 2007: 10).

2.4.2.   Accuracy in the "Codes of Ethics" Corpus

As far as codes of ethics are concerned, on the basis of those analysed in the previous section, it is possible to say that the entries under accuracy tend to focus on the interpreter's duty to be faithful to the original speech and although some codes provide readers with general indications, others are more specific. The standard of practice issued by NCIHC, for instance, simply states that practitioners should interpret "accurately and completely", whereas the code of ethics employed by NAJIT clarifies that the original speech should be translated "by conserving all the elements of the original message while accommodating the syntactic and semantic patterns of the target language". Indeed, among the codes analysed in the previous section, the code of ethics issued by NAJIT, for example, clearly states that "the register, style and tone of the source language should be conserved" and, using almost identical words, the code written by EULITA clarifies that "the register, style and tone of the source language shall be conserved".

In the light of this, it is possible to state that additions, omissions and substitutions – which may be registered in the interpreter's rendition when compared to the original speech – are sometimes necessary to achieve accurate interpreting, assuming that the original message is not modified (Hale, 2007). This assumption appears to be clarified in some of the codes of ethics that were analysed in the previous section, which condemn omissions and substitutions that could modify the message of the source text. The code of ethics issued by AUSIT, for example, underlines the fact that omissions or distortions should be avoided in order to preserve "the content and intent of the source message or text". Similarly, the code of ethics written by NAJIT clarifies that "there should be no

distortion of the original message through addition or omission, explanation or paraphrasing". In addition to this, prescriptions of verbatim or literal translation are not present in any codes of ethics.

2.4.3.   Challenges to Accuracy in Community Interpreting

It appears from the previous sections about accuracy in codes of ethics that these documents do not always provide interpreters with specific and clear indications about how this principle should be intended. In addition to this, Hale (2007: 111) argues that, as far as accuracy is concerned, codes of ethics seem to neglect the internal and external challenges that interpreters face when trying to deliver an accurate interpretation. According to Hale (2007: 111), these challenges may occur during the three different phases of the interpreting session, identified by Ginori & Scimone (as cited in Hale, 2004) as comprehension, conversion and delivery.

2.4.3.1.   Internal Challenges in the Comprehension Phase

In the comprehension phase, during which the interpreter's aim is to comprehend the meaning of source message, practitioners may have to face various difficulties in understanding what the speaker is expressing, and these challenges can be of different kinds. Firstly, problems in understanding the message may be related to difficulties of a linguistic nature (Hale, 2004; Hale, 2007; Pöchhacker, 2004). According to Miguélez (as cited in Hale, 2007: 18) and Hale (2007: 15), linguistic difficulties are often linked to elements such as incorrect pronunciation, false starts and embeddings, other than grammatically and structurally atypical sentences which are often used in specific community interpreting settings (for example legal settings). Moreover, it is not rare for misunderstandings to be caused when interpreters, despite understanding the source message at a semantic level, fail to grasp the pragmatic meaning and, therefore, do not transmit the speaker's intention (Hale, 2004: 23).

Secondly, communication breakdowns may also be caused by cross-cultural differences. Indeed, while it would be wrong to imply that communication problems are related to cultural differences, it is possible to state that an interpreter lacking knowledge regarding

"experiences, beliefs, political situations, context and general background of the speakers" is more likely to experience communication problems (Hale, 2014). In this regard, Hale (2014: 4) highlights how pragmalinguistic failures can also be caused by cultural differences, when misunderstandings are provoked "by the diverse ways different languages express pragmatic intention linguistically". Each culture, for example, has a particular way of perceiving concepts such as impoliteness; for instance, while in many language the imperative is considered to be a normal mode to express a request ("Open the door, please!"), in English this linguistic choice may be perceived as rude, as lacking indirectness ("Could you please open the door?) (Hale, 2014: 4-5). Consequently, interpreters who are not aware of these differences, are likely, for example, to turn a polite request into an order, altering the force of the illocutionary intention of the speaker and the level of politeness and, therefore, causing a different reaction in the listener during the delivery phase of the interpreting sessions (Hale, 2004: 23). Indeed, according to Hale (2004: 23) politeness markers or syntactic changes are often needed to guarantee equivalence as far as levels of politeness are concerned.

2.4.3.2.   Internal Challenges in the Delivery Phase

During the delivery phase of interpreting sessions, interpreters are likely to face other difficulties related to interpreting register shifts and coarse language (Hale, 2007: 138). As regards the former, Hale (2007: 138) states that recognizing and then interpreting register shifts constitute a very difficult task for the interpreter. Indeed, as found by Berk-Seligson (1990/2002), interpreters tend to alter the original register, making it similar to the register of the person who is listening, following interpreters' natural inclination to adapt the register of the interpreted speech to the register of the hearer. Moreover, Pöchhacker (2004: 146) reports that, when interpreting, many practitioners seem to have the tendency to alter the register of the original speech by using linguistic features – such as non-contracted forms in English –leading to an upward shift in the register of the interpreted speech. In general, interpreters, especially in the absence of training, often make these transformations unconsciously (Hale, 2007: 138).

The second difficulty faced by interpreters in the delivery phase is related to coarse language and vulgarisms, which may put interpreters in a difficult position (Hale, 2007:

138). Vulgarisms and coarse language are usually included under the umbrella term *taboo words*, which is generally used to define terms expressing emotions – such as pain or anger – rather than notional meaning/sense and, specifically, insults and obscene words (Mouallem, 2015). In this regard, in order to classify words and expressions considered as taboo, Mouallem (2015: 2) presents the classification offered by the British anthropologist Edmund Leach, who divided this kind of term into three groups: words that have to do with sex and excretions (e.g. shit); words relating to Christianity (e.g. Christ); words that have to do with "animal abuse", that is calling a person using the name of an animal (e.g. bitch).

In the light of this, considering that taboo words are socially regarded as expressions that should not be pronounced, and that every person views these expressions differently according to their gender and cultural or religious beliefs, it is possible that some interpreters may refuse to repeat these words (Hale, 2007; Mouallem, 2015). As a consequence, some practitioners omit the taboo words, while others resort to euphemism to reduce the intensity of the meaning of the word or simply decide to communicate that the speaker has pronounced a swear word (Hale, 2007; Mouallem, 2015). These choices regarding the interpretation of swear words or words related to sex or to body functions may have serious consequences on the interpreting session (Mouallem, 2015: 3). By omitting or diluting swear words, interpreters may diminish the accuracy of the message and they may also deny the listener of linguistic elements that could tell him/her more about the speaker's membership of a particular group or of his/her experience (Hale, 2007). Moreover, if interpreters decide not to include such words in medical or legal settings (for example body functions in the former and sex references in the context of rape cases, in the latter), they are likely to cause message alterations that could result in an incorrect diagnosis or verdict (Mouallem, 2015). However, even when interpreters do decide to interpret taboo words, the task may be very complicated, as they "may not be prepared to quickly produce a rendition that carries the same illocutionary force and achieves the equivalent perlocutionary act as the original" (Hale, 2007: 138).

2.4.3.3. External and Setting-related Challenges

In the light of this, it is reasonable to say that the numerous challenges faced by interpreters are not only caused by difficulties in delivering speech which is pragmatically equivalent to the original, but also by context-related issues. Due to time limitations, interpreters have "to resort to the appropriate linguistic resources quickly, without any real time to stop and think" (Hale, 2004: 142); this situation, aggravated by long assignments without breaks and, therefore, by stress and fatigue, are likely to be the cause of inaccurate interpreting performances (Hale, 2007: 143). Therefore, in this delicate phase, intepreting skills and qualities such as memory, capacity and listening skills, together with language skills and experience, turn out to be particularly crucial (Hale, 2004: 23).

In addition to the aforementioned difficulty, when trying to achieve accuracy, another obstacle that interpreters may have to face is the lack of information about the matter at the centre of the interpreting session and about the people they will interpret for (Hale, 2007: 147). Claiming to respect confidentiality of information and assuming that interpreters will "just translate", service providers often refuse or appear unwilling to provide interpreters with information or materials that could be used to prepare for the assignment, and this attitude is likely to increase the chances of misunderstandings (Hale, 2007: 147).

2.5. Impartiality

The discussion presented in the previous section has clearly showed the importance of the principle of accuracy which, constituting the basis of the interpreter's job, is present in 10 out of the 11 codes of ethics analysed in section 2.3. However, as has been discussed in section 2.4, accuracy is not the only cardinal concept constituting the core of professional ethics in community interpreting, as this notion is usually associated with another important ethical principle: the principle of impartiality (sometimes defined as "neutrality") (Skaaden, 2013). In this respect, the relevance of this principle is not only attested on a theoretical level, but it is also evident in the analysis of the "Codes of Ethics" corpus, whose results showed that, like accuracy, impartiality is present in 10 out of the

11 codes of ethics analysed. But what is impartiality, and how is it related to the principle of accuracy?

2.5.1. Defining Impartiality

According to Rudvin (as cited in Kalina, 2015: 75) the interpreter's task is considered as providing clients with "an accurate account of the interlocutors' utterances", specifying that, in doing so, "the interpreter does not serve interests of either party". In this respect, it is possible to state that, without impartiality, accuracy in community interpreting would be an unachievable task (Miguélez, as cited in Hale, 2007: 121). Leaving aside the assumption refuted by Rudvin (2002: 231), according to which impartiality is synonym as translational equivalence, impartiality in interpreting is guaranteed by avoiding the employment of interpreters who have personal interests or conflicts of interest that may hamper an accurate rendition (Hale, 2007: 121). Indeed, as far as personal interests are concerned, their presence may influence the interpreter and lead him or her to alter the speaker's utterances in the hope of producing the desired outcome, jeopardizing the entire interpreting session (Hale, 2007: 118).

Considering this, it is possible to say that the basic tenet of impartiality in community interpreting is the prohibition of the employment of speakers' friends, relatives or acquaintances as interpreters, because their personal interests could hinder the delivery of an accurate interpretation. In this respect, the same applies for "insurmountable" conflicts of interests that could lead the interpreter to act in order to change the outcome of the interpreting session, damaging one of the speakers in the breach of the principle of accuracy (Hale, 2007: 118). Regarding this, Inghilleri (2012) presents an example of a glaring breach of the principle of impartiality committed by a Turkish interpreter during an asylum hearing for a Kurdish asylum seeker. In this case, the unresolved conflict occurring in Turkey between various insurgent Kurdish groups and the Turkish government resulted in a conflict of interests between the interpreter and the asylum seeker, who declared that, during the hearing, the interpreter repeatedly questioned the truthfulness of his words and twisted his utterances (Inghilleri, 2012).

By presenting this case, Inghilleri (2012) illustrated a situation of conflicts of interests originating from a political matter and, at the same time, a blatant breach of the principle

of impartiality, which consequently led to an inaccurate rendition, likely to have jeopardized the asylum application. Indeed, the importance of hiring interpreters without connections with either of the speakers nor involvement in conflict of interest situations is also specified in some of the codes of ethics included in the "Code of Ethics" Corpus. In the code of ethics issued by ITIA, for example, it is clearly stated that interpreters should "decline to interpret where a family or close personal or professional relationship may affect impartiality" and, similarly, the code of ethics for legal interpreters issued by NAJIT prescribes that "any real or potential conflict of interests shall be immediately disclosed to the Court and all parties". In this regard, it is important to highlight that these codes, other than reiterating the importance of impartiality in community interpreting, clarify that it is the interpreter's responsibility to acknowledge these critical issues and, consequently, to decide to disqualify himself or herself from the job.

In the light of what has been discussed in the previous paragraph, it is possible to state that the first – and probably most immediate – way of defining the concept of impartiality in community interpreting refers to the necessity of employing interpreters who are not connected to either of the speakers and do not experience any conflict of interests during the interpreting session. But when this first requirement is met, how should an interpreter act to in order to be impartial? According to Hale (2007: 118) the principle of impartiality is the interpreter's "obligation to observe strict objectivity to ensure that personal feelings, opinions, beliefs or interests do not interfere with the main aim of producing accurate renditions". In this regard, it is possible to say that the main requirement that the interpreter has to meet is to be objective and unbiased. However, scholars like Rudvin (2002) and Wallmach (2002) highlighted the fact that, albeit respecting the principle of impartiality, interpreters cannot be required to dispose of their individuality. Indeed interpreters, as human being involved in a human communication, will inevitably have their own beliefs and ideas and will, consequently, create their "own opinions about the people for whom they are interpreting, about the fairness of the process, about the likely truthfulness of the utterances, about the quality of the profession" (Hale, 2007: 119).

In the light of this, it is natural that interpreters, due to their own cultural and emotional baggage, are likely to disagree with what the speakers say or to consider some declarations as untrue. Disagreements of this kind, according to Hale (2007: 118), unlike the intentional alteration of an utterance, cannot be classified as unethical behaviour.

Respect for the principle of impartiality means, in fact, acknowledging subjectivity and, consequently, to preventing it from interfering with the interpreting activity (Hale, 2007: 119). The code of ethics issued by ITIA, for example, seems to acknowledge the interpreter's subjectivity, albeit clarifying that the interpreter will "not impose his/her philosophical, religious or political views on any interpretation". Indeed, it can be said that just as an actor sometimes takes on roles very different from his/her own personality, similarly interpreters often act and speak on behalf of someone whose ideas and personality are different from their own (Laster and Taylor, 1994). However, although there is general agreement on this definition of impartiality, this notion is often opposed to the concept of "advocacy".

2.5.1.1. Advocacy

Phelan (2019: 111) defines advocacy as "probably the most controversial issue in public service interpreting", as it seems to clash with the main tenets of the impartiality principle. The general meaning of advocacy is, in fact, associated with the act of supporting a particular cause and, when applied to the context of community interpreting, the term is described as "actively supporting, defending and pleading for a client", especially in situation of power imbalance (Wadensjö, as cited in Phelan, 2019: 111). Considering this and, at the same time, taking into account what has been previously said about impartiality, it is natural to think that in order to respect this principle, interpreters should refrain from advocacy. Indeed, advocacy is explicitly discouraged in 2 out the 11 codes of ethics included in the "Codes of Ethics" corpus. The code of ethics issued by SKTL, for instance, prescribes that "the interpreter shall not act as an assistant or advocate for those being interpreted" and, similarly, the code written by AUSIT states that "interpreters and translators do not, in the course of their interpreting or translation duties, assume other roles such as offering advocacy". In addition to this, the same indication, despite formulated in a more implicit way, is found in other codes, such as that issued by NRPSI, prescribing that the interpreter "shall not enter into discussion, give advice or express opinions or reactions to any of the parties". However, there does not seem to be general agreement on the meaning of advocacy nor on its inappropriateness in the context of community interpreting.

Unlike Wadensjö, Inghilleri (2012:7) defines advocacy as "clarifications or repair of misunderstandings due to clashes of culture or language". Indeed, as we have seen in section 2.4.3.2, cross-cultural differences can put at risk the delivery of accurate interpretation, causing misunderstandings and, for this reason, advocacy – intended as the interpreter's intervention to ensure communication – is sometimes accepted. In this regard, other codes of ethics clearly state that the interpreter's intervention is sometimes needed. To be precise, the codes prescribing the need of interpreters' clarifications on cultural misunderstandings are those issued by the medical interpreters' association – NCICH and IMIA. NCICH, for example, prescribes in its code of ethics that "the interpreter alerts all parties to any significant cultural misunderstanding that arises" and then specifies, in the standard of practice, that clarifications are needed in situations where there are "clashing cultural beliefs or practices, a lack of linguistic equivalency, or the inability of parties to articulate the differences in their own words". Similarly, the code of ethics produced by IMIA states that the interpreter should "engage in client advocacy and cultural interface roles only when appropriate and necessary for communication purposes", adding that interpreters "have a responsibility to use patient advocacy and cultural interface to ensure effective cross-cultural communication between clients". Indeed, as far as cross-cultural misunderstandings are concerned, there are cases in which cultural differences cannot simply be resolved through an accurate pragmatic rendition and, therefore, the interpreter is likely to feel the need to intervene and provide the clients with an explanation (Hale: 2007: 132).

2.5.2.   Cross-cultural Misunderstanding

As was already mentioned in section 2.4.3.2, cultural knowledge seems to play a major role in community interpreting and mediation activities. Indeed, according to De Jongh (as cited in Falbo, 2013: 54) "language is an expression of culture" and, therefore, clarificatory interventions of interpreters and mediators may become fundamental in cases of cross-cultural misunderstandings. However, before analysing situations of this kind, it is important to discuss the role played by culture in these contexts.

According to Liddicoat and Scarino (as cited in Liddicoat, 2014: 4), community interpreters and mediators can be perceived as professionals whose scope is "is an active

engagement in diversity as a meaning making activity that involves interpreting the meaning of diverse others for oneself and for others", primarily using their language proficiency. Language is, in fact, much more than a tool placed outside culture as – being shaped by the culture within which they are used – they are considered to be a culturally-contextualized phenomenon (Liddicoat, 2014: 4). For this reason, Liddicoat (2014) highlights the importance of viewing languages both as a contextualized phenomenon and a revealing element of cultural understanding, other than simply approaching them from a purely linguistic perspective. In this respect, because the relationship between languages and culture becomes most salient in the practices of language in use, issues of pragmatics are of special importance (Liddicoat, 2014: 4).

To be precise, the discipline investigating the way in which the language system is put into use during encounters with people with different first languages and representing different cultures is defined as "Intercultural Pragmatics" (Keckes, 2013: 14). Intercultural Pragmatics is based on the assumption that language is shaped in a set of rules and social conventions created and developed in a specific speech community creating its own sets of linguistic and non-linguistic conventions that are unique to that group of people (Keckes, 2013: 15). Accordingly, each human language seems to be considered as an entity reflecting a unique society, while conventions, shared knowledge and beliefs can be seen as the common ground in which the interaction takes place. Nevertheless, when this common ground is not shared by both participants in the interaction, as in the case of intercultural communication, the chance of encountering cross-cultural misunderstandings tend to increase (Keckes, 2013: 2).

However, verbal communication is not the only element worth considering when investigating culture. According to Kirch (1979: 416), to these two indissoluble elements – culture and language – it is necessary to add "non-verbal communication", which is an equally constituting part of every interaction; indeed, like verbal communication, non-verbal communication is also shaped in the context of a societal community. Although verbal language is usually considered to be the main system of human interaction, elements of non-verbal communication known as kinesics (for example gestures and body language) constitute fundamental communicational aspects (Miletich, 2015: 165). To be precise, according to Poyatos (2002: 116), kinesics includes "gestures and/or movements that are done consciously (usually with the head and/or face and extremities), manners

(movements that are socially learned such as the way we eat or shake hands), and postures".

Concerning these elements, Kirch (1979: 417) explains that, "like linguistic morphemes, gestures are meaningful, but the meaning may vary in different contexts". Some of the same gestures – which are part of our everyday interaction – other than not being understood, may have opposite meanings in different cultures. For instance, while sticking the tongue out could be perceived as mockery in Western countries, the Polynesians see it as a greeting or a sign of reverence (Kirch, 1979: 417). The same cultural differences may exist in terms of body language, which is, however, usually more difficult to detect. In this regard, LaFrance and Mayo (1978: 84) explain how, for example, people belonging to certain cultures associate eye-contact to active listening, while others tend not to look at the speaker. In addition to this, it is noteworthy that even silence can mean and communicate different things depending on the culture in which it is considered (Miletich, 2015: 166).

Considering these dynamics, cultural misunderstandings may arise during intercultural encounters, especially in case of difficulties in understanding non-verbal communication. In these cases, community interpreters may decide to intervene to explain particular gestures that carry a specific meaning in the speaker's culture, and that are probably unknown to the other party (2007:174). In this respect, in order to present an example of non-verbal language in need of interpreting, Miletich (2015: 174) cites a gesture – often used by Spaniards – which consists in moving downward two fingers next to the nose to indicate a bad economic situation. While this gesture is probably perfectly clear to people belonging to the same culture as the speaker who does the action, the other participants are very likely to be unaware of its meaning. For this reason, the interpreter may rightfully decide to intervene in the interaction, verbally conveying the meaning of the gesture (Miletich, 2015:175). In this respect, as far as the "Codes of Ethics" corpus is concerned, gestures are only mentioned in the code issued by ITIA (2009), which simply prescribes that interpreters should "not emulate the gestures made by the speakers" since "they have already been seen".

However, community interpreters' interventions may also be aimed at clarifying utterances that, even if accurately translated, would not convey the same meaning as the

original. Being unaware of the speaker's cultural background, there may be cases in which listeners are not able to completely understand the other party's message and intentions and, therefore, their reaction will be different from expected (Hale, 2007: 143). To explain this, Hale (2007: 143) presents the example of a Spanish-speaker man from Central America who, testifying during a courtroom hearing, talked about his family's indecision about spending a huge amount of money on paying their mortgage or on their daughter's fifteenth birthday reception. In this case, the interpreter gave an accurate rendition of the speaker's utterance, but he did not intervene to explain the witness' cultural context. In this respect, Hale (2007: 143) underlines that, without any cultural explanation, the man's declaration could have sounded unreasonable to most of the listeners, probably unaware of the fact that, in some Spanish speaking countries, fifteenth birthdays are important events on which families are used to spend substantial amount of money. As a consequence, it is possible that the non-intervention of the interpreter may have discredit the speaker, indirectly questioning his common sense. Commenting on this example, Hale (2007: 129) states that this kind of situation constitutes complex ethical dilemmas for community interpreters, who have to use their professional judgement to decide whether to intervene or not. Indeed, when an interpreter decides to intervene and to act as "cultural broker" even when the code of ethics does not offer a precise indication, he/she has to be confident that the misunderstanding he/she has identified is caused by cross-cultural issues and not by individual differences related to factors such as personality or education (Hale, 2007: 323).

2.5.3.   Other Challenges: participants' expectations, pressures and emotional difficulties

After presenting the ethical dilemmas faced by interpreters in cases of cultural miscommunication, it is important to consider other elements that may put the respect of the principle of impartiality at risk. To be precise, serious challenges can be related to the expectations that clients may have towards the interpreter and, at the same time, to the difficulties in managing extreme emotions.

Even when interpreters see themselves as impartial figures and work to guarantee an objective and accurate rendition, the speakers may perceive them in a different way.

According to Rudvin (2004: 273), a client who does not speak the institution's language, and who arrived in the host country from the same country of origin as the interpreter's, is likely to see the interpreter as an ally, assuming that he/she will not translate offensive words or potentially detrimental statements that may jeopardize his/her case. Indeed, while the presence of an interpreter belonging to the client's ethnic group could help to create a familiar and reassuring environment, it could, at the same time, lead the client to try and familiarize with the interpreter, even seeking favours (Rudvin, 2004: 294). In this regard, Rudvin (2004: 294) argues that this problem is likely to be more frequent in contexts such as medical settings, where community interpreters are sometimes expected to undertake various tasks other than interpreting.

Arguing about the serious consequences these challenges may lead to, Merlini (2009: 69) presents an example of breach of the principle impartiality occurring during a meeting between a French-speaking asylum applicant and an Italian police officer. Communication between the parties was ensured by a French speaking interpreter, a former immigrant who arrived to Italy from Morocco (Merlini, 2009: 69). Merlini (2009: 70) reported that, when the police officer momentarily left the room, the interpreter started giving advice to the asylum applicant on how to make his story more credible, positioning himself as the asylum seeker's ally. According to Merlini (2009: 86), although the asylum applicant's migration story was more traumatic compared to that of the interpreter, the latter tended "to recognize the sense of cultural uprooting and estrangement that he himself must have felt upon his arrival in the new socio-institutional context", yielding to the asylum seeker's expectations. However, expectations can also come from the institution's representatives, who may pressure the interpreters to give inappropriate information such as opinions on the truthfulness of the story told by a speaker (Hale, 2007: 132). According to Kalina (2015: 77), this kind of trust in the interpreter is quite common in medical settings where doctors tend to side with the interpreter, as both have the desire to overcome communication barriers to help the speaker. On the other hand, service providers may have different expectations, and it is not rare that the "institutional" party, especially during a legal case, sees the interpreter as biased (Kalina, 2015: 76). Indeed, Kalina (2015: 77) underlines that such dynamics occur often in asylum hearings, where officers are likely to question the interpreter's impartiality.

In general, regardless of the specificity of the situation, it is possible to say that speakers in community settings are likely to expect the interpreter to side with one of the two participants involved in the interaction (Kalina, 2015: 77). Consequently, community interpreters "often find themselves caught in a struggle between a number of competing demands and expectations from those around them", which leads to challenging ethical dilemmas (Hale, 2007: 143). This kind of pressure, together with the interpreter's self-awareness of being the only one understanding both parties, may lead the interpreter to experience stress and suffer severe psychological problems (Rudvin, 2004; Rudvin, 2005)

Difficulties in respecting the principle of impartiality can also be related to the peculiar settings in which community interpreters operate, which often require them to handle extreme emotions. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter One, community interpreters have to listen and interpret extremely confidential and intimate information regarding themes such as violence, child abuse and torture. According to Martin and Valero-Garcés (as cited in Merlini & Gatti, 2015 :144) community interpreters often find themselves in "circumstances in which it would be difficult for any human being to remain unperturbed". Although the emotional aspects of community interpreting are rarely addressed in codes of ethics or IS, emotions play a fundamental part in in this profession, especially in relation to the principle of impartiality (Kalina, 2015: 77). While empathy – intended as the ability to understand the other's point of view while showing careful affective displays – has been proven to be beneficial to the quality of intepreting activities, too much emotional involvement could negatively affect the respect of impartiality (Hale: 2007; Merlini & Gatti, 2015). Interpreters who struggle to be emotionally detached from the interaction are in fact more likely to breach the principle of impartiality, following their instinct to side with the less powerful participant (Guery: 2014). In general, according to scholars such as Barsky (1996), Mason (1999) and Wallmach (2002), interpreters struggle to respect the principle of impartiality when interpreting in extreme emotional conditions, and it is not rare for interpreters to be unable to start or continue to interpret for emotional reasons (Kalina, 2015: 78). In addition to this, the managing of extreme emotion can cause stress and psychological problems in the interpreters who, unlike other practitioners – such as doctors or psychologists – do not have access to specific support or counselling structure (Guery, 2014).

62

2.6.Role

The previous sections, which focused on the principles of accuracy and impartiality, seem to implicitly demonstrate that there are varying expectations and ideas on what role the interpreter plays in community settings. To be precise, these controversies seem to revolve around the interpreter's scope for intervention during the interpreting session. Although the notion of role cannot be defined as an ethical principle that should be followed, this concept constitutes an important part of every code of ethics, since it describes "a set of expectations associated with individuals acting in particular social positions" (Gavioli, 2020: 499). Nevertheless, taking into account the "Code of Ethics" corpus, it emerges that only 6 out of the 11 codes analysed present a description of the interpreter's role. However, before illustrating the different views of the interpreter's role presented by the codes included in the corpus, it is important to provide an overview of the concept of role in community interpreting.

2.6.1.   Defining Role: criticisms to the "conduit" model

According to Ciordia (2017), the definition of the interpreter's role constitutes one of the most important topics both among IS scholars and interpreters themselves. In this regard, Roy (2002: 347) states that interpreters "don't have a problem with ethics, they have a problem with the role". Similarly, Pöchhacker and Schlesinger (2005: 162) defined role as "the most widely discussed topic and the most controversial one" in the context of IS. From a general perspective, interpreting is considered to be a crucial activity in the communication between people who speak different languages, with interpreters seen as important actors expected to translate utterances from one language into another, without exercising any influence on the interaction (Gavioli, 2020: 499). However, going beyond this general definition, Avery (as cited in Ciordia, 2017) identifies three models of interpreting, which include: the "conduit" model; the "active interpreter working as a cultural mediator or broker" model; and the "interpreter embedded in their own cultural-linguistic community" model. Nevertheless, as far as this section is concerned, I will focus only on the first two models.

According to scholars such as Kalina (2015) and Roy (2002), the conduit model seems to be the most prevalent in IS. In this respect, Roy (2002) reports a strong presence of

metaphors describing interpreters as a "conduit", "machine" or "pane of glass", which suggests that the interpreter's role should be limited to the transfer of the original message. Indeed, according to this model, the interpreter seems to be considered as a "mere conveyor of words" (Pöllabauer, 2015: 208). Moreover, the reception of this model seems to diminish the complexities related to community interpreting, promoting the idea that interpreting is an instrumental activity (Kermit, 2019: 17) and that "the interpreter is essentially just a device that takes no part in communicative proceedings other than dispassionately to relay messages between individuals not sharing a common language" (Tate and Turner, as cited in Ozolins, 2015: 328). Consequently, this conception of the interpreter's role has led to the idea that interpreters can become "invisible" figures whose only task is to remove the communication barrier in an almost imperceptible way (Kermit, 2019: 20). However, in spite of the predominance of this model – especially in legal settings –scholars seem to have reached a common consensus on the fact that the invisibility of interpreters is nothing but a myth (Phelan, 2019: 120). As it has been discussed in the previous section about impartiality, it is now clear that interpreters cannot become "fully neutral" nor "wholly invisible" (Rudvin, 2002: 223) and that – as human beings – they cannot avoid creating an opinion on the people they interpret for nor decide to "suppress" their thoughts (Hale, 2007: 120).

In the light of this, it seems reasonable that a significant number of studies in IS tend to underline the inadequacy of the conduit model, which does not consider the difficulties related to the interpreting, while neglecting the importance of cultural aspects in community interpreting (Ciordia, 2017). Indeed, the inappropriateness of this interpreting model has long been argued. B.W. Anderson (1976/2002) is considered to be the first scholar to try and suggest a "more nuanced understanding of the interpreter's role", underlining that the interpreter's task goes beyond that of simple linguistic transfer (Gavioli, 2020: 499). Similarly, studies conducted by scholars such as Barsky (1996), Bot (2003) and Angelelli (2006), who focused on context of extreme power inequality like asylum hearings and healthcare, questioned the appropriateness of a restricted role of the interpreter (Gavioli, 2020: 499). Moreover, field research in community interpreting, which started in the late 1980s, has shed light on the complexities of this activity, while showing various discrepancies between what interpreters are prescribed to do and what they do in reality (Gavioli, 2020: 500). Therefore, the attempt to provide practitioners

with a new perspective on the interpreter's role constitutes a central theme in IS and, in spite of the continuing debate on the matter, there is general consensus on the fact that interpreters can be seen as participants in the interaction, albeit to different extents (Gavioli, 2020: 500).

2.6.2. Interpreting as Participation and Cultural Mediation

As far as the interpreter's participation in the interaction is concerned, Wadensjö (1998) offered two different levels of involvement, which Gavioli (2020: 500) defines as "acting as participant" and "acting as cultural mediator". Taking into account the first concept we mentioned, and defining the interpreter as a person who acts as a participant, it is possible to say that interpreters do not only repeat utterances from a language into another, but they also perform other activities, becoming coproducers of the interaction. Interpreters can, for example, act as coordinators in the interaction by asking speakers to pause to give them time to translate or exhorting them to clarify or repeat parts of their speech (Gavioli, 2020: 500). Moreover, as discussed in the previous sections, interpreters may intervene to clarify references to culture, people and habits usually mentioned by one of the speakers, who simply assumes the other participants' ability to understand them (Mason, 2006). However, the interpreter's scope is likely to widen, especially in specific settings. In this regard, Gavioli (as cited in Gavioli, 2020: 501) states that it is not rare for community interpreters working in healthcare settings to be authorized to take the initiative and give advice or reassure patients on specific matters. This exemplificative situation seems once again to show the variety of roles that interpreters may play, leading us to Wadensjö's (1998) second level of involvement – that of the interpreter acting as a cultural mediator – which is comparable to the model of the "active interpreter working as a cultural mediator or broker" theorized by Avery (2001).

Discussing Wadensjö's (1998) perception of interpreters as cultural mediators, Gavioli (2020: 502) states that many scholars – such as Pöchhacker (2008) – started to discuss interpreting as a form of cultural mediation, giving rise to major controversies in the context of IS. One of the main arguments deployed by scholars supporting the idea of interpreting as cultural mediation is that language and culture are intrinsically connected (Gavioli, 2020: 502). This notion, which was also at the centre of the sections dedicated

to the principles of accuracy and impartiality, highlights the importance of the interpreter's cultural expertise as necessary to clarify cross-cultural differences (Ciordia, 2017). Indeed, as we have previously discussed, a significant part of the interpreting activity consists in clarifying "non-linguistic differences between people" (Wadensjö, 1998: 277-278) which, even if literally translated, would prevent the speakers from completely understanding each other. In this respect, according to Merlini (2009), there are in fact utterances which cannot be translated without the interpreter's mediation – intended as an activity aimed at providing listeners with cultural clarifications and explanations.

However, mediation activities in community interpreting are likely to go beyond interventions of cultural explanations. As community interpreting usually involves situations of inequalities where one of the speakers is in need of assistance, it is not rare that community interpreters' interventions to bridge different cultures could also lead to the reduction of power inequalities (Gavioli, 2020: 502). In community interpreting, interpreters have in fact the chance to empower participants, giving them the possibility to express their needs and, therefore, to access services. Interpreters who play this role are defined by Rudvin (2005: 19) as "positive power-brokers" because, being trained to face power asymmetries, they can facilitate communication between immigrants and public service providers, while "constructively managing and coordinating language-mediated discourse". In this regard, the ability to bridge different cultures and reduce inequalities among speakers has become so important in some areas that countries such as Belgium, Spain and Italy have decided to create the figure of cultural mediators whose main task, other than interpreting, is to solve conflictual situations originated from cultural misunderstandings (Gavioli, 2020: 503). Nevertheless, although cultural mediators became key figures in some countries – as we will see in the following sections – Kalina (2015) underlines that the "cultural mediator" approach in interpreting is often associated with lack of professionalism. Indeed, according to Zimman (as cited in Kalina, 2015: 79), untrained interpreters "tend to get overinvolved, overidentified with the client, particularly if the client comes from the same culture" and they, consequently, put ethics at risk.

In the light of what has been discussed in this section, it is clear that the debate about the community interpreter's role revolves around the opposition between the "conduit"

approach and the "cultural broker model", with the latter prescribing that interpreters act as cultural mediators. Nevertheless, scholars such as Kalina (2015: 79) highlighted that, regardless of the model we consider, a minimum level of mediation by the interpreter will always be present in the interaction. Considering this, Kalina (2015: 79) states that the aforementioned models are not to be considered separately or to be intended as mandatory approaches between which the interpreter has to choose. Similarly, Ciordia (2017) argues that interpreters have the chance to "switch roles in the middle of an assignment, depending on the circumstances and the expectations of the consumers, and this includes the advocacy role". The same concept has been developed by Niska (2002), who theorized the existence of a spectrum of roles – going from clarifier, cultural broker and then advocate – among which the interpreter can choose depending on the circumstances. Therefore, according to this model, the interpreter's role is not a fixed concept, but it is something composed of different coexisting parts. However, in spite of the progresses made in defining the community interpreter's role in the context of IS, the appropriate level of involvement the interpreter should choose in the interaction is still unclear and, as we will see in the section below, this situation of uncertainty is also reflected in codes of ethics.

2.6.3.   Role in the "Codes of Ethics" Corpus

As far as codes of ethics are concerned, on the basis of those analysed in section 2.3.1, it is possible to identify a general tendency to define the interpreter as the person who guarantees that communication between people speaking different languages is achieved. In this respect, only 2 codes – those written by the legal interpreters' associations EULITA and NAJIT – further clarify that, playing the role of linguistic facilitators, interpreters enable people who speak a different language than the one used by institutions to access legal services. In general, four out the six codes of ethics, when discussing the concept of role, do not mention any of the previously explored theoretical notions– such as advocacy, cultural broker or cultural mediation – and only focus on the conduit role, without specifying if and when the interpreter can intervene to ask for clarifications or to explain cross-cultural differences. The only exceptions seem to be the code of ethics issued by ITIA and AUSIT, which go slightly more into detail. To be precise, the code

written by ITIA clarifies that interpreters "should never act on behalf of the user and should never speak on behalf of either party", and then continues by specifying that advocacy is not admitted ("a community interpreter is not employed by the beneficiary and should not act as their advocate").

In addition to this, the Irish code seems to implicitly limit the role of the interpreter to that of linguistic conduit, clarifying that intervention of any kind should be made with caution. Specifically, the code states that "while a community interpreter is expected to have a general understanding of the cultural background of both parties, s/he is not a cultural expert and should be very wary offering cultural advice". Moreover, the ITIA code clarifies that a community interpreter should refuse tasks such as written translation, as they are outside his/her range of competence. Similarly, albeit less precisely, the code issued by AUSIT insists that interpreters refuse tasks which fall out of their expertise, but nevertheless the tasks that should be refused are simply referred as "any tasks that may be undertaken by other parties involved in the assignment". In this regard, the code continues by underlining that even "when such other tasks are mandated by employment arrangements, practitioners insist that a clear demarcation is agreed". However, although this code does insist on the importance of role boundaries, it does not seem to be able to describe where the demarcation line should be placed.

In the light of this analysis of the concept of role in codes of ethics, it is possible to say that these documents barely explain what interpreters should do, and cause such confusion that, according to Roy (2002: 247), "no one really know where to draw the line on the involvement of the interpreter". Consequently, the lack of consensus on the interpreter's role and the absence of general guidelines that can be applied in every community interpreting setting are likely to have extremely serious consequences on interpreting activities. To be precise, this confusion over the interpreter's role is likely to have damaging consequences on professionalism, especially on clients' expectations (Ciordia, 2017). As long as the boundaries defining the scope of the interpreter's intervention are blurred, clients could, for example, perceive interpreters as "social workers in disguise" and, therefore, the performance of these practitioners could be affected by these inappropriate expectations (Ciordia, 2017).

3. Research process, data analysis, findings

After looking at the theoretical frameworks that support this work, particularly focusing on ethics and concepts such as *accuracy*, *impartiality* and *role* in the context of community interpreting, Chapter Three will focus on the analysis conducted on the data gathered from interviews with respondents selected as relevant voices to discuss the aforementioned themes mentioned in relation to the Italian context. Specifically, as the main scope of this thesis is to investigate the role that ethics and ethical principles play in community interpreting, this is the focus that will be adopted when analysing interviews and comparing them to the respective theoretical notions. Before going into the heart of the research, in section 3.1 an overview of the status of community interpreting and mediation will be provided. In fact, because the people involved in the interviews are interpreters and mediators working in Italy, it was deemed it necessary to investigate both the legal framework regulating the provision of interpreting services in Italy and its actual implementation. Concerning the research, section 3.2 will describe how the interviews were devised and conducted, while section 3.3 will focus on the interviewees, describing who they are and providing a general evaluation of the outcome of the interviews. Finally, the sections that will follow, 3.4 and 3.5., will describe the analysis that was conducted, illustrating a qualitative investigation displaying the most important themes emerging from the interviews with the selected interpreters and mediators.

3.1. Community Interpreting and Mediation in Italy: an overview

As has already been mentioned in the previous section, Italy, together with Belgium and Spain, is one of the group of countries in which the need to bridge different cultures while reducing power inequalities has become important, leading to the creation of the figure of cultural mediators (Gavioli, 2020: 503). In this regard, not only do cultural mediators work side by side with interpreters, but in many cases they seem to have become more prominent than community interpreters themselves. The aim of this section is to focus on this aspect of community interpreting in the Italian context, investigating the available interpreting services and the relationship between community interpreters and linguistic and cultural mediators. However, in order to understand the reasons behind the rise of

mediators, it is important to provide a brief overview of the immigration situation in Italy's recent past.

3.1.1. Italy's Recent Migration History, First Immigration Laws and Language Provision

A significant change in Italy's immigration pattern can be identified at the beginning of 1970s, when the country started to receive unexpected migration flows and was hit by what Ozolins (2010: 202) defined as a "shock of immigration". This sudden shift in migration routes transformed Italy – always considered as country of emigration due to its massive outward migration flows – into a country of immigration (Amato & Garwood, 2011). According to Amato and Garwood (2011), these immigration flows toward Italy were the result of the country's industrial prosperity and lack of labour force caused by an increasingly aging population. These factors combined created, indeed, an attractive situation for migrant workers coming from extra-EU countries, who started to be employed by Italian industries to meet the workforce demand (Amato & Garwood, 2011). Due to these favourable conditions, immigration flows toward Italy continued also in the following decades, reaching high peaks in the 1990s and 2000s – much later compared to other European countries or countries such as Australia and the United States (Tomassini, 2012: 40). Today the number of foreign citizens in Italy is indeed considerably high. According to Idos (2020), the number of foreign citizens living in Italy at the end of 2019 amounted to 5,306,500. In addition to this, it was reported that, in terms of the number of residents, Romanian migrants ranked first (1,207,919), followed by Albanians (440,854), Moroccans (432,458), Chinese (305,089) and Ukrainians (240,428).

Taking into account Italy's former status as a country of emigration, it is understandable that, before the 1970s, the country had never been in real need of an immigration policy and, therefore, when the first massive inward migrations occurred, the country was caught unprepared (Amato & Garwood, 2011). Immigration immediately gave rise to political and mediatic debates at the beginning of the 1980s, leading to the adoption of a first immigration law in 1986 first (Law 943/1986)[5], and later of the Martelli Law on

---

[5] See http://www.ecn.org/macondo/leggi/collocamento.html

immigration in 1990 (Law 39/1990)[6]. These laws, other than implementing restrictive measures on immigration, acknowledged the immigrants' rights to access housing, education, healthcare and social services (Amato & Garwood, 2011). However, neither of these two laws seemed to have planned the provision of translation and interpreting services for those public service providers who had to guarantee various services to immigrants (Amato & Garwood, 2011). Therefore, Italian service providers found themselves flooded with a huge amount of requests from foreign citizens and, consequently, "the ad hoc interpreting solutions that had been used until then (relatives, fellow migrants, etc.) were no longer able to cover the increased demand for interpreters" (Amato & Garwood, 2011). In order to face this increasing demand, Italian public service providers sought the help of volunteers from associations and NGOs who had been assisting migrants in terms of service access and integration for years. Replying to these requests, at the beginning of the 1990s, a great number of organizations asked untrained interpreters – usually members or sympathizers of the organizations – to act as interpreters for those in need and, at the same time, to support and advise them (Amato & Garwood, 2011).

Moreover, as each organization had its own way of arranging linguistic services and providing training (if any), the tasks performed by mediators could vary from area to area (Albertini & Capitani, 2010: 18). Taking these elements into consideration, it is no surprise that, in a short time during the 1990s, linguistic and cultural mediators took hold in Italy, and the aforementioned organizations – together with local governments – quickly became Italy's main players in the provision of linguistic services and assistance to migrants. At the same time, Italy's central Government turned a blind eye to these needs and, according to Ozolins (2010: 202), this attitude seems to be persistent even today. Indeed, the Italian government still seems to consider migration as an emergency, consequently making its reception system rely on local entities and ignoring the need of a national policy in terms of linguistic assistance (Ozolins, 2010: 202).

---

[6] See http://www.ecn.org/macondo/leggi/martelli.html

3.1.2. Community Interpreters in Italy: a secondary role

In the light of this overview, it seems reasonable to assume that mediators are among the main actors in Italy's provision of linguistic services in the context of public service access. On the other hand, interpreters and, in general, intepreting activities in Italy, have continued to be associated with the more prestigious activity of conference interpreting (Garzone, 2009). However, it is necessary to clarify that the figure of community interpreters appears in various parts of Italian legislation, which mentions the necessity of their services in situations and settings comparable to that of community interpreting. As far as legal settings are concerned, for example, the code of criminal procedure adopted in 1989[7] includes five articles – gathered under the title *Traduzione degli Atti* (Translation of Proceedings) – referring to the presence of interpreters in legal proceedings (Art. 143-147) (Garwood, 2012: 175). As has already been mentioned in Chapter One, these kinds of laws are key to guaranteeing the constitutional right to a fair trial, as, by guaranteeing the presence of an interpreter, they allow non-Italian speakers to understand every part of the legal proceedings and to express themselves freely (Falbo, 2013: 70). In spite of this, many scholars such as Falbo (2013) and Garwood (2012) – who analysed the figure of the interpreter in the Italian legislation – reported that, other than not being distinguished from that of the translator, the role of the interpreter still seems undefined. In addition, these laws do not provide any guidelines or criteria regarding the selection of the interpreters, who are not required to have minimum skills or qualifications. Consequently, there is no regulatory body aimed at managing interpreting services (Garwood, 2012: 178). In this regard, Garwood (2012: 177) highlighted the existence of official registers of court interpreters – independently managed by local Clerk of Court's Offices. However, even in this case, there are no official criteria that regulate access to this register and, most of the time, interpreters are not selected from the register, but simply chosen as friends of the judge (Falbo, 2013: 89).

Taking into consideration another area of legal interpreting, asylum hearings, it is possible to identify a similar lack of criteria in the selection of interpreters. Indeed, while the assistance of an interpreter during asylum hearings is guaranteed by article 10 of the

---

[7] See https://www.altalex.com/documents/news/2014/03/19/traduzione-degli-atti

legislative decree 25/2008[8], the role of the interpreter and the requirements he/she should meet to perform interpreting activities are not defined. In this respect, since the provision of intepreting services in the context of asylum procedures is usually guaranteed by private organizations (*cooperative*), the interpreters' requirements are usually decided by their own staff.

Moreover, even if we focus our analysis on other community interpreting settings such as the medical context, it is clear that the situation is almost unchanged. Tomassini (2012: 40) explains that although "immigrants' rights and entitlements [to health-care access] are laid down by the Italian law, no national response has yet been given to organise linguistic interpreting services" and, consequently, there is a lack of accreditation procedures and national registers for healthcare interpreters, who have to comply with individual regional criteria. Considering language service provisions in these Italian community settings, it is possible to state that the figure of community interpreters is still undefined and that, in general, these figures lack national regulation in terms of training or profiling (Garzone, 2009: 110).

3.1.3.   Linguistic and Cultural Mediators in Italy

In light of what has been previously discussed, identifying the dynamics and characteristics related to community interpreting and, therefore, to the role of community interpreters in the Italian context constitutes a very difficult task (Garzone, 2009: 111). Indeed, the activity that in other countries is commonly defined as community interpreting is included in Italy in the macro-category of "linguistic and cultural mediation", used to describe activities such as interpreting in different community settings (Garzone, 2009: 110). Nevertheless, as far as linguistic and cultural mediation are concerned, Luatti (as cited in Falbo, 2013: 29) highlights a glaring inconsistence as regards terminology, as the terms *mediazione* (mediation) and *mediatore* (mediator) are used in Italian legislation and guidelines in association with various adjectives, including *culturale* (cultural), *interculturale* (intercultural), *linguistico* (linguistic) and *linguistico-*

---

[8] Legislative Decree 25/2008 implements the Directive 2005/85/EC, which defines minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status. https://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/Testi/08025dl.htm

culturale (linguistic and cultural). In this respect, while the choice of using one adjective over another may shift the focus to one specific aspect of the activity – for example on languages rather than culture – Luatti (as cited in Falbo, 2013: 30) underlines the indiscriminate use of one or other adjective in the Italian context.

Linguistic and cultural mediators were first mentioned in official government legislation in 1990[9], specifically in a document issued by Italy's Ministry of Education, which prescribed the use of cultural mediators in state schools to assist foreign students without, however, defining their skills or requirements (Amato & Garwood, 2011). Later, in 1998, the adoption of the Turco-Napolitano law on immigration (Law 40/1998)[10] reintroduced the figure of the trained cultural mediator – explicitly mentioned as a foreigner – whose task was to facilitate communication between public service providers and foreigners (Riccardi, 2019). Although this law seemed to officially recognize the importance of mediators and to delegate their recruitment to external organizations, the legislative void regarding the definition of the role of linguistic and cultural mediators' role as well as their tasks and training at a national level was not filled (Amato & Gardwood, 2011; Riccardi, 2019: 211). As a consequence, regional and local governments enacted their own rules and guidelines regarding mediators, leading to an uneven national professionalization of mediation (Russo, 2014: 84).

Another attempt to create a national legislation on the matter was made in 2000 by the Italian National Council for Labour and Economic[11] affairs which, taking advice from stakeholders such as organizations and institutions, created a series of guidelines aimed at regulating the role definition and training of linguistic and cultural mediators (Amato & Garwood, 2011). To be precise, this document assigned the provision of training to regionally trained agencies – usually the same organizations which had been organizing training for years – which were to provide a 500-hour course aimed at training mediators to perform a huge amount of diversified tasks, ranging from interpreting to psychological assistance (Amato & Garwood, 2011). These issues were then revised in other documents such as the one written by the Ministry of the Interior's Institutional Working Group for the Promotion of Intercultural Mediation (GLI) in 2009. This document – "Guidelines for

---

[9] See http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm205_90.html
[10] See https://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/98040l.htm
[11] See https://italiena.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/documento-finale-mediazione-culturale-cnel.pdf

the recognition of the professional figure of intercultural mediators"[12] – despite lacking normative value, lists a series of skills that were to be at the centre of training, including "mediating, providing guidance, accompanying, informing, interpreting, welcoming, developing the ability to listen and understand, communicate, recognise people's needs and resolve conflicts" (Amato & Garwood, 2011). In addition to this, these guidelines clearly recognize that mediators operate in various settings, ranging from reception centres and public institutions to hospitals and schools, which seem to mirror the context in which community interpreters usually work, especially in English-speaking countries (Russo, 2014: 86). Commenting on this document, Amato and Garwood (2011) state that, despite containing "perhaps slightly idyllic vision of the role of cultural mediation in the process of integration of migrants", these guidelines seem to better clarify the cultural mediator's tasks.

However, reflecting on the numerous tasks assigned to mediators, Russo (2014: 86-87) states that, despite being trained, mediators cannot be expected to be "masters of all trades" and to play these many roles. In this respect, considering the various tasks mediators have to perform, Luka (2005) listed a series of qualities and competences any good mediator should have. To be precise, good mediators – other than having high-level language skills – should not be afraid to question themselves and be versatile in order to solve misunderstandings and conflicts in different ways. Moreover, they should always be willing to learn new things and possess basic knowledge of psychology, as they often have to face critical emotional situations. Therefore, mediators should also be empathic and, at the same time, possess a strong moral compass that prevents them from being biased. In addition to this, Luka (2005: 210) highlights the importance for mediators to be strongly motivated, as they often find themselves having to work in situations where external incentives – such as service providers' appreciation and money remuneration – are minimal.

---

[12] See http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/archiviodocumenti/mediazione-interculturale/Documents/00937_linee_indirizzo_mediatore_interculturale.pdf

3.1.4. Interpreters and Mediators in Italy: final conclusions

In the light of what is described in these documents, it seems that language skills and interpreting techniques are simply one of the many competences a mediator should have, not considering linguistic skills as a pillar of linguistic and cultural mediation (Belpiede, as cited in Garzone, 2009: 111). Indeed, the mediators described by the aforementioned documents are former immigrants whose main task is to help newcomers to communicate with Italian institutions regardless of their specific skills in interpreting and translation. On the other hand, the figures that seem to emerge from the educational context – particularly from university courses – appear to be different. University courses – such as "Language and Intercultural Mediation" offered by the University of Bologna – tend in fact to focus on language skills (translation and interpreting) applied to "mainstream" languages such as English, French or Spanish, which do not cover the languages spoken by most of the migrants arriving to Italy (Mack, 2005: 9). For these reasons, the training offered by universities often differs from "the kind of mediation that cultural mediators are called upon to perform in their role as 'bridges' between migrant service users and public service providers" (Amato & Garwood, 2011). These elements show the coexistence of two types of mediators: an Italian mediator – professionalized in university context – whose training is based on interpreting and triadic exchanges; a migrant whose task is to help other migrants to access Italian services by facilitating communication with the institutions, performing different kinds of mediations apart from that of triadic exchanges (for example a dyadic mediator-user interaction in offices) (Mack, 2005: 9; Falbo 2013: 37). Moreover, considering the activity usually performed by the latter, interpreting and translating activities seem to be perceived simply as a tool used to solve conflicts and to empower migrants – the "weaker" party in the interaction (Falbo, 2013: 30).

On the whole, it is possible to say that the interpreter's role seems, in most of the cases, closely comparable to that of mediators, especially as far as interpreting activity is concerned (Falbo, 2013: 37). There are, however, some elements and tasks peculiar to mediators only – such as conflict resolution – that prevent these figures from completely overlapping (Falbo, 2013: 41). In addition to this, the blurred lines dividing these two figures are also mirrored in the Italian legislative context. As appears from the laws and guidelines analysed, although mediators' tasks and competences in Italy seem to be

slightly more defined if compared those of interpreters, neither of these figures are nationally defined, accredited or standardize, making it difficult to place the activity of community interpreting in the Italian context (Rudvin & Tomassini, 2008: 248; Garzone, 2009: 110). Moreover, neither interpreters nor mediators are provided with specific codes of ethics; the only one available in Italy – issued by AITI – is very generic, as it was created for both interpreters and translators. Consequently, the unclear description of the figures of interpreters and mediators has unavoidably led to an intense debate regarding role definition in community interpreting in Italy, as it is impossible to guarantee high-quality linguistic services in institutional contexts without defining specific professional boundaries for each figure (Rudvin & Tomassini, 2008: 249; Garzone, 2009: 113-114). According to Garzone (2009:113-114), defining the role of interpreters and mediators and underlining their respective peculiarities is likely to contribute to the recognition of these professions, which have been neglected for a long time, especially in Italy.

3.2. Planning the Interviews

As previously mentioned, the aim of interviewing community interpreters and mediators working in the field of the provision of linguistic services in Italy was to investigate the perception that these professionals have regarding ethics and ethical principles such as *accuracy*, *impartiality* and *role* in the context of community interpreting and mediation in Italian institutional settings. While the primary goal of the interviews was to discuss the aforementioned themes, it is important to highlight that interviewees were also given the chance to explore different aspects of their profession, including recognition and remuneration. Therefore, it was possible to have a comprehensive view on issues that, despite being secondary to the main scope of this thesis, are key to understanding the status of community interpreting and mediation in Italy.

The interviews took place in October and November 2020. Since not all stakeholders have Italian as their mother tongue, the interviews were conducted both in Italian and English, and interviewees could choose the language they felt most comfortable with. While all interviews were planned to be face-to-face, only two of them were conducted in this mode. Indeed, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, which made it difficult to move across Italy, I decided to conduct three interviews using the video conferencing tool Zoom and

to adopt the mode of the virtual interview – now considered as a valid interview method (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 97). Interviews were chosen as a data collection method due to their widespread used in the context of research investigating personal experiences and opinions about a given topic (McKinley & Rose, 2020: 279). To be precise, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews, as they are considered to be "the ideal method for collecting verbatim accounts" (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 181). Following the indications provided by McKinley and Rose (2020), I prepared a set of guiding questions. It is important to highlight that the questions were asked not in the same order and were formulated in different wordings, depending on how the dialogue with each participant unfolded. While answering the questions, participants were free to talk as much as they want and to mention issues that were important to them and that I had not anticipated (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 78). Moreover, I did not ask questions regarding topics which participants had already talked about spontaneously, and I sometimes asked unplanned questions (McKinley & Rose, 2020).

Concerning the questions, I decided to prepare three different sets of questions which, despite having the same structure, slightly varied depending on the interviewee they were directed to. As I will explain in detail in the following sections, among the interviewees whom I selected there were community interpreters, mediators and professionals working both as interpreters and mediators. For this reason, considering the differences that exist between interpreting and mediation, I deemed it necessary to slightly adapt some questions – for example, those related to role definition. However, it is important to highlight that, in spite of these slight changes, all participants were asked about the same topics. There were eighteen questions that were organized by topic area, in order to make the interviews progress with a natural flow (McKinley & Rose, 2020: 280). As they concerned secondary topics, I considered the last two questions as optional and I asked them only when I realized that the interviewee had not mentioned these topics. In general, the eighteen questions can be divided into six different groups, based on the topic they refer to:

Questions	Topic
1, 2, 3, 4	• Interviewee's mother tongues; • Interviewee's training and work experience;

	• Interpreting techniques.
5	• Interviewee's opinion on ethics and codes of ethics in community interpreting and/or mediation.
6, 7	• Interviewee's opinion on accuracy and challenges to the respect of this principle; • Interviewee's opinion on the interpretation of gestures and coarse language.
8, 9, 10	• Interviewee's opinion on impartiality and challenges to the respect of this principle; • Interviewee's opinion on pressures and expectations from the speakers.
11, 12, 13, 14	• Interviewee's opinion on role definition; • Interviewee's opinion on the speakers' attitude.
15	• Interviewee's opinion on the ideal qualities of interpreters and/or mediators.
16	• Interviewee's opinion on the difference between interpreters and mediators.
17, 18 (optional)	• Training of interpreters and/or mediators in Italy; • Recognition of interpreters and/or mediators in Italy.

Table 4 Interview's questions set

3.3. Interviewees Involves

After establishing the aims and the themes of the interviews, several individuals were asked to take part in my research project to investigate about ethics in community interpreting. Having investigated the provision of linguistic services in the context of Italian public institutions and having acknowledged the important role played by mediators (see section 3.1) the idea was to include both interpreters and mediators in the list of the interviewees. Due to the qualitative nature of the research – which aims to collect useful and heterogeneous data (Dörnyei, 2007: 124) – conducting five or six interviews were deemed to be sufficient. For this reason, I selected six interviewees: two

interpreters, two and mediators and two professionals working both as interpreters and mediators.

	Interviewee	Occupation	Setting
1	Interpreter 1	Interpreter	Asylum hearings
2	Interpreter 2	Interpreter	• Courts and police stations
3	Mediator 1	Mediator	• Reception centres • Asylum hearings, courts, police stations
4	Mediator 2	Mediator	• Local council • Previously: schools and hospitals
5	Interpreter/Mediator 1	Interpreter and Mediator	• Counselling centre for migrants • Previously: courts, police stations, asylum hearings, local council
6	Interpreter/Mediator 2	Interpreter and Mediator	• Local council • Courts, police stations, and asylum hearings

Table 5 Interviewees: occupation and settings

As illustrated in Table Five, the participants not only have different occupations, but also work in various settings. These differences, which led me to the creation of three different sets of questions – were the key to collecting heterogenous data, which enabled me to conduct a comprehensive analysis, taking into consideration several aspects of community interpreting and mediation in Italy. In this respect, other than gathering data regarding the main focus of this thesis – ethics and ethical principles – I had the chance

to partially investigate some peculiarities related to different interpreting and mediation settings.

The collaborative spirit of the interviewees, who gave exhaustive answers regarding each topic, made it possible to conduct interviews with an average length of an hour, as is usually the case for semi-structured interviews (McKinley & Rose, 2020: 282). The data that I obtained were very detailed and rich in accounts of different types – including participants' experience and perspectives – mirroring the kind of desirable results described by Braun and Clarke (2013: 79). After obtaining the consent of the participants, I recorded the interviews in order to transcribe them and, subsequently, analyse them as indicated by Braun and Clarke (2013: 92).

3.4. Qualitative Analysis

As mentioned in the introduction, this section will present a qualitative analysis of the most commonly recurring themes emerging from the interviews with community interpreters and/or mediators. In order to conduct a qualitative analysis, the method of thematic analysis was adopted – being recently recognised as a distinctive research method for the social sciences (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 178). Thematic analysis is described by Braun and Clarke (2013: 179) as a "unique qualitative analytic methods in that it *only* provides a method for data *analysis*". This method is indeed an analysis which "looks for themes that emerge entirely from the data" (Paltridge & Pathiki, 2015: 428). Thematic analysis primarily focuses on the content of what is said without considering other aspects of narrative such how it is produced (Paltridge & Pathiki, 2015: 400). Regarding this method for this flexibility, some tend to see it as intuitive and overly simplistic; however, scholars such as Riessman (as cited in Paltridge & Pathiki, 2015: 400) clarify that thematic analysis requires rigour and commitment. Indeed, after having transcribed the spoken data, the researcher has to spend a significant amount of time identifying key themes and patterns in the narrative. Subsequently, using his/her solid background in social sciences – such as history, sociology and anthropology – the researcher has to connect narrative content to broader issues and ideas (Paltridge & Pathiki, 2015: 400).

Regarding the concept of "theme", it can be described as "something important about the data in relation to the research question" that "represents some level of *patterned* response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 10). There are no rigid rules or methods in theme selection, and therefore the research judgement is key to determining what a theme is. In this regard, it important to consider that the "keyness" of a theme is not related to quantifiable measures, but it depends on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 10). As already mentioned, thematic analysis is not regulated by rigid rules and it does, in fact, involve constant moving back and forth between the data set, the extract of data that are being analysed, and the analysis of the data that is being produced (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 17).

A good thematic analysis consists of six different phases. The first phase consists in familiarising oneself with the data by transcribing and reading them multiple times in an active way – taking notes and starting to search for patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 18). Secondly, the researcher should start generating initial codes, identifying interesting features of the data and organizing them into groups in order to find repeated patterns across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 18). Subsequently, it is necessary to analyse the codes that have been sorted and to group them into potential themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 18-19). The scope of the fourth phase is to obtain a definite thematic "map", and therefore the researcher should refine the potential themes – for example breaking down a theme into two different ones or making two themes collapse into one (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 20-21). During the fifth phase the researcher has to define the "essence" of each theme, organising the related data into a coherent account and an accompanying narrative (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 22). Finally, working on the themes, the researcher has to produce a report. The scope is to conduct an analysis by selecting key examples and relating them back to the literature and the theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 23).

To conclude, due to its flexibility, the method of thematic analysis presents many advantages. For example, using this method, the researcher has the chance to have a broad set of comments that can be made about the data, together with a wide range of analytic options (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 27). Nevertheless, lacking specific guidelines, it is important for the researcher using thematic analysis to be clear and explicit about his/her choice of analysis. Furthermore, it is fundamental for researchers to constantly refer to an

existing theoretical framework when making analytic claims, otherwise the report would be reduced to a mere description (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 27). In this respect, it is worth underlining that the theoretical framework to which the thematic analysis will relate back is that described in the previous chapters of this work. Particular attention will be directed to theoretic concepts such as ethics, accuracy, impartiality and role, which were included in the sets of questions which the stakeholders were asked. In addition to this, the analysis will also include secondary theoretical concepts which, despite not being part of the interviews, were consistently mentioned by the interviewees and, therefore, worth analysing.

3.5. Thematic Analysis: discussion of themes and subthemes

The aim of this section is to present and discuss the main themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the interviews with the six stakeholders. In order to do this, I will present the interviewees' accounts on the topics that I identified, including relevant excerpts of the interviews[13]. Analysing the participants' accounts, I was able to identify seven themes and several primary and secondary subthemes, which are summarized in the following table:

N.	Theme	Primary Subthemes	Secondary Subthemes
1	Ethics	Codes of ethics	-
2	Accuracy	Challenges to accuracy	• Internal challenges in the comprehension phase • Internal challenges in the delivery phase

---

[13] Interviews' excerpts are included in tables. The acronym placed next to each excerpt refers to the participant who uttered the statement in question. Acronyms and participants are associated as follows: Interpreter 1 – I2; Interpreter 2 – I2; Mediators 1 – M1; Mediator 2 – M2; Interpreter/Mediator 1 – I/M1; and Interpreter/Mediator 2 – I/M2.

		Coarse language	-
3	Impartiality	- Empathy - Speakers' pressures and expectations - Mistrust towards interpreters and mediators	-
4	Role	Speakers' perception of the role of interpreters and mediators	-
		Interpreters' and mediators' perception of their role	- Interpreters - Mediators - Interpreters and mediators: two overlapping figures
5	Interpreters and mediators: ideal qualities	-	-
6	Consequences of lack of professionalization	- Demotivation - Poor remuneration and training	-
7	Training	-	-

Table 6 Themes and subthemes

3.5.1. Ethics

This theme, which is at the basis of this thesis, was widely explored in Chapter Two. After describing the relationship between ethics and professionalization, the chapter focused on codes of ethics for community interpreting, analysing both their content and the role of training in the application of ethical principles (Phelan 2019; Baixauli-Olmos, 2017). As far as the interviews are concerned, all interviewees were first asked about the importance of ethics in their professions, while the second part of the question aimed at investigating participants' view of codes of ethics.

Before illustrating the interviewees' opinions about ethics, I deemed it important to mention the fact that four out of the six participants, while discussing the importance of ethics spontaneously mentioned specific ethical principles. To be precise three participants automatically associated ethics with the importance of being impartial, and another mentioned three principles: confidentiality, impartiality and accuracy. By instinctively referring to these specific principles, interviewees seemed to confirm Skaaden's (2013) definition of accuracy and impartiality as core ethical principles. However, focusing on their perception of ethics, all interviewees seemed to confidently define ethics as a fundamental part of their job:

I1	"interpreters should act respecting the principles that regulate professionals' behaviour and conduct". (my translation)
I2	"ethics plays a very important role specifically in my case, because I work in the field of criminality". (my translation)
M1	"honestly, ethics is fundamental when one is working as a cultural mediator".
M2	"there are some basis that every mediator should have, otherwise one can't do this job [...] one can't simply improvise, it's a very serious job". (my translation)

| I/M1 | "ethics should be internalized. [being an interpreter and a mediator] I have to know the ethics and its criteria. I need to evaluate myself". (my translation) |
| I/M2 | "yes, I think they are very important. The ethics and all of that". |

Table 7 Importance of ethics

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that half of the interviewees associated the concept of ethics with the impact that interpreters' and mediators' performance may have on clients' life. Indeed, three of the interviewees seem to share the idea expressed by Hale (2007) and Polezzi (2012), according to whom an inaccurate interpreting performance is likely to have a great impact a person's life. In this respect, these respondents clearly described their own sense of responsibility towards the people they interpret for in different settings:

I1	"it's a role which is full of responsibilities […] while I may perceive it as an ordinary event, the asylum hearing constitutes a crucial and long-awaited moment for the asylum seeker. Determining his/her destiny and life in the new country, this life-changing moment will stay in the asylum seeker's mind forever. That is why the interpreter has to show honesty and a great sense of responsibility". (my translation)
M1	"if the person was not trained to know the ethics and know his/her responsibilities, it might cause so many mistakes, so many errors, and no one knows who will be the one to pay the price of those mistakes".
I/M1	"[the interpreter] has a great responsibility. If I interpret something incorrectly, lawyers or judges could change the concept, interpreting it differently. This may change the defendant's situation". (my translation)

Table 8 Interpreters' and mediators' responsibilities towards clients

As far as the professional responsibilities are concerned, the statements included in Table 8 speak for themselves and clearly mirror the ideas expressed by Hale (2007) and Polezzi (2012). Moreover, I could not avoid associating M1's statement to a quote by Smirnov

(as cited in Hale, 2007: 25) who seems to concisely summarize the idea expressed by the interviewees mentioned in Table 8: "sadly enough it is not the life of an interpreter, but that of his client that may become a price paid for a poor rendition".

3.5.1.1. Codes of Ethics

As far as the second part of the question is concerned, all respondents showed a positive attitude towards the use of codes of ethics in community interpreting and mediation, saying things like: "they could be useful as you put on paper what an interpreter should do" (I2, my translation). However, what is interesting, in my opinion, is that three respondents also voiced reservations about these documents:

I2	"they could be useful as you put on paper what an interpreter should do. However, in my opinion, one decides how to act depending on the situation. They are obviously useful if someone is never impartial. Codes could also be useful for those approaching this profession for the first time". (my translation)
M1	"but if someone doesn't know these principles is good to have them written somewhere. It would remind the individual that you have to work by these principles".
I/M1	"to read the code is not enough. Training is fundamental". (my translation)

Table 9 Opinions on codes of ethics

In the light of these statements, codes of ethics seem to be considered as useful only when employed as reminder of principles that should already be clear to the professional or as a way to introduce these principles to people approaching community interpreting and mediation. In addition to this, two interviewees – I2 and M2 – saw the writing of codes of ethics as a difficult and complex task. In this respect, discussing the possibility of writing a code for mediators, M2 commented that it would be almost impossible to group all the aspects of mediation, and suggested the adoption of a basic code of ethics that

could be adapted depending on the setting where it is used. This suggestion seems to reflect a tendency that is already widespread in the context of community interpreting – where we find a wide use of setting-specific codes (Baixauli-Olmos, 2017).

To conclude, it is worth mentioning that three out of the six respondents spontaneously expressed their opinions on the role of ethics in the context of mediation and interpreting in Italy. These interviewees described a critical situation where breaches of ethical principles occur frequently, as not all practitioners seem to abide to codes of ethics. One respondent, for example, mentioned an unmistakable episode of ethical breach involving a practitioner who deliberately used his knowledge for his own personal profit. To be precise, this practitioner made service providers believe that all migrants coming from a specific area of Bangladesh only spoke one particular dialect, hiding the fact that they are also able to speak the country's national languages – Bengali and English. Coming from the same area as that of the migrants and therefore being able to speak this dialect, the interpreter in questions encouraged service providers to call him to interpret for every migrant coming from the area he indicated, denying other interpreters the possibility to interpret for these people. The interpreter's deliberate decision to use his knowledge to his own advantage denotes a serious ethical breach and, according to the interviewee, the institutions' lack of control causes breaches of this kind to happen frequently (I/M1).

3.5.2. Accuracy

As outlined in section 2.4, accuracy constitutes one of the core ethical principles of community interpreting and, when applied to interpreting activities, it denotes the action of transmitting the speaker's intention while maintaining style, register and content. Concerning the participants' answers, accuracy was unanimously defined as "something very important" (M1). Indeed, there was general agreement on the fact that accuracy constitutes a fundamental tenet for both interpreters and mediators, being a guarantee of a "high-quality performance" (I1, my translation).

However, the same agreement was not found regarding the interviewees' perception of the meaning of accuracy. In fact, the respondents' answers on this matter could be divided into two groups. To my surprise, interpreters – who mostly work in legal settings – tended to see accuracy as synonym of faithfulness to the text, partially mirroring codes of ethics

and the view expressed by Wells (1991), who believes in literal, verbatim interpretation, especially in context of legal interpreting:

I1	"to make sure that what the asylum seeker says is conveyed to the commissioner correctly and without alterations, guaranteeing that the asylum seeker's right to tell his/her story. On the other hand, accuracy means translating the commissioner's questions without omissions nor alterations, meeting his/her need to gather information that will be used to evaluate the asylum claim". (my translation)
I2	"accuracy means to be thorough, as much as possible. When you translate, you have to be faithful to the text, to the primary meaning of a word. Of course, if the translation doesn't seem to make sense, one should deliver the literal meaning together with an explanation of what he/she thinks the person wanted to say". (my translation)
I/M1	"this is accuracy: to literally interpret what the person is saying". (my translation)
I/M2	"it's important to be accurate I totally agree […] I think the most important thing is to understand the vocabulary very well and to get the context meaning […] that's in my opinion. But in their opinion, I have to translate word for word"

Table 10 Accuracy for interpreters

Reading the excerpts included in Table 10, one could easily identify a tendency to support verbatim interpreting. In my opinion, however, in spite of the use of expressions such as "literally interpret" or "without alterations", it is reasonable to believe that the interviewees mentioned in Table 10 referred to the necessity of maintaining the message unaltered, rather than suggesting a word-for-word interpretation. Two of these respondents in fact, mentioned the importance of context meaning and, in general, all the aforementioned interpreters showed a certain sensitivity to the concept of propositional meaning in other parts of the interviews (I1's and I/M2). In addition to this, it is worth

emphasizing I/M2's statement, which seems to confirm Morris' (as quoted in Hale, 2004) idea that many lawyers expect interpreters to render "the speaker's words verbatim".

Mediators, on the other hand, tended to associate accuracy both with context meaning and a deep understanding of cultural dynamics. In this respect, three respondents seem to perceive languages as a tool to achieve mutual understanding between the institutions and the service recipients, so that their needs are met with the mediator's help, mirroring Falbo's (2013) view:

M1	"but if he or she is not accurate, writing exactly the meaning or the real context that the individual is referring to, it means there's a change to the story of that particular individual. So, at the end of the day, all that you do for work is wrong, because it doesn't transmit the reality".
M2	"accuracy means deeply understanding – not only at a linguistic level – the dynamics that gradually develop and mediating accordingly. This may sometimes lead to intervene […] to interrupt and to ask". (my translation)
I/M1	"for me accuracy means exactly conveying to the institution the problems that a person is experiencing and, viceversa, explaining to this person what the institution has to offer and how to access it"[14]. (my translation)

Table 11 Accuracy for mediators

3.5.2.1. Challenges to Accuracy

Concerning the challenges to accuracy in community interpreting, I deemed it appropriate to dedicate a specific subtheme to these aspects, as interviewees' accounts on this matter were numerous and diverse. Interview excerpts regarding this topic were in turn divided into two groups, mirroring section 2.4.3: internal challenges in the comprehension phase; and internal challenges in the delivery phase.

---

[14] I/M1's statements appear both among the interpreters' and mediators' statements because, working both as an interpreter and a mediator, she talked about accuracy from both perspectives.

3.5.2.1.1. Internal Challenges in the Comprehension Phase

Only a few internal challenges in the comprehension phase emerged and were directly mentioned by two participants only. These two respondents – I1 and M1 – talked about occasional difficulties in the comprehension of the speaker's message, specifically in grasping the exact context meaning, key to delivering an accurate rendition. According to M1, these problems mainly arise when interpreting two "completely different languages and cultures", and they can, however, be overcome by simply pausing "to listen for four, five seconds before talking". I1 highlighted similar problems in the context of asylum hearings. She reported that the interpreter's focus and ability to interpret accurately risk being jeopardized by the mental state of asylum seeker who, being sometimes confused or stressed, is likely to provide an incoherent and grammatically incorrect account (I1). The same problem is identified by UNHCR (2017:145), which however emphasizes how "confused accounts (for example, hesitant, incoherent or interspersed with pauses) may be just as informative as easily understood ones".

3.5.2.1.2. Internal Challenges in the Delivery Phase

Concerning internal challenges in the delivery phase, accounts were numerous and various. Five out of the six interviewees experienced difficulties coming from different sources. First, according to two participants, for example, difficulties in delivering an accurate rendition usually originate from the differences existing between languages which are very divergent from a grammatical point of view (M1 and I/M2). Taking English and Italian as an example, one respondent noted how interpreters who do not have Italian as their mother tongue may automatically tend to give little importance to grammatical aspects such as gender agreement in verbs or adjectives. This dynamic could lead the interpreter to deliver a rendition which, despite being slightly imprecise from a grammatical point of view, would still be completely understandable and correct in terms of content and intention. However, the respondent argued that a rendition of this kind is likely to be perceived as inaccurate by other participants in the interaction (I/M2). Moreover, the respondent argued that, in a similar way, many Italian service providers tend to prefer professionals who have perfect Italian pronunciation to those with deep

linguistic and cultural knowledge, confirming Hale's (2007: 147) theory that some practitioners tend to assess interpreters on the basis of their accent:

I/M2	"sometimes my English accent or intonation doesn't make the word sound as it should. For example, I was in the court once and the judge wanted to make a story out of '*palma*' and '*paalma*', and I was like: 'Please, you understand, '*vino di palma*', and they're like: 'No'. Okay, '*di P<aa>lma*'. When did Italian become as stressed? You get the message, you understand, you're just trying to make a big deal out of a soft thing […] and so sometimes they're trying to make these things, but it's just because they're just biased"

Table 12 Accuracy as accent

Furthermore, another participant – I2 – identified potential difficulties in accurately interpreting specialized legal terms recurring in all legal settings (Angermeyer, 2020: 276). Echoing Hale's (2007: 19) findings on the difficulties related to specialized language, the respondent – despite having a good knowledge of legal terms and proceedings – perceived technical jargon as a source of difficulty. To be precise, the interviewee related difficulties in the rendition of these terms to differences existing between many countries' legal systems. In this respect, a law or a procedure used one a country may not exist or be applied differently in other legal systems. Therefore:

I2	"there are words that have to be translated using a periphrasis, having a reasonably comprehensive knowledge of the legal sector […] to translate the Italian Code of Criminal Procedure into English – into a legal system where there are no written rules and everything is transmitted orally – is very arduous task, very very arduous and sometimes impossibile. For instance, the expression *reato concorrente* has to be translated using a periphrasis, as it is impossible to translate". (my translation)

Table 13 Accuracy as specialized terminology

To conclude, two participants – M2 and I/M1 – identified cultural differences as a source of difficulty in delivering an accurate rendition. Similarly to what was expressed by I1 about the difficulties in the comprehension phase, one respondent found that, during moments such as the verbalization of testimonies, accurate delivery may be challenged by the incoherence of the speaker's account. Indeed, according to the respondent, for people belonging to certain cultures it is natural to omit information which are key to creating a credible account, as also explained by UNHCR (2017: 87). According to this interviewee, one possible solution would be for interpreters or mediators to ask for clarification about confusing parts of the account (I/M1). In a similar way, another respondent stated that, dealing with various cultural codes, "bridging" speakers' points of views constitutes a difficult task (M2). To be precise, the difficulties seem to lie not in the actual delivery of the message, but in making the participants understand the importance of mediation, being able to dissect and explaining cultural aspects without taking sides. In this respect, the interviewee emphasized the difficulty in clarifying each speaker's point of view to the opposite party – especially when the latter is unwilling to see mediation as a fundamental task (M2).

3.5.2.2. Coarse Language

As far as coarse language is concerned, I was surprised that four out of the six respondents declared that they tend to avoid translating coarse language, choosing simply to report that the speaker is swearing or using expletives. This choice of "providing comments about what they perceive as impolite language instead of interpreting it" is defined by Felberg and Saric (2017: 12) as "meta-commenting". In this respect, two out of the four aforementioned respondents declared that they choose to "meta-comment" as, when coarse language is involved, accurate rendition would have a negative impact on the encounter – generating chaos (M2 and I/M1). On the other hand, the other two interviewees described utterances of this kind, including insults or sex-related topics, as unnecessary for an accurate rendition of the message in terms of content and intention (I2 and I/M2). I2 and I/M2 mentioned, however, that they would interpret each word if explicitly asked to by service providers, while M1 stated that it would be appropriate to interpret coarse words if they were part of the speaker's personal narration. Contrarily, I1

– who works in the context of asylum hearings – highlighted the necessity to interpret everything always. However, I1 also declared that if the asylum seeker gets too upset, putting the interaction at risk, she can decide to try and calm the speaker, after receiving permission to intervene from the service providers – the interviewers who, interviewing the migrant during the asylum hearing, are in charge of assessing the asylum seeker's story and of deciding on his/her right to (I1).

A less definite answer was given by M2, who currently works in a local council's immigration office. Indeed, acting as a service provider and, in a certain way, as a local council representative, this respondent is a participant in dyadic interactions and, therefore, the person to whom coarse language is directed. Taking this into account, the interviewee stated that there are different factors to consider before deciding how to act: the type of problem which is being discussed; the person's reasons for using expletive language; how many times the same concept has been repeated. After evaluating these elements, she usually decides on how to react, bearing in mind that situation of this can be "a ticking time bomb" (M2).

3.5.3.   Impartiality

As discussed in section 2.5 of this work, impartiality constitutes one of the core principles of ethics in community interpreting, being present in 10 out the 11 codes included in the "Codes of Ethics" corpus. When being asked about this principle, all interviewees seem to perceive impartiality as a key principle, as well as agreeing on Rudvin's (as cited in Kalina, 2015) idea that impartiality is a principle according to which a professional "does not serve interests of either party":

I1	"to be impartial means fulfilling the ethical obligation to keep a distance from the person you're interpreting for". (my translation)
I2	"in terms of ethics, being as impartial as possible is very important […] impartiality is key". (my translation)

M1	"I think it is something that forms the basis of cultural mediation. Because if you are to mediate and to handle a situation which is already getting out of hand, to bring it to normality one has to be neutral".
M2	"for me impartiality means giving value to the person [...] I try to make everyone understand that I try to give value to both speakers. Therefore, this is very important to me. It has to be clear. I give value both to the person and to the institution, for me they are at the same level. This is what impartiality means to me as a mediator". (my translation)
I/M1	"impartiality needs to be at the centre of every linguistic service provided by mediators, interpreters or translators. The important role played by impartiality should be a fixed point. This is the first thing to keep in mind. Without impartiality, the service is completely jeopardized. This principle is like the Bible, it's the Bible when doing this job". (my translation)
I/M2	"you have to be very neutral, you don't have to know this person, you don't have to be involved".

Table 14 Definition of Impartiality

Furthermore, it should be highlighted that four out of the six interviewees, commenting on impartiality, spontaneously seemed to mirror Rudvin's (2002) view that impartiality should not equal an absence of subjectivity and personal baggage. Indeed, according to Hale (2007: 121), the only way to be impartial is for interpreters and mediators "to control their subjectivity so that they do not interfere with their ability to render the utterance faithfully". In this respect, despite describing impartiality as fundamental, the aforementioned respondents wished to emphasize their subjectivity:

I1	"the interpreter is empathic and sensitive because, after all, he/she is a human being and can't be invisible". (my translation)
I2	[to be impartial] is virtually impossible. We are human beings, therefore it is normal to slightly prefer one of the two parties". (my translation)
I/M2	"you're not dealing with robots, you're dealing with people so sometimes you can feel the pain".

M2	"the idea of impartiality is utopian". (my translation)

Table 15 Subjectivity and impartiality

3.5.3.1. Empathy

As mentioned in the previous subsection, despite being expected to be neutral and impartial, interpreters and mediators are human beings who have to deal with their subjectivity and emotions. Indeed, as discussed in section 2.5.3 of this thesis, empathy was identified by scholars such as Kalina (2015) and Hale (2007) as a source of difficulty in respecting the principle of impartiality.

When asked about the role of empathy, interviewees expressed both positive and negative opinions. Three out of six respondents, for example, acknowledged that empathetic professionals – who learnt how to handle emotion through training – are very likely to achieve great results in terms of interpreting and mediation by creating a positive environment and establishing trust between the speakers (I2, M2 and I/M2). This view was found to match Merlini and Gatti's (2015: 141) theory that empathy – viewed as "understanding and perceiving the other's emotional state, but without acquiring it" – is likely have a positive impact on interpreting and mediation.

On the other hand, five out of the six interviewees – including those who expressed a positive attitude towards empathy – seemed to perceive emotions as a potential source of difficulties when trying to be impartial. All of the aforementioned interviewees gave very detailed answers about this topic:

I1	"during hearings involving, for example, a mum, an abuse victim or simply someone who experienced traumatic events, the interpreter feels empathy for this person […] the risk is that, in this case, empathy could jeopardize the interpreter's duty to be accurate and impartial". (my translation)
I2	"of course, sometimes you sympathize with the person, you'd like to help, wouldn't you? You may hesitate but, other than making him understand that you want to help him or repeating 'I'm here to help', there's nothing you

	can do; otherwise you become his lawyer […] sure, the challenges are related to the fact that you learn about situations which are so sad and tragic that you have the instinct to side with this person, but you can't do this". (my translation)
M2	"mediators need to have everything under control: how they express themselves, how they ask questions, how they express what they feel […] of course, you empathize, you don't have to be impassive not feeling anything, but you have to show empathy with words […] you have to handle different opinions, religions you don't understand, ideologies that lead people to act in a certain way, sometimes hurting themselves or their children. You have to deal with this, especially when you translate something really painful". (my translation)
I/M1	"if a person doesn't keep this principle in mind, he/she is not able [to be impartial]". (my translation)
I/M2	"when you're expected to be a hundred percent neutral, sometimes there are cases that you can identify with, you can relate to, and this makes it difficult for you to stay neutral. The other person might not be able to relate to it and he might think it's stupid, but because you can relate to this, you don't laugh, do you understand? […] so, sometimes it's not so easy to be neutral".

Table 16 Difficulties related to empathy

Analysing the statements included in Table 16, it was found that empathy, while recognized as beneficial, was identified as source of difficulties in being impartial, especially when dealing with tragic stories. These declarations seem to match the idea expressed by UNHCR (2017), according to which interpreters and mediators should particularly pay attention on neutrality and objectivity when dealing with issues such as violence or persecution.

In addition to this, to my surprise, four out of the six interviewees mentioned a topic which I considered less central: fatigue and stress in interpreting and mediating. As was

found by analysing these interviews, interpreting and mediating can be challenging also at a psychological level:

I1	"when it's necessary, the interpreter can try to create a safe environment, but he/she should never put themselves in the asylum seeker's shoes. The interpreter should never side with the migrant […] this is never easy, and it may complicate everything, causing the interpreter to suffer from fatigue, both at a cognitive and emotive level. In order to avoid this, it is possible to suspend the hearing and take a break". (my translation)
M1	"it could be difficult, and it could have psychological effects on the person who is doing this job, if one is not very strong emotionally. Because, doing this job, you are dealing with desperate people who don't know where's the starting line and where is the finish end of it, who are full of problems, who have a very bad experience […]I do have stories in which I have to pause for a while, go and take a walk for five or ten minutes, have some coffee, then return to continue. I believe that I have to take a break in order to be able to control myself within the situation".
M2	"when the mediation is going well and the mediator is able to create a safe space, the speaker often decides to reveal very intimate details. I'm happy about this. However, you know that you have to deal with this information afterwards. What do you do with that information? How do you handle it? Privacy can become an obstacle". (my translation)
I/M2	"I'm with very sensitive cases, where there are people who are crying, not because they are hurt, but because they relived some traumatic experience in their past. When they start reliving them, you know, you can't stay neutral. So, at this point, luckily, I'm allowed to leave when I get uncomfortable. So, I just leave. I excuse myself […] I excuse myself and I go. And I've worked with people who have seen me actually break down because I don't know, I just broke down".

Table 17 Fatigue and emotional distress

98

As has emerged from the excerpts included in Table 17, interpreters and mediators often have to deal with different participants in the interactions, ranging from patients and victims to perpetrators or persecutors (Ndongo-Keller, 2015: 337). In this respect, respondents talked about the risk of suffering from stress and emotional fatigue when dealing with emotionally-challenging cases. According to Ndongo-Keller (2015: 341), the "special vulnerability" of professionals dealing with trauma is related to different factors, primarily associated with the intensity of the stories they listen and interpret – which lead interpreters and mediators to be drawn into the intensity of these accounts.

Furthermore, referring to M2's account, it is important to consider that emotional distress is not only limited to the duration of the interpreting or the mediation session. Interpreters and mediators are in fact likely to struggle to find a way to deal with the distressing emotions originating from their tasks as they "do not always feel they can debrief due to concerns about violating their confidentiality oath" (Knodel, 2018: 3). However, two interviewees – I/M1 and I/M2 – mentioned that these difficulties to manage thoughts and emotions tend to become easier to handle, mirroring Ndongo-Keller (2015: 346). Moreover, three out of the six interviewees mentioned the interpreter's and mediator's right to take a break when the emotional distress becomes overwhelming (I1, M2, I/M2).

3.5.3.2. Speakers' Pressures and Expectations

Concerning this subtheme, all six interviewees reported that migrants often tended to perceive them as allies during interpreting and mediation sessions. To be precise, two of the participants – M1 and I/M2 – talked about the difficulties arising when the migrant has the same country of origin as the interpreter's or the mediator's. In this case, migrants were reported to assume that interpreters and mediators – perceived as fellow citizens – would side with them and would be willing to establish a relationship. According to both M1 and I/M2, who manage to remain impartial in spite of everything, these pressures created a real ethical dilemma. Specifically, I/M2 provided specific examples of the two ways in which impartiality is challenged by migrants who not only expect the professional to side with them during the interaction, but also to interact out of the intepreting or mediation session. The following excerpts seem to match the pattern described by Rudvin

(2004) where migrants who do not speak the institution's language are described as likely to perceive interpreters and mediators as allies and, when their expectations are not met, conflicts may arise:

I/M2	"someone is explaining some concepts, you know, that's very typical to my culture, very typical to my background […] sometimes they don't even have the words to express themselves and they're like: 'But you know what I'm talking about, you help me tell them what I'm talking about". I'm like: 'No. I know what you're talking about, but I can't tell them what you're talking about'. Sometimes they don't understand. They think that you're not trying to help them. In Africa we are meant to be one, we're one, we feel each other's pain. It doesn't matter if we've known each other before. If someone has a problem, I'm supposed to like, help him, you know like empathy and so on. But if I'm supposed to be neutral, that kind of makes that impossible".
	"I was talking to a South American interpreter, my colleague who is from South America. Now, the South Americans are very few in maybe in Italy […] and when they see each other, they try to create a bond, like: 'You're my sister, we're from the same place', so they want you to hang out with them, to go take a coffee with them. This is against our codes, the ethics and all of that, but they don't understand when she tells them […] and so, they're looking at you like: 'You're being snobbish, this is not how you are' […] there's always a little bit of conflict there".

Table 18 Examples of migrants' pressures and expectations

However, from the analysis of the interviews, it appears that belonging to the same ethnic group did not appear to be the only reason why migrants may tend to see interpreters and mediators as allies. Four out of six respondents, in fact, despite not sharing the same origins as the migrants, also reported having taken as figures of reference by newcomers. One participant, for example, reported being usually perceived by migrants as a point of contact between them and the institutions, being often asked for help with regards to bureaucratic issues with embassies (I/M1). Furthermore, two participants reported often

100

being offered gifts from the migrants they interpreted for. In this regard, both participants, despite understanding that these gifts were nothing but a way to express gratitude, underlined the importance of not accepting any gift or form of payment from clients. Indeed, by accepting these gifts and by interacting out of institutional settings, interpreters and mediators are at risk of losing their authority as professional figures in the eyes of the person they interpret for (I2 and M2).

However, to my surprise, speakers' attitude towards interpreters and mediators was not reported to be static, but very likely to change. In this respect, two out of the six participants stated that when migrants' expectations are not met, trust can easily turn into mistrust, or viceversa:

I/M1	"[the interpreter] is often see as a reference figure, but if you don't meet their expectations, you're the enemy. From friend, you become enemy". (my translation)
I2	"it happened to me a lot. At the beginning they are suspicious, then you become their lifeline and they say: 'I'm not saying anything without you'. Yes, a lot of times". (my translation)

Table 19 Examples of speakers' attitude changes towards interpreters and mediators

To conclude this section, I deemed it necessary to mention briefly the topic of expectations and pressures from the side of service providers. Concerning this matter, only two interviewees seemed to have experienced this kind of pressure. While one participant simply mentioned the possibility of interviewers asking interpreters for advice and opinions on the asylum seeker's story after an asylum hearing, another participant reported having experienced explicit pressures from service providers. To be precise, being called to mediate in order to solve a controversy between a group of migrants and the administrators of a reception centre, the respondent reported to having been asked by the administrators to say things in their favour (I1's and M2). This account seems to show how, explicitly asking the mediator to act in their favour, service providers tend to see themselves as the powerful participant in the interaction (Rudvin, 2005: 164).

3.5.3.3. Mistrust towards Interpreters and Mediators

Concerning the concept of mistrust towards interpreters and mediators – which was introduced above – although this particular theme is usually investigated from the point of view of service providers (lawyers, doctors etc.) rather than from that of the users (Edwards et al., 2005), interviewees were asked about their perception of mistrust from migrants. Analysing the interviews, it was found that all participants experienced situations of this kind. While three out the six the interviewees did not explain the alleged origins of this mistrust – which was however defined as completely normal – the remaining three provided specific explanations.

Among the three participants who tried to explain the origins of migrants' mistrust in interpreters and mediators, two respondents reported that this feeling sometimes seems to originate from the fear that these professionals will not be able to accurately understand and deliver their message, or that they will be judgemental about what they hear (I/M1 and M1). On the other hand, one participant identified the source of mistrust in a matter of privacy. To be precise, the respondent explained that, especially when a speaker belongs the interpreter's or mediator's ethnic group, he/she may be afraid that the professional will reveal confidential information to other members of the community (I/M2). The interviewees' views seem to match the findings presented by Edwards at al. (2005), who, analysing the accounts of various people needing an interpreter to access services in the United Kingdom, reported a high level of mistrust toward professionals. While many clients associated their mistrust to the perception of interpreters as service providers' allies, others stated that their lack of trust was related to the fact that they had not been adequately informed about the role played by the interpreter (Edwards et al., 2005: 15). Moreover, Edwards et al. (2005: 16) found that, even when clients did trust professionals, this trust came with an "element of uncertainty" and with a risk that "the person who was interpreting for them was not able to, or did not want to, give a correct representation of their and other people's words", and that "that private information might be made public".

Furthermore, three out of the six interviewees provided examples of the way in which clients tended to display their mistrust towards interpreters and mediators. For example, the feeling of mistrust may be so intense that the service user may refuse the intervention

of interpreters or mediators. In such a case, service providers may decide to dismiss the professional, hire someone else or persuade the speaker to let the professional intervene – especially when he/she is seen as a respected professional among service providers (I/M2 and M1). On the other hand, migrants may also display their profound lack of trust by continually disturbing the interpreting process, pretending not to understand what the interpreter is saying or giving incoherent answers (I2).

To conclude, I deemed it important to highlight that two out of the six interviewees spontaneously stated that they had experienced mistrust from service providers as well. Indeed, it does not seem rare for service providers not to completely trust interpreters and mediators, perhaps due to their previous contacts with unqualified figures or to doubts about the professionals' competences (M2 and I/M2). These accounts seem to mirror Hale's (2007: 149) view that a relevant numbers of service providers, not recognizing these professionals' competence, still have problems in trusting interpreters and mediators.

3.5.4.   Role

Although it cannot be defined as an ethical principle to abide to, the notion of role in community interpreting and mediation constitutes a fundamental element of each code of ethics, as it should define the professional's tasks. As far as this thematic analysis is concerned, the analysis will focus on both interpreters and mediators, and the concept of role will be considered from different points of view. The interviewees, in fact, as well as expressing their perception of the difference between the role played by interpreters and mediators, provided other meaningful insights into the way that other participants in the interaction tend to perceive the role played by these professionals.

One of the main controversies discussed in section 2.5.2 of this work had to do with the interpreter's possibility of intervention in the interaction in order to clarify potential cultural misunderstandings. From the theoretical framework regarding this issue it has emerged that, while mediators seem to be free to intervene and clarify cultural misunderstandings, interpreters are expected to limit their interventions. The same view on the matter seems to be expressed by all interviewees, especially referring to possibility of explaining non-verbal language, such as gestures:

Interpreters (I1 and I2)	Both speakers tend to call the attention of the other party when the speaker is making a particular gesture and, only if they are completely sure of its meaning, they intervene to explain it. I2 also mentioned the tendency to explain behaviour that would be perceived as negative by the other speaker (for example, not shaking hands when meeting).
Mediators (M1 and M2)	M1 and M2 defined clarificatory interventions as mandatory for mediators, as their goal is to understand and explain cultural codes and the reasons behind specific behaviour. Concerning to gestures, both mediators underlined the importance of explaining their meaning.
Interpreters/mediators (I/M1 and I/M2)	Concerning gestures, I/M1 highlighted the necessity to explain them, regardless of acting as mediators or interpreters, while I/M2's preference when interpreting is to call the other speaker attention on the gesture. As far as other interventions are concerned, during interpreting sessions, M/1 sometimes asks commissioners, lawyers or judges for permission to clarify misunderstandings or explain complex legal terminology. On the other hand, I/M2 said that she provides this kind of clarifications mostly during mediation, having more freedom.

Table 20 Clarification of gestures and misunderstandings

What emerges from these statements is a clear tendency in interpreters to limit their interventions, while mediators, as well as feeling more entitled to intervene, seem to perceive these clarifications as a fundamental part of their job. In this respect, commenting on the importance of explaining gestures, one participant perceived the mediator's explanations as a way to prevent conflict in the interaction, stating that sometimes "when someone does a particular gesture, the other one, in their culture, knows that that gesture is an insult, while the other one – who does the gesture – doesn't even mean nothing" (M1). It should be noted that this statement seems to mirror Kirch's (1979)

view on the importance of non-verbal communication, perceived as a fundamental part of every human interaction. The account provided by one participant offers a significant example of the importance of a clear understanding of non-verbal behaviour in interpreting and mediation:

I/M2	"for example, I was at the *Comune* and there was a lady who would not look at the person talking to her, she would not look at the psychologist, she would not look at the operator. She kept her face down. And so, the conclusion was: 'She's not interested in anything we want to say, she doesn't want to listen, she's biased and she's always/ and she's very rude'. And I had to tell them: 'No, she's being very polite' because her context, from her country, she can't look at you, she has to look down, as a sign of respect because if she looks at you and then she's kind of like challenging you. So: 'I am looking at you because I'm rude'. So, when they understood this, it calmed them a bit, because they wanted to give her an expulsion, they wanted to expel her and tell her to go away and all of that".

Table 21 Participant's account on the understanding of non-verbal communication

3.5.4.1. Speakers' Perception of the Role of Interpreters and Mediators

Although I deemed it necessary to discuss this concept in a separate subtheme, it is possible to consider this theme as strictly related to what was discussed at the beginning of section 3.4 regarding the interpreter's and mediator's interventions to clarify cultural elements. However, investigating the speakers' perception of the role played by interpreters and mediators may also help understand the factors that influence interpreters and mediators in deciding whether to intervene or not. Overall, five out of the six respondents – both interpreters and mediators – stated that interpreters and mediators intervening in the interaction are often seen negatively by service providers:

I1	"some commissioners don't really pay attention when the asylum seekers make gestures, therefore they don't tolerate the interpreter's intervention in

	this case […] Sometimes commissioners don't accept that the interpreter takes the initiative and often they interrupt the interpretation, preventing the interpreter from playing his/her role in the right way […] overall, the interpreter rarely acts as a mediator, mainly because not many commissioners tolerate it". (my translation)
I2	"police don't really care about culture. According to them, when you're in a country you should just respect the ethics and the beliefs of that country […] I'm with police officers, but they don't seem to understand [the interpreter's role]". (my translation)
M2	"[to intervene] sometimes means to take the initiative, even though they don't let you do it often". (my translation)
I/M1	"I always ask the judges for permission to explain". (my translation)
I/M2	"we have to deal with lawyers and judges who are very strict. And they judge you as not professional, once you start talking with your assisted".

Table 22 Service providers' attitude towards interventions

Analysing the interview excerpts reported in Table 22, it seems that the majority of participants (five out of six) feel restrained by the service providers' negative attitude towards interpreters' and mediators' interventions. The interviewees' statements, as well as proving the service providers' lack of attentions towards cultural issues, seem to match the findings of Hale's (2007) research. Hale (2007: 149) in fact, interviewing doctor and lawyers working with interpreters, found that service providers have the tendency to mistrust interpreters openly playing the role of "cultural brokers" or "mediators". Referring M2's statement included in Table 22, this mistrust also may apply to service providers working with mediators. Indeed, considering her experience as a mediator in schools, M2 stated that very often teachers do not perceive mediators as professionals. In this respect, both I/M2 and M2 explained that service providers tended to evaluate interpreters' and mediators' competences on the basis of factors which are unrelated to language skills or interpreting and mediation techniques: teachers, for example, were found to value mediators having experience in teaching. These accounts seem to match

Hale's (2007: 149) findings according to which service providers tend to light judge the interpreter's work "without having any expertise in the matter".

Service providers' negative attitude toward the interventions of interpreters and mediators, together with their lack of understanding of their role, presents "a challenge for interpreters in attempting to please those for whom they interpret, while meeting their ethical obligations" (Hale 2007: 154). Considering this, it seems understandable that interpreters – undecided about intervening or not – might solve their ethical dilemma by deciding not to intervene. Indeed, according to one participant, it is not rare even for those professionals who have a high level of cultural knowledge to decide not to take the responsibility to intervene (I1). Interrupting to explain cultural differences, in fact, interpreters may be told that such information is not required, or irrelevant (Hale, 2007: 144). However, service providers are not the only participants in the interaction who may misconceive the role of interpreters and mediators. To be precise, three out of the six interviewees, referring to the asylum context, stated that very often asylum seekers whose applications are rejected tend to blame interpreters:

I1	"it frequently happens that the asylum seeker doesn't understand the interpreter's role and tasks. This is a very complex issue. There is the idea that the interpreter works for the commission and that, when the asylum application is rejected, the interpreter is to blame because he/she has allegedly interpreted inaccurately or has expressed a negative opinion on the applicant's story". (my translation)
I/M1	"I explain to the person that I will have nothing to do with him and the commission, that I will be there only to interpret his answers and commissioner's questions". (my translation)
I/M2	"the first thing they usually tell the asylum seeker is that 'the interpreter here is neutral, so don't expect her to be on your side or on our side' […] the commissioners tell them: 'These interpreters are neutral so don't hope they'll help you'. So, it makes it easier for me when they tell them: 'Look, she's neutral, so she's not on your part, she's not on our part' […] if he thinks I'm

	on the side of the interviewer, and things go bad for him, he could come out and take it out on me. There have been cases of threats where he would go out and threat you because it's your fault that they didn't give him this thing".

Table 23 Examples of asylum seekers' misconceptions of the interpreter's role

In the light of the excerpts included in Table 23, it seems that, as reported by UNHRC (2013: 146), "defining the scope and boundaries of the interview clearly helps to protect you as an interpreter". In this respect, one participant reported that, before each mediation session, she usually clarifies her role to the participants in order to prevent misunderstandings (M2). However, according to Hale (2007), the confusion existing among service providers and migrants regarding the role of interpreters and mediators is not surprising. Hale (2007) argues in fact that "it would be unfair to expect service providers to have a sophisticated understanding of interpreting issues, as that is not their profession" and "as there is parallel confusion also among practising interpreters".

3.5.4.2. Interpreters' and Mediators' Perception of their Role

This subtheme investigates both interpreters' and mediators' perception of their role as professionals, focusing on the differences between interpreters and mediators. To be precise, particular attention will be dedicated to the role of mediators, whose tasks still seem to be unclear in the context of Italian legislation.

3.5.4.2.1. Interpreters

Concerning the role of the community interpreter, all six participants seemed to relate this figure to a high-level of language skills. In fact, according to all participants, the interpreters' main task is that of transferring a message from one language into another, without changing or omitting information. While this should come with no surprise, as it mirrors the association between language and interpreting supported by many scholars (Kalina, 2015), it is important to underline that none of the interviewees seem to favour the idea of the "conduit model" as theorized by Avery (as cited in Ciordia, 2017) (see section 2.6.1). Indeed, despite recognizing the interpreter as a figure whose primary task

is removing communication barriers, the interviewees did not seem to perceive the interpreter as the "mere conveyor of words" mentioned by Pöllabauer (2015: 208). Respondents seemed in fact to refute the idea that interpreters "just translate", depriving the interaction of the cultural aspects of the language (Falbo, 2013: 34). On the contrary, they appeared to perceive interpreters not only as visible participants, but as co-constructors of the interaction, who can intervene with their competence and cultural knowledge (Falbo: 2013: 35). In this respect, four out of the six interviewees clearly acknowledged that, when interpreting, interpreters also have to deal with cultural misunderstandings and non-verbal language, and to grasp all the nuances of the language (I1, I2, M2 and I/M2). These interviewees' statements seemed to match Falbo's (2013) and Hale's (2007) view that cultural knowledge is key for interpreters.

Furthermore, it should be highlighted that the role played by interpreters does not appears as well-defined as it might seem. Three out of out the six interviewees who currently work or have worked in the past in very different settings – ranging from courtrooms, asylum hearings and police stations to hospitals – seem in fact to show that the interpreter's work is far from static (I2, I/M and I/M2). The continual change of contexts and settings adds a challenge to these professionals, who have to constantly adapt to different types of interpreting activities. The context of legal interpreting alone, for example, includes a relevant number of settings – such as courts, tribunals, police stations, asylum hearings and lawyer clients meeting – differing from each other "in terms of the relationship between interlocutors, the goal of the interaction, the privacy and the formality of the event, the roles of the participants, the role of language, and as a consequence, the implications for interpreters" (Hale, 2007: 65).

3.5.4.2.2. Mediators

Concerning the role played by mediators, it was perhaps surprising to see that all interviewees gave very exhaustive answers that, despite mentioning many different aspects, can be summarized in the two defining concepts: level of involvement and additional tasks. As far as the level of interaction is concerned, all participants stated that mediators, unlike interpreters, are expected to be highly involved in the interaction. Indicating conflict resolution as the mediator's main task, five out of the six interviewees

seemed to highlight that, other than interpreting, mediators have to facilitate communication, make sure that the speakers fully understand each other's intentions, requiring them to "dig in" to make the interaction between clients and service providers go smoothly (I1, M1, M2, I/M1 and I/M2). In the light of this, all participants seemed to agree on the fact that, as well as being allowed to intervene and clarify cultural misunderstanding, mediators have to explain the reasons behind the speakers' behaviour – verbal and non-verbal – using their cultural knowledge:

I1	"[the mediator's] intervention can clarify cultural aspects, provide speaker with useful information or facilitate communication" (my translation)
I2	"other than having excellent language skills, [mediators] also need to have a deep cultural knowledge […] including knowing habits, traditions or dialects. Of course, the mediator is not supposed to know every dialect, but he should be able to identify particular dialects or behaviour. Interpreters are not required to do that". (my translation)
M1	"the cultural mediator is like the judge, because you know both cultures and now you have to intervene with the knowledge of both cultures, intervene to justify".
M2	"the mediator doesn't favour one speaker, he/she just favours communication. Therefore, aiming at facilitating communication, if one speaker is "weaker" in the interaction, if he/she sees his/her rights denied or needs help, I do what I can. I let this person speak and communicate, I get involved". (my translation)
I/M1	"one has to mediate considering culture, cultural codes and non-verbal language […] before starting to mediate, the mediator has to know the exact reason why he/she has been called. Moreover, the mediator has to build trust with the speaker". (my translation)
I/M2	"mediation is to understand the thought. In interpretation you convey words, in mediation you convey meanings, what they want to do, what they want

	to say, what is causing the problem, what is causing the conflict or what can resolve the conflict".

Table 24 Participants' perceptions of the mediator's role

The statements included in Table 24 seem to match the idea that mediators should contextualize meaning and rely on advocacy to make sure at all speakers are given time to express themselves and are understood (Luatti as cited in Falbo, 2013: 32; Falbo, 2013: 42). In this respect, it is noteworthy that one participant described mediation as an activity that goes beyond language transfer, and as a willingness to connect with people also through non-verbal elements such as gaze and tone of voice (M2).

Commenting on the role of mediators, I feel it important to underline that three out of the six interviewees mentioned the versatility of these professionals. These participants in fact – speaking from experience – reported that, other than interpreting, mediators are often called on to undertake different tasks such as providing legal assistance, giving information about permits of stay, family reunification and similar proceedings (M1, M2 and I/M1). In this respect, mirroring Falbo's (2013), two participants highlighted the wide range of knowledge required from mediators, ranging from possessing knowledge about Italian institutions and legislation to having some notions of disciplines such as pedagogy or anthropology (M2 and I/M2). These accounts seem to confirm Falbo's (2013: 36) conception of mediation in Italy as a complex and undefined activity. First, as was already mentioned in section 3.5.2.2, as well as being cultural brokers in triadic interactions – mirroring community interpreters – mediators working for institutions may also act as service providers and engage in dyadic interactions (Luatti as cited in Falbo, 2013: 37).

3.5.4.2.3. Interpreters and Mediators: two overlapping figures

To conclude this section, it is possible to say that, although some of the mediators' duties match those of interpreters, the former often have to deal with different and complex tasks. While the existence of such multitasking figures could be seen as positive, the lack of legislation regulating tasks and competences of mediators often seems to lead to emergency interventions (Balsamo as cited in Falbo, 2013: 31). Therefore, according to Falbo (2013: 31), linguistic and cultural mediation is at risk of becoming an

oversimplified response to problems needing long-terms solutions. In this respect, I would argue that it is important to mention the fact that, considering both their high involvement in the interaction and the different tasks performed by mediators, five out of the six interviewees described the role of these professionals as more difficult and more complex than that played by interpreters (I1, I2, M1, M2 and I/M2). Furthermore, I was surprised that two interviewees spontaneously talked about how, very often, the figures of interpreters and mediators seem to overlap (I1 and I/M1). I/M1, for example, explained that, when interpreting in delicate settings such as the Family Proceedings Court, she often has to act as a mediator by explaining to confused parents the functioning of this kind of Court. Regarding this kind of overlapping, it is interesting to consider I1's view on this topic:

I1	"the interpreter has to act as a mediator when there is the need to clarify cultural elements, or to facilitate communication. Community interpreting settings lead the interpreter working in this field to have to take up more tasks and to have skills similar to that of the mediator's. Today we cannot talk about the 'classic' interpreter seen as a 'pane of glass', because this figure cannot guarantee high-quality interpreting performances. Community interpreters need to be able to understand how and when to act as a mediator. Regardless of the distinction between these two roles, I believe that interpreters and mediators share common traits that should be used regardless of the activity that is being conducted" (my translation)

Table 25 Interpreters and mediators: overlapping roles

The excerpt included in Table 25 seems to support Niska's (as cited in Ciordia, 2017) view that the "interpreter can switch roles in the middle of an assignment, depending on the circumstances and the expectations of the consumers, and this includes the advocacy role". To be precise, according to Niska (as cited in Ciordia, 2017) it may sometimes be necessary for interpreters to choose their role from a spectrum of possibilities, fulfilling more than one role. This model, which lies in the fact that interpreters are no longer bound to only one role, was also used by Luatti (as cited in Falbo, 2013: 39) and Merlini (2009) when discussing the role of interpreters and mediators in Italy. According to Luatti (as

cited in Falbo, 2013: 39), assuming the inseparability of language and culture, interpreting and mediation should not be seen as opposite or complementary concepts, but as two parts of a single activity (Merlini, 2009). Consequently, according to Merlini (as cited in Falbo, 2013: 40), this new theorization calls for a new approach in terms of training. Indeed, starting to tear down the already blurred boundaries that differentiate interpreters and mediators, Merlini (as cited in Falbo, 2013: 40) suggests that courses including interpreting techniques and ethics should be organized.

3.5.5.   Interpreters and Mediators: ideal qualities

The theme of the interpreter's and mediator's ideal qualities was mentioned in section 3.1.3, when discussing the role of these figures in Italy. According to Luka (2005), the qualities that make a person a good interpreter or mediator range from language skills to personal attributes, as their combination is key to bringing two cultures into contact and to guaranteeing communication. Focusing on the mediator, but including community interpreters in the discussion, Luka (2005) states that the main distinctive trait of these figures their deep linguistic and cultural knowledge – especially related to non "mainstream" languages. In this respect, it is interesting to see how, when generically asked about the qualities interpreters and mediators should have, all participants surprisingly mentioned several attributes described by Luka (2005), ranging from language proficiency to personal qualities such as personality traits like curiosity and self-confidence.

As far as language skills are concerned, all participants mentioned the importance of possessing deep linguistic and cultural knowledge, with one participant highlighting the importance of "not only knowing the language", but also of being "fluent grammatically" (M1). Moreover, some of the participants spontaneously introduced the topic of specialized languages, emphasizing the importance of knowing specific terminology belonging to a particular setting (for example courts, hospitals etc.), and of acquiring expertise in the functioning of specific procedures or institutions. Taking legal settings as an example, although knowledge of legal procedures is not a requirement to become a legal interpreter (Falbo, 2013), this element is key to delivering good interpreting

performances in this setting. According to four out of the six participants, this applies to all institutional settings:

I2	"we have to assume that there is a fair amount of knowledge of the legal setting because. In order to be a good interpreter in this sector, one should graduate in law, other than knowing a language. Of course, this is fairly impossible […] some people specialize in economic or legal contexts, other in literature, one can't specialize in all sectors. One can, however, start to explore different sectors to decide where to specialize. As far as my job is concerned [working for the Italian Ministry of the Interior] I chose the legal sector" (my translation)
I/M1	"one has to really know every institution and, therefore, keeping oneself updated becomes fundamental".
I/M2	"have a good understanding of the vocabulary, because you can't limit yourself to one vocabulary. You have to like try the medical vocabulary, the legal vocabulary, everything, because you never can say who is coming your way, so you can't always say: 'Ah quella cosa, quella cosa'. No, you have to know what you're talking about, and that's good. You have to have a minimum of preparation".
M2	"you have to have certain competencies. You have to know about immigration laws, human rights and, in general, you have to understand how institutions work and how to get around them". (my translation)

Table 26 Participants' opinions on setting-related knowledge

In addition to this, it is possible to say that all participants shared Luka's (2005) view that interpreters and mediators should be educated people with a deep cultural knowledge, be ready to come into contact with people from different countries and cultures, and be able to handle conflicts, pressures and stress, as will be further analysed on the following pages. However, it is perhaps surprising that five out of the six respondents, when answering the general question about interpreters' and mediators' ideal qualities, tended

to underline another aspect that, despite being mentioned by Luka (2005), seems less obvious: the will to question one-self and to learn. According to Luka (2005: 209), professionals working as community interpreters and mediators should never stick to a preconceived way of working, but instead they should be eager to open their minds, both at a professional and cultural level. In this regard, two of the participants talked about spontaneously taking up new languages while improving others and, in general, five out of the six respondents mentioned the importance of cultural knowledge and lifelong learning at a more general level:

I1	"[a community interpreter] should be educated and smart and should respect diversity. Moreover, he/she should be able to listen and open up to others while respecting human values and playing his/her role without any prejudice". (my translation)
I2	"[a good interpreter] should be educated, as knowledge is never enough. You have to possess an all-around knowledge to understand, translate and interpret […] a sentence can be interpreted in different ways, in Italian as well as in other languages. So, yes, it is important to be educated and to have good language skills, because you never stop learning". (my translation)
I/M1	"to have a broad knowledge, an all-round education, and the highest degree of expertise in the culture of his/her country of origin. An uneducated person cannot do this job. Education gives a person sensitivity, knowledge and a culture so wide that he/she is able to know different cultures and contexts in order to interpret accurately. Then, he/she has to know the institution in which he/she works for, keeping him/herself updated". (my translation)
I/M2	"you shouldn't stop learning. You should really really get information about so many things. So if they have a peculiar problem, you google it, you have to do research, you have to do everything you want so that you know something, and you don't just go there saying: "I don't know, I don't know".

M2	"to understand, to know cultures and religions, including both their basic and peculiar aspects". (my translation)

Table 27 Cultural knowledge and life-long learning

Another subtheme is the importance of being motivated and passionate in working as interpreters and mediators. Passion for languages, together with the will to help immigrants to deal with Italian institutions, are mentioned as primary factors in some participants' decision to become interpreters and/or mediators. In this respect, it is noteworthy to mention how the interest in these occupations had different origins for each participant – from personal interests for some, and from personal experience for others:

I1	"my personal desire to bring into contact two different worlds and cultures is one of the main reasons that led me to become an interpreter". (my translation)
I2	"I had a sort of revelation. I've always been interested in languages because I really like to talk to people, especially from other countries". (my translation)
I/M1	"at the beginning I really struggled to make my way through Italian institutions and I noticed that other people coming from the Indian Subcontinent – where I come from – had the same problem. This is when I first thought about it and I started working". (my translation)

Table 28 Participants' approach to interpreting and mediation: personal interest and experience

On the other hand, the remaining participants stated that, even though the choice of working as interpreters and mediators was the response to an increasing need for these professional figures, their interest was sparked while working, and it turned out to be the key to continuing to work in this field:

I/M2	"I decided that it's actually very useful, because they don't have many interpreters who hear Nigerian, who speak Italian, who are willing to help

116

	other people. And there are lot of language barriers among people, immigrants. So, it became something useful that I could do to help other people".
M1	"during the time of the course I realized that being a cultural mediator was very very interesting".

Table 29 Participant's approach to interpreting and mediation: job opportunity

All interviewees expressed an idea present in many scholars' works, according to whom passion, motivation and self-esteem are at the centre of successful interpreting and mediation. Indeed, according to Luka (2005) and Hale (2007), all other personal qualities are useless in the absence of strong motivation, which should always come from within. As was explained in Chapter One, community interpreters and mediators often have to face intimate and distressing emotions when listening to tragic accounts of violence and persecution, handling a wide range of "negative" emotions. For this reason, it is fundamental for them to strengthen their self-esteem in order to be prepared to any outcome (Hale, 2007: 122). It was interesting to see how these particular topics were mentioned by two of the participants – to be precise by two mediators:

M1	"another one which is very important, that is to be able to give out your thought without fear of favour".
M2	"there may be unexpected outcomes, you should expect that. You simple have to expect the unexpected". (my translation)

Table 30 The importance of confidence

Moreover, three out of five interviewees – both interpreters and mediators – supported Luka's (2005) opinion that when interpreting and mediating in the context of public services, professionals should always be guided by a strong passion:

I2	"it also takes a great deal of passion and dedication, in my opinion. It's like a…I'm not saying it's a vocation like being a doctor, but I think that, if you're a mediator, you have to be hyper-motivated, there has to be some sort of zeal". (my translation)
M2	"it's an attitude to a high-quality mediation, to a mission that wants you where there's conflict, where communication is blocked, so that you can restore it". (my translation)
I/M2	"I think if you really want to help someone, really help the person, it gives you satisfaction and you get satisfaction from resolving conflicts. I get that when I help a family to understand an issue, I get satisfaction when a family stick together".

Table 31 The importance of passion

3.5.6.   Consequences of Lack of Professionalization

This theme, which was partially discussed both at a general and a national level respectively in sections 2.2.2, 2.4.3.3 and 3.2, was mentioned by all interviewees, who expressed very negative opinions about interpreters' and mediators' recognition and working conditions in Italy. What is interesting is that I did not plan a question related to this theme, which was however spontaneously raised by the respondents – who tended to mention it while answering questions regarding different themes. In some cases, mention of this topic was not surprising, as it emerged when I asked about the role and recognition of interpreters and mediators in Italy. On the other hand, there were cases in which a respondent chose to discuss this topic while talking about themes such as accuracy, interpreters and mediators' ideal qualities or training. However, what is interesting is not only the prevalence of this theme across the interviews, but also the passionate and precise way in which respondents criticized the provision of intepreting and mediation services in Italy. In this respect, most of the criticisms voiced by the interviewees mirror the problems identified by scholars discussing community interpreting at an international level (see section 2.2.2), whereas others can be identified as peculiarities of the Italian context.

3.5.6.1. Demotivation

The interviewees seemed to have unconsciously explored and dissected Luka's (2005) views about the importance of confidence and motivation in community interpreting and mediation, which were mentioned in the previous section. Half of the participants, in fact, indirectly highlighted the importance of motivation for mediators and interpreters by explaining, in practice, how external stimuli – from the institutions or the government – are not only insufficient, but are likely to demotivate these professionals (Luka, 2005).

First, it emerged from the interviews that motivation is a key factor in achieving high-quality performances, as mediators and community interpreters are rarely encouraged or supported by the institutions, whose attitude sometimes constitutes an obstacle to professionals (Luka, 2005: 210). Concerning institutions' reluctance to give interpreters sufficient information about their future assignments (Hale, 2007: 97), one participant specifically stated that it is not uncommon for the Ministry of the Interior's local offices – know in Itay as *Prefetture* – to inform interpreters about their assignments only few hours before the start of the event. To be precise, the interviewee mentioned the time when she had to interpret during an important press conference attended by distinguished participants, such as Italy's national anti-mafia prosecutor. The participant reported that, even though the press conference was scheduled several days before, the assignment notification came only the night before the event, together with inaccurate information about the interpreting task. This caused her to deliver a performance below her usual level: "they always call you last minute, you are always seen as the short end of the stick, even though you are the one who transfers the message […] policemen, directors, they don't understand the interpreter's work" (my translation, I2). In general, it is possible to say that, both in interpreting and mediation contexts, professionals often do not know anything about the person they will have to interpret for (I/M2 and M2).

Similar problems seem to be common for mediators – often regarded with mistrust by the institutions (Hale, 2007: 149). In this respect, one respondent – who has been working for years as a mediator in schools – stated that it is not rare for teachers to perceive mediators as non-professionals. Consequently, not understanding the importance of mediation, they tend to call mediators when the situation has reached such a critical point so critical that one hour of mediation becomes ineffective. The respondent also explained

that teachers often limit the mediator's intervention, not asking for his/her intervention on a regular basis and refusing to dedicate time to discuss the mediation session, which is key to effective intervention. In the long run, feeling constrained and unappreciated, mediators lose their motivation, causing the quality of the mediation to automatically drop: "because mediators are not considered at an academic, educational and professional level, everyone underestimate them. Therefore, mediation becomes ineffective; it's like a dog chasing its tail […] if mediators are not allowed to play their role fully, they can't be effective. So, they lose their motivation, they feel like they are not taken seriously and say to themselves: 'Why am I even bothering? They don't appreciate nor consider me'" (my translation, M2).

3.5.6.2.   Poor Remuneration and Training

Five out of six participants raised the issue of remuneration in relation to training. This topic was mentioned by scholars such as Hale (2007) and Garwood (2012), who described how poor remuneration of interpreters and mediators is likely to discourage them from continuing to work in this field and to invest in further training, considering that such low wages do not warrant the investment. Garwood (2012: 187), for instance, defined the wages of community intepreting working in Italian legal settings as a "financial absurdity" and, according to Hale (2007: 161), poor remuneration is identified as a major complaint for practising community interpreters and mediators at a global level. Inevitably, low wages have a negative impact on the quality of community interpreting and mediation, because "if interpreters have no financial incentive to train and improve, the quality will remain static or deteriorate" (Hale, 2007: 149). As far as the interviews are concerned, it is interesting that the topic of the relationship between remuneration and training was by five out of six participants:

| M2 | "at some point – as it happened to me – after investing a lot, you realize that you can't do this anymore, or you don't want to do it, because you choose to live and make ends meet […] so, you become part of a system that I almost decided to leave, which pays you 16 euros per hour without a proper |

	contract. Of course, if you registered for VAT, you already know that you will have to deduct 40% or 50% of you wage; 20% if you're not registered. Who would come to work for less than ten euros? […] I'm not saying they're not trained, but then you can't expect to hire a motivated mediator who works at his/her maximum". (my translation)
I/M2	"[…] so, when they see a good one [mediator] who is really well prepared, then they're happy but they don't want to pay. So, many people don't want to waste their time getting a degree, getting a master's, going professional, because they don't pay you well […] most people do this interpretation work as a side work, do you understand? They want a fixed job that pay them goods, bills. They don't want to do it as a fixed job".

Table 32 Remuneration and Training

In these excerpts the practitioners clearly identify low wages as a leading factor in discouraging people from undertaking training; it shows how, even mediators and interpreters who did undertake training, lose their motivation to bend over backwards to do a good job. Using Hale's (2007: 149) words, it is possible to say that "such a situation perpetuates mediocrity". Moreover, the Italian situation described on these passages mirrors that described by Garwood (2012), according to whom the Italian government does not seem to accept that hiring trained and qualified people costs money. In the light of these conditions, it is common for qualified interpreters and mediators to decide to leave their jobs, leading to a shortage of qualified professionals and, consequently, to the use of ad hoc figures (Garwood, 2012). Considering this, it is easy to identify such dynamics as the reason for a lack of training courses in community interpreting and mediation in Italy. In addition to this, as already discussed in section 2.2, the shortage of training also seems to be caused by the lack of mandatory qualification requirements to work in this sector, which makes training courses unnecessary. As emerged from the interviews, this picture appears to be applicable to the Italian context:

I1	"there aren't enough training courses, especially for humanitarian interpreters […] selecting these professionals became very difficult in Italy. Cooperatives inevitably have to hire interpreters lacking qualifications do this job, causing unfair competition". (my translation)
M1	"some people they just look for people who understand the language, which is very wrong. Because it's a profession that requires a bit of quality and experience or know-how of what the job requires"
M2	"mediators who consider themselves as professionals don't accept every assignment. It's not a profession that pays well. Mediators are not called assiduously. Highly-trained mediators are not able to make ends meet, unfortunately. Therefore, they have to do other jobs […] it's a shame because many highly-trained mediators decide to give up mediation". (my translation)
I/M2	"so, I think that's just the problem, that they can't keep people using people just like that because they don't want to pay […] here in Italy they just use the people that they see in most contexts. When they get a very good mediator and they're able to resolve more conflicts, they are happy. The Comune is realizing this, that they really need a good mediator, and it's helping. But it's one thing to realize, it's another thing to pay someone. I'm not gonna stay here to help until you make up your mind to give me what it's due to me"

Table 33 Remuneration and training availability

In the light of what has been previously discussed, it is possible to say that there are many system-related problems concerning the provision of interpreting and mediation services in Italy. To be precise, the interviewees' accounts seem to match the situation described in section 3.2. Indeed, they confirmed both the increasing demand of linguistic services and the important role played by mediators in the 1990s, while highlighting that language service provision in Italy still seems to be a flawed system lacking unitary regulation and guidelines:

I1	"we don't have a law that regulate the role of interpreters and mediators. We don't have a register nor a code of ethics, and this situation led to chaos and to the emergence of many undefined professional figures". (my translation)
I2	"at the beginning of the 1990s, when there was a huge demand of interpreters, I discovered that the Ministry of Justice didn't have its own interpreters". (my translation)
M2	it's a bit sad. We live in 2020 and we've been talking about intercultural mediation since I started working in 2005. But even before that. So, the first mediators started to work in 1990. It's been forty years and we are still complaining about the quality of mediation". (my translation)

Table 34 Lack of regulation

The picture that emerges from these interviews is that of a country that does not appear to value community interpreting and mediation and that sees these jobs as unskilled occupations, "requiring no training and hence not meriting professional remuneration" (Hale, 2007: 149). This perception consequently results in a total lack of respect for practitioners. Regarding this, one participant reported that, after an interpreting session, the institution issued a contract mentioning mediation instead of interpreting services, in an attempt to save money by trying to apply mediators' fees – usually lower. In this respect, it is possible to state that the tendency to economize on linguistic services in the context of public institutions in Italy seems to be common to different settings. Concerning this tendency, scholars such as Garwood (2012) investigated the impact that this dynamic has in Italian legal settings. To be precise, Garwood (2012: 187) noted how, by hiring ad hoc interpreters in order to save money, the Italian government causes an opposite effect. Ad hoc interpreters, usually lacking training and experience are likely to "considerably lengthen court proceedings, frequently cause cases to be adjourned and sometimes give rise to totally unnecessary trials, at enormous cost" (Garwood, 2012: 187). In other words, it is possible to say that the institution's intention to economize on the provision of legal interpreting not only has a negative impact on the

professionalization of community interpreting, but it also causes significant financial loss on the long run.

To conclude, Italy's state of community interpreting and mediation provision described in the interviews confirms Ozolins' (2010) view, according to which migration is still seen as an emergency by the Italian government, as discussed in section 3.2. In this respect, it was interesting to see how Ozolins' (2010) idea was voiced almost exactly by one participant: "Italy treats [people who came with ships] as an emergency, a crisis. So, when there's a crisis, you use everything that you have to manage the situation. So, we are paid from a fund that comes from an emergency fund. So, everything works still like that because they really didn't see that someone has come to stay" (I/M2). It is undeniable that the participants' description of community interpreting and mediation in Italy is discouraging and seems to confirm the importance of the role played by interpreters and mediators who are passionate about what they do:

I/M1	"we know that there are obstacles to overcome, but we don't have any solution. Regardless of what we choose to do, we have to do it together. Otherwise, we won't solve these problems". (my translation)
I/M2	"So, if I'm able to explain everything and resolve that conflict, I think I'm happy. I'm not really so particular about the money, the money will come, I hope But I'm more fulfilled with that. I think that you should go with this preparation, you know you're doing something important for someone". (my translation)

Table 35 Importance of participants' proactivness

3.5.7. Training

Regarding training, I deemed it necessary to reserve a specific theme to talking about this topic, as it was widely mentioned by all interviewees. This theme was, as expected, mentioned at the beginning of each interview, when respondents were specifically asked about their personal experience in terms of training. All answers were exhaustive and seemed to confirm the absence of a harmonized national regulation of training for

community interpreters and mediators. Indeed, the composition of their training experience is varied. Overall, all participants possess a university degree: two of them – one mediator and one interpreter – attended university courses specializing in interpreting and mediation, while the remaining four graduated in other fields, such as law or even mathematics. Further training undertaken by participants proved to be of different kinds. For instance, participants whose degree was not relating to interpreting nor mediation participated in specific courses organized by different institutions: two participants undertook courses organized by the organization providing interpreting services; two participants undertook courses organized by universities and local councils in collaboration with other institutions (for example the Italian Healthcare Service).

However, in spite of their different backgrounds, all interviewees expressed opinions about the importance of training. To be precise, similarly to what was discussed in section 2.1.1, participants highlighted the importance of undertaking training in order to be able to respect ethical principles:

I1	"there aren't enough training courses, especially for humanitarian interpreters". (my translation)
I2	"training is key and, according to me, interpreters should meet specific requirements". (my translation)
M1	"I would say that, you know, training before doing this job is very important, it's something that is very vital".
M2	"if you don't have a *modus operandi*, you're not able to do this job". (my translation)
I/M1	"it's not enough to read the codes. Training is fundamental and happens every day". (my translation)
I/M2	"it's very important, it should be […] in an ideal situation, the training of interpreters should be paramount to every other need".

Table 36 Relation between ethics and training

In addition to this, although this topic had already emerged from the interviewees' personal accounts of their training experience, the analysis of the interviews allowed me to find further proof of the lack of harmonized legislation regulating interpreting and mediation training, specifically regarding the organizations providing linguistic services. These organizations – often known in Italy as *cooperative* – are reception associations or agencies that, after winning a contract, are in charge of organizing linguistic services in the context of asylum hearings. To be precise, the winners of this call for tenders organized by local offices of the Italian Ministry of the Interior – known as *Prefetture* – are required to provide interpreting services in the languages requested by migrants and to guarantee that interpreters and mediators respect certain ethical principles[15].

Analysing the interview of one interpreter working in the context of asylum hearings, it is clear how the definition of job requirements for interpreters and mediators are at the discretion of the organizations in charge of providing linguistic services. In this respect, it emerged from the interviews that having to provide interpreting services in a considerable number of languages, organizations may also to hire people who know a specific language or dialect who, however, do not have any qualifications. Moreover, it is interesting to learn that the professionals working in the context of asylum hearings are likely to lose their jobs when the organization they work for loses its contract. In that case, in fact, the organization winning the contract has the right to keep or fire personnel, even trained and experienced professionals (I1).

Secondly, by analysing the interviews, it is clear that each organization also has the power to decide about further training. Participants emphasized the importance of continual training by saying things like: "in every field, not just in interpretation, there should be periodic training of people. So that, even if you're good, they would brush you" (I/M2). However, these organizations often do not seem to organize specialized training courses and, when they do, they decide who can participate. In this regard, one participant mentioned the organizations' tendency to reserve training only for "weak" professionals, leaving the others to cover for them. In this respect, it was interesting to learn that even representatives of international organizations such the UN have commented on the quality

---

[15] http://www.prefettura.it/FILES/allegatinews/1173/2020_INTERPRETARIATO_-_CAPITOLATO_E_DISCIPLINARE_DI_GARA.pdf

of interpreting services in the context of asylum. Former UNHCR representative for Southern Europe, Laurens Jolles, stated in an interview in 2013 that, while many countries have specific regulations aimed at selecting interpreters who will work on a permanent basis, the selection in Italy is still unregulated, as the organizations that make the selection do not always pay the necessary attention[16].

Overall, it appears the provision of training for community interpreters and mediators in Italy lacks national regulations and, in this respect, both scholars – such as Garwood (2012) or Garzone (2009) and professionals seem agree that training and requirement in this profession should be harmonized on a national level, a desire that was expressed by one of the participants: "training is key, and it has to be regulated […] there have to be some characteristics which cannot be ignored" (my translation, I2)

---

[16]

https://www.repubblica.it/solidarieta/profughi/2013/11/08/news/profughi_a_lampedusa_il_sospetto_che_fra_gli_interpreti_ci_siano_spie_del_regime_eritreo-70537449/?ref=search

Discussion and Conclusions

This final chapter constitutes an attempt to summarize all the analysed data and the results obtained, in order to relate them to the initial research questions and to present the research implications.

Major findings and limitations of the study

Thanks to my study of ethics in community interpreting – which focused on the notions of accuracy, impartiality and role – I had the opportunity to reflect on professional ethics and to attempt to investigate its role in guaranteeing high-quality interpreting. To be precise, the interviews with the professionals working in the field of community interpreting in Italy enabled me to address my two research questions. The aim of this work was, in fact, first to determine the meaning that ethics and, specifically, accuracy, impartiality and role have for practitioners. Subsequently, I attempted to identify the challenges connected to the respect of these principles, as well as the way in which professionals deal with them.

Returning to the first research question, it is possible to say that, as has emerged from the interviews, ethics is considered to be a key element, leading professionals to guarantee high-quality services. In this respect, I identified a clear tendency of professionals to relate ethics to their responsibility towards their clients, acknowledging the great impact that community interpreting services may have on migrants. Nevertheless, the great value placed on ethics by the respondents does not seem to be attached to codes of ethics. Analysing the interviews, I observed in fact a feeling of scepticism towards these documents, which are considered almost useless in absence of training on ethics and professional behaviour.

Concerning the concepts at the heart of this thesis, accuracy, role and impartiality are valued as fundamental notions in the context of community interpreting, with the last being considered as the main tenet of ethics and "the Bible" of this profession. To be precise, accuracy – considered as an integral part of community interpreting and mediation – is intended as conveying the speaker's message exactly, without however being associated with word-for-word interpreting nor with the conduit model theorized

by Avery (as cited in Ciordia, 2017). As seen in the interview excerpts concerning this principle, mediators appear to go beyond the idea of accuracy as an exact rendition of the message: indeed, they seem to pay particular attention to clarifying cultural differences – including non-verbal behaviour – and to making sure that the speakers fully understand each other's intentions and reach an agreement.

A similar pattern was found as regards the principle of impartiality, which is seen to be generally associated with the will of not taking sides and treating both parties equally. Indeed, while interpreters tend to refer the message limiting their interventions as much as possible, mediators appear to intervene in the interaction more freely. Accordingly, in order to fulfil their task of conflict resolution, mediators may see impartiality as the ethical obligation to give all speakers the opportunity to express themselves fully and, therefore, they tend to feel free to intervene to clarify misunderstandings.

Interpreters' and mediators' perceptions of accuracy and impartiality seem to be fully mirrored by their perceptions of the role that they play. In this regard, although neither of these figures see themselves as invisible, and both value cultural elements other than linguistic ones, I found unanimous agreement on the fact that the role played by mediators is more complex than that of interpreters. Mediators are in fact called on to undertake different tasks, ranging from interpreting and translating to providing legal assistance. However, as has emerged from the interviews, neither of these two figures are clearly recognized at a national level, with tasks or qualifications that are still to be officially defined.

As far as the second research question is concerned, the interviews showed that the respect of ethical principles can be challenged by different types of problems which, unexpectedly, seem mainly to originate from external factors rather than from language-related issues. Language-related problems are indeed perceived as minor issues, which can be overcome thanks to training and experience. Emotional challenges and empathy, on the other hand, may have a greater impact on ethics and may put the impartiality principle at risk. Empathy turned out in fact to be a potential source of difficulties for interpreters and mediators, especially when dealing with dramatic and painful accounts. Training and experience, however, constitute fundamental tools to manage emotions and to understand when to interrupt the session in order to regain emotional control.

On the other hand, external factors – such as speakers' and institutions' attitudes towards interpreters and mediators – seem to constitute a more relevant issue. Misconceptions about the role that interpreters and mediators have to play may lead speakers to ignore professionals' obligation to be accurate and impartial. In this respect, three different attitudes towards interpreters and mediators seem to emerge from the respondents' accounts: extreme trust, leading speakers and service providers to perceive professionals as allies and to expect them to take sides; mistrust about professionals' competences or neutrality; lack of recognition of interpreters and mediators as professionals. Misunderstandings of these kinds – especially when coming from migrants – may produce conflict and obstacles to the communication, which are however seen as normal and as surmountable thanks to training and expertise. On the contrary, when misconceptions about role are expressed by service providers, they may have a greater impact both on the interaction and on the professionals' proactiveness. Service providers' negative perceptions of interventions made by interpreters and mediators, together with the lack of recognition of these professional figures, may in fact hinder the quality of the performance. Due to the negative attitude of service providers, practitioners may in fact be forced to limit their interventions. Therefore, qualities such as confidence, passion and patience turn out to be key for professionals to handle these types of uncomfortable and complex situations, but sometimes they appear to be insufficient. Highly-trained and passionate professionals may be in fact be so discouraged and demotivated by lack of recognition and poor remuneration that they may decide to leave their job or to stop taking further training, seeing that unqualified people are equally hired.

In spite of the numerous themes discussed in this work, I would like to point out that this research may have two limitations. First, because the respondents' work experience in interpreting and mediation are limited to legal, asylum and school settings, some significant settings of community interpreting – such as health-care settings – could not be included in the research. An additional possible limitation of this study may be related to the fact that all respondents are highly-trained interpreters and mediators. Taking this into account, it is possible that the results that emerged from the interviews would have been different if untrained participants had been involved in the research.

Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

In the light of the findings of this study in the context of community interpreting, I believe that ethics plays a significant role in guaranteeing high-quality linguistic services. In this respect, I argue that providing high-quality interpreting or mediation is not simply an end in itself, but constitutes a decisive element during important moments of a person's life – whether they are big or small. For instance, the rejection or the acceptance of an asylum application could depend on the interpreter's performance; this will decide the asylum seeker's destiny. Similarly, a competent mediator could be key to enabling a migrant child to be welcomed into a new school. For this reason, I deem it important to recognize the value of community interpreting as a discipline tied to human rights and equity and, therefore, to carry out further research in this direction. Moreover, part of the findings of my research shed light on a side of community interpreting, which I believe requires further investigation: the emotional and psychological impact that interpreting and mediation may have on professionals. Respondents' accounts of the fatigue and emotional distress that may be experienced during and after emotionally challenging interpreting sessions suggest that the theme of emotion management should be further investigated. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to suggest that professionals should be provided with the opportunity to debrief and to receive psychological support.

In addition, I believe that the adoption of laws and clear guidelines regulating community interpreting and mediation at a national level should be the first step to take in order to raise the level of interpreting and mediation in Italy. In my view, training, remuneration and criteria defining the figures of interpreters and mediators should be the primary focus both in enhancing the quality of linguistic services and in protecting qualified professionals. Indeed, the findings of this study showed that a clear definition and recognition of interpreters and mediators as professional figures can have a positive impact on the quality of linguistic services and on the respect of ethical principles. By making training for interpreters or mediators mandatory, ad hoc interpreters lacking qualifications would not be allowed to provide services for extremely low fees and would not cause professionals' wages to drop. Regarding this, I believe that, if fully recognized and adequately remunerated, professionals would be encouraged to continue working as interpreters or mediators, to invest in further training and to deliver high-quality services. Furthermore, service providers' full recognition of these figures would make it easier for

professionals to do whatever it takes to respect ethical principles, not feeling judged or restrained from playing their role. Concerning this, I also believe that the challenges to the respect of ethical principles would be less testing for interpreters and mediators, if they were sure that service providers knew their role and supported them as professionals. In my opinion, as far as Italy is concerned, recognition of interpreters and mediators at a national level is far more needed than just introducing and adopting codes of ethics in the field of community interpreting and mediation. Tasks and rights of mediators should for example be officially defined at a national level, so that these figures' complex services start to be valued. In this regard, the same applies to community interpreters, who are still overshadowed by conference interpreting.

To conclude, I deem that research – involving practitioners – could do much to identify the challenges experienced by interpreters and mediators working in Italian community interpreting settings and to provide information for the improvement of linguistic services in Italy. Moreover, it is also key that both public opinion and, most of all, Italian policy-makers start to see community interpreting and mediation as a resource that enables migrants to communicate effectively with Italian institutions, preventing conflict and facilitating inclusion. However, in order to do this, I would consider it necessary for Italy to reconsider its perception of inward migration and – using one of the respondent's words – to stop treating this phenomenon as "an emergency and a crisis".

References

AITI (Associazione Italiana Traduttori e Interpreti). (2013). Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct. www.aiti.org/english/code-of-professional-ethics-and-conduct (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Albertini, V., & Capitani, G. (2010). La mediazione linguistico-culturale. Stato dell'arte e potenzialità. *I Quaderni del CESVOT*, *47*. http://www.cesvot.it/repository/cont_schedemm/5495_documento.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Alonso-Araguás, I. (2016). Interpreting practices in the Age of Discovery: The early stages of the Spanish empire in the Americas. In Takeda, K., & Baigorri-Jalón, J., *New Insights in the History of Interpreting (*Eds., pp. 27-46). Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins

Amato, A., & Garwood, C. (2011). Cultural mediators in Italy: a new breed of linguists. *inTRAlinea*, *13*. http://www.intralinea.org/archive/article/1673 (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Anderson, R. B. W. (2002). Perspectives on the role of interpreter. In Pöchhacker, F., & Shlesinger, M. (Eds.), *The Interpreting Studies Reader* (pp. 209–17). London: Routledge.

Andres, D. (2013). History of Interpreting. In Chapelle, C. A. (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 1-8). Oxford: Blackwell-Wiley.

Angelelli, C. (2008). The role of the interpreter in the healthcare setting. In Valero-Garcés, C., & Martin, A. (Eds.), *Crossing borders in community interpreting: Definitions and dilemmas* (pp. 147-164). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Angermeyer, P.S. (2020). Legal Interpreting. In Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (3rd ed., pp. 275-280). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

AUSIT (Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators). (2012). Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. http://ausit.org/AUSIT/Documents/Code_Of_Ethics_Full.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Austin, J. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Avery, M. P. B. (2001). The role of the health care interpreter: An evolving dialogue. Washington, DC: NCIHC.

Baigorri-Jalón, J. (2015). The history of the interpreting profession. In Jourdenais, R., & Mikkelson, H. (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of interpreting* (pp. 23-40). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Baixauli-Olmos, L. (2017). Ethics codes as tools for change in public service interpreting: symbolic, social and cultural dimensions. *Jostrans-The Journal of Specialised Translation*, *28*, 250-272. https://www.jostrans.org/issue28/art_baixauli.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

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

Bancroft, M. A. (2015). Community interpreting: a profession rooted in social justice. In H. Mikkelson & R. Jourdenais (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of interpreting* (pp. 229-247). Abingdon & Ney York: Routledge.

Barsky, R. (1996). The Interpreter as Intercultural Agent in Convention Refugee Hearings. *The Translator* 1(2): 45–64 DOI: 10.1080/13556509.1996.10798963

Beckford, J. (2003) *Social Theory and Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berger, S. (2000). Globalization and politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *3*(1), 43-62. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.3.1.43 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Berk-Seligson, S. (1990/2002). *The Bilingual Courtroom. Court Interpreters in the Judicial Process*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Bettin, G., & Cela, E. (2014). L'evoluzione storica dei flussi migratori in Europa e in Italia. *Rapporto di Ricerca realizzato nell'ambito del progetto PRIN "Piccoli comuni e coesione sociale: politiche e pratiche urbane per l'inclusione sociale e spaziale degli immigrati", Venezia.* http://www.unescochair-iuav.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/UR-AN_Bettin-Cela_def.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Bischoff, A., & Loutan, L. (2004). Interpreting in Swiss Hospitals. *Interpreting* 6 (2), 181–204. https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.6.2.04bis (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Brambilla, E. (2016). Cowboys, Indians and Interpreters. On the controversial role of interpreters in the conquest of the American West. *The Interpreters' Newsletter,* 21, 63-78. Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste. DOI: 10.13137/1591-4127/13731

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101. DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage

Canagarajah, S. (2017). *The Routledge Handbook of Migration and Language.* Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

CBTI (Chambre Belge de Traducteurs et Interprètes-Belgische Kamer van Vertales en Tolken). (n.d.) Code of Conduct https://www.cbti-bkvt.org/en/publications/code-of-conduct (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Ciordia, L. S. (2017). A conceptual and contemporary approach to the evolution of impartiality in community interpreting. *JoSTrans: The Journal of Specialised Translation, (28)*, 273-292. https://jostrans.org/issue28/art_santamaria.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Cronin, M. (2000). *Across the lines: Travel, language, translation*. Cork: Cork University Press.

Cronin, M. (2010). Globalization and translation. In Gambier, Y., & Doorslaer, L. (Eds.), *Handbook of Translation Studies* (pp. 134-140). Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Cronin, M. (2020). Globalization. In Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (3rd ed., pp. 213-218). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dueñas González, R., Vásquez, V. and Mikkelson, H. (1991). *Fundamentals of court interpretation*. North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press.

Edwards, R., Temple, B., & Alexander, C. (2005). Users' experiences of interpreters: The critical role of trust. *Interpreting, 7*(1), 77-95. DOI: 10.1075/intp.7.1.05edw

EULITA (European Association of Legal Interpreters and Translators). (2013). Code of Ethics. https://eulita.eu/wp-content/uploads/files/EULITA-code-London-e.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Falbo, C. (2013). *La comunicazione interlinguistica in ambito giuridico. Temi, problemi e prospettive di ricerca.* Trieste: EUT Edizioni, Università di Trieste.

Felberg, T. R., & Saric, L. (2017). Interpreting impoliteness: Interpreters' voices. *FLEKS-Scandinavian Journal of Intercultural Theory and Practice, 4*(1). DOI: 10.7577/fleks.2436

Foz, C. (1998). *Le traducteur, l'Église et le Roi: Espagne, XIIe et XIIIe siècle*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

Furmanek, O. (2013). Professionalization of interpreters. In Chapelle, C. A. (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 1-8). Oxford: Blackwell-Wiley.

Gaiba, F. (1998). *The origins of simultaneous interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

García-Beyaert, S. (2015). Key External Players in the Development of the Interpreting Profession. In Jourdenais, R., & Mikkelson, H. (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Interpreting* (pp.45-61). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Garwood, C. (2012). Court interpreting in Italy. The daily violation of a fundamental human right. *The Interpreters' Newsletter, 17*, 173-189. Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste. http://hdl.handle.net/10077/8625 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Garzone, G. (2009). Osservazioni sul profilo professionale del mediatore linguistico e dell'interprete in ambito sociale nella prospettiva deontologica. In Miller, D. R., & Pano, A. (Eds.) *La geografia della mediazione linguistico-culturale.* Bologna: Dupress

Gavioli, L. (2020). Role. In Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (3rd ed., pp. 79-84). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Gentile, A. (1997). Community interpreting or not? Practices, standards and accreditation. In S. Carr, R. Roberts, A. Dufour and D. Steyn (Eds.), *The Critical*

Link: Interpreters in the Community (pp. 109-18). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Gentile, A., Ozolins, U., & Vasilakakos, M. (1996). *Liaison Interpreting: A Handbook.* Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Giambruno, C. (2008). The role of the interpreter in the governance of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish colonies in the "New World". In Valero-Garcés, C., & Martin, A. (Eds.), *Crossing borders in community interpreting: Definitions and dilemmas* (pp. 27-50). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Guéry, F. (2014). *Learning to be a public service interpreter: boundaries, ethics and emotion in a marginal profession.* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. The Manchester Metropolitan University. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15674

Haines, D. (2019). Refugees and geopolitical conflicts. In Gold, S.J., & Nawyn, S.J. (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Migration Studies* (2nd ed., pp. 90-98). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Hale, S. (2004). *The Discourse of Court Interpreting. Discourse practices of the law, the witness and the interpreter.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Hale, S. (2007) *Community Interpreting*: *Research and practice in applied linguistics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hale, S. (2014). Interpreting culture. Dealing with cross-cultural issues in court interpreting . *Perspectives*, 22:3, 321-331, DOI: . 10.1080/0907676X.2013.827226

Hall, S. (2002). Political Belonging in a World of Multiple Identities. In Vertovec, S., & Cohen, R. (Eds.), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: theory, context, practice* (pp. 25-21). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hatim, B., & Mason, I. (1997). *The Translator as Communicator.* London: Routledge

Herbert, J. (1952). *The Interpreters' Handbook:How to become a conference interpreter*. Geneva: Georg.

Idos   (2020). *Dossier   Statistico   Immigrazione   2020.*   Roma: IdoS. https://www.dossierimmigrazione.it/prodotto/dossier-statistico-immigrazione-2020/ (Last access: 23 February 2021)

IMIA   (International   Medical   Interpreters   Association).   (2006). https://www.imiaweb.org/uploads/pages/376.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Inghilleri, M. (2012). *Interpreting justice: Ethics, politics and language*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Inghilleri, M. (2017). *Translation and Migration*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Inghilleri, M. (2020). Migration. In Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (3rd ed., pp. 329-224). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

ITIA (Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association). (2009). Code of Ethics. https://www.translatorsassociation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Code-of-Ethics-for-Community-Interpreters.pdf (accessed: 23 February 2021)

Kalina, S. (2015). Ethical challenges in different interpreting settings. *MonTI Special Issue 2,* 63-86. https://doi.org/10.6035/MonTI.2015.ne2.2 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Kant, I. (2005). Toward perpetual peace. In Karmis, D., & Norman, W. (Eds.), *Theories of Federalism: A Reader* (pp. 87-99). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-05549-1_8 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Katschinka, L. (2014). The impact of Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. In Falbo, C., & Viezzi, M. (Eds.), *Traduzione e interpretazione per la società e le istituzioni* (105-114). Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste. DOI: http://hdl.handle.net/10077/9841 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Kearney, R. (2019). Linguistic Hospitality—The Risk of Translation. *Research in Phenomenology*, *49*(1), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.1163/15691640-12341407 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Keckes, I. (2014) *Intercultural Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kermit, P.S. (2019). Situating Interpreting Ethics in Moral Philosophy. In Phelan, M., Rudvin, M., Skaaden, H., & Kermit, P.S. (Eds.), *Ethics in Public Service Interpreting* (pp. 1-23). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Kirch, M. S. (1979). Non-verbal communication across cultures. *The Modern Language Journal*, *63*(8), 416-423. https://doi.org/10.2307/326027 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Knodel, R. K. (2018). Coping with vicarious trauma in mental health interpreting. *Journal of Interpretation*, *26*(1), 2. : https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/joi/vol26/iss1/2 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

LaFrance, M., & Mayo, C. (1978). Cultural aspects of nonverbal communication. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *2*(1), 71-89. https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(78)90029-9 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Laster, K., & Taylor, V. (1994). *Interpreters and the Legal System*. Sydney: The Federation Press.

Liddicoat, A. J. (2014). Pragmatics and intercultural mediation in intercultural language learning. *language learning*, *11 (2)*. DOI: 10.1515/ip-2014-0011

Lucassen, J., & Lucassen, L. (2019). European migration history. In Gold, S. J., & Nawyn, S. J. (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Migration Studies* (2nd ed., pp. 32-44). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Luka, G. (2005). Il mediatore interculturale. In In Russo, M., & Mack, G. (Eds.), *Interpretazione di trattativa: la mediazione linguistico-culturale nel contesto formativo e professionale* (pp.203-212). Milano: Hoepli.

Mack, G. (2005). Interpretazione e mediazione: alcune osservazioni terminologiche. In Russo, M., & Mack, G. (Eds.), *Interpretazione di trattativa: la mediazione linguistico-culturale nel contesto formativo e professionale* (pp.3-14). Milano: Hoepli.

Mackintosh, J. (2006). Professionalization: Conference Interpreting - a new profession. In M. J. Chai & A. L. Zhang (Eds.), *Professionalization in Interpreting: International Experience and Developments in China* (pp. 2-14). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. http://research.sflep.com/Upload/PDF/177743a62190444fbb4da435cc201d4f.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Major, G., & Napier, J. (2012). *Interpreting and knowledge mediation in the healthcare setting: What do we really mean by "accuracy?".* Linguistica Antverpiensia, 153-173. https://lans-tts.uantwerpen.be/index.php/LANS-TTS/article/view/304/194 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Martínez-Gómez, A. (2020). Non-professional Interpreting. In Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (3rd ed., pp. 370-375). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Mason, I. (1999). Introduction. *The Translator 5(2)*, 147–60. https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.1999.10799038 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Mason, I. (2006). On Mutual Accessibility of Contextual Assumptions in Dialogue Interpreting, *Journal of Pragmatics 38*, 359–373 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2005.06.022 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

McKinley, J., & Rose, H. (Eds.). (2020). *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Applied Linguistics.* London & New York: Routledge.

Merlini, R. (2009). Seeking asylum and seeking identity in a mediated encounter: The projection of selves through discursive practices. *Interpreting*, *11*(1), 57-93. DOI: 10.1075/intp.11.1.05mer

Merlini, R., & Falbo, C. (2011). Faccia a faccia con l'interprete: strategie di cortesia nelle interazioni mediche bilingui. *Cortesia–Politesse–Cortesía. Frankfurt: Peter Lang*, 193-209.

Merlini, R., & Gatti, M. (2015). Empathy in healthcare interpreting: going beyond the notion of role. *The Interpreters' Newsletter, 20,* 139-160. http://hdl.handle.net/10077/11857 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Mikkelson, H. (1996a). Community Interpreting: an emerging profession. *Interpreting* 1(1), 125–9. https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.1.1.08mik (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Mikkelson, H. (1996b). The professionalization of community interpreting. In *Global vision: Proceedings of the 37th annual conference of the American Translators Association* (pp. 77-89). https://acebo.myshopify.com/pages/the-professionalization-of-community-interpreting (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Miletich, M. (2015). Accounting for nonverbal communication in interpreter-mediated events healthcare settings. *Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts*, *1*(2), 162-181. DOI: 10.1075/ttmc.1.2.02mil

Mouallem, S. (2015). Interpreting taboo: developing and evaluating strategies in the transfer of taboo language. *The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences (EPESS)*, *3,* 48-56. https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/331347 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Munday, J. (2012). *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and applications* (3rd ed), Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

NAJIT (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators). (2016). Code of Ethics.https://najit.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/09/NAJITCodeofEthicsFINAL.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

NCIHC (National Council on Interpreting in Health Care). (2004). Code of Ethics. https://www.ncihc.org/assets/documents/publications/NCIHC%20National%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

NCIHC (National Council on Interpreting in Health Care). (2005). Standard of Practice. https://www.ncihc.org/assets/documents/publications/NCIHC%20National%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Ndongo-Keller, J. (2015). Vicarious trauma and stress management. In H. Mikkelson & R. Jourdenais (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of interpreting* (pp. 337.351). Abingdon & Ney York: Routledge.

Neumann Solow, S. (1981). *Sign Language Interpreting: A Basic Resource Book*. Silver Spring, MD: National Association of the Deaf.

Niska, H. (2002). Community interpreter training: Past, present, future. In Garzone, G., & and Viezzi, M. (Eds). *Interpreting in the 21st century: Challenges and opportunities*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 133-144.

NRPSI (National Register of Public Service Interpreters). (2016). Code of Conduct. https://www.ncihc.org/assets/documents/publications/NCIHC%20National%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Ozolins, U. (1998). *Interpreting and Translating in Australia: Current Issues and International Comparisons*. Melbourne: Language Australia.

Ozolins, U. (2000). Communication needs and interpreting in multilingual settings: The international spectrum of response. In R. P. Roberts, S. Carr, D. Abraham, & A. Dufour (Eds.), *The critical link 2: Interpreters in the community. Papers from the 2nd International Conference on Interpreting in Legal, Health, and Social Service Settings, Vancouver, BC, Canada, 19–23 May, 1998,* 21–34. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ozolins, U. (2010). Factors that determine the provision of Public Service Interpreting: comparative perspectives on government motivation and language service implementation. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, *14*(1), 194-215 https://www.jostrans.org/issue14/art_ozolins.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Ozolins, U. (2015). Ethics and the role of the interpreter. In Jourdenais, R., & Mikkelson, H. (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Interpreting* (pp. 319-336). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Paltridge, B., & Phakiti, A. (Eds.). (2015). *Research methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Parsons, T. (1978). *Action Theory and the Human Condition*. New York: The Free Press.

Phelan, M. (2019). Codes of Ethics. In Phelan, M., Rudvin, M., Skaaden, H., & Kermit, P.S. (Eds.), *Ethics in Public Service Interpreting* (pp. 84-145). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Pöchhacker, F. (1999). 'Getting organized': The evolution of community interpreting. *Interpreting*, *4*(1), 125-140. https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.4.1.11poc (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Pöchhacker, F. (2004). *Introducing Interpreting Studies*, London & New York: Routledge.

Pöchhacker, F. (2008). Interpreting as mediation. In Valero-Garcés, C., & Martin, A. (Eds.), *Crossing borders in community interpreting: Definitions and dilemmas* (pp. 9-26). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Pöchhacker, F., & Schlesinger, M. (2005). In Pöchhacker, F., & Schlesinger, M. (Eds.), Introduction: Discourse-based research on healthcare interpreting. *Interpreting: International Journal of Research and Practice in Interpreting, 7*(2). *Special Issue. Healthcare Interpreting: Discourse and Interaction,* 157-167.

Polezzi, L. (2012). Translation and migration. *Translation Studies*, *5*(3), 345-356. DOI: 10.1080/14781700.2012.701943

Pöllabauer, S. (2012). Community interpreting. In Chapelle, C. A. (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 1-7). Oxford: Blackwell-Wiley.

Pöllabauer, S. (2015). Interpreting in Asylum Proceedings. In H. Mikkelson & R. Jourdenais (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of interpreting* (pp. 319-336). Abingdon & Ney York: Routledge.

Poyatos, F. (2002). *Nonverbal Communication Across Disciplines: Culture, Sensory Interaction, Speech, Conversation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. DOI: 10.1075/z.ncad1

Premoli, S. (2008). *Pedagogie per un mondo globale: culture, panorami dell'educazione, prospettive*. Torino: EGA https://centridiricerca.unicatt.it/lelmondial_consapevole_2014_premoli.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Remael, A., & Carroll, M. (2015). Community Interpreting: Mapping the present for the future. *Translation & Interpreting, 7*(3), 1-9. http://www.trans-int.org/index.php/transint/article/view/509 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Riccardi, A. (2019). Interprete e mediatore: evoluzione delle definizioni. *Rivista internazionale di tecnica della traduzione/International Journal of Translation, 21,* 205-217. Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste. DOI: 10.13137/2421-6763/29131

Roberts, R. (1997). Overview of community interpreting. In S. Carr, R. Roberts, A. Dufour and D. Steyn (Eds.), *The Critical Link: Interpreters in the Community* (pp. 127-38). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Roy, C. (2002) The Problem with Definitions, Descriptions and the Role of Metaphors of Interpreters, In Pöchhacker, F., & Shlesinger, M. (Eds.), *The Interpreting Studies Reader* (pp. 344-353), London: Routledge.

Rudvin, M. (2002). How neutral is neutral? Issues in interaction and participation in Community Interpreting. In G. Garzone (Ed.), *Perspectives on Interpreting 33*, 217–33. Bologna: CLUEB.

Rudvin, M. (2004). Cross-cultural dynamics in community interpreting. Troubleshooting. In Hansen, G., Malmkjær, K., & Gile, D. (Eds.), *Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies* (pp. 271-284). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Rudvin, M. (2005). Power behind Discourse and Power in Discourse in Community Interpreting: The Effect of Institutional Power Asymmetry on Interpreter Strategies. *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, *51*. *https://riull.ull.es/xmlui/bitstream/handle/915/18851/RCEI_51_(%202005)_10.pdf?sequence=1* (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Rudvin, M. (2006). The cultural turn in Community Interpreting. A brief analysis of epistemological developments in Community Interpreting literature in the light of paradigm changes in the humanities. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series–Themes in Translation Studies*, *(5)*. https://lans-tts.ua.ac.be/index.php/LANS-TTS/article/view/150 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Rudvin, M. (2015). Etica, filosofia e mediazione linguistica: dall'Etica della filosofia occidentale al codice deontologico della mediazione linguistica. *Lingue e Linguaggi*, *16*, 393-412. DOI 10.1285/i22390359v16p393

Rudvin, M. (2019). Situating Interpreting Ethics in Moral Philosophy. In Phelan, M., Rudvin, M., Skaaden, H., & Kermit, P.S. (Eds.), *Ethics in Public Service Interpreting* (pp. 24-83). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Rudvin, M., & Tomassini, E. (2008). Migration, ideology and the interpreter-mediator. The role of the language mediator in educational and medical settings in Italy. In Valero-Garcés, C., & Martin, A. (Eds.), *Crossing borders in community interpreting: Definitions and dilemmas* (pp. 245-266). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Runcieman, A. (2020). Community interpreting and the Covid-19 crisis: Present relevancy and future directions. *Tilburg Papers in Cultural Studies*, *242*, 1-22. https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/sites/default/files/download/TPCS_242-Runcieman.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Russo, M. (2014). Al di là delle denominazioni: limiti e orizzonti di ruoli e funzioni del mediatore linguistico-culturale. *Lingue Culture Mediazioni/Languages Cultures Mediation 1(1-2)*, 81-100. DOI: 10.7358/lcm-2014-0102-russ

Schweda-Nicholson, N. (1994). Professional ethics for court and community interpreters. In D. L. Hammond (Ed.), *Professional Issues for Translators and Interpreters*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Searle, J. R. (1975). Indirect speech acts. In Cole, J., & Morgan, J. (Eds.). *Speech Acts: Syntax & Semantics Vol. 3: Speech Acts* (pp. 59–82). New York: Academic Press.

Shlesinger, M. (2011). An equal footing: On the role of community interpreters in multilingual societies. [online] http://www.uef.fi/documents/1040001/1040006/Community+interpreting_

Joensuu_conference.pdf/04bf82fb-c585-4ebc-a017-a0038e7aeb48 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Skaaden, H. (2013). Assessing Interpreter Aptitude in a Variety of Languages. In D. Tsagari & R. Van Deemter (Eds.), *Assessment Issues in Language Translation and Interpreting* (pp. 35-51). Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Skaaden, H. (2019). Ethics and Profession. In Phelan, M., Rudvin, M., Skaaden, H., & Kermit, P.S. (Eds.), *Ethics in Public Service Interpreting* (pp. 146-201). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

SKTL (Suomen kääntäjien ja tulkkien liitto). (2016). Code of Ethics. https://www.sktl.fi/@Bin/1015311/Tulkin_etiikka_englanti.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Song, M. (2019). The changing configuration of migration and race. In Gold, S.J., & Nawyn, S.J. (Eds.), The *Routledge International Handbook of Migration Studies* (2nd ed., pp. 201-211). Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 169-179.

Steger, M. B. (2017). *Globalization: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tipton, R. (2020). Community Interpreting. In Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (3rd ed., pp. 79-84). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

Tomassini, E. (2012). Healthcare interpreting in Italy: current needs and proposals to promote collaboration between universities and healthcare services. *The Interpreters' Newsletter, 17*, 39-54. http://hdl.handle.net/10077/8542 (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Tomlinson, J. (2007). Cultural globalization. In Ritzer, G. (Ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization* (pp. 352-366). Oxford: Blackwell.

TRINOR (Traductores e Intérpretes del Norte). (2016). Código Deontológico. http://www.trinor.es/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/DG10197ES.pdf (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Tseng, J. (1992). Interpreting as an Emerging Profession in Taiwan — A Sociological Model [Unpublished Master's Thesis]. Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan.

Turner, B.S. (2010). Theories of globalization: issues and origins. In Turner B.S. (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Globalization Studies*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.

UNHCR, (2017). Handbook for Interpreters in Asylum Procedures. Vienna: UNHCR Austria. https://www.unhcr.org/dach/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2017/09/AUT_Handbook-Asylum-Interpreting_en.pdf (Last access: 23 February 2021)

UNHCR. (n.d.). *Refugee Data Finder*. UNCHR. https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=K7QzbD (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Union of International Associations. (2018). The Yearbook of International Organisations.Available at https://uia.org/yearbook (Last access: 23 February 2021)

United Nations (n.d.) *Migration.* https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/migration/index.html#:~:text=Today%2C%20more%20people%20than%20ever,million%20more%20than%20in%202010.&text=While%20many%20individuals%20migrate%20out,others%20migrate%20out%20of%20necessity. (Last access: 23 February 2021)

Valdeón, R. A. (2013). Doña Marina/La Malinche: A historiographical approach to the interpreter/traitor. *Target. International Journal of Translation Studies*, *25*(2), 157-179. DOI: 10.1075/target.25.2.02val

Wadensjö, C. (1998). *Interpreting as Interaction.* London and New York: Longman.

Wallmach, K. (2002). 'Seizing the surge of language by its soft, bare skull': simultaneous interpreting, the Truth Commission and country of my skull. *Current Writing. Special issue on Translation and Power, 14(2)*, 64–82.

Wells, W. (1991). *An Introduction to the Law of Evidence.* South Australia: A. B. Caudell.

Zimanyi, K. (2015). Reflections on interpreting settings and ethics in view of visual representations of la Malinche. *Translation & Interpreting*, *7*(2), 1-16. DOI: 10.12807/ti.107202.2015.a01

Sets of Questions in English

Set of questions in English n. 1 (for interpreters)

1) Why did you decide to become an interpreter? What kind of training did you undertake? How long have you been working as an interpreter?
2) What are your mother tongues? What are your working languages and how did you learn them?
3) Where do you usually work?
4) What techniques do you use while interpreting? (consecutive with notetaking, simultaneous)
5) According to you, is ethics an important element in your profession? What do you think about codes of ethics? According to you, are they useful?
6) Accuracy. What does it mean, according to you, to interpret something accurately?
7) What are the main challenges or ethical dilemmas that make it difficult to respect this principle? What do you do when it comes to gestures? And when the speaker uses vulgar language?
8) Impartiality. What does the impartiality principle mean to you?
9) What are the main challenges related to the respect of the impartiality principle? (for example, from an emotional or cultural point of view)
10) Have you ever experienced pressures or expectations from one or both speakers involved in the interaction?
11) Role. What do you consider to be your role as a professional interpreter?
12) In the communicative interaction, do you see yourself as a visible or invisible participant?
13) Have you ever experienced some sort of misunderstanding regarding your role? Have you ever being asked for help or asked to interact outside the mediation?
14) Have you ever experienced distrust from the person from one or both speakers involved in the interaction?
15) According to you, what are the qualities that a good interpreter should have?
16) According to you, what are the differences between interpreter and mediator?
17) According to you, how important is training for interpreters/mediators in Italy?
18) Do you think interpreters and mediators are rightfully recognized?

Set of questions in English n. 2 (for mediators)

1) Why did you decide to become a mediator? What kind of training did you undertake? How long have you been working as a mediator?
2) What are your mother tongues? What are your working languages and how did you learn them?
3) Where do you usually work?
4) What techniques do you use while interpreting? (consecutive with notetaking, simultaneous)
5) According to you, is ethics an important element in your profession? What do you think about codes of ethics? According to you, are they useful?
6) Accuracy. What does it mean, according to you, to interpret something accurately?
7) What are the main challenges or ethical dilemmas that make it difficult to respect this principle? What do you do when it comes to gestures? And when the speaker uses vulgar language?
8) Impartiality. What does the impartiality principle mean to you?

9) What are the main challenges related to the respect of the impartiality principle? (for example, from an emotional or cultural point of view)

10) Have you ever experienced pressures or expectations from one or both speakers involved in the interaction?

11) Role. What do you consider to be your role as a professional mediator?

12) In the communicative interaction, do you see yourself as a visible or invisible participant?

13) Have you ever experienced some sort of misunderstanding regarding your role? Have you ever been asked for help or asked to interact outside the mediation?

14) Have you ever experienced distrust from one or both speakers involved in the interaction?

15) According to you, what are the qualities a good mediator should have?

16) According to you, what are the differences between interpreter and mediator?

17) According to you, how important is training for interpreters/mediators? What about training in Italy?

18) Do you think interpreters and mediators are rightfully recognized?

Set of questions in English n. 3 (for interpreters and mediators)

1) Why did you decide to become an interpreter and mediator? What kind of training did you undertake? How long have you been working as an interpreter/mediator?

2) What are your mother tongues? What are your working languages and how did you learn them?

3) Where do you usually work?

4) What techniques do you use while interpreting? (consecutive with notetaking, simultaneous)?

5) According to you, is ethics an important element in your profession? What do you think about codes of ethics? According to you, are they useful?

6) Accuracy. What does it mean, according to you, to interpret something accurately? Do you think that this principle has a different meaning whether you are interpreting or mediating?

7) What are the main challenges or ethical dilemmas that make it difficult to respect this principle? What do you do when it comes to gestures? And when the speaker uses vulgar language?

8) Impartiality. What does the impartiality principle mean to you? Do you think that this principle has a different meaning whether you are interpreting or mediating?

9) What are the main challenges related to the respect of the impartiality principle? (for example, from an emotional or cultural point of view)

10) Have you ever experiences pressures or expectations from one or both speakers involved in the interaction?

11) Role. What do you consider to be your role as a professional interpreter? And as a mediator?

12) In the communicative interaction, do you see yourself as a visible or invisible participant? Is there a difference in this being an interpreter or a mediator?

13) Have you ever experienced some sort of misunderstanding regarding your role? Have you ever been asked for help or asked to interact outside the mediation?

14) Have you ever experienced distrust from one or both speakers involved in the interaction?

15) According to you, what are the qualities a good interpreter should have? And a mediator?

16) According to you, what are the differences between interpreter and mediator?

17) According to you, how important is training for interpreters/mediators? What about training in Italy?

18) Do you think interpreters and mediators are rightfully recognized?

Sets of Questions in Italian

Set of questions in Italian n. 1 (for interpreters)

1) Quali sono i motivi che l'hanno spinta a intraprendere la professione di interprete? Da quanto fa questa professione? Che tipo di studi/corsi ha completato?
2) Qual è/quali sono la sua lingua madre? E le sue lingue di lavoro? Come le ha apprese?
3) Dove lavora di solito?
4) Che tecnica di interpretazione utilizza? (consecutiva con presa di appunti, simultanea etc.)
5) Cosa ne pensa del ruolo dell'etica in questo lavoro? E dei codici deontologici? (ad esempio AITI). A suo avviso, sono uno strumento utile?
6) Accuratezza. Cosa significa, per lei, interpretare in modo accurato?
7) Quali sono le difficoltà e i dilemmi etici che si presentano nel rispettare questo principio? Come si comporta quando la persona per cui sta interpretando fa dei gesti? E quando utilizza un linguaggio volgare?
8) Imparzialità. Cosa significa per lei essere imparziali?
9) Quali sono le difficoltà o i dilemmi etici che trova nel rispettare il principio di imparzialità e che la porterebbero a intervenire?
10) Ha mai sperimentato pressioni o aspettative da una delle parti per cui stava interpretando?
11) Come vede il suo ruolo di interprete?
12) Nel processo comunicativo, lei si considera visibile o invisibile?
13) Le è mai capitato che una o entrambe le parti non comprendessero a pieno il suo ruolo? Che chiedessero aiuto per qualcosa o che volessero contatti al di fuor del colloquio?
14) Ha mai sperimentato diffidenza da parte delle persone per cui ha interpretato?
15) Secondo lei quali sono le qualità che un buon interprete dovrebbe avere?
16) Quali sono le differenze, a suo avviso, tra un interprete e un mediatore?
17) Che importanza ha, secondo lei la formazione per la figura dell'interprete/mediatore? In Italia?
18) Trova che le figure di interprete/mediatore siano riconosciute in Italia?

Set of questions in Italian n. 2 (for mediators)

1) Quali sono i motivi che l'hanno spinta a intraprendere la professione di mediatore? Da quanto fa questa professione? Che tipo di studi/corsi ha completato?
2) Qual è quali sono la sua lingua madre? E le sue lingue di lavoro? Come le ha apprese?
3) Dove lavora di solito?
4) Che tecnica di interpretazione utilizza? (consecutiva con presa appunti, simultanea)
5) Quanto ritiene importante l'etica in questa professione? Ritiene il codice etico uno strumento utile e necessario?
6) Accuratezza. Cosa significa, per lei, mediare in modo accurato?
7) Quali sono le difficoltà e i dilemmi etici che si presentano nel rispettare questo principio? Come si comporta quando la persona per cui sta interpretando fa dei gesti? E quando utilizza un linguaggio volgare?
8) Imparzialità. Cosa significa per lei essere imparziali?
9) Quali sono le difficoltà o i dilemmi etici che trova nel rispettare il principio di imparzialità e che la porterebbero a intervenire? 10)
10) Ha mai sperimentato pressioni o aspettative da una delle parti per cui stava interpretando?
11) Ruolo. Come vede il suo ruolo di mediatore?
12) In qualità di mediatore, nel processo comunicativo, lei si considera visibile o invisibile?
13) Le è mai capitato che le parti non comprendessero a pieno il suo ruolo? Che chiedessero aiuto per qualcosa o volessero contatti al di fuor del colloquio?

149

14) Ha mai sperimentato diffidenza da parte delle persone per cui ha interpretato?
15) Secondo lei quali sono le qualità che un buon mediatore deve avere?
16) Quali sono le differenze, a suo avviso, tra un interprete e un mediatore?
17) Che importanza ha, secondo lei la formazione per la figura dell'interprete/mediatore? In Italia?
18) Trova che le figure di interprete/mediatore siano riconosciute in Italia?

Set of questions in Italian n. 3 (for interpreters and mediators)

1) Quali sono i motivi che l'hanno spinta a intraprendere la professione di interprete/mediatore? Da quanto fa questa professione? Che tipo di studi/corsi ha completato?
2) Qual è/quali sono la sua lingua madre? E le sue lingue di lavoro? Come le ha apprese?
3) Dove lavora di solito?
4) Che tecnica di interpretazione utilizza? (consecutiva con presa di appunti, simultanea etc.)
5) Quanto ritiene importante l'etica in questa professione? Ritiene il codice etico uno strumento utile e necessario?
6) Accuratezza. Cosa significa, per lei, interpretare in modo accurato? Vede questo principio in modo diverso quando interpreta o media?
7) Quali sono le difficoltà e i dilemmi etici che si presentano nel rispettare questo principio? Come si comporta quando la persona per cui sta interpretando fa dei gesti? E quando utilizza un linguaggio volgare?
8) Imparzialità. Cosa significa per lei essere imparziali?
9) Quali sono le difficoltà o i dilemmi etici che trova nel rispettare il principio di imparzialità e che la porterebbero a intervenire? Vede questo principio in modo diverso quando interpreta o media?
10) Ha mai sperimentato pressioni o aspettative da una delle parti per cui stava interpretando??
11) Come vede il suo ruolo di interprete? E quello da mediatore?
12) Nel processo comunicativo, lei si considera visibile o invisibile?
13) Le è mai capitato che le parti non comprendessero a pieno il suo ruolo? Che chiedessero aiuto per qualcosa o volessero contatti al di fuor del colloquio?
14) Ha mai sperimentato diffidenza da parte delle persone per cui ha interpretato?
15) Secondo lei quali sono le qualità che un buon interprete dovrebbe avere? Quali un mediatore?
16) Quali sono le differenze, a suo avviso, tra un interprete e un mediatore?
17) Che importanza ha, secondo lei la formazione per la figura dell'interprete/mediatore? In Italia?
18) Trova che le figure di interprete/mediatore siano riconosciute in Italia?

Interview n. 1 – Interpreter 1

1. Sono una donna immigrata in Italia da circa 15 anni. Ho sempre sentito il bisogno della società ospitante di inserire delle Figure professionali di interpreti e mediatori per facilitare l'inclusione sociale. Il mio desiderio personale di conciliare due mondi e due culture diverse, era tra i motivi che mi hanno spinto ad intraprendere la professione di interprete. In Italia ho eseguito un corso universitario sull'Interpretazione Giudiziaria organizzato dall'Università, e un altro corso, ritenuto il primo in Italia sull'Interpretazione Umanitaria, organizzato dall'Università.

2. L'Arabo è la mia lingua madre. Lavoro anche con la lingua francese, che ho appreso durante il mio percorso scolastico nel mio paese d'origine.

3. Ho lavorato presso la Corte Penale e, soprattutto, presso le Commissioni Richiedenti Asilo.

4. Presso le Commissioni Richiedenti Asilo, come tecniche di interpretazione ho utilizzato l'interpretazione simultanea (soprattutto durante la prima parte del colloquio), e la consecutiva con presa di appunti (nella parte relativa al racconto e alla spiegazione dei motivi e dei timori dell'eventuale rientro nel proprio paese d'origine). Ho anche utilizzato lo chuchotage quando, per esempio, si trattava di tradurre al richiedente ciò che veniva detto tra l'intervistatore e un'altra parte (un avvocato, per esempio) .

5. L'argomento dell'etica in quest'ambito è recente ed è molto complicato. L'Etica, o moralità, si riferisce al concetto del bene, che è un termine filosofico, ed è difficile stabilire ciò che è giusto e ciò che è sbagliato. L' interprete dovrebbe agire nel rispetto dei valori che regolano il comportamento e la condotta dei professionisti. Questi valori sono generalmente indicati dai codici deontologici, che vengono firmati con il contratto di prestazione tra l'interprete e la cooperativa che gestisce il servizio di Interpretariato. Sono strumenti utili del lavoro perché garantiscono il rispetto dell'imparzialità, la riservatezza, che secondo la Dottoressa Mette Rudvin, sono i pilastri e i concetti di base dell'etica professionale.

6. Interpretare in modo accurato significa per me garantire un lavoro di qualità. In altre parole, garantire che ciò che viene detto dal richiedente venga trasmesso al funzionario in modo corretto senza alterazioni, e che il diritto del richiedente di esporre la sua storia alla commissione non venga leso. Dall'altra parte, l'accuratezza significa che le domande del funzionario vengano tradotte senza omissione, senza alterazioni e senza modifiche, e che il suo bisogno di raccogliere gli elementi che aiutano a valutare la domanda di protezione e a prendere la decisione, sia esaudito.

7. Le difficoltà che si presentano nel rispettare la deontologia e l'etica professionale sono tante, ed è solo con l'esperienza che l'interprete riesce a superare i dilemmi linguistici e culturali. L'interprete non deve essere influenzato da amicizie con i connazionali, per esempio, oppure dai pregiudizi nei confronti di certe diversità o certi gruppi etnici. Si deve superare ogni imbarazzo rispetto alle storie relative, per esempio, alle libertà individuali (orientamento sessuale, scelte religiose, etc.), si deve saper mantenere una giusta distanza perché l'interprete non operi né nell'interesse del richiedente, e neppure nell'interesse della commissione, ma operi nell'interesse del buon andamento dell'audizione. L'interprete deve saper gestire se stesso, gestire la sua fatica e il suo stress lavorativo.

a) Nel caso in cui il richiedente si esprima in modo volgare oppure si agiti o dica parolacce, devo mantenere la calma e devo cominciare subito a tradurre tutto ciò che viene detto dal richiedente, così il funzionario capisce e comincia subito a gestire la situazione. Quando il funzionario fallisce in qualche modo a ristabilire la tranquillità, posso chiedere il permesso del funzionario ad intervenire per calmare il richiedente con mie parole, invitandolo a

collaborare con la commissione. Questa mia iniziativa deve essere presa sempre con grande responsabilità.

b) Se il richiedente fa dei gesti culturalmente rilevanti, attiro l'attenzione del funzionario spiegando il loro significato. Non devo mai riprodurre i gesti del richiedente, soprattutto dei richiedenti vulnerabili, e devo usare un linguaggio adeguato alla situazione e al contesto. Il problema qui è che ci sono dei funzionari che non danno grande importanza ai gesti culturali dei richiedenti, e non tollerano l'intervento dell'interprete in queste situazioni. Un altro lato riguarda la voce del richiedente. La voce è molto importante per esprimere i sentimenti, l'interprete deve seguire il ritmo e deve saper tradurre anche i sentimenti, sempre con grande responsabilità e consapevolezza. Ed è proprio in questa fase che l'interprete può andare oltre al suo ruolo per assumere quello del ruolo del mediatore culturale, che fa attenzione ai segni verbali e non verbali.

8. Essere imparziale significa essere adempiente ad un obbligo deontologico che prevede di mantenere una giusta distanza dalla persona che si traduce. L'interprete deve dimostrare la sua neutralità nel momento dell'informativa che si fa prima dell'inizio dell'Audizione. Durante l'informativa, si ricorda al richiedente che l'interprete è imparziale e che non ha nessun ruolo nella presa di decisione finale da parte della commissione, e che l'interprete rispetta il segreto professionale e non divulga in nessun modo nessuna informazione relativa ai dati personali oppure alla storia che verrà raccontata. L'interprete non può essere simpatico al richiedente e non deve mai mettersi nei suoi panni. L'interprete deve far capire al richiedente che non fa parte della commissione, e che rappresenta solo sé stesso perché è una figura autonoma e indipendente. L'imparzialità dovrebbe essere anche manifestata nei confronti della Commissione stessa, non si può dare pareri e opinioni riguardo alla credibilità della storia raccontata, neppure intromettersi nel lavoro del funzionario. L'interprete non può rispondere alle domande che interessano la procedura davanti alla Questura, non può valutare l'audizione oppure dare un parere sulla futura decisione della commissione, il suo ruolo finisce con la fine dell'audizione.

9. Ci sono delle difficoltà che incontra l'interprete nel rispetto del principio di imparzialità. In certe audizioni in cui il richiedente sia una donna mamma per esempio, oppure una vittima di violenza, o anche una persona che ha alle spalle una storia addolorata, l'interprete prova una certa empatia e una certa sensibilità, perché in fin dei conti è una persona umana e non può essere "invisibile". Il rischio qui è che la sua empatia possa mettere in discussione i doveri di probità e di obiettività. Quando il contesto richiede delle abilità non linguistiche, l'interprete può per esempio generare un clima di fiducia, ma non deve mai mettersi nei panni del richiedente, e deve uscire subito da questa presa di posizione e dissociarsi, lasciando a parte l'empatia. Questo cambiamento nei ruoli non è assolutamente facile, e delle volte complica la situazione e crea una fatica cognitiva ed emotiva. Per uscire da questa situazione, generalmente si sospende l'audizione e ci si prende una pausa.

10. Può capitare di trovarsi davanti ad un richiedente confuso, ripetitivo, che non sa usare la grammatica, con vari stati emotivi, che non ricorda certi elementi della sua storia. Tutto questo può pesare sulla concentrazione dell'interprete e può avere delle ripercussioni sul suo livello cognitivo, e può anche complicare il suo dovere a garantire un'interpretazione accurata.

11. Percepisco il mio ruolo di interprete come un ruolo fondamentale sia per la commissione che per il richiedente. È un ruolo con un'elevata percentuale di responsabilità. La mia priorità è di far arrivare la storia del richiedente in modo fedele e con tanta cautela. L'audizione che assisto è magari normale per me, ma per il richiedente è un evento molto aspettato e molto decisivo, che traccerà il suo futuro e la sua vita in un Paese diverso dal suo da tutti i lati. L'audizione come un evento, rimane un ricordo indimenticabile per il richiedente, perché delle volte è

legato al destino che deve affrontare. Perciò l'interprete deve comportarsi con grande responsabilità e grande onestà.

12. L'interprete umanitario non può essere un computer, ma è una persona umana. Durante l'audizione non può manifestare espressioni facciali influenzando l'intervistatore e alterando i suoi compiti, oppure mettendo a disagio il richiedente stesso. La regola dell'invisibilità è una regola deontologica. Ma il ruolo dell'interprete non può in nessun modo essere meccanico, rigido, bensì coinvolto nell'interazione. Nel processo comunicativo, l'interprete deve seguire la voce, il ritmo, i segni verbali e non verbali, deve saper sentire le esigenze del richiedente e gestire il contesto, perciò non può non essere considerato visibile.

13. Capita spesso che il richiedente non comprenda bene il ruolo e i compiti dell'interprete. Questo è un aspetto molto difficile. C'è sempre l'idea che l'interprete lavori per conto della commissione, e che le decisioni di rigetto, per esempio, sono sempre colpa dell'interprete che ha sbagliato a tradurre, oppure ha dato un parere riguardante la credibilità della storia raccontata. Questo è un pregiudizio, come tanti altri che riguardano la sua cultura o il suo genere. Da parte dei funzionari, non sempre tollerano certe esigenze dell'interprete. Delle volte interrompono la traduzione e non lasciano che l'interprete svolga il suo ruolo in modo giusto. Ci sono anche dei funzionari che non rispettano l'interprete come una figura professionale autonoma, contrariamente ai richiedenti che considerano l'interprete come una figura rispettosa e un punto di riferimento.

14. Delle volte notavo una certa diffidenza da parte della persona per cui dovevo interpretare, diffidenza prima di cominciare l'audizione, per esempio, per paura che non ci fosse comprensione del linguaggio perché veniamo da paesi diversi e da culture diverse. Paura del richiedente che io giudicassi la sua storia oppure le sue scelte di genere o anche, soprattutto, le sue scelte religiose. Diffidenza provata dopo la fine dell'audizione, soprattutto con i richiedenti che non sono riusciti ad esporre in modo chiaro i motivi per cui hanno lasciato i propri Paesi d'origine, oppure non sono muniti di prove ed indizi attestanti il loro timore in caso di rientro ai Paesi d'origine. Nel primo caso, cerco di spiegare al richiedente tutte le informazioni di cui ha bisogno, eliminando tutte le barriere e mettendolo al suo agio per affrontare l'audizione con tranquillità, e delle volte questo lavoro appare più difficile del lavoro durante l'audizione stessa. Invece nel secondo caso, cerco di essere neutrale evitando di giocare nessun ruolo.

15. Un buon interprete dovrebbe avere certe qualità: dovrebbe essere una persona colta, intelligente, rispettosa delle altre diversità, che sa ascoltare e aprirsi all'altro sempre nel rispetto dei valori umani, che svolge il suo ruolo senza pregiudizi nei confronti degli altri e nei confronti delle differenze. La diversità è diventata nei nostri giorni una realtà, quindi bisogna imparare a rispettare ciò che è diverso. Deve essere semplicemente "competente".

16. L'interprete e il mediatore culturale sono due figure differenti. In Italia, la figura del mediatore è nata prima dell'interprete perché, nel passato, l'Italia ha dovuto affrontare situazioni di emergenze umanitarie con l'inserimento di mediatori culturali. Solo negli ultimi anni, si è parlato di una figura autonoma di interprete. Il mediatore ha un ruolo maggiore perché le sue competenze vanno oltre le funzioni della mediazione linguistica: può intervenire per chiarire certi elementi culturali, può arricchire il colloquio con informazioni utili per la comprensione, può facilitare la conversazione. Contrariamente, l'interprete deve tradurre da una lingua di partenza ad una lingua di arrivo senza aggiungere, né omettere informazioni. Questa distinzione è ormai superata e le esigenze attuali richiedono più compiti. L'interprete deve mettere la veste del mediatore quando c'è la necessità di chiarire elementi della cultura, oppure quando deve facilitare l'andamento del colloquio. Il contesto umanitario odierno costringe l'interprete in quest'ambito ad avere più requisiti e più abilità simili a quelle possedute dal mediatore culturale. Oggi non si può più parlare di una figura classica dell'interprete,

l'interprete "specchio" non può garantire un servizio di qualità, l'interprete umanitario deve saper come e quando dotarsi delle capacità inerenti alla figura del mediatore. Indipendentemente di questa distinzione, credo che tra le due figure ci sia un minimo comune denominatore che bisogna sfruttare da entrambe le figure, e penso anche che i servizi socio-sanitari siano adatti all'inserimento della figura di mediatore, invece i settori giudiziari, umani sono adatti alla figura di interprete. Generalmente, il riferimento dell'interprete alle competenze del mediatore durante l'audizione non è frequente: primo perché non tutti i funzionari tollerano quest'idea, secondo perché la commissione ha tutti i mezzi tecnologici ed informatici per indagare su certi elementi culturali, terzo perché bisogna farlo con conoscenza e consapevolezza e responsabilità, e non tutti gli interpreti hanno le abilità e se ne assumono la responsabilità, quando si deve assumere il ruolo del cultural broker.

17. Purtroppo, in Italia non esiste ancora una legge organica sulla materia di asilo politico, e non esiste una legge che regolarizza la figura dell'interprete e del mediatore. Non esiste un albo, neppure un codice deontologico e un codice sull' etica professionale. Una situazione che creato tanta confusione e tante figure senza requisiti. Non ci sono abbastanza corsi di formazione, soprattutto per l'interprete umanitario, e non c'è un riconoscimento vero e proprio di questa figura, come per esempio negli altri paesi come l'America, Australia e Grande Bretagna. In Italia, la condizione è molto critica anche nella selezione di queste figure. Le cooperative sono costrette ad inserire anche degli interpreti che magari non hanno neanche i titoli necessari per svolgere questo tipo d lavoro, e si crea in questo modo una sorta di concorrenza sleale. Può capitare che un interprete, dopo aver lavorato per anni in questo ambito e aver fatto un'esperienza, si trova messo a parte solo perché la cooperativa con cui aveva il contratto di prestazione ha perso l'appalto e quindi il nuovo ente vincitrice lo esclude. Questo è un argomento da non sottovalutare, perché non è giusto che la carriera di un professionista, che opera in un ambito molto delicato, sia lasciata perdere.

Interview n. 2 – Interpreter 2

p1#1: allora intanto volevo chiederti quali sono i motivi che ti hanno spinta a intraprendere la professione di interprete e se c'è stato un motivo particolare <ee>

p2#1: no, praticamente, io ho avuto <sp> una <aa> <P> fin da ragazzina, detto brevemente, avrei voluto fare sempre il medico <ehm> poi però ho avuto una specie di folgorazione e ho <ehm> mi interessavano molto le lingue perché mi piace molto chiacchierare, e quindi entrare in contatto con altre persone, soprattutto anche di altre nazionalità. Per cui mi è nata l'esigenza di questa <sp> di fare <ee>le lingue, cioè di studiare le lingue. Anche perché il francese l'ho fatto alle medie, ero molto portata e quindi avevo ottimi risultati, da lì mi sono un po' galvanizzata, tra virgolette, per cui poi ho iniziato. E quindi ho proseguito, ho fatto la Scuola Interpreti e l'Università contemporaneamente, ma l'Università non l'ho mai finita.

p1#2: e l'Università quindi non aveva nulla a che fare con la Scuola Interpreti?

p2#2: no, perché la Scuola Interpreti all'inizio non rilasciava una laurea ma un diploma, e quindi facevo l'Università anche per piacere, perché naturalmente tutto l'aspetto letterario non viene curato nella Scuola Interpreti. E poi invece <e> <ehm> essendo <oo> cioè poi io non sono riuscita a lavorare e studiare, fare tutto. la Scuola Interpreti costava molto cara quindi mi sono sbrigata a finirla <sp> e quindi <ii> mi sono rimasti due esami che non ho mai concluso, non ho mai fatto e non finirò mai. Poi però mi è stata riconosciuta la laurea breve della Scuola Interpreti e quindi mi sono accontentata.

p1#3: e dove hai studiato?

p2#3: allora la Scuola Interpreti l'ho fatta a Perugia, e l'Università lo stesso, a Perugia.

p1#4: quindi da quant'è che fai l'interprete?

p2#4: dunque faccio l'interprete dal millenovecentottantasette e ho fatto diverse <ee> cioè mi sono calata in diversi ruoli. In realtà, diciamo che <sp>ho iniziato a lavorare all'ufficio immigrazione, per cui era un interpretariato di contatto soprattutto, e prevedeva anche la <sp> traduzione di questi vari decreti che c'erano, di rifiuto. Poi sono passata all'ufficio denunce, però a disposizione di tutta la Questura, e lì è iniziato il parapiglia, tra virgolette, perché, praticamente, capita di tutto. Capita di <sp> tutto. Dalla semplice denuncia del furto di portafoglio, all'ordinanza che ti ho detto la scorsa settimana, che dovevo assolutamente concludere, di centodiciannove pagine scritte sul perfezionamento del reato eccetera eccetera, filosofico anche, quindi molto difficile, fatto in cinque giorni. Per cui puoi immaginare <sp> insomma <aa> così. Oppure ho seguito molto <oo>, ad esempio, la collaborazione con le autorità giudiziarie, quindi con giudici, con la Della Monica, non so se l'hai mai sentita nominare. Ho lavorato molto a fianco a lei, e ho fatto un lavoro molto interessante, perché <sl> pur avendo spagnolo come terza lingua, ci fu un momento in cui loro sequestrarono un grosso carico di droga e un recluso spagnolo <oo> decise di fare il collaboratore di giustizia, sicché in un luogo nascosto venne in Italia e voleva <ehm> non si fidava, insomma era molto particolare, distante eccetera. Di me si fidò. Io non è che lo sapessi tanto, ma la passione era talmente tanta che per tanti mesi ho seguito lui nella traduzione. Ci rivelava <unclear> i vari movimenti con la mafia italiana, quindi era un ruolo di responsabilità.

p1#5: quindi le tue lingue di lavoro quali sono?

p2#5: allora, inglese, francese, spagnolo come terza lingua, che ho fatto all'Università, e poi ho fatto dei corsi per conto mio, di perfezionamento, insomma, sì <P> ora è tanto che non lo pratico più. [avevo già appreso che la lingua madre fosse l'italiano]

p1#6: di solito/quindi prevalentemente lavori in prefettura e uffici?

p2#6: allora in questi anni/no, dipende <sp> molto ho lavorato con il tribunale perché quando lavoravamo/cioè all'inizio degli anni Novanta, quando c'era un gran bisogno di interpreti <sp> e poi ho scoperto che il Ministero di Grazia e Giustizia non ha interpreti <lp>apparentemente. Quindi era un po' un filo diretto. Quindi magari arrestavano una persona, doveva essere giudicata, dalla Questura passavo in tribunale e viceversa, con tante traduzioni.

p1#7: quindi interpretazione e rispettive traduzioni?

p2#7: e relativa traduzione, sì, sì. Poi mi è capitato anche venti giorni fa di <ii> andare ad una conferenza stampa dove c'era stato il caso di un <ehm> praticamente <ee> di un arresto a livello europeo di più di venti elementi per traffico di stupefacenti dove c'era anche <ehm> insomma, il capo della <aa> dell'antimafia. Insomma, tanti altri personaggi importanti <sp> dove me l'hanno comunicato alle diciotto e trenta della sera per la mattina dopo. Non è stato un grande exploit, però d'altra parte <lp> e mi hanno detto: "Questo signore dell'Eurojust è lettone". Tra me e me ho pensato: "Speriamo bene, non so se il lettone [riferito all'accento] lo capisco". Per scoprire il giorno dopo, cinque minuti prima di iniziare l'interpretariato, che questo signore non era lettone, ma greco <lp> ed era dell'Europol, e non dell'Eurojust. Vabé, questa è una piccola sfumatura <sp> però questo greco, siccome era anche giovane ed era un responsabile del settore dell'antiterrorismo a livello europeo, ha parlato un sacco, ed era difficilissimo stargli dietro <P> sicché la figura è stata non delle migliori perché per forza, saperlo alle sei e mezza, una conferenza stampa che lo sapevano da dieci giorni. Insomma, così è come si lavora. Della serie <sp> come si lavora.

p1#8: di solito che tecniche di interpretazione usi?

p2#8: allora, io in questo caso ho adottato lo chuchotage, anche se potevo fare la consecutiva <sp> ma ho preferito di no. Poi/sì poi praticamente facevamo frase per frase, che non so come si dica

155

tecnicamente, ma insomma <ehm> lui diceva una frase e io dietro traducevo perché, insomma, c'era parecchia tensione, era in un'aula bunker e preferivo, insomma, farlo così.

p1#9: E in generale quindi <ii>

p2#9: in generale, a volte ho fatto la consecutiva, e questo l'ho fatto soprattutto con il francese <ehm> perché ad esempio/sì, negli anni Novanta vennero un gruppo di ingegneri marocchini che erano affiliati con il Ministero dell'Interno a fare un giro di ricognizione ad Arezzo, nelle fabbriche dell'oro eccetera eccetera, nei vari macchinari e stabilimenti. E io lì feci da interprete, da accompagnatrice e interprete per il Ministero dell'Interno <sp> e in quel caso optai per la <aa> per la consecutiva, ma ero più giovane e più fresca dalla Scuola Interpreti. Poi di solito scelgo io. Questo signore greco me l'ha chiesto e ho detto: "Guardi preferisco lo chuchotage" <foreign word>. Perché insomma <ehm> e poi ho deciso di fare frase per frase.

p1#10: invece diciamo che il focus del mio/della tesi è l'etica, sono i codici deontologici. Quindi volevo chiederti innanzitutto <ehm> secondo te che ruolo ha l'etica in questa professione?

p2#10: ma/l'etica ha un ruolo molto importante perché nel mio settore, in modo specifico, nel senso che io lavoro sempre nel campo della devianza <ehm> nel senso che lavorando in questura ovvio che non è che intervisto il regista o lo scrittore, ma sempre un imputato tra virgolette, come ti dicevo l'altra volta, in qualche modo <lp> per cui l'etica è molto importante, anche perché bisogna assumere assolutamente un comportamento più neutrale possibile, cosa che <lp> io ritengo personalmente sia praticamente impossibile, in quanto siamo esseri umani e quindi, di conseguenza, uno una piccola propensione, o per un verso o per l'altro, ce l'ha. Però, eticamente è molto importante essere il più imparziali possibile, naturalmente se si può, ed essere più neutrali possibili. Compito molto arduo per l'interprete, molto arduo.

p1#11: e quindi un codice deontologico secondo te avrebbe valore? <ehm> in Italia ce n'è solo uno dell'AITI, che però è piuttosto vago. Secondo te è uno strumento che è importante, che potrebbe essere utile, o lo è già?

p2#11: potrebbe essere utile perché uno mette su carta praticamente quello che dovrebbe fare in pratica <lp> poi però ai fini proprio/credo che a livello soggettivo <oo> il riscontro uno ce l'abbia molto a livello soggettivo, dipende dai casi in cui uno si trova. Certo <sp> è ovvio che se uno comincia a essere di parte ogni volta, è normale che praticamente/voglio dire <sp> deontologicamente ci vorrebbe un codice in un certo qual modo <lp> che orientativamente ti inserisca, anche per le nuove leve, per le nuove figure che escono adesso. Però non è facile credo redigere un codice deontologico.

p1#12: ottimo. Continuando a parlare dei codici etici, uno dei principi che si trova anche in altri codici di altri Paesi è l'accuratezza.

p2#12: l'accuratezza va da sé, non c'è nemmeno bisogno di citarla.

p1#13: e come lo intenderesti tu, il principio dell'accuratezza?

p2#13: l'accuratezza è che bisogna essere scrupolosi al massimo, quindi quando uno traduce, bisogna attenersi A punto A, nel <sp> primo significato della parola. Certo che se il discorso non fila e se questo vuole dire qualcosa e uno <lp> capisce, interpreta, dà la versione letterale e accanto la versione ufficiale che crede che l'altro abbia voluto dire. Cioè, l'accuratezza sta in questo. Però l'accuratezza sta proprio nella figura dell'interprete e del traduttore stesso. Perché sennò come si fa?

p1#14: infatti volevo chiederti se ti è mai capitato di aver problemi a rispettare l'accuratezza. Nel senso di problemi linguistici o magari legati a differenze culturali.

p2#14: sì mi è capitato, perché soprattutto la mia preparazione è nell'ambito legale, giuridico-legale e <sp> come saprai meglio di me <sp> il sistema giuridico inglese, il sistema giuridico francese, che già è più simile al nostro, differiscono completamente. Quindi ci sono delle parole che non si riesce a tradurre a tutt'oggi e che bisogna tradurre con delle perifrasi, presupponendo una preparazione

nell'ambito giuridico-legale non indifferente, perché per fare l'interprete per bene in questo settore bisognerebbe essere laureati in giurisprudenza, e in più conoscere le lingue <lp> cosa non sempre possibile e conciliabile, però insomma <P> perché poi ci sono diverse specializzazioni. C'è chi è specializzato in campo economico, chi in campo giuridico, chi in campo letterario, non si riesce ad avere una specializzazione in tutto. Certo uno magari può <sp> provare a mettere le mani in pasta in diversi settori per vedere qual è il settore che gli piace di più, però io, gioco forza, per il lavoro che faccio, è il settore giuridico, preferisco il giuridico <P> e quindi legale. Per cui <ii> sì <sp> ci sono delle difficoltà, delle serie difficoltà <lp> perché, come saprai, il codice di procedura penale italiano, che è un tomo che non finisce più, è ricchissimo di commi su commi, dove la chiarezza è un punto interrogativo. Tradurlo in inglese, in un sistema dove non ci sono regole scritte, ma è tutto orale, diventa un compito molto arduo, molto molto arduo <sp> e spesso non si riesce a tradurre. Per esempio, "reato concorrente", un esempio palese dove tu devi svilupparlo con una perifrasi perché non si riesce a tradurre, perché non so neanche se esiste in inglese, nel Regno Unito, il reato concorrente, perché la Mafia come sai <sp> anche se è diffusa dappertutto, insomma è un fenomeno particolarmente nostro.

p1#15: invece poi ti volevo chiedere <sp> ti è mai capitato che qualcuno usasse un linguaggio volgare o, in un certo senso, "alterato"? In quel caso come ci si comporta?

p2#15: Beh <hh> lì <ìì> naturalmente <sp> la gestualità conta tanto, perché uno fa capire un po' l'imbarazzo <oo> io provo, un po' per pudore, ho provato a dire <ee> <ehm>: "L'indagato, oppure l'imputato, riferisce delle parole piuttosto blasfeme per tradurle". Allora mi dicono: "Che cosa ha detto esattamente?" Perché loro vogliono sapere cosa ha detto. E a quel punto uno traduce, se uno capisce tutto <sp> perché poi

<lp>

p1#16: e se invece magari qualcuno fa gesti che non <sp> che culturalmente non sono <sp> che sono peculiari di una certa cultura?

p2#16: Coi gesti non intervengo. Perché nella gestualità <P> io sono sempre il tramite, c'è sempre un referente che è un ufficiale.

p1#17: chiedo perché consultando alcuni codici etici, c'è chi dice di riprodurre il gesto, c'è chi dice di spiegarlo, non c'è molta concordanza.

p#17: Nella gestualità <àà>, a mio avviso, ognuno ci può cogliere<ee> ci può cogliere un significato che l'altro magari non dà, oppure il significato che magari gli dà un Paese non viene dato in un altro, però non si può a questo punto <P> esiste la parola e uno si esprime con le parole, non puoi interpretare il gesto, ma si può interpretare la parola. Io sono di questo parere, insomma.

p1#18: e invece, ricollegandoci a quella cosa che dicevi prima <lp> ti è mai capitato di trovarti in difficoltà perché il sistema non ha funzionato bene?

p2#18: tantissime volte. Noi veniamo sempre avvertiti all'ultimo minuto proprio perché c'è una trascuratezza e non un senso <P> perché loro pensano: "L'interprete/dieci pagine di traduzione <sp>l'interprete in una giornata le fa". Magari fosse, no? "L'interprete la lingua la sa". Ma non siamo mica bilingue, va anche detto questo <sp> quindi figurati. A me è capitato con un cinese <lp> il quale parlava un inglese molto stentato, che si capiva e non si capiva. A spiegargli la scientifica <sp>il laboratorio scientifico è stato difficilissimo. Una volta me la sono cavata molto bene perché mi ero preparata, l'avevo saputo due giorni in anticipo, un'altra volta mi è capitato <unclear> e ho avuto un po' di difficoltà, lo riconosco. Mi disse il <ll> poliziotto, che lui lavora proprio alla scientifica, mi ha detto: "Eh l'altra volta avevi dato delle spiegazioni con più brillantezza". Eh, l'altra volta ero più preparata però per dirti, ci riesci, e poi spesso qualche cosa non capisci. E allora lì sta a te <sp> cercare di comunque <lp> dare sempre il significato, chiedere spiegazioni, non è umiliarsi, è chiedere, perché uno naturalmente deve chiedere. Se non ha capito chiede di ripetere, e cerca di arrivarci. Dove non ci

arrivi, dai la parola <lp> il senso comune, dicendo "In questo momento non sono in grado di dare una <ehm> una traduzione più specifica".

p1#19: e invece, parlando di quello a cui avevamo già accennato <lp> l'imparzialità. Ritieni che sia un principio importante, sempre riguardo l'etica?

p2#19: beh <sp> senti <lp> l'imparzialità è molto importante. Non è facile applicarla in toto, in tutto, però <òò> secondo me è molto importante perché poi a quel punto non sei <sp> più l'interprete ma diventi l'avvocato, parlo sempre del mio settore, nel campo della devianza, e quindi un indagato o un imputato. Se tu non sei/certo a volte ti fa anche tenerezza, vorresti suggerire qualcosa, no? Magari tentenni un po', però più che tentennare <lp> e fargli capire che lo stai aiutando o ripetergli "Io sono qui per aiutarti", non si può fare, perché sennò uno diventa l'avvocato e allora a quel punto

<sp>

p1#20: Quindi la difficoltà è legata all' empatia?

p2#20: certo, la difficoltà è legata al fatto che ci sono situazioni così tragiche, situazioni così tristi così <lp> aberranti, in un certo qual modo, che ti viene l'istinto di essere/di prendere parte, di essere da una parte, però non te lo puoi permettere.

p1#21: invece ti è mai successo di sperimentare pressioni da una parte o dall'altra? Magari dall'imputato oppure <P> che avessero delle aspettative rispetto al suo ruolo?

p2#21: dunque, mi è capitata una cosa che non so però se può essere riferibile a questa domanda, ma comunque la cito, tanto è breve. Durante quest' indagine grande che si fece per/con questo spagnolo, venne fuori una forma di mafia dalla <unclear> e, facendo da interprete nell'aula bunker, fui quasi minacciata <P> mi fecero capire che praticamente dovevo stare al mio posto perché traducevo tutto insomma <P> da qualche capo, sottocapo oppure la moglie, perché lì vengono tutte le donne, lo sai no come fanno. Mandano le mogli che sono poi anche loro, insomma <P> e quindi non credo di aver risposto alla tua domanda. E mi è capitato sì, quella volta mi è capitato. Mi sono un po' impressionata detto sinceramente, non si scherza.

p1#22: al contrario, invece? Cioè che una persona magari ti vedesse come un aiuto <P> come più che interprete, magari come un alleato.

p2#22: tante volte. Mi è capitato tante volte che loro magari lì per lì sono diffidenti, e poi tu diventi la loro ancora di salvezza. E ti dicono: "Io senza di lei non dico niente, non parlo". Sì, tante volte. È una situazione un po' di comodo, perché comunque <lp> anche se parlano italiano, non parlano italiano, parlano la loro lingua <P> vabé che si esprimono meglio, ma oltre a esprimersi meglio riescono di più a <aa> dire cose come: "Non ho capito ripeti", "Non è stato chiaro" eccetera. Lì una cosa difficile è che a volte <lp> sempre nel mio settore, fingono di non capire perché non gli fa comodo ovviamente capire, e perché magari gli stai dicendo che sono condannati a nove mesi e tre giorni di reclusione. Non è che gli fa tanto comodo capire e quindi dicono: "Io non capisco quello che dice lei". Ecco, lì è un po' delicato perché con tanta pazienza allora uno ripete piano piano. Chi c'è dall'altra parte non è che sia scemo completamente e dice: "Vabé, questo si sta rifiutando". Allora glielo dice anche in italiano etc. Ecco, questo sì, a volte che fingono le persone, ma <sp> sempre nell'ambito della devianza.

p1#23: quindi è capitato che andassero oltre il ruolo di interprete, che chiedessero aiuto anche al di fuori?

p2#23: sì, sì. Allora, io ti dico che ho seguito anche molto il filo della prostituzione. Il filone della prostituzione, nella fattispecie erano delle ragazze nigeriane. Ai tempi, quando c'erano le madame <foreign word>, cioè queste donne che erano da anni che erano in Italia, che avevano un permesso di soggiorno, che cosa facevano? Andavano nel loro Paese <lp> riunivano un po' di ragazze promettendo loro un lavoro di parrucchiera o un lavoro di donna delle pulizie eccetera eccetera. In realtà poi incutevano timore alle famiglie, nel senso che insomma <ehm> chiedevano un pagamento. Questo

158

pagamento era praticamente un riscatto di trentamila, quarantamila euro. E quindi che cosa è successo? È successo che molte <sp> venivano minacciate, in un certo qual modo, e temevano per la loro famiglia, che era sempre in Nigeria <P> alcune però hanno collaborato con la Polizia. Io ho aiutato tantissimo, io e una mia collega, che ora purtroppo neanche lei c'è più <P> insomma io e una mia collega, abbiamo collaborato con una <P> con un paio di loro perché non tutte collaborano, va detto. Perché non è che <unclear> non è così, perché insomma sono diffidenti, hanno le loro ragioni <P> comunque una ragazza che s'è messa il registratorino nel <ll> seno, ha registrato quello che dicevano le altre. Questa ragazza poi è stata aiutata perché praticamente è ritornata in Nigeria <lp> senza permesso di soggiorno, senza niente, per aspettare l'autorizzazione, perché avevamo trovato un lavoro per lei. Una su cento, va bene? E un'altra che ci ha aiutato moltissimo. Mi ha molto aiutato perché è riuscita <P> si fidava di me e mi ha telefonato. Ha simulato un incontro con la madame <foreign word> e la Polizia. Io sono venuta a gambe levate a informare la questura, i poliziotti <lp> a quell'epoca non c'erano ancora i cellulari, negli anni Novanta. Praticamente cosa è successo <lp> hanno arrestato la madame <foreign word>. Ma due su cento eh <P> quindi se si fidano, se tu riesci <lp> l'empatia è molto molto importante. Se tu riesci a stabilire un contatto, se sentono che sei umana, chiaramente devi essere il più imparziale possibile, se sentono che hai un trasporto <sp> cioè un trasporto, <ehm> in un qualche modo, di veicolare al massimo la lingua, di aiutare al massimo la persona che hai davanti, è ovvio che poi si <ehm> stabilisce una sorta di empatia, e quindi è normale che hai più soddisfazione te, ha più soddisfazione <lp> cioè insomma, lui, la persona si sente aiutata anche se poi sta dentro due anni, però si è sentita non trascurata perché, bene o male, non è nel suo Paese d'origine.

p1#24: quindi però all'inizio un po' di diffidenza c'è.

p2#24: eh, hai voglia, sì, sì <ìì>. C'è chi non ti considera per niente, chi risponde tanto per rispondere, ti porta in giro, gli chiedi una cosa ti risponde rosso, gli chiedi se quello è nero ti dice che è bianco, non ti risponde per niente. Ci vuole tanta pazienza <sp> e un lavoro certosino, e tanto aggiornamento professionale.

p1#25: ma invece ti è mai capitato magari che ci fossero delle <ehm> non incomprensioni, però magari che l'imputato o qualcuno dicesse qualcosa legato alla sua cultura, che magari fosse poco comprensibile alla cultura italiana, o magari al contesto?

p2#25: no, questo francamente non mi è capitato per fortuna. Anche perché <cough> quando lavoravo in tribunale, non c'era ancora la figura del mediatore linguistico, non c'era ancora. È venuta un po' dopo questa figura come esigenza, è stata creata dopo, questa figura del mediatore linguistico. La cultura <lp> se ne sbattono i poliziotti italiani. Quando sei in un Paese, in un altro Paese ti devi comportare secondo i canoni e l'etica di questo Paese. Però, la figura del mediatore culturale non c'era. Poi io quando sono andata via dall'ufficio immigrazione, era il periodo in cui sono arrivati invece i mediatori linguistici che io però non ho conosciuto, e attualmente penso ci siano ancora.

p1#26: Sì da quello che so, di solito sono presenti.

p2#26: Non so come si può fare <P> se devi far parte di una cooperativa.

p1#27: Io so che le Prefetture spesso fanno dei bandi, ad esempio per le Commissioni Territoriali, o cose del genere, quindi sì, è fatto tramite cooperative. Comunque, volevo chiederti, secondo te, che qualità dovrebbe avere un buon interprete?

p2#27: allora, innanzitutto, un'ottima cultura. Un'ottima cultura di base<ee> perché la cultura non basta mai, devi avere sempre una conoscenza a trecentosessanta gradi per poter tradurre e capire e interpretare, perché insomma ci sono delle parole che son/vabé quelle e basta. Però c'è una frase che può avere tante interpretazioni, come in italiano, anche nelle altre lingue. Un'ottima cultura, una buona conoscenza delle lingue, visto che non si finisce mai di conoscerle, e tanta passione e dedizione soprattutto, secondo me. È un po', non ti dico che è un po' una vocazione come il medico, però <sp>

insomma se fai <sp> anche il mediatore linguistico credo che tu debba essere iper-motivato no, perché sennò <P> più che motivato, ci deve essere proprio un trasporto. E una vastissima cultura, una cultura più ampia possibile, a trecentosessanta gradi. Secondo me sì, per capire determinati atteggiamenti che non si possono tradurre, ma le parole sì.

p1#28: certo. E quando ci sono certi atteggiamenti particolari, magari legati ad aspetti culturali, comunque si tende a tradurre e spiegare perché una persona ha un certo atteggiamento?

p2#28: mah per esempio c'era il caso di <lp> ti parlo sempre delle donne nigeriane. Una donna che si spogliò nuda in piazza. Io non lo so se in Nigeria come senso di dissenso <P> francamente, culturalmente parlando non lo so. Ho degli amici nigeriani, un'amica nigeriana carissima ma non me ne ha parlato. Però questa donna si spogliò completamente nuda. Non lo so se sono comportamenti <sp> più leciti nei loro Paesi d'origine o che si manifestano in un qualche modo, per dirti. Questa è una mia carenza, non lo so. Però, insomma, non <ehm> non ti so dire. Ci sono degli atteggiamenti che praticamente sono <lp> poi sono abbastanza inspiegabili. Poi, ripeto, io essendo sempre in questo settore <lp> ci sono degli atteggiamenti disperati che non so quanto dipendano dalla cultura. È difficile capire se dipende dalla cultura o se piuttosto è una reazione di fronte al fatto che hanno compiuto, che non riconoscono o che non vorrebbero che fosse riconosciuto <sp> in quanto tale.

p1#29: e invece se riconosci che è un aspetto culturale, tenderesti a spiegarlo o no?

p2#29: sì, tenderei a spiegarlo. Se riesco a capirlo <lp> sì, il fatto per esempio che <ee> non so <ehm> non si dà la mano in alcuni Paesi <ehm> non è un gesto di scorrettezza, ma semplicemente un uso e un costume di quel Paese lì. Ecco, dove riesco, dove si può <P> però ecco questo a titolo informativo.

p1#30: e invece volevo chiederti se, secondo te, l'interprete è una figura visibile o invisibile nello scambio?

p2#30: ma io penso che a tutt'oggi, ancora <lp> il vero ruolo dell'interprete e la vera <lp> l'importanza dell'interprete è stata riconosciuta, l'importanza. Il ruolo che ricompre e il rispetto nei confronti del quale bisogna, secondo me, avere, non è stato afferrato in pieno, perché <unclear> vuole che, come ti dicevo vieni informata all'ultimo minuto, sei sempre l'ultima ruota del carro, quando tu sei il veicolo, che trasmetti. Se prendiamo una riunione tra capi di stato <P> per esempio, potrebbe succedere l'inenarrabile. E a volte succede, perché gli interpreti prendono delle papere non indifferenti e capiscono fischi per fiaschi. Ancora diciamo <oo> proprio invisibile, no. Pseudo-visibile, forse, attualmente, ma non riconosciuta nel suo vero ruolo secondo me, secondo il mio punto di vista. Io lo vedo/vabé io sono in un ambiente ovviamente di polizia, di poliziotti, di <ii> dirigenti, però non se ne rendono conto per niente. Quando uno ti porta dieci pagine e ti dice: "Me la fai entro domani", a me vien da ridere. Dall'italiano all'inglese o dall'italiano al francese. Vuol dire non rendersi conto affatto della difficoltà oggettiva che una traduzione può implicare. Vuol dire non capire quello che fa l'interprete.

p1#31: da questo punto di vista pensi che, ad esempio, l'interprete sia tutelato dal sistema italiano per situazioni di stress o per il fatto che venga messo in situazioni difficili?

p2#31: tutelato dici? Mah, non mi pare che <P> innanzitutto non viene data tanta importanza all'interprete. Tutta questa tutela io non la vedo, perché se sbagli la colpa è tua e te la prendi in toto.

p1:32: perché leggevo anche di situazioni di stress dovute magari, per gli interpreti in commissioni territoriali, a storie pesanti per gli interpreti, e quindi si parlava della possibilità di predisporre un servizio psicologico per debriefing.

p2#32: questo non lo so, non credo. Mi sembra abbastanza utopico. Lo stress è forte, certo.

p1#33: invece volevo chiedere <P> come la vedi la differenza tra l'interprete e il mediatore? Perché a livello legislativo non c'è una distinzione netta.

p2#33: il mediatore forse è un gradino <sp> più <sp> per certi versi un gradino più su dell'interprete, perché oltre a conoscere la lingua e a conoscerla molto bene, deve conoscere anche molto bene la cultura a

cui fa <sp> insomma di cui si occupa. Cioè della nazionalità di cui si occupa. Quindi una cultura che includa usi e costumi e dialetti eccetera eccetera. Non si pretende mica che conosca i dialetti <sp> però se la persona si esprime in un dialetto o in un altro, o se si comporta in un determinato modo, il mediatore culturale dovrebbe essere in grado di saperlo cogliere, cosa che non è chiesta all'interprete. L'interprete è più professionale a livello di traduzione, forse. Ma il mediatore culturale se non cono/capisce bene quello che dice non riesce nemmeno a fare il mediatore culturale, per cui presuppone una cultura molto vasta <ehm> nel mediatore culturale, una cultura che non è l'ABC ma va al di là, io credo.

p1#34: e nella tua idea il mediatore è meno imparziale? Molti vedono il mediatore come quello che si schiera un po' di più.

p2#34: anche lì dipende, è una questione <P> io penso che ci siano delle reazioni personali. Certo, di solito ci sono sempre delle situazioni familiari drammatiche. Le persone che vengono in Italia, a parte l'americano che si compra la villa, l'inglese, il tedesco <ehm> molto spesso, secondo me, si trovano in situazioni molto tragiche, molto <oo> che mettono a dura prova l'imparzialità del<ll> mediatore culturale credo.

p1#35: perché c'è questa tendenza ad assimilare le figure a livello legislativo, o comunque c'è il luogo comune che siano figure quasi simili.

p2#35: no, non sono due figure simili, son diverse. Sì, alla base c'è una conoscenza della lingua, ma <sp> uno è il perfezionamento della lingua, e basta, cioè <unclear> sì, poi l'interprete conosce anche un po' la cultura della lingua per cui è interprete. Però, invece, il mediatore culturale deve proprio avere radici una/radici nella cultura, conoscere la cultura per poter interpretare e dire "Guarda che l'atteggiamento di questo è così, perché eccetera". Faccio un esempio. I cinesi <P> difficilissimo poter comunicare con loro, mettono una barriera, proprio un mondo a parte. Prendevano l'abitudine di portare regali molto costosi, come oro, a chi magari gli riempiva un foglio con nome, cognome, indirizzo, insomma, che ci vogliono cinque minuti. E questo naturalmente è peculato, non si può fare. Nella cultura, ragionando nella loro cultura, c'è un tasso di corruttibilità talmente alto in Cina, che portarti un regalo per loro <sp> portarti un <unclear> è come se ti regalo una banana o una rosa, mi capisci? Certo, non per questo si presuppone che tu accetti il regalo d'oro, ma capire che non è perché loro vogliono naturalmente abusare, ma perché è così. Gli serve una cosa, chiamano subito la persona referente, vanno subito dalla persona che può fare qualcosa. Infatti, c'è una gerarchia tale in Cina che praticamente scavalcano, perché sennò non arrivano mai, e fa parte della cultura. Non so se son stata chiara.

p1#36: sì, sì assolutamente. Poi, come ultima cosa, ti volevo chiedere cosa pensi della formazione, perché capita che vengano chiamate in tribunale persone che sanno la lingua, ma che non hanno una formazione specifica nell'interpretazione.

p2#36: la formazione è fondamentale. Deve essere in un qualche modo regimentata, secondo me. Ora, il fatto che il tribunale chieda tre anni di esperienza, io lo trovo corretto, perché non sono passeggiate le traduzioni del tribunale. Quelle giuridiche non sono passeggiate, cioè nel senso, non è "il fiore è bello". Però deve essere regimentata meglio. Devi avere, secondo me, ci deve essere proprio un/delle caratteristiche che <unclear> da cui non si può prescindere perché finora, invece uno diceva: "Io mi scrivo all'albo degli interpreti del tribunale, le so le lingue, le ho studiate, le so". E ti iscrivi, ti chiamano e fai quello che devi fare. Questa ordinanza di centododic-diciannove pagine che io ho tradotto insieme alla mia collega era una/abbiamo ritradotto su una traduzione di uno che praticamente l'ha messa nel traduttore automatico e non si capiva niente. Ti dico solo che lo stupefacente era diventato "amazing" <foreign word>, "loro" di "hanno dato loro 50 tonnellate di hashish", "gold" <foreign word> era diventato. Per farti l'esempio più lapalissiano. Una traduzione che va a livello europeo, che deve evitare la scarcerazione di ceffi presi con cinque anni di indagini <P> praticamente questo non l'ha riguardata per niente, non c'era una frase che non è stata ritoccata.

Ma come si fa?! Questo deve essere denunciato, secondo me, per truffa allo Stato. Perché se tu fai una traduzione, la vuoi riguardare? La formazione è fondamentale, secondo me devono essere proprio <P> si deve rispondere a determinate caratteristiche, aver fatto <P> ora faccio l'esempio dell'interprete perché, chiaramente, essendo interprete <sp> come l'interprete AIIC deve avere seicento ore di cabina muta fino a qualche anno fa, non so se è stato poi bypassato, così il mediatore linguistico deve fare training, deve fare un <ehm> un affiancamento, perché sennò come fai a farti una cultura?

Interview n. 3 – Mediator 1

p1#1: So, you work as a cultural mediator, right?

p2#1: Yeah, I've been working as a cultural mediator for four years.

p1#2: And how did you decide to become a mediator? Was it a precise choice or did it just happen?

p2#2: It happened in the sense that one year after my arrival in Italy, I was trying to see <sp> I was saying: "What job should I do?" Now, trying to study the job market, I realized that the need for cultural mediators was very high. And I was a teacher, because I graduated in mathematics as a teacher and I've taught for some years <ehm> my experience in teaching, dealing directly with people, with students, you know, is something similar as a cultural mediator. It gives me a vast experience in that. So<oo>, I said: "Okay, let me go and do a course". I saw that there was a course that was offered by one of these cooperativas <foreign word>, it was a three-month course <ehm> and I went for the course. During the time of the course I realized that, yes, doing a cultural mediator was very very interesting. After finishing the course, immediately I got a job proposal.

p1#3: where did you take this course?

p2#3: the institution that gave me this proposal, to do this course is a cooperativa <foreign word> that does not only deal with migrants, but it also deals with repatriation camps and some prisons. They also deal with minors and so much other stuff. They are the ones who offered me the job. They do over/the last two years I'm not sure, but before, every year there was this course, if someone is interested. After finishing this course, immediately my first proposal was from this cooperativa <foreign word> that I work with.

p1#4: and now, do you work with some institutions like the Comune <foreign word> or <sp> where do you usually work?

p2#4: the Comune <foreign word> I only work with them when necessary. They do call me just for an hour or two to do some kind of mediation for them. Similarly to the hospital, and it's a bit different <ehm> when it comes to the Prefettura <foreign word> and the Court of Justice. Those are people that I worked with very well before the<ee> Covid-19. But since the arrival of this Covid pandemic, you know, things are not/have not been working so well like before. As you know, as a cultural mediator you deal directly with the people so <P>

p1#5: so, you work mainly with the Prefettura? Or does it depend?

p2#5: mostly I work with cooperativas. With the Prefettura and the Court of Venice, I do have a contratto a chiamata <foreign word>. A contract in which they would call me whenever they need it. But I have a fulltime contract with a cooperative.

p1#6: so, I wanted to ask you about your mother tongues and your working languages, also the ones that you use during mediations.

p2#6: actually, I speak six languages, one of which is my mother tongue, which is Wolof. I speak Mandinka, Fula, Bambara, Italiano and English. I do a little bit of French, but it's just basic so I would not count it as a language that I <ehm> speak.

p1#7: they're a lot anyway. When you do the cultural mediation session, do you usually like <sp> they say a sentence and you translate, or you take notes, for example. Or is it all just oral?

p2#7: no, it depends where/you know, cultural mediator is not only by translating. Because, you know, we have translation, part of it, we have problem solving, part of it and, you know, we have a/we call/a bit of legal assistance where the individual has to <ehm> talk about his or her personal experience to me, in which I have to write down. So, it depends on what aspect, on which one of these am I dealing with. If it is a normal translation, I don't have to write down anything. I just have to translate directly for the other part.

p1#8: okay, thank you.

p2#8: you're welcome <laugh>

p1#9: so, I'm going to the heart of my thesis which is ethics, in particular in the part of intepreting. And so, the first thing I wanted to ask you is whether you think codes of ethics or regulations are useful. Also, do you think that they could be useful in order to respect ethics or does it just depend on the person?

p2#9: <ehm> honestly, ethics is fundamental when one is working as a cultural mediator <ehm> and the ethics concept is like okay, one: one has to respect the privacy of those you are dealing with. Two: one has to be very fair, very honest and sincere in what you are doing. A<aa>nd three: one has to say exactly the reality without any fear or favour <ehm> yes, that's it. These are the basic ones that are very very fundamental.

p1#10: and do you think that these <ehm> rules or, like, principles <sp> can be respected better or, anyway, that it could be useful to have them written down in a code? Like in these Codici Deontologici <foreign word> for interpreters that exist in some interpreting fields, for example. For mediation, do you think they could be useful?

p2#10: <ehm> yes, it would be useful because, okay, if I know these principles, I would abide by them, I would work through it. But if someone doesn't know these principles is good to have them written somewhere. It would remind the individual that you have to work by these principles. So obviously it's important if it is written.

p1#11: okay. So, I've been analysing these codes of ethics that exist in different countries and I've noticed that one of the main principles is the principle of accuracy. So, I wanted to ask you, in cultural mediation, what does accuracy mean for you? What does it mean to interpret something accurately?

p2#11: <ehm> accuracy is something very important because, as I said before, dealing with so<oo> many different individuals, some are very desperate. If someone, especially the cultural mediator, is not accurate in translating what the individuals are saying, it makes them pay the price. Not the cultural mediator, because <sp> he or she would say what he thinks. But if <sp> he or she is not accurate, writing exactly the meaning or the real context that the individual is referring to <sp> it means there's a change to the story of that particular individual. So, at the end of the day, all that you do for work is wrong, because it doesn't transmit the reality.

p1#12: and about accuracy, there are also some discussions about some particular situations. So, I wanted to ask you: what do you do when you're in a situation when a person is starting to swear, to use coarse language? Do you translate exactly, or do you behave differently? If someone insults or gets angry.

p2#12: <ehm> yeah. Unfortunately, I've never witnessed a situation like this. But, if it is me, I'd prefer not to insult directly, but I would make the person in which I'm translating this to notice that that world is an insult. Yes, because <ehm> if I contain the situation from the individual who is sending out this

insult, yes, I would change it and I will make the other person notice that, okay, it was not a decent word, this is why I decided not to translate it. This is the simplest thing I could do.

p1#13: okay you say that this is an insult, but you don't translate it exactly.

p2#13: yeah.

p1#14: and <ehm> when it comes to <P>

p2#14: but/but sorry with these words of insults, if it is part of the story of the individual which <sp> for example, if someone was insulting the person that we are judging down, if it is his or her personal story <sp> yes, that insult has to be translated and put into the file. But if it is in a case of problem solving, if one insults the other one, to avoid more chaos, in that case I would not translate. So, this is the flexibility that we have.

p1#15: and when it comes to gestures which are, for example, part of the culture of the person who is speaking, what do you do? Do you explain to the institution what they mean or no?

p2#15: <ehm> yes, if I know the meaning of the gestures, yes, I explain it. Because this is something/when it comes to problem solving <sp> <ehm> between two individuals, that's just what normally intensify the situation <sp> because when someone does a kind of/a particular gesture, the other one, in their culture, knows that that kind of gesture is an insult, while the other one who does the gesture doesn't even mean nothing. It intensifies the situation, and in that case I have to explain the meaning of the gesture and try to calm down the situation.

p1#16: okay. and another principle, which is very important, is the principle of impartiality. What does this principle mean to you – to be completely impartial or neutral in these situations?

p2#16: <ehm> I think it is something that forms the basis of <ehm> cultural mediation. Because if you are to mediate and to handle a situation which is already getting out of hand, to bring it to normality one has to be neutral. And/because here the cultural mediator is always seen as the judge in which, you know, both parties listen to because they realize he/she has some kind of understanding in culture and language, the moment an individual realizes that you speak his or her language. That's when the trust starts. So, you know, in this case <sp> being neutral is fundamental.

p1#17: and talking about this, are there any <ehm> difficulties related to the respect of this principle? For example, some situations in which you find yourself in a difficult position that/I mean, in which you tended to be unbalanced. Or maybe in which you had the instinct to, but you didn't.

p2#17: <ehm> I would say yes. Yes, I had this situation where I had a group of migrants that came from my country, Gambia, that had a problem with the cooperativa <foreign word> in which they were in. So, I had to mediate between the administration that I work for <sp> and this group of migrants that have the same origin with me. They know me very well, and I know them very well. I know the administration very well, and they know me very well. So, both sides were trying to push me to side with them to say things in their favour. It was very difficult, but I tried to/ I tried not to <unclear> and to remain neutral for the whole situation, yeah.

p1#18: so, it's an issue of empathy, sometimes.

p2#18: yeah.

p1#19: and, I forgot to ask you <ehm> when talking about the principle of accuracy, are there any particular difficulties that make it difficult to respect this principle, or do you think it's kind of easy?

p2#19: yes, it's difficult. There are some kind of difficulties. Because two completely different cultures, two completely different languages <sp> when I have to translate from one language to another, in which grammatically they are completely different. So, in this case, to translate these words one after the other it's difficult. I have to use my proficiency in the language, because understanding exactly what the person is referring to with that statement, for me is important to be accurate, to make sure that

whatever I say should be exactly what he said. The meaning, put in the context, in which he or she means. So, I have to translate it exactly to get that objective done. So sometimes you'll see that, you know, it could come like individuals said a statement, but I have to listen for four, five seconds before talking. So, I'm trying to think in order to put it relating it to the accuracy that we are talking about. So, I have to say exactly/what he or she says.

p1#20: <ehm> so you already told me that sometimes you experience some pressures from both parties or just one of them, right?

p2#20: <ehm> regard to this, yes. It could be from both parties, it could be from one party. But this/ we normally experience this always <ehm> when we are dealing with the administration. When the administration is involved, because the administration gets power and wants to be right, even if they are wrong. So, in this case they try to pursue me to side with them which, you know, it has been very difficult. Sometimes I do refuse in the face of the person in charge, which is not nice when it comes to ethics, you know. But I am also respecting some kind of procedures of my job, which is part of the ethics. It's the same.

p1#21: of course. And, from the other side? Like, did it ever happen to you that, for example, one person saw you and considered you as the person of reference, asking you for help outside this mediation context? Like, for extra help.

p2#21: it always happens, it always happens. This is something that of course happens often, because <ehm> when it comes especially to the migrant sector. Most of these people arrive here and they don't know what it's called an asylum request. They don't know almost nothing about the procedure: what they have to do, what they have to prepare and bring in before the judge or the Commission. So, in this case, they do come after. We have to sit series of times to see how to organize best for their personal story, for their file, what they need to bring in, all that stuff. After the hearing at the Commission they would still come after me to say: "Okay, during my time of the Commission, this and this and this happened. What should I do?" So, knowing what does take place at the Commission, so I could advise the person: "Okay, get yourself prepared for this, you might have a second chance. Or if you don't have a second chance with the Commission, when you go to the court you can clarify those mistakes". And I'm like: "This is what you would want to do".

p1#22: okay, so they ask for help. And <ehm> so when you're mediating, do you see yourself as an invisible or a visible entity in the interaction? Cause the interpreter is usually considered as invisible, but what about the mediator?

p2#22: <ehm> can you repeat the question again? I did not/I did not get you.

p1#23: like, for example, the interpreters are sometimes seen like as they are invisible, meaning that they just translate words.

p2#23: yes, I understand.

p1#24: and about this, what do you think about the mediator? Do you see yourself as a visible participant?

p2#24: <ehm> it depends on the situation. It depends on the situation, but I would say that, you know <sp> you know, at time you could be visible, at times you could be invisible. But whatever the case is, it depends on the situation. I'll put it like this, because it is very difficult to give specific answers to this question. Because, it's not always the case.

p1#25: and, in general, what do you consider to be your role as a mediator? What should a mediator do, and does, differently from the interpreter, for example? What's the difference between them, according to you?

p2#25: <ehm> the translator works in solitude respect to the cultural mediator. Because the translator only has to translate exactly from one text to another, or from one conversation to another, whereas the cultural mediators don't only have to translate, but have to emphasize that both parties comprehend

very well what has been said. The other thing, when it comes to problem solving <sp> it is the cultural mediator that has the responsibility to bring peace, he's like the judge. The cultural mediator is like the judge, because you know both cultures and now you have to intervene with the knowledge of both cultures, intervene to justify. So<oo>, it's something completely different with being a translator. I would have chosen to be a translator if I could choose between the two. Because the translator job is less stressful.

p1#26: I see <laugh> and I wanted also to ask you <ehm> what do you think are the main qualities that a good cultural mediator should have in order to do a good job?

p2#26: <ehm> I think I answered this last time. The qualities that a good <ehm> mediator should have is to be someone who is respectful to privacy, the ethics of the job. You need to be fluent <ehm> not only knowing the language, but to be fluent grammatically <ehm> yes, be accurate and<dd> yes, finally <sp> the last one would be <ehm> be realistic, not to be biased, be neutral. Yes, one has to be neutral. If a cultural mediator has these ones <sp> oh, and another one which is very important, that is be able to give out your thought without fear of favour. Give your judgement without fear or favour.

p1#27: okay. And did it ever happen to you that the person you were interpreting for <ehm> not the institution, but the other party, expressed mistrust and didn't want to talk or didn't trust you?

p2#27: I don't understand <P>

p1#28: did it ever happen that the people you were interpreting for, like migrants or <ehm> not the institution, didn't want to tell their story because they didn't trust you or didn't trust the interviewer?

p2#28: yes, it does happen several times <ehm> not with me as the mediator. In most cases <sp> yes sometimes it could <P> I don't remember that happening to me, but I've seen it happen with colleagues whereby this person they were supposed to mediate refused because of lack of trust in the mediator. Because <ehm> to him he understood that the mediator did not understand well his language, so in this case he refused that mediator and I was called in order to step in. And this was how I noticed this <sp> this situation. Because the one that you have to mediate for, when the individual understands that you do not understand very well his or her language, he could refuse. Just lack of trust that, you know <sp> he doesn't know what/whether that person could respect accuracy and the ethics.

p1#29: thank you. And, also, you were mentioning before that mediation could be very stressful. So, do you think that it's a psychologically challenging activity, mediation? Can it cause stress or difficulties on a psychological level?

p2#29: yes, it causes both things. It could be difficult, and it could have psychological effects on the person who is doing this job, if one is not very strong emotionally. Because <ehm> doing this job you are dealing with desperate people who don't know where's the starting line and where is the finish end of it, who are full of problems, who have a very bad experience. So, you know, it's stressful and has some psychological effects also in the sense that when this individuals start to narrate their experience to you, sometimes you yourself, as a cultural mediator, would like to say: "How is this possible? that is not true, I don't believe that someone could go through this and still sit right in front of me". You know, like I said last time, because of privacy I cannot go into details but I do know that sometimes I do have stories in which I have to pause for a while, go and take a walk for five or ten minutes, have some coffee, then return to continue. Because, you know I was full of pressure being in a situation that was/ I believe that I have to take a break in order to be able to control myself within the situation.

p1#30: and I wanted also to ask you whether you think training is important in this job. Do you think that here in Italy this job is properly recognized or is it just institutions asking for people who simply know the language to do this job without training?

p2#30: <ehm> yeah, it depends where the individual works. But I would say that, you know, training before doing this job is very important, it's something that is very vital. In some parts or some people, they

just look for people who understand the language, which is very wrong. Because it's a profession that requires a bit of quality and experience or know-how of what the job requires. So, if the person was not trained to know the ethics and know his or her responsibilities <ehm> it might cause so many mistakes, so many errors, and no one knows who will be the one to pay the price of those mistakes.

p1#31: do you think that here in Italy there's enough recognition of the cultural mediator or still not much?

p2#31: lately, yes. Lately, especially. yes there has been a fair recognition of the cultural mediator. But I do know that before it was not like that. I do understand that if you want to be a cultural mediator, you go ask for certificates, qualification, training or something like that stuff. If you don't have, they will/might understand that he has the<ee> language capacity but he does not have the training, so we send him to do the training.

Interview n. 4 – Mediator 2

p1#1: intanto so che lavori come mediatrice principalmente, ma volevo chiederti se fai anche qualche servizio di interpretazione.

p2#1: <ehm> allora, nel passato sì, attualmente no. Nel passato ho fatto sia <sp> interpretaria/cioè sia orale che anche scritto, sì. La conoscenza delle lingue mi ha portato a questo.

p1#2: certo. Quindi poi volevo chiederti <sp> allora la prima domanda è: quali sono i motivi che ti hanno spinta a intraprendere la professione di mediatrice? C'è qualche motivo particolare?

p2#2: allora <ehm> diciamo soprattutto l'aspetto più umano della mediazione e cioè <ehm> io poi personalmente non pensavo che conoscere le lingue diventava <ehm> non volevo che fosse una cosa <ehm> molto statica e molto <sp> limitativa, cioè almeno per me, per quello che io visionavo, per il mio punto di vista. Ho sempre voluto avere a che fare con le persone, e andare oltre quelli che sono gli schemi che a volte l'interpretazione per forza ti mette/ti obbliga a rimanerci dentro a certi schemi linguistici o di forma o di altro, insomma. Sapendo che c'è ben altro e che a volte/che c'è tutto un lato umano, sotto l'aspetto culturale, religioso e del vissuto della persona, e anche del momento stesso. Per cui tutte le emozioni coinvolte all'interno di un colloquio, di un/di una, sì di un dialogo. Non per forza deve essere <ehm> insomma quei dialoghi un po' <sp> con lacrime <laugh> un dialogo dove c'è questa correlazione, di tutti questi <sp> di queste aree che avvengono nello stesso momento e che quindi il portatore, che sia l'interprete che sia qualsiasi dei due, o più coinvolti nel dialogo, portano con sé. Per cui <ehm> diciamo che il mediatore in questo senso ha un/potrebbe anche essere un lavoro molto molto più difficile di quello dell'interprete perché ha ovviamente tutte queste cose in questione, cioè si domanda e si questiona tantissimo, e non necessariamente solo sul lato linguistico. Quindi ha un feedback <foreign word> anche immediato della propria/del proprio interpretariato. Ha un feedback <foreign word> immediato, ci sono delle reazioni immediate per cui <sp> a livello di responsabilità <sp> è ancora maggiore, insomma almeno per quanto io penso sulla mediazione.

p1#3: certo. Invece adesso, lavorando come mediatrice, hai fatto qualche corso? Qual è stata la tua formazione?

p2#3: la formazione <ehm> ho fatto una laurea in mediazione linguistica interculturale e <ehm> poi ho fatto diversi corsi in collaborazione con l'università. Poi io a mia volta ho formato in molti corsi altri mediatori oltre ad avere insomma/la mia tesi era sulla mediazione quindi comunque c'è un <sp> ho voluto approfondire moltissimo anche l'aspetto teorico e quindi di supporto a quello che io pensavo fosse veramente importante a livello sia interculturale che <ehm> a livello di insomma relazioni con le persone. Per cui sì, moltissimi corsi, corsi, formazioni io ad altri, e sempre sulla mediazione, per cui <lp>

p1#4: invece poi volevo chiederti quali sono le tue lingue madri, una o più d'una, e invece quali sono le lingue di lavoro.

p2#4: io sono albanese, per cui l'albanese è la lingua madre e<ee> le lingue di lavoro, beh l'italiano ovviamente <sp> l'italiano, l'inglese, il francese, ovviamente l'albanese, il pidgin English e<ee> avrei voluto anche il coreano ma non trovo coreani <laugh> Non ce ne sono, ma avrei molto voluto, è uno di quei pezzi mancanti.

p1#5: e queste lingue le hai studiate all'università? L'inglese, il francese, il Pidgin immagino di no.

p2#5: no, il Pidgin no <laugh> l'inglese già lo sapevo in Albania, era la mia seconda lingua. Poi quando sono venuta in Italia <sp> ovviamente l'italiano era la mia terza lingua, poi una volta venuta in Italia, l'italiano non era più lingua straniera, quindi <laugh> è come se si fosse azzerata come lingua straniera. Mi sono detta: "Ma aspetta, io pensavo di conoscerne tre, invece" <ehm> quindi attraverso/tramite l'italiano ho imparato il francese. Quindi sì, ho imparato il francese tramite una lingua veicolare, così come sto imparando il coreano tramite l'inglese per cui, anche il coreano è tramite un'altra lingua <ehm> veicolare. Il Pidgin è/diciamo che è auto <sp> autotune <foreign word> è tutta la musica della lingua, ho passato molto tempo con persone nigeriane, ghanesi, insomma tutta quella zona che parla pidgin e, insomma, ho potuto sperimentarmi moltissimo, prenderne anche tutte le sfumature, i codici linguistici diciamo <sp> molto particolari di questi parlanti di Pidgin, la teatralità della lingua diciamo.

p1#6: dove lavori di solito: uffici, comuni oppure insomma in diversi posti?

p2#6: <ehm> ade/attualmente o nel passato?

p1#7: attualmente ma anche nel passato se <P>

p2#7: attualmente io<oo> sono/lavoro presso il Comune. Io con la mia collega gestiamo uno sportello di idoneità alloggiativa e<ee> dove, diciamo, hanno relegato i mediatori culturali come noi. Però per entrarci comunque dovevi fare una specie di concorso <sp> selezione più che concorso, però con tanto di preparazione e<ee> diciamo relegato perché <ehm> in realtà stiamo facendo gli operatori comunali, cioè siamo come degli operatori. Però diciamo che un operatore comunale non ha una formazione tale, necessaria per questo tipo di sportello, per cui le mediatrici culturali hanno <sp> diciamo che hanno aggiunto oltre a quelle conoscenze quelle di cultura e di lingue, insomma <sp> a tutto quel tipo di formazione aggiungiamo ovviamente tutta una preparazione che è quasi/non siamo dipendenti del Comune, ovviamente, perché i mediatori non hanno veri e propri <ehm> contratti purtroppo, non vengono ancora riconosciuti come professionisti. È però come se fossimo dei dipendenti comunali quindi <sp> che però hanno delle skills <foreign words> mo<oo>lto più/di gestione dell'utenza straniera, di tutte le provenienze, tutte le lingue e <sp> sì insomma <sp> quindi attualmente gestisco questo sportello per questo documento che è specifico solo per gli immigrati <lp> attualmente questo. Poi nel passato, ovviamente, ho gestito io progetti di mediazione e gestito altri mediatori che lavoravano con me e per me nelle scuole, nella sanità ho lavorato tantissimo. Diciamo che ho iniziato nella sanità, per poi andare nelle scuole e <ehm> l'aspetto anche un po'/anche un po' nell'area giudiziale, per cui qualcosina ho fatto anche lì e<ee> poi ho lavorato per anni in degli sportelli in Comune che si chiamavano i CISI, quindi Centri di Informazione per Immigrati, dove facevamo tutta la consultazione sulle pratiche <ehm> insomma <sp> permessi di soggiorno, ricongiungimenti, tutte quelle pratiche, tutte le informazioni che avevano a che fare con i migranti e qualsiasi procedura che poteva essere fatta e data come servizio, insomma, dei cittadini immigrati nel Comune.

p1#8: quindi un'attività complessa, immagino.

p2#8: parecchio.

p1#9: e invece adesso, lavorando allo sportello del Comune come mediatrice, utilizzi una tecnica precisa? Non so, consecutiva con presa note, oppure semplicemente traduci frase per frase? Hai una preferenza?

p2#9: ma non sono interprete <laugh>

p1#10: no però appunto, nell'attività magari di mediazione <P>

p2#10: no, no, l'attività di mediazione sarà perché sono <ehm> anni ormai che <lp> è uno sportello, nel senso che non hai il tempo. È molto orale, e a volte quello che io uso sono delle tecniche soprattutto orali. Non abbiamo né il tempo né/non c'è da scrivere. E poi non ti è neanche concesso. Cioè, non è che si riesca a scrivere. È soprattutto uno sportello dove c'è un'utenza che viene e chiede un servizio, e il Comune lo offre. Per dare un servizio, però, ha bisogno di personale con determinate skills <foreign word>. In questo caso qui, la mediazione in realtà è <sp> altissima nel senso che è su tutti i livelli, perché ti arrivano persone di cui tu non parli neanche le lingue, per cui le doti di mediazione si vedono non strettamente sempre collegate alle lingue che parli, ma a un modus operandi, a un pensiero che il mediatore ha sulla mediazione, sulla persona, e sul valore che quel tipo di dialogo, che quel tipo di incontro, può dare l'un l'altro. Quindi, in questo caso, la mediazione non è verso/tra me e/non è a tre, nel senso che c'è una persona e io sono tra di loro. È in realtà sempre a tre, però io fungo da mediatore tra l'utente e il Comune, tra l'utente e il tipo di servizio, e il tipo di documento che richiede. E viceversa, perché poi faccio anche la mediatrice, cioè <sp> anche il Comune, nel caso in cui non abbia dato un servizio buono all'utente quindi <sp> da una parte sono la faccia/rappresento il Comune, in questo caso qui. Dall'altra parte <ehm> sì, utilizzo la mediazione non sempre strettamente legata alle lingue. Certo che, se conosco la lingua della persona, è molto, diciamo/mi viene quasi automatico, entro anche nel <sp> però la mediazione, a mio avviso, non è per forza collegata alla lingua. È proprio un modo di essere, un modo di pensare le relazioni, un modo di pensare al prossimo, insomma, alla persona che hai davanti in un'ottica diversa, che ovviamente la persona percepisce come <sp> si sente valorizzata, si sente <ehm> in grado di potersi esprimere. E anche se non si esprime, lui non si sente cacciato via o non si sente buttato fuori solo perché il suo modo di esprimersi non <sp> non riesce a volere, non riesce a esprimere quel che vuole ottenere, quel che vuole dire. Quindi sì, questa è la mia percezione della mediazione.

p1#11: quindi è più un aspetto culturale, umano, no?

p2#11: sì, è proprio un voler entrare in relazione con l'altro e trovare tutti i modi. Quindi, anche teatralmente parlando, cioè proprio il viso, lo sguardo, come ci si pone, le mani <ehm> il tono della voce. Insomma, sono tutti aspetti comunicativi che sono in realtà/determinano poi l'outcome <foreign word>, l'esito di qualsiasi tipo di incontro, di relazione.

p1#12: certo. E invece, ricollegandoci a questo e parlando del focus della tesi, quel è secondo te il ruolo dell'etica nella professione di mediatrice? Poi, secondo te, l'idea del codice etico, che per i mediatori comunque non c'è <sp> può essere utile? O comunque, che ruolo avrebbe nella professione?

p2#12: si è parlato tantissimo della mediazione <ehm> direi che, seppur essendoci/allora, seppur ci sono dei tratti molto simili <sp> aspetta, ricapitolo. Ci sono delle basi <ehm> delle fondamenta che ogni mediatore deve avere, sennò non lo può fare, okay? Sennò fa veramente danni, questo è proprio preso per sicuro. Fa molto danno il mediatore non preparato, il mediatore che non prende sul serio tutte quelle dinamiche di cui abbiam parlato prima, molto danno. Ed è una cosa/quindi uno non ci si può improvvisare – uno lo può fare, e magari ti va bene, però non ci si può improvvisare. È una cosa molto seria e<ee> quindi un codice etico io lo vedrei molto bene su molti aspetti. D'altra parte, la mediazione è tale che non lo puoi veramente mettere dentro una cornice e dire: "È questo", secondo me. Magari possiam parlare di diversi tipi di mediazione, oppure di mediazioni fatte in aree diverse, e che quindi a quel codice etico di base si aggiungono altre <ehm> peculiarità, altre cose specifiche dell'area di cui si sta parlando. Però con questo non voglio dire che per forza un mediatore che lavora nella sanità non è in grado di lavorare nelle scuole. Però, è anche vero che un mediatore che lavora

nelle scuole, ha delle competenze <ehm> anche di pedagogia, anche di elementi di <ehm> a volte di insegnamento, a volte di/saper gestire una classe, saper gestire il bambino, la persona o l'adolescente. Entrare in relazione con le insegnanti, conoscere il mondo della scuola e capire come funziona cioè, è un mondo a sé, e ha bisogno di persone che conoscano anche elementi, a volte, della pedagogia. Per cui, se tu non lo sei, anche le insegnanti stesse non ti prendono sul serio, se non ti vedono come quel mediatore senza il quale <sp> quindi a volte loro non trovano questo tipo di aspetto professionale e non chiamano/non pensano che la mediazione sia importante. Per cui, si riducono all'interpretariato, e quindi cosa vuol dire? Che magari chiedono al fratello maggiore, che fa l'interprete per il bambino minore. Però ovviamente entrano in gioco/stai camminando un po' su un campo minato perché a volte ci sono delle cose che un fratello maggiore, per quanto maggiore, non è in grado di reggere. Non è in grado di gestire un dialogo senza/che non metta entrambi i lati, entrambe le <ehm> le persone coinvolte, o i gruppi coinvolti, sullo stesso livello, che possano parlare con gli stessi diritti e quindi esprimersi, esprimere le proprie idee. Per cui, questo è uno dei risultati, degli esiti di una mediazione non molto professionale e che ha fatto diversi danni negli anni. Però ci son stati tantissimi mediatori professionisti che han fatto in realtà una cosa <sp> aldilà di quello che veniva loro chiesto. Quindi, un codice etico ritengo sia per me molto fattibile molto, anzi, importante. D'altra parte, però <sp> riconoscere una professione, riconoscere l'etica di una professione senza che questa venga quantomeno legalizzata e riconosciuta<aa> mi chiedi di fare la pedagogista, mi chiedi di fare l'interprete, mi chiedi di fare mediazione, mi chiedi di fare i compiti, di entrare nella mente del bambino, fare pure i giochetti, fare questo, per poi essere pagato dieci euro all'ora. E aver fatto un'ora di viaggio senza essere <sp> quindi credo che il codice etico vada <sp> sì è una professione veramente <ehm> non lo so, veramente poco valorizzata. Eppure, è stata uno <ehm> uno di quei punti cardinali sul <sp> sulla intercultura, sull'aspetto della <sp> dell'inclusione sociale. Se non ci fossero stati i mediatori <sp> io veramente dubito che ci sarebbe stata la minima inclusione che c'è. Ovvio che c'è sempre da fare, però <P>

p1#13: certo, infatti. Parlando ancora di etica, volevo chiederti <ehm> prendendo in esame i principi più ricorrenti dei vari codici, che magari negli altri Paesi si applicano all'interpretariato, risulta che uno dei principi più ricorrenti sia l'accuratezza. Tu come lo intendi tu il principio di accuratezza, cosa significa per te mediare in modo accurato?

p2#13: mediare in modo accurato, come ho detto prima, è tenere conto di tutte quelle dinamiche che ci sono e che tu magari puoi sapere, conoscere, in precedenza dell'incontro, per cui il mediatore è importante che si informi un pochino prima, se ha possibilità. E poi, mentre si fa poi la mediazione, l'accuratezza è quella di dover, non solo a livello linguistico, capire veramente le dinamiche che si stanno man man <ehm> vivendo, si stanno man mano evolvendo <ehm> e adeguare la sua<aa> mediazione in base a questo. Questo vuol dire a volte anche prendere iniziativa, anche se a volte non ti lasciano, però poter anche a volte anche interrompere e cercare di chiedere e capire meglio, senza cioè creare <ehm> rafforzare quei luoghi comuni che a volte ci sono, da parte soprattutto delle istituzioni o<oo> da parte di <sp> insomma, a volte anche dell'immigrato sicuramente. Per cui ci sono dei luoghi comuni che tutte e due le parti che entrano in una relazione creano; "Ah lei è razzista", "Ahh lei vuole solo prendere i soldi e basta, non vuole integrarsi". Sto parlando di una cosa/quindi tutti e due, comunque il mediatore sa già in anticipo che, probabilmente, incontrerà questo, e che uno non ha tempo perché ha tanti progetti da fare, l'altro invece, dove va <lp> insomma, questa è l'accuratezza. Capire prima, mentre si sta facendo, ma cercare di dare un feedback <foreign word> anche dopo <ehm> e cercare di capire se la persona dalla quale è stata chiamata, di solito si viene chiamati da un'istituzione, si viene chiamati da una scuola, da <P> cioè, [il mediatore] è molto attento a capire se l'istituzione/se lui è riuscito a far passare il messaggio. E quindi io di solito andavo sempre a chiedere: "Ma è stato capito?", "Lui intendeva così", "Tu cosa hai visto?". E vedi dalle reazioni, dal feedback <foreign word> dell'istituzione che lo rappresenta <sp> e vedi che a volte hanno capito, oppure che hanno avuto una conferma di una cosa, oppure se nessuno ha detto così, si chiede: "Da dove l'hai capito?", "Da dove è stato preso?". Per cui per me, almeno per me, era molto importante avere questo momento

dopo di confronto, dire "Okay è stato capito? Tu come l'hai percepito?". Perché intanto aiutava me come mediatrice a crescere professionalmente e vedere se avessi sbagliato, se avevo fatto qualcosa, se avevo mancato qualche aspetto della comunicazione, ma è importante anche per capire l'istituzione. Perché più io capisco l'istituzione, più io capisco l'immigrato, la persona, più sono in grado di svolgere una mediazione sempre migliore. Non c'è mai perfezione nella mediazione, okay? Però, voglio dire, c'è proprio una crescita a livello professionale, anche di persona, perché ti confronti. Il mediatore, o l'interprete, che lascia l'ora sua ed è finita là <sp> <ehm> sì diciamo che manca moltissimo nel feedback <foreign word>, non ha quel feedback <foreign word> che a volte è veramente importante per il mediatore per crescere. A volte l'istituzione non permette il feedback <foreign word>, non lo vuole, ti vuole solo quell'oretta e basta. Perché? Perché seppure sia stato <sp> almeno dalle nostre parti, è stato molto insegnato, e c'è stata molta formazione anche in congiunta tra operatori delle istituzioni e i mediatori, non recepiscono la mediazione come una cosa importante e non recepiscono il mediatore come un collega, quando in realtà potrebbe dare delle chiavi di lettura in più a una situazione che sembrava veramente bloccata. Ed è bloccata perché si aspetta fino all'ultimo prima di chiamare il mediatore. Arrivi quando c'è una crisi totale tra le persone, tra <sp> ovvio che in un'ora il mediatore non fa il miracolo, è un procedimento che va fatto, va chiamato. Per cui, a volte, il mediatore non essendo riconosciuto come collega, come professionista, viene chiamato all'ultimo quando la situazione è veramente incontrollabile, quando le tecniche di mediazione da parte loro non sono state efficienti o non sono state utilizzate, e quind<ii> ovvio che il mediatore, se poi non gli viene permesso di entrare nel ruolo nel quale dovrebbe entrare, fa ben poco. Quindi perde anche di motivazione, si vede <ehm> preso così in giro e <sp> si educa un mediatore così – perché poi a un certo punto il mediatore dice: "Senti, ma chi me lo fa fare, non mi valorizzano né considerano". Altro che feedback <foreign word> poi con l'istituzione <sp> se l'istituzione mi paga dopo dieci anni e <sp> perché succede anche così.

p1#14: e quindi le difficoltà secondo te legate all'accuratezza, cioè al raggiungimento dell'accuratezza, son queste anche? Cioè, per esempio, l'atteggiamento dell'istituzione?

p2#14: sono/cioè sì la volontà di entrambe le parti di considerare la mediazione come importante, e a voler quindi entrare in comunicazione. Quando il mediatore viene chiamato è perché la comunicazione è molto difficile. I codici della comunicazione possono essere molteplici: culturali, religiosi, linguistici, di pensiero, di modo di pensare, di posizioni, anche a livelli idealistici a volte.

p1#15: quindi la difficoltà magari è trovare un modo per spiegare queste differenze?

p2#15: far capire l'importanza della mediazione. Sì, questa è fondamentale, perché sennò il mediatore a quel punto non è più mediatore, è un semplice interprete. Semplice tra virgolette, è chiaro. Perché se non valorizzi il fatto che lui [l'immigrato] ti dice di no <sp> ti dice di no perché c'è un motivo, e tu mi permetti di chiedergli il motivo, e tu sei pronto a voler capire il motivo, allora io ti faccio mediazione. Se invece tu vuoi semplicemente comunicare: "Vedi che è successo così così, e quindi siete fuori dalla casa, okay?". Uno gli può dire: "No guarda non è così". Ma non c'è volontà dall'altra parte a entrare in comunicazione, per cui è sempre bipartisan, insomma, la cosa. L'accuratezza <sp> è quando il mediatore si sente veramente di aver valorizzato. A volte c'è un procedimento, a volte c'è tutto questo desiderio di voler poter risolvere la situazione, il nodo critico nella quale si trova adesso la cosa. Il mediatore può veramente, se competente, può veramente veramente portare a dare una soluzione anche definitiva, a volte.

p1#16: e ti è mai capitato che per questi aspetti culturali, per queste differenze culturali, religiose eccetera, hai trovato difficoltà nel comprendere il punto di vista della persona? Oppure magari anche a riferirlo, semplicemente?

p2#16: eh, sicuramente. Sono centinaia<aa>, non so quante mediazioni ho fatto. Sì, sicuramente. I punti di vista <ehm> sì. Sì, sì sicuramente <sp> soprattutto sono i punti di vista quelli che a volte fai più fatica, perché ovviamente non devi convincere nessuno e non sei lì per convincere nessuno. Per cui non

bisogna prendersi troppi carichi. Sì, sicuramente a livello/magari anche nella scuola. Le opinioni diverse, quando indichi una persona neoarrivata come vuota, con poche o niente conoscenze ecco. Cioè la scolarizzazione pregressa <ehm> è un rischio non da poco, perché non potendosi esprimere, lo studente non può far capire che ha una scolarizzazione pregressa. E anche lì, non per forza <sp> se non ti sa fare un'addizione con il metodo che tu usi in Italia, non vuol dire che lui non sappia fare un'addizione col metodo che lui usa nel suo Paese. Quindi, il fatto che non sappia il metodo, però sappia fare comunque la somma o sappia fare l'addizione, lo rende comunque portatore di conoscenza, però con altri strumenti, con altri mezzi, insomma. Poi ci sono a volte delle classi che, insomma, parlo ovviamente/io non faccio mediazione nelle scuole da tanti anni, però parlo della mia esperienza pregressa. Entrano in gioco tantissimo tanti aspetti culturali, come si crescono i bambini, come <sp> le donne come affrontano i propri rapporti con gli uomini, con le malattie. Il fatto di non voler andare dal medico, oppure di andare troppo. Tutte queste cose qua. Il caldo, il freddo a volte, cioé <sp> no, pare niente ma ho lavorato con/essendo una mediatrice io di professione, di base, nell'immigrazione riesco a lavorare tantissimo/nel senso che non mi rendo neanche conto quando sto facendo mediazione. Io insegno italiano come L2, e in realtà sto facendo mediazione, perché è una mediazione di significati, una mediazione di suoni, una mediazione di <sp> di aspettative, perché devi mediare anche queste cose. Non puoi avere tutto subito e<ee> cioè <sp> mediazione dei tempi, no? È sempre una mediazione, entriamo in contatto con la persona, ci vediamo alle otto ma tu arrivi alle otto e mezza, come mediamo la cosa? Dobbiamo entrare in rapporto comunque. Volendo o dolendo, ci dobbiamo vedere, no? Quindi <sp> la mediazione va proprio oltre alla lingua. Ci sono tutti questi aspetti proprio anche semplici del caldo e del freddo. Ti dico, quando abbiam fatto/con la mia cooperativa avevamo un CAS, quindi avevamo dei ragazzi richiedenti asilo che avevamo seguito e<ee> mediazione continua, continua. Perché, metti <ehm> il termosifone a trenta gradi? C'è il termostato. Perché lo metti a trenta gradi in inverno e stai in canottiera? Fai fatica a capire il procedimento mentale di uno che poi <sp> ti si spacca la caldaia e ti arriva una bolletta di mille euro al mese, no? E poi li vedi in canottiera e<ee> in ciabatte in casa, e ti dicono pure che c'è freddo. Questa è la tipica cosa che gli italiani a volte <ehm> rinfacciano a chi lavora con gli immigrati: "Ecco, vedi loro". Sono tutti codici culturali che richiedono mediazione continua, anche quotidiana, di significati, di aspettative, di obiettivi, okay? Dove vuoi arrivare? Lì. Ma quanto tempo, che tipo di lavoro serve per arrivare là? Quali strumenti devi utilizzare? Eh, ma non ce li hai? Quindi come fai ad ottenerli? Per cui è una mediazione continua, continua proprio di significati di base. Perché stiamo parlando/quando parliamo soprattutto di adulti, si parla di questo. E non puoi mettere nella testa di nessuno un concetto se non gli è proprio <laugh> non viene richiesto e non va fatto, chi te lo fa fare, comunque <laugh> quindi sì insomma, voglio dire che il mediatore proprio di base poi queste cose le incontra e dici: "Ma come fai?". Io sto con sto maglione, con tre maglioni di lana che ne so, in casa, ma teniamo <sp> altro che riscaldamento globale, cioè, voglio dire. Quindi questo, non so se ho risposto alla tua domanda.

p1#17: sì, sì, sei stata molto chiara. Poi volevo chiederti una/riguardo due cose che potrebbero sembrare un ostacolo alla comunicazione. Volevo chiederti come ti comporti quando magari <ehm> la persona non so, si agita, utilizza un linguaggio molto colorito, come ti comporti in quel caso?

p2#17: dipende chi è <laugh> è sempre "dipende" in una mediazione, okay? Nella mediazione è sempre "dipende". Dipende dove, chi, con chi sei. Se sei all'aperto, se sei al chiuso, se hai un qualche supporto, quanti anni hai, come ti vede la persona, quindi come la persona che hai di fronte ti vede come donna. Cioè, che concetto ha sulla donna che prende posizione all'interno di un discorso e<ee> culturalmente e religiosamente parlando, qual è la tipologia del problema di cui si sta trattando. È veramente nel torto oppure ha qualche ragione? Tutte cose che valuto sempre. Il fatto che una persona mi alzi la voce durante una <sp> cioè, valuto tanti aspetti. Valuto anche la mia stanchezza. Quante volte ho ripetuto lo stesso concetto? <ehm> c'è gente fuori che mi sta aspettando? Come siamo messi con i tempi? Tutte queste cose magari sembrano così, però il mediatore valuta veramente e seriamente tutti questi aspetti, dovrebbe, almeno. Io almeno cerco, okay? Prima, poi, di pormi di un determinato

modo. E quindi, sono quella che posso essere molto dura, se serve, se serve proteggere, a volte. Perché, che ne so, se c'è il marito e la moglie, la moglie mi sta zitta in un angolo e/cioé dovremmo parlare con lei e lui magari vuole <sp> lui va fuori e si parla con la moglie. Cioè, nel senso <sp> si valuta veramente caso per caso, okay? A volte invece <ehm> valuti di non rispondere in modo duro, ma rispondi in modo da poter calmare la persona e cercare di entrare nella comunicazione. Quindi, veramente si va caso per caso, e dallo storico che si ha con la persona o con l'istituzione. O con/se è un procedimento da lungo tempo, se è una cosa mordi e fuggi, capito come? Cioè, dipende veramente da tanto, e ci sono tante dinamiche in base a tutte queste <sp> per questo dico che il mediatore non può inventarsi. Perché come fa uno che sa solo l'inglese a entrare e fare il mediatore così. Tanti sanno l'inglese, ma non ti sanno gestire una situazione che potrebbe diventare una bomba ad orologeria, voglio dire. Cioè, può veramente complicarsi la situazione, a tal punto che questo potrebbe essere anche un fallimento nella mediazione perché non si è stati in grado di poter/di mettere in contatto le due parti.

p1#18: e invece sempre parlando del lato più culturale, c'è un/di solito quando l'immigrato o comunque la persona estranea alla cultura dell'istituzione fa gesti diciamo, peculiari alla sua cultura, che significano un qualcosa di specifico, tendi a spiegarli all'istituzione? Come ti comporti?

p2#18: dentro/all'interno di quel colloquio, di quell'incontro?

p1#19: sì, se la persona fa un gesto che significa qualcosa di specifico.

p2#19: certo. Certo, sì, sì. Il mediatore è tenuto a farlo. Ci sono codici culturali e a volte se non li capisce, chiede etc. Però <sp> cioè, se io conosco <sp> adesso, potrei dire, conosco molto bene, o meglio di altre culture, quella nigeriana <sp> posso dire che se uno mi fa una determinata cosa, oppure mi risponde con un determinato modo, lo capisco benissimo. Cioè, capisco il modus operandi a volte, la modalità di pensiero dietro. Dipende molto da quanto conosci quella <sp> le persone/cioè, l'altra difficoltà è quella che ti chiamano solo per la tua lingua madre, okay? Quindi <sp> questo non l'ho detto prima, però <ehm> che ne so, non permettono al mediatore di essere traversale, e se da una parte è giusto e corretto che sia per la propria lingua madre perché, in teoria, conoscono bene <sp> però è anche vero che ci sono pochi mediatori che <ehm> che hanno vissuto per tantissimi tantissimi anni nel proprio Paese. Okay, quindi ci sono veramente pochi di quelli che hanno vissuto tanto, che hanno un bagaglio diverso. Quelli che invece hanno fatto le scuole qua <ehm> o anche l'università, quelli che hanno fatto le scuole proprio dalle elementari, è come se fossero italiani. Quindi anche se la sua lingua madre è l'albanese, sinceramente dubito che possa interpretare quei codici culturali, a meno che non siano insomma, molto specifici del Paese dei genitori o del <sp> insomma della famiglia. Per cui anche lì, insomma, io non sarei molto/per quello che dico io, io sono per la mediazione alta, cioè per una mediazione dove il mediatore si vede proprio al di là della lingua che parla. Ecco perché ci troviamo, anche con la mia collega, dentro uno sportello dove ci arrivano dal Bangladesh, dall'India, dal Pakistan, dalla Nigeria, dall'Albania, dalla Polonia, Ucraina. Cioè tutte le nazionalità possibili e immaginabili arrivano in ufficio da noi prima o poi. Per cui, se non hai modus operandi da mediatore, non ce la fai. Quindi io sono proprio per la mediazione alta, per una preparazione molto alta, che non è per forza legata alla lingua.

p1#20: Certo, chiaro. Invece, l'altro principio cardine che viene sempre citato e che più o meno abbiamo già toccato è quello dell'imparzialità. Volevo chiederti, tu come la intendi? Come intendi il principio di imparzialità e quali sono le difficoltà nel rispettarlo al 100%?

p2#20: imparzialità la intendo nel/io almeno, nella valorizzazione della persona, che per me non ha <sp> cerco, almeno, seppur tendo al più debole <ehm> cerco di fare in modo che venga capito che sto valorizzando entrambe le parti. Per cui, per me, quello è molto molto importante. Deve passare, voglio che passi proprio questo. Quindi, io valorizzo l'istituzione e valorizzo la persona, per me sono su due punti di partenza a livello di valore. Per me questa è l'imparzialità come mediatrice. Però, se all'interno del colloquio c'è una parte più debole, naturalmente do più attenzione alla parte più debole. Ma credo

che poi sia etico farlo. Va fatto perché non/il superpartes è un'utopia, okay? Ma lo devi gestire però. Cioè, se prendi la parte del debole, ovvio che devi avere equilibrio. Non puoi/okay, per dirti <sp> vedi che c'è dolore, allora: "Ah vado ad abbracciarlo". Questo non sarebbe equilibrio. Nessuno ti chiede e non devi assolutamente entrare in quel senso. Cioè, quando parlo della parte più debole, sto parlando dell'attenzione a livello <sp> cioè nella comunicazione. Cioè che quella parte possa poter comunicare veramente quello che vuole comunicare, in questo senso qua. Controllando moltissimo le mie emozioni, perché a volte ci si trova <sp> che ne so <sp> come mi è successo, in casi di violenza di genere. Okay, ovvio che ti viene. Caspita, cioè. Ti verrebbe quasi umanamente di abbracciare, di toccare, di cioè <sp> però non sei una professionista. Anche chi lavora con le donne vittime di violenza <sp> attenzione, non puoi toccare la gente. Sto facendo magari un estremo, però ho sentito casi. Così come, che ne so, il mediatore che poi va nelle case. Tu finisci la tua mediazione lì, e se ci si vuole vedere, non ci si vede fuori. Ci si vede sempre in quel contesto lì. Perché? Perché tu perdi agli occhi del genitore il tuo/la tua autorità come figura intermediaria, hai rovinato <sp> dovresti ritirarti, praticamente, da quell'incontro. Non dovresti più farlo. Per cui ci sono tutti quegli aspetti là, che non vanno <sp> cioè, l'ago della bilancia non va né dall'uno né dall'altro se non che per la comunicazione in quel momento là. Per cui, per facilitare la comunicazione, se c'è una parte più debole, che non riesce ad esprimersi, che ha i suoi diritti calpestati, che è stata, che ne so <sp> ha bisogno di aiuto. Io faccio più che posso, faccio parlare, faccio comunicare, entro proprio in gioco. Faccio proprio mediazione con l'istituzione per dire, magari: "Archiviamo il servizio", "C'è questa informazione". Quindi io mi spendo, trovo altre informazioni per far sì che si trovino ulteriori chiavi di lettura o ulteriori <sp> aiuti. Ma non vado all'estremo, quello che <sp> io investo tutto, devi rimanere la figura <ehm> devi mantenere l'autorità come professionista, come mediatore. Sennò non aiuti né l'istituzione, né la persona.

p1#21: quindi le difficoltà sono prettamente emotive, diciamo. Cioè quello che potrebbe far <ehm> problematizzare questo equilibrio, è legato all'emotività della situazione, è quello che dev'esser controllato.

p2#21: il mediatore deve controllarsi su tutto, su tutto. Su come si esprime, su come chiede le cose, su come le comunica le cose che sente, okay? Se la mamma piange, il mediatore si mette a piangere, come lo sta comunicando, cioé <laugh> deve avere un controllo molto alto sulla mediazione. Cioè, ovvio che dimostri sensibilità, non devi essere assolutamente essere superpartes, nel senso che non senti niente ma<aa> devi mostrare quella empatia di cui si parla sempre in un modo/cioè tramite le parole. Perché già lei sta soffrendo, già lei <sp> esempio/oppure, già uno è arrabbiato. Le emozioni sono più a che fare con <ehm> anche dopo, come tu che gestisci queste prese di posizioni diverse, queste religioni che non capisci, o comunque non accetti, oppure queste ideologie che portano determinate persone a fare determinate azioni, anche che a volte <sp> a loro male, contro sé stessi, contro i propri figli. Deve gestire queste <sp> e soprattutto se quello che tu stai traducendo è veramente molto sofferente, cioè molto molto <sp> d'impatto molto molto grande, è successo. Ripeto, mi è successo tantissime volte, soprattutto quando fai una buona mediazione escono fuori veramente dettagli, veramente cose, perché si è creato quello spazio dove uno voglia comunicare, dove uno voglia dire anche cose veramente molto intime. Son contenta tante volte però <sp> dopo devi gestire il dopo, il dopo le scene. Cioè, cosa fai con quelle informazioni, come le gestisci e<ee> come le trasmetti, la privacy cioè anche lì, no <sp> questo è un ostacolo. Se il mediatore va a casa o in giro dicendo: "Mi ha detto questo, questo, quell'altro", ovvio che è un ostacolo. Cioè, si saprà. Deve assolutamente assicurare, soprattutto alla parte più debole, che le informazioni che vengono dette in quel momento là, vengono utilizzate in quel momento là, che io non vado in giro a dire agli altri <sp> ci sono stati casi che se la famiglia mi dice una cosa, io valuto se è importante per gli insegnanti, valuto veramente. Se è importante per far vedere lo studente in un altro modo, per far capire determinate dinamiche che succedono in famiglia, che ne so, il papà non ha il lavoro, la mamma, cioè, non lo so. Tutte 'ste cose qua. "Eh perché non parlano italiano in casa", che è una delle espressioni più famose da quando faccio mediazione, Ma, intanto, chi l'ha detto che parlando italiano in casa migliora l'italiano, e migliora

qualsiasi cosa? Uno. Anche perché ci sono studi, tantissimi studi dove, quando la lingua madre viene parlata anche in casa, aiuta moltissimo il filtro affettivo, aiuta moltissimo il/lo stabilizzarsi all'interno di un/cioè parlare italiano in casa lo puoi forzare, ma fino a un certo punto. Però gli insegnanti dicono: "Sono loro che devono parlare italiano in casa". Io ovviamente che dico a loro: "La maestra ha detto che dovete parlare italiano in casa". Ovviamente glielo trasmetto, ma faccio un lavoro diverso con l'insegnante dopo. E cerco di capire prima le motivazioni dell'insegnante: "Come mai mi dici questo?", "Da cosa lo noti?", "Cosa viene fuori?", "Che atteggiamenti ha il ragazzo?" In famiglia cerco di capire le dinamiche. Una volta che capisco le cose, poi a quel punto faccio una <ehm> do un feedback <foreign word> all'insegnante. A volte mi permetto anche di dare qualche, che ne so, queste cose che ti ho appena detto. "Non è detto", "guarda che", e alla famiglia posso dire: "Guardate che magari provate tot tempo al giorno a cominciare a inserire un po' di italiano", ma non che per il fatto che non si parla l'italiano a casa, si arrivi a un giudizio sulla famiglia, tipo:"non vogliono integrarsi" solo per il fatto che non si parla italiano. Ora, questo tipo di giudizio cosa comporta? Comporta un blocco sulla relazione con la scuola e famiglia, l'insegnante del ragazzo e la famiglia. Perché si sentono giudicati, si sentono inadeguati, si sentono non/cioè. L'italiano, quale italiano poi? Ci sono tante tipologie <laugh> quale italiano? Ci sono italiani a livello settoriale, ne hai una marea. L'italiano della tv non è uguale all'italiano che parla a scuola. Vuoi l'italiano della matematica o l'italiano delle scienze, o l'italiano della storia e geografia, che sono tre settori completamente diversi. Su ogni tipo di linguaggio diverso per ogni materia di scuola, vedete che utilizzano un italiano completamente diverso. Allora la famiglia, che tipo di italiano deve parlare a casa, che possa aiutare il ragazzo a chissà cosa migliorare? No? Allora ovvio che io, insegnando anche l'italiano, riesco ad avere un quadro molto più ampio sulla cosa. Però questo è un esempio di come a volte <sp> <ehm> la privacy è un ostacolo, la <ehm> la facilità di dare un giudizio e di etichettare le persone è un ostacolo alla comunicazione. E tutte quelle altre cose che ho detto prima.

p1#22: e invece, ricollegandoci a quello che mi avevi detto prima, cioè della necessità di limitare l'interazione a questi incontri in contesti più istituzionali, ti è mai successo che magari la persona, l'immigrato, o comunque anche l'istituzione, non avessero ben chiaro il tuo ruolo e chiedessero cose che andassero oltre quello che eri tenuta a fare? Cioè come hai detto <ehm> visite <sp> che ti chiedessero visite extra al colloquio o situazioni del genere. O, all'opposto, situazioni di diffidenza, magari?

p2#22: <ehm> sto pensando <sp> sarà perché io sono molto chiara quando/allora, uno degli aspetti del mediatore è che se l'istituzione che mi ha chiamato non conosce il mio ruolo, io in teoria, e anche in pratica, faccio capire il mio ruolo. Praticamente, faccio delle mini/prendo delle informazioni, chiedo a loro cosa vogliono<oo> ottenere da questo incontro, per cui faccio tutto una<aa> pre <laugh> una preparazione, diciamo, all'incontro stesso. Per cui <ehm> quando io faccio questa preparazione qua, normalmente ho già tipo<oo> posto i confini, ho già educato loro, diciamo, a come trattarmi, okay? Non so se mi spiego. Okay, quindi, normalmente <sp> in realtà mi permette di avere maggiore libertà nel prendere iniziativa/cioè facendo questa cosa di borderline <foreign word> cioè questa cosa di tracciare un po' i confini, in realtà mi permette di essere molto più libera. Sembra un po' un controsenso, ma in realtà è così. È molto pedagogico, diciamo. Perché poi io posso prendere iniziativa. Cioè, se io so di avere competenze altre, che possono facilitare il rapporto e possono aiutare, mi permetto di suggerire, mi permetto di far entrare altri <ehm> professionisti all'interno della <sp> che ne so, posso dire che, a mio parere, c'è bisogno di uno psicologo oppure c'è bisogno di uno/di un professionista, oppure di un educatore. Oppure, posso dire, come ho fatto <sp> cioè siccome io avevo delle competenze di insegnamento di L2 <ehm> potevo dire: "Guarda, più che di mediazione lui ha bisogno di una mediazione del linguaggio <ehm> scolastico". Quindi, in quel senso lì potevo/cioé, io pormi come quella che propone iniziati/prende iniziativa nel rapporto. E a quel punto era però un'iniziativa che io potevo fare. Se non lo posso fare, non mi propongo, e ovviamente loro non mi <sp> io almeno ho sempre <sp> io lo chiamo proprio <sp> una gestione del rapporto a livello totale. Cioè, gestisci prima, dopo, frattempo, gestisci completamente tutta l'interazione che avviene tra mediatore e istituzione. Ovviamente se non lo sai fare, dici di no.

p1#23: certo. Invece, dall'altra parte? Cioè dalla parte dell'immigrato, della parte più debole. È mai successo che ti vedessero come un punto di riferimento, che chiedessero aiuto al di fuori?

p2#23: sì. Sì, sì, da parte loro c'è molto. Verso i mediatori, soprattutto quelli che sono molto <ehm> capaci di entrare in relazione, capaci di empatia, capace di veramente anche, a volte, risolvere. È ovvio che nella parte più debole <ehm> c'è questa ammirazione anche proprio <sp> riconoscimento proprio, okay? Perché veramente si entra a che fare con <P> quando soprattutto si sentono rispettati, valorizzati, quando la loro privacy è stata tenuta, è stata gestita bene, questa cosa qua assolutamente aiuta. Però ti porta anche ad avere richieste a volte particolari. Vogliono una relazione più approfondita, vogliono, che ne so, invitarti a casa, oppure vogliono, che ne so, farti regali, doni. A volte ci sono alcune culture che, cioè, per forza devono darti dei soldi, perché magari da loro, chi ti fa un favore, glielo ripaghi in qualche modo. Per cui il mediatore, a volte è dalla parte della propria cultura, della propria/quindi sì, deve saper dire di no, quando è fuori dalla sua professione. Deve assolutamente saper dire di no, perché poi perde l'autorità, è quello il discorso. È proprio quello il discorso, perde la possibilità di svolgere e fare mediazione.

p1#24: e invece a livello magari di diffidenza o di difficoltà nell'aprirsi? Come <ehm> ti è mai successo?

p2#24: come?

p1#25: a livello magari di sperimentare diffidenza da parte della persona, se ti è mai successo e come si supera, diciamo <ehm>

p2#25: ah sì, certamente. È normalissimo. "Chi sei? Da dove vieni? Da quale parte dell'Albania?". Perché ovviamente ti devono localizzare <unclear> ovvio, è normalissimo. Poi la diffidenza, non puoi pretendere che non ci sia. E, tra l'altro, la questione fiducia, di cui non ho ancora parlato ma <sp> la questione fiducia è fondamentale. Proprio, è fondamentale per l'esito della mediazione. E la fiducia, ci si lavora, non puoi pretendere già di avercela. Per cui, tu parti proprio sapendo che c'è diffidenza, da entrambe le parti. Dall'istituzione, perché hanno trovato veramente di tutto, quindi mediatori di tutti i tipi <sp> e molto probabilmente hanno avuto delle brutte esperienze e<ee> diffidenze che l'istituzione potrebbe avere/potrebbe aver diffidenza sull'esito stesso del colloquio. Cioè, perché magari hanno provato chissà quanti, quante volte, con altri strumenti loro, e non hanno potuto risolvere la situazione, vedono la mediazione come l'ultima tappa e hanno ovviamente la diffidenza pazzesca che possa avere un minimo di risultato, un esito positivo. Per cui sì, la diffidenza te la devi aspettare come professionista, è normalissimo. Anzi, se non ci fosse, io mi pongo sempre un po' <P> a meno che, tipo, hai creato un/cioè da un lavoro di molto tempo con quelle istituzioni che ti conoscono bene, ovvio che da quelle parti lì non hanno più la diffidenza ma anzi, hanno anche fin troppa fiducia <laugh> magari un'aspettativa molto più alta, perché magari ti hanno già vista all'opera, perché così.

p1#26: poi invece volevo chiederti <ehm> allora intanto, secondo te, quali sono le qualità che un mediatore dovrebbe avere? Sia a livello di competenze, ma anche a livello<oo> diciamo psicologico, mentale, di carattere o personalità.

p2#26: beh un po' credo di averne parlato parecchio <laugh> credo che/la capacità di entrare in relazione al di là delle lingue, la capacità di gestire una situazione complessa, di gestire i conflitti. La gestione dei conflitti è fondamentale <ehm> quella di creare un luogo che è uno spazio dove ci si possa mediare, dove tutti quanti stanno/siano disposti a poter comunicare e<ee> quello di poter prendere una posizione, di poter dire di no, di saper dire di no. Le competenze a livello <ehm> culturale <sp> umane altro, certo che deve avere delle competenze a livello/certo sapere le leggi sull'immigrazione, conoscere i diritti fondamentali dell'uomo, insomma, conoscere come funzionano le istituzioni e<ee> come ci si giostra all'interno di diverse istituzioni. Perché hanno peculiarità diverse e hanno anche mindset <foreign word> diversi. <ehm> sì capire, conoscere le culture ovviamente, le religioni, degli aspetti anche comuni, però anche aspetti un po' specifici. E conoscere quelle <ehm> come posso dire, quelle/quei colori delle lingue, cioè quei colori delle lingue che sono oltre, sono la lingua stessa. Il

Pidgin English è tutto teatro, cioè è tutto un lavoro sui suoni, è tutto sulle espressioni, è tutto<oo> insomma quelle così lì, parlano chiaro e tondo, parlano in modo molto più grande. Poi ovvio che devi un po' essere un mezzo psicologo, un mezzo insegnante, un mezzo <ehm> cioè non lo so adesso, un mezzo operatore di sportello, cioè veramente purtroppo <ehm> purtroppo è talmente complesso perché non sai con chi stai parlando, dove ti trovi etc., che le competenze che potresti mettere <sp> in opera veramente possono essere le più svariate, le più svariate. Che ne so, a volte come funziona la scuola <sp> se ci hai lavorato dentro può veramente determinare l'esito di un <sp> e se non ci hai lavorato, caspita <sp> quindi sicuramente ne sto mancando altri, però proprio <sp> è/io direi proprio, è un'attitudine alla mediazione alta, a una missione, a una visione e a una missione diversa. Quella che ti vuole lì dove c'è il conflitto, dove c'è il blocco della comunicazione, ché la comunicazione avvenga. Però, non sei un superman <foreign word> e non sei una superwoman <foreign word>, quindi non è che puoi caricarti dei pesi degli altri, e non devi farlo. E non puoi portare avanti <sp> le tue missioni e le tue vedute, perché nessuno te lo chiede e magari non interessa a nessuno. E<ee> non devi caricarti tu di aspettative perché <ehm> ripeto, siccome le dinamiche all'interno di questo tipo di rapporto, di relazione che si crea, sono talmente svariate, talmente tante <sp> a volte imprevedibili, che seppur avendo le competenze di gestione del <sp> sia prima <sp> quindi prevenire, che durante, che alla fine, ci possono essere veramente delle cose inattese che te la devi aspettare, voglio dire. Ti devi aspettare l'inaspettabile.

p1#27: e invece, vado praticamente con l'ultima domanda. Volevo chiederti una tua opinione riguardo la differenza nel ruolo tra l'interprete e il mediatore, visto che in Italia spesso son figure quasi assimilate, diciamo, per alcune/per l'opinione comune.

p2#27: <ehm> status versus dinamico, io la vedo proprio così <ehm> uno/almeno a me, poi sicuramente l'interpretariato può essere molto dinamico <laugh> <ehm> però credo che sia proprio<oo> statico verso un qualcosa di più dinamico, inspet/cioè, statico e strutturato da una parte, per quanto possibile. Anche se strutturato dall'altra parte c'è quel <ehm> quel dubbio di/quel dubbio dell'esito, perché non può essere determinato da/l'interpretariato è unipartes, manca di interazione. Pensa anche solo al chochutage, o alla consecutiva, okay? Li ho fatti tutti e due. Sono utilissimi, sono importantissimi, ma tu sei un veicolo di lingua, e basta, okay? Non è che metti te stessa più di tanto. Certo che un buon interprete può usare la lingua in qualche modo molto variegato, la può usare in tal modo da captare tutte le sfumature della lingua che sente, e dei personaggi che sta interpretando. Perché, per dire, a me è capitato. C'era questa <ehm> scrittrice nigeriana che<ee> aveva scritto un libro e che io ho interpretato, okay? Qui era un convegno. Lei stava portando il suo libro in Italia tradotto in italiano e io stavo <sp> interpretando il suo intervento nel convegno. Ovvio che, conoscendo un po' le donne nigeriane, conoscendo un po' il contesto, potevo in qualche modo io, però <sp> non mi veniva richiesto di fare questo. Cioè, io interpreto e basta. Ma anche perché, ormai, la gente dicendo di sapere l'inglese <ehm> insomma a volte trovi persone che sanno l'inglese, per cui c'è tutta una scrematura. E anche a livello di aspettativa, dal quel punto di vista è diverso. Dall'altra parte, la mediazione a volte è fatta in un contesto molto più intimo, molto più <ehm> dove tu dai veramente l'attenzione a quell'incontro, a quella persona, oppure a quella riunione, a quella famiglia, a quello che è. Raramente <ehm> è una cosa pubblica, perché c'è dietro la privacy, ci son dentro tutte quelle cose che ho detto prima. Io stimo tantissimo l'interpretariato, ma io non sarei proprio capace di essere così concisa come loro. Per cui è un dono l'essere concisi e l'essere in grado di poter <ehm> inquadrare in così poco tempo un messaggio, una lingua, una cultura, cioè, nel senso/siccome l'ho fatto, capisco pienamente la difficoltà. Io <ehm> non è che dico di no. Non l'ho esercitato tanto quanto la mediazione, però ripeto <ehm> è un altro contesto, e le difficoltà sono diverse. Non è che uno è meno o più dell'altro. Per me, è più difficile la mediazione, perché è molto/ci vuole veramente tanta professionalità. E ho visto tanti danni fatti da mediatori che hanno preso la mediazione/oppure da istituzioni che hanno preso il mediatore in velocità, perché non viene considerata la mediazione come <sp> professionalità che serve. Quello è cruciale.

p1#28: infatti, volevo proprio chiederti due parole sulla situazione del mediatore come figura professionale, e quindi della preparazione a lui richiesta.

p2#28: il mediatore adesso, per me, è morto <laugh> nel senso <ehm> non c'è più la mediazione come da quando ho iniziato io. I neoarrivati sono un po' meno di tempo fa, per esempio nelle scuole. Cioè, in alcune aree è veramente <sp> la scuola si sta un po', non so, abituando e<ee> i mediatori vengono presi comunque in modo sporadico, non continuativo <ehm> non valorizzati come professionisti e<ee> questo fa sì che fai/chiedi degli interventi on spot <foreign word> senza una minima continuità. Questa porta sia a, veramente, rendere inefficace qualsiasi tipo di intervento che si è voluto prendere. Perché è inefficace, non porta da nessuna parte.

p1#29: e quindi, secondo te, questa mancanza di una figura professionale ha anche ricadute sulla preparazione? Cioè, magari si tende a prendere persone non preparate?

p2:29: sì. sì, sì. Sì, perché il mediatore che si considera professionista <ehm> diciamo che ormai fa anche un filtro <ehm> poi non è una professione che ti paga, okay? Non è assolutamente/cioè, come l'hanno <sp> come l'hanno trattata la mediazione ha fatto sì che ci sono magari degli enti che utilizzano dei mediatori proprio veramente a chiamata, okay? E riducono la mediazione alla semplice <ehm> traduzione, al semplice interpretariato, okay? Quindi è proprio uno spot per cui i mediatori che sono molto alti, non campano con la mediazione. Non campano, purtroppo, con la mediazione. Per cui <ehm> devono fare altri lavori. Per cui diciamo che è un po'/veramente <sp> un peccato nel senso/perché si perdono veramente tantissime professionalità, tantissimi operatori molto ben formati <sp> a un certo punto, come me stessa, hai veramente investito tantissimo per poi arrivare a non poterlo fare, o non volerlo più fare perché devi scegliere di vivere e, verosimilmente, arrivare a fine mese. Per cui, purtroppo, seppur nella sua complessità, nella sua alta professionalità, non essendo considerato a livello di/a livello accademico, educativo, professionale, fa sì che venga presa sottogamba da tutti quanti. E quindi, gli interventi che vengono fatti sono poco efficaci perché <ehm> perché è un cane che si mangia la coda.

p1#30: Ma quindi non è richiesta una preparazione specifica, giusto?

p2#30: no, loro decidono la preparazione. Nel senso <sp> quando io facevo i miei progetti di mediazione, sceglievo i mediatori con un certo tipo di filtro, ma io sapevo cosa fosse la mediazione e sapevo cosa cercavo in un mediatore, okay? E facevo tanta fatica a trovarne. Perché in un progetto di mediazione, ovvio che non posso comunque pagare quanto vorrei, io vengo già sottopagata. Quindi entri in un sistema che ho voluto quasi lasciare, perché sedici euro all'ora, non ti dà un contratto. Ovviamente se hai la partita IVA sai già che devi toglierti il quaranta o cinquanta percento. Se non hai la partita IVA, ti togli il venti percento. Ma, allora, chi è che viene a farti un'ora con meno di dieci euro o con dieci euro stessi? Dieci, dodici euro. Allora questo ovvio che/non sto dicendo che non siano preparati, anzi. Però poi non ti aspettare l'aspettativa che tu abbia un mediatore motivato, un mediatore che <ehm> quello che si diceva prima, che si spende, che ti dà il feedback <foreign word>, che ti dà questo e quell'altro. Perché viene pagato un'ora, ha capito che se sta mezz'ora in più per parlare con l'insegnante non viene considerato. Oppure, se viene considerato, non viene pagato. Cioè, dopo un po' la motivazione viene a mancare. Ed è un po' triste perché siamo nel duemilaventi, e i discorsi sulla mediazione interculturale <sp> ne stiamo parlando da almeno <sp> io ho iniziato nel duemilacinque <ehm> sì, duemilacinque ma io mi ricordo già da prima. Quindi i primi mediatori nel Novanta. Voglio dire, son passati quarant'anni in Italia, okay? Per arrivare poi a lamentarsi della qualità della mediazione. Non ci si può più lamentare perché purtroppo si è arrivati a quello che è. Ecco, per me questo è.

Interview n. 5 – Interpreter/mediator 1

p1#1: lei lavora principalmente come interprete?

p2#1: sì, faccio l'interprete per i tribunali e anche traduzioni scritte solo in due lingue, inglese e bangla, perché per scrivere queste due lingue c'è bisogno di grande conoscenza tecnica. Io ce l'ho solo in queste, in altre lingue no <sp> poi ho fatto tanti anni traduzione <ehm> di libri di facoltà di legge, di giurisprudenza in Bangladesh. Mio papà scriveva i libri, perciò ho dovuto aiutarlo/quindi lavoravo con lui e ho fatto questa esperienza, lavorando con lui, di conoscere tecnicamente il linguaggio che si usa per la traduzione scritta in ambito legislativo.

p1#2: quindi, mi diceva che lei fa l'interprete di tribunale ma anche la mediatrice?

p2#2: al momento, avendo un mio progetto personale, mi occupo di questo tipo di mediazione che cerco di fare con l'istituzione e con gli utenti che si rivolgono direttamente al mio servizio.

p1#3: come mai ha iniziato la professione di interprete e mediatrice? C'è qualcosa che l'ha spinta in particolare?

p2#3: sono venuta qui in Italia ventisette anni fa. Soprattutto a quell'epoca, quando sono venuta, la prima cosa è stata l'impatto personale, perché questo era il Paese dove si parla una lingua/a quell'epoca si parlava solamente quasi italiano. Parlavano, gli adulti, un po' francese, perché per loro era questo. Se vedevano uno straniero che aveva difficoltà a parlare nella loro lingua, succedeva che spontaneamente cercavano di dire cose in francese. Io all'inizio ho fatto molta fatica a inserirmi in questo contesto e, in realtà, a mano a mano, vedevo le persone che venivano dal subcontinente India, la mia provenienza, che avevano questa difficoltà. Loro non hanno mai sentito una lingua che dovevano imparare dalla A alla Z, vivendo qui. Perciò ognuno, nel loro contesto, più o meno conosceva solo questo: l'esigenza lavorativa non poteva avere una vasta conoscenza linguistica. Perciò, tutte le volte che incontravo queste persone, avevano questo tipo di difficoltà. Questo mi ha spinto, sia personalmente a me, e anche vedendo altre persone. Tra il novantacinque e il novantasei <sp> ho dovuto inserire mia figlia all'asilo nido <ehm> dicevo che in quel periodo ho riflettuto tantissimo sul bisogno, soprattutto per le famiglie, di lavorare <ehm> di sostenere le famiglie soprattutto, perché le famiglie hanno grosse difficoltà a comunicare qualsiasi cosa di cui hanno bisogno proprio per i primi passi di accoglienza. Allora, questo infatti è stato il primo momento che ci ho pensato e ho iniziato a lavorare. Il mio background mi ha stimolato tantissimo – anche perché io prima lavoravo con il pubblico – a identificare la difficoltà di cercare di inserire le persone superando le loro difficoltà.

p1#4: ha fatto qualche corso per diventare interprete e mediatrice?

p2#4: allora, io ho fatto un corso tra il novantasei e il novantasette <sp> è stato l'unico corso di mediazione culturale in ambito socio-sanitario di un post-diploma, ed è stata l'unica volta. Era organizzato dal Comune e dal Servizio Sanitario. Ho fatto questo post-diploma <ehm> poi ho iniziato a lavorare. Ho lavorato per il servizio immigrazione del Comune, perché a quell'epoca il Servizio Immigrazione aveva un organo <sp> sotto il Comune, un intero servizio che lavorava per l'immigrazione. Ho lavorato lì come operatrice, e parallelamente ho fatto altre due specializzazioni: una sul campo scolastico e un altro socio-sanitario e legale. Perciò, facendo queste due specializzazioni, mano a mano che continuavo a lavorare, ho maturato esperienza di lavoro.

p1#5: al Comune quindi era una mediatrice?

p2#5: come dicevo, lavoravo come operatrice. Ho sempre lavorato come operatrice, ma il lavoro che facevo era in gran parte di mediazione che dovevo fare per le persone. Era questo lo scopo.

p1#6; quindi ha lavorato per il Comune prima, e ora per il tribunale?

p2#6: come istituzioni, ho lavorato fino al duemiladieci, duemilaundici al Comune. Il Comune poi praticamente ha sciolto questo servizio di immigrazione, l'ha dato all'ASP "Poveri Vergognosi".

Proprio in quel momento io ho rinunciato a questo lavoro e ho cominciato a lavorare solamente con il tribunale e <ehm> in Commissione per i rifugiati. Preciso anche questo: che il lavoro che facevo nel Servizio Immigrazione dal duemilatre <sp> io lavoravo per i rifugiati, per la maggior parte. Perciò avevo metà contratto per i rifugiati, li seguivo in tutto il percorso. Facendo questo, succedeva però che, ugualmente, dovevo presentare i casi in Commissione. La Commissione a quell'epoca, non avendo nessuno che poteva essere <ehm> un interprete per loro, mi dava questo incarico di lavorare come interprete.

p1#7: quindi si occupava di loro per tutto il percorso e poi faceva l'audizione?

p2#7: ho fatto questo lavoro fino a un anno fa, fino al duemiladiciannove. Poi, all'inizio di quell'anno, ho smesso con la Commissione. In più lavoravo anche con <sp> con la Polizia, col Ministero dell'Interno <laugh> infatti nell'ambito del Ministero dell'Interno c'erano intercettazioni <ehm> poi interventi anche in aula. Così facevo tutto il percorso anche nel tribunale. Come <ehm> come mio lavoro, succedeva che tutti questi lavori che facevo erano spezzati in diverse parti. Una parte la facevo col Tribunale dei Minori, una parte con il Ministero dell'Interno, soprattutto coi poliziotti, in aula <ehm> perciò per ogni servizio che facevo, avevo un ruolo diverso, perché <sp> le mediazioni erano una cosa specifica da svolgere, l'interprete in tribunale un altro <laugh> scritto e traduzione un altro ancora. Perciò, facendo così<iì>, nel duemilatredici, ho ricominciato a lavorare un'altra volta come operatrice dopo la primavera araba. Con l'emergenza dei rifugiati, ho iniziato a lavorare di nuovo coi rifugiati, per l'accoglienza <ehm> ho lavorato con le cooperative. Il sistema di accoglienza nazionale era cambiato e, diciamo, assorbito dalle cooperative che continuano a lavorare anche ora. Allora io sono stata chiamata da questa cooperativa dove ho lavorato fino al duemiladiciotto. Poi con lo scioglimento del centro di accoglienza più grande dell'Emilia-Romagna, il centro Mattei <sp> quando ha chiuso, la cooperativa dove lavoravo è stata data a un'altra cooperativa. Allora, a quel punto, ho rinunciato. Ho scritto il mio progetto, che poi è stato approvato. Prima lo facevo come volontaria, però a mano a mano ha cominciato a crescere moltissimo. Nel duemilaventi è stato approvato e adesso devo seguirlo a tempo pieno.

p1#8: con quali lingue lavora?

p2#8: io mi occupavo soprattutto delle lingue del subcontinente India, perciò urdu, hindi e bangla, tre lingue <ehm> poi inglese <sp> e lavoro anche le persone che parlano dialetto punjabi. Loro <sp> delle persone dal Punjab, in Pakistan, loro ritengono questa la loro lingua. Soprattutto, in Italia, la maggior parte delle persone che vengono, vengono dal Punjab, e non da Islamabad, Karachi, da lì proprio pochissime persone. Io <sp> mia mamma ha imparato questo dialetto quando è andata a vivere in Pakistan, la prima lingua che ha imparato era punjabi, per questo avevo la conoscenza di questo dialetto e<ee> perciò spesso mi capita anche di fare traduzioni per loro.

p1#9: quindi quali sarebbero le sue lingue madri?

p2#9: io sono nata e cresciuta in Pakistan perciò <lp> ma mia mamma viene dal Bangladesh. Mia mamma è di origine del Bangladesh, quindi sa il bangla. Ho due lingue madri e l'hindi, praticamente <sp> ho fatto il Master's per metà in India. Poi l'hindi è una lingua vicina all'urdu e al bangla, perché viene dal sanscrito. Per me l'hindi è stata una lingua che ho acquisito proprio per questo motivo, perché la lingua hindi, per l'ascolto, ha molte somiglianze con l'urdu ma non <ehm> non quello letterario, perché quello letterario ha origine dall'arabo e il persiano. Perciò la letteratura ha un livello diverso da quello colloquiale che somiglia all'hindi e che, per scrittura, somiglia al bangla, perché la scrittura viene dal sanscrito. Perciò, questa lingua, è stato facile impararla. Però comunque l'hindi, l'urdo e il punjabi le uso solo per comunicare, non per iscritto. Per lo scritto, una persona deve avere un livello molto alto, per conoscere specificamente ogni parola. Questo io non lo so.

p1#10: quindi come lingue madri direbbe Bangla e<ee>

p2#10: bangla e inglese. Però anche urdu colloquiale, sono molto abile perché sono cresciuta lì.

p1#11: che tipo di tecniche di interpretazione usa di solito? Simultanea o consecutiva?

p2#11: simultanea l'ho usata poco, perché simultanea <sp> riesco a farla in inglese e in bangla. Siccome la lingua bangla è molto complessa, la simultanea in inglese per me è più facile, ma non molto facile in bangla, perché spesso andare dall'italiano al bangla è difficile. Ci sono delle parole aggiuntive o modificate, quindi ci vuole prima il testo, sennò non si riesce a fare simultanea. In tribunale, quando faccio l'interprete, non faccio la simultanea, pochissime volte capita. I giudici quando raccontano, non hanno pause, perciò la simultanea non riesci proprio a farla.

p1#12: certo, capisco. Arrivando nel vivo, invece <sp> il mio lavoro si concentra principalmente sull'etica e sui codici etici, visto che in Italia è<èè>

p2#12: zero.

p1#13: ecco, quindi volevo chiederle <sp> innanzitutto, cosa pensa dell'etica? Pensa che abbia un ruolo importante, sia per i mediatori che per gli interpreti?

p2#13: racconto due storie, che sicuramente daranno un accenno su come l'etica sia zero in Italia <ehm> prima racconto di un ragazzo che faceva l'interprete in Commissione per i rifugiati. Questo ragazzo proviene da una zona del Bangladesh dove si parla un dialetto particolare. Questo dialetto lo parla solamente la popolazione di questa zona. Ma questa zona è la zona dove ci fu la prima immigrazione verso l'Inghilterra, perciò sto parlando del millenovecentotrenta, millenovecentoquaranta e, mano a mano, ci sono tantissime persone che sono andate in Inghilterra. A quell'epoca le persone che sono andate in Inghilterra <sp> loro <ehm> non avendo avuto a che fare con l'amministrazione locale, vivevano in modo isolato. La seconda generazione, per esempio, non ha mai imparato la lingua nazionale. Come succede anche, per esempio, ai Siciliani che sono andati in America. Lo stesso esempio. Ma adesso, in questa generazione di adesso, del duemilaventi, questa zona ha tutta l'amministrazione locale controllata dal governo centrale, dove ci sono tutte le scuole nazionali, università, college <sp> è tutto nazionale. Non esiste più che questo popolo parla solamente questa lingua. Tutti parlano la lingua nazionale, perché è totalmente cambiato il sistema nazionale, per la scuola, l'università. Tutte le persone vanno a lavorare in altre città. Per la comunicazione, ovviamente, si è diffusa la lingua nazionale. A parte questo, è successo che questa zona, essendo molto ricca, e avendo commercio locale e internazionale molto avvantaggiato, conta altre persone che vivono insieme a loro, che si sono trasferite. Il dialetto non esiste più in questa zona. Le persone, può darsi che in casa, con i nonni o coi genitori, ancora comunicano con questa lingua. Però non è <sp> invece questo ragazzo ha manipolato le informazioni dicendo che i richiedenti asilo di questa zona parlano solo questo dialetto, diffondendo la notizia anche in Questura. Lui ha trovato questo gancio, con un background storico. Negli ultimi sette, otto anni, in Bangladesh è successo che questa zona è stata una zona molto molto fertile per i fondamentalisti, che facevano scappare gli abitanti in cambio di denaro. Prendevano i soldi e i poveri andavano in Libia e Medio Oriente. Perciò, con il flusso dalla Libia all' Italia, sono arrivate tutte queste persone con la nave. Perciò lui ha diffuso che queste persone parlano solo questa lingua. Lui teneva i contatti del centro, di tutte le persone. Nome, cognome, numero di telefono. Ovunque andava, trasmetteva questa informazione, riguardo questa lingua. Invece non era vero. L'etica di queste persone, in quel caso, è il denaro, non è assolutamente la mediazione. Invece, per catturare questo meccanismo, ho lottato e ho tentato di spiegare a tutte le persone questa dinamica. Gli altri, non conoscendo questo posto, questo tipo di lavoro, questa specificità, non potevano accettare quello che spiegavo. Per loro quello che dico io, o quello che dice lui, hanno lo stesso valore. Se io non ho l'etica, se io non ho questo specifico chiarimento della mia professione, le persone non hanno modo o strumenti di controllarmi. In quel caso, io non potevo dire che deontologicamente <sp> che queste sono cose che voi, Commissione, Questura, dovete conoscere. Questo è un esempio complesso di questo fatto. Perciò, per uno che vuole fare questa professione, da dentro deve nascere e crescere questo chiarimento, che io devo essere un mediatore con questa deontologia, criterio e chiarimento. Io stessa devo valutarmi, se è giusto fare una cosa o no, perché non c'è uno standard precisato da seguire.

p1#14: pensa, quindi, che questi codici potrebbero essere uno strumento utile?

p2#14: penso che ogni servizio che usa un interprete, li deve conoscere. Se non lo conosce, non devono utilizzare questo servizio. Come con i medici, spesso succede che, senza mediatore, senza nessuno, il medico cura il paziente. Vedendo la sua sofferenza, fa il suo dovere. Puoi dire che loro hanno una conoscenza del corpo talmente precisa che riescono a dare una medicina, una cura. Invece un servizio che non conosce questa persona dettagliatamente, non riesce a "curare" questa persona. Servono mediatori. Però io dico sempre che se noi non abbiamo deontologicamente questi codici, non sappiamo giudicare il mediatore, allora è importante <sp> non possiamo usarli. Secondo esempio: questi giorni sono stata chiamata da un responsabile di un servizio dicendo: "Guarda c'è una signora in situazione molto molto critica, con molti problemi, come possiamo risolvere?" Ho chiesto: "Con chi posso parlare?" Mi ha risposto un ragazzo, dicendo: "Io sono il suo mediatore". "Tu sei il suo mediatore, cosa vuol dire?" Tu puoi essere un accompagnatore, che l'ha accompagnata, ma non puoi essere il suo mediatore. "No, no, io sono un mediatore, lavoro come mediatore". Allora, siamo a questo livello, che una persona che accompagna una persona presso un servizio si presenta come mediatore, perché precedentemente questa persona era stata usato da un servizio. Dopo, il servizio non sapeva che ha continuato a seguire questa persona. Hai capito come è stata svolta questa attività? Il servizio, per facilitarsi, usa qualsiasi persona, che per profitto personale utilizza queste persone accompagnandole in diversi servizi.

p1#15: quindi si può dire che l'etica è importante ma molti non ce l'hanno ben presente.

p2#15: non gli è stato insegnato!

p1#16: invece volevo chiederle un'altra cosa. Il codice etico per gli interpreti italiano somiglia a quelli di altri Paesi, e uno dei principi di cui si parla è il principio di accuratezza. Lei come intende questo principio?

p2#16: per me, l'accuratezza sarebbe come il mediatore deve essere, specificatamente è il riportare esattamente la fatica che la persona porta in un servizio, e spiegare a questa persona esattamente cosa il servizio riesce a offrire, e come questa persona potrebbe accedere a questa offerta. Se sono un interprete, e il mio ruolo è essere in mezzo tra utente e servizio sociale, devo essere molto chiaro nel dire ciò che la persona sta chiedendo e ciò che il servizio può offrire, fino a che punto riesce ad arrivare. Faccio un esempio: questa persona, ovviamente, senza capire il quadro del servizio sociale, di cosa riesce a offrire, continua a dire tante altre cose. Invece, il mediatore puntualmente, in quel caso, deve dire: "Noi siamo qui, e il servizio può offrire questo, questo e questo". La stessa cosa dobbiamo fare coi servizi, specificando i problemi della persona e indicare, se serve, un altro tipo di servizio. Questo tipo di cose, un mediatore le deve sapere, e qui sta l'accuratezza.

p1#17: e invece questo principio come si applica a un contesto come il tribunale?

p2#17: il ruolo è distinto. Se vado in udienza <ehm> in udienza di convalida dell'arresto, faccio un esempio. Una convalida di arresto e un'udienza del collegio di assise sono due cose completamente diverse. Quando una persona va in tribunale per la convalida dell'arresto, questa persona naturalmente racconterà: "Ah io non ho fatto nessun reato, mi hanno arrestato, io ho fatto questo, questo e questo". In quel punto, il giudice non vuole sentire queste cose <sp> l'interprete, in quel caso, con il permesso del giudice, deve spiegare a questa persona che siamo in sede solo con il giudice che gli convalida l'arresto fatto dalla polizia. Poi, in un secondo momento, quando arriverà alla data dove c'è il dibattitto e tutte le altre cose, solo in quel momento racconterai questo. Invece, quando siamo in un'aula, lì bisogna <sp> capire a che livello siamo, per quale motivo siamo lì. Normalmente, succede che sono già state condannate e due o tre anni sanno bene come funziona, allora bisogna spiegare perché la condanna già pronunciata aumenterà o diminuirà, non bisogna andare e capire tutto. Tutto quello che si racconta, la persona l'ha sentito già mille volte. Lo sa benissimo di cosa si parla. In quel momento c'è un gruppo di giudici che devono ascoltare tutto quello che è successo.

p1#18: invece quando si tratta di interpretare le testimonianze? Come si interpreta accuratamente, quali sono le difficoltà, magari a livello linguistico?

p2#18: ogni volta, qualsiasi cosa dico in italiano <sp> l'accuratezza è questa, quello che la persona sta dicendo, l'interprete deve interpretarlo testualmente, sennò ha una grandissima responsabilità. Se io sbaglio a dire qualsiasi cosa, questo concetto potrebbero cambiarlo, qualsiasi parola, i giudici o gli avvocati potrebbero interpretarlo diversamente. Questo cambierebbe la situazione della persona che è accusata di reato. In quei casi, bisogna essere molto attenti. I poliziotti <sp> spesso succede nel momento di verbalizzazione della denuncia, portano una persona dalla strada, scrivono il verbale. Dalla testa sua, di quello che sta scrivendo, alla testa della persona che ha poca conoscenza di tutto questa deontologia, e fa la denuncia. Perciò, in aula, questa cosa veramente complessa spesso succede. Succede che gli avvocati furbi approfittano di questa cosa, anche dicendo che la persona non parla italiano, ha bisogno di interprete, se anche lo parla poco. Questo senza fargli presentare la persona che è venuta a fare interprete in quel momento [della verbalizzazione]. Io penso che anche questo è un fatto molto importante. Qualsiasi persona che la Polizia chiama a fare interprete al momento di verbalizzazione, deve essere presente in aula per dire la testimonianza: "Sono stata chiamata dalla polizia". Oppure se anche la persona condannata, mi ha chiamato lui, perché questa persona non ha strumenti di farlo, la Polizia non mi ha esplicitato che non ho capacità di farlo. Per poca serietà di questo lavoro, si fa sempre. Questa è l'accuratezza. Io non posso essere oggetto di pesare su una persona che non ha fatto questo reato.

p1#19: e quali sono le difficoltà nel rendere un concetto in modo esatto? Magari, difficoltà a livello linguistico o culturale.

p2#19: linguistico no, ma culturale sì. Perché quando succedono queste cose, la persona tante cose non le racconta perché sono ovvie. Perciò per loro non è naturale esplicitare certi fattori, perché questo è l'ovvio per queste persone. Invece quando si verbalizza, queste cose non sono ovvie. Perciò chi deve verbalizzare non esplicita e non chiede, la stessa cosa succede anche con la persona che sta raccontando. Perciò una persona più preparata potrebbe essere importante in questi casi, dove riesce a dare questi spunti di chiarimento sulla verbalizzazione in ogni momento. Questo non solo in tribunale. La stessa cosa succede per il quasi novanta percento dei casi dei richiedenti asilo politico, per la verbalizzazione delle memorie, la verbalizzazione di tante piccole cose in Commissione.

p1#20: allora qui mi collego con un altro principio, quello dell'imparzialità. Lei come intende questo principio? Ed è diverso tra quando fa l'interprete o la mediatrice?

p2#20: allora, l'imparzialità deve essere in qualsiasi servizio che un mediatore, traduttore o interprete va a svolgere. Il suo ruolo deve essere proprio come <sp> come puntato nella sua fronte. Questa deve essere la prima cosa. Quando non c'è questa imparzialità nel suo lavoro, il lavoro è completamente fallito. Perciò, questo è come la Bibbia, è la Bibbia di questo lavoro. Perciò, io penso che un mediatore, la prima cosa che deve capire è che questa è la Bibbia. Poi deve imparare tutti questi punti, e poi andare a lavorare. Sennò <sp> penso all'esempio che ho detto prima, succede così. Qui in Italia è veramente/ancora dobbiamo maturare moltissimo, perché non abbiamo questo concetto. Io proprio <sp> non do la colpa all'Italia al cento percento <ehm> anche l'immigrazione che è successa in Italia, le persone hanno pochi strumenti. Questa è un'altra difficoltà grave. Non avendo le persone lo strumento, non gli danno questo peso, mai. Se glielo davano, questo servizio li preparava. Spesso è successo così. "Oh facendo così posso finire il mio lavoro va bene così." La risposta era spesso questa. Qualche volta, quando io ho sollecitato: "Dobbiamo essere più precisi", la risposta era: "No no va bene". Perciò abbiamo avuto anche questo tipo di risposta, spesso. Se trovavamo la situazione da battaglia, dalla parte degli immigrati, o comunque di contestazione, potevamo preparare meglio.

p1#21: quindi, riguardo il principio di imparzialità, quali sono le difficoltà che si trova ad affrontare nel rispettarlo? Ci sono dei momenti in cui si è portati a schierarsi?

p2#21: l'imparzialità mi ha portato a <ehm> a diverse cose su cui rifletto nella mia vita. Uno è questo: come dicevo, abbiamo scarsa immigrazione. Perciò le loro aspettative e conoscenza, o le loro aspettative di ricevere una risposta di ciò che gli spetta, non è lo stesso che riceve dal servizio, oppure che io riesco a comunicare. Perciò, per loro io sono il vincolo tra la comunità e il servizio. Succede che questo tipo di ruolo, quando si ha una comunità, è visto dalla comunità stessa come un punto di riferimento ma, se non riesci a dare il servizio chiesto, sei la nemica. Quindi da amica diventi nemica.

p1#22: quindi hanno aspettative nei suoi confronti? Come mi diceva all'inizio, magari anche nell'ambito delle Commissioni, da parte di una persona che ha seguito precedentemente che poi si aspetta un aiuto.

p2#22: normalmente succede che in Commissione, se capita che questa persona era mio utente io spiego sia a lui che ai commissari che io conosco la persona e ho seguito il suo percorso. Loro, siccome mi conoscono da anni e conoscono il mio lavoro, loro mi accettano come interprete. A quel punto allora spiego alla persona che, da quel momento, io non c'entro nulla con lui e con la commissione, che sono qui solo per tradurre ciò che il commissario chiede e ciò che lui risponde. Anche quando andrà in tribunale, deve sapere che io non c'entro niente.

p1#23: e in quei momenti, quando magari sente delle storie difficili, è difficile mantenere il distacco o gestire l'empatia?

p2#23: lavorando da tanto tempo <ehm> come dicevo, io sono sicura di questo punto, che io non devo schierami <sp> allora si riesce. Ma se una persona dall'inizio non ha questo chiarimento, può darsi [che non riesca]. Non riesce, deve conoscere molto bene il tutto.

p1#24: certo, chiaro. Invece cosa/cosa pensa della tutela che viene data a interpreti e mediatori, anche rispetto alla gestione di situazioni di stress o alle conseguenze dell'interpretare storie traumatiche?

p2#24: soprattutto succede per intercettazioni, casi molto gravi. Situazioni dove ci sono i complici fuori <sp> questa cosa deve essere sempre nascosta, nessuno deve sapere al momento dell'intercettazione, chi sta facendo l'intercettazione. Succede che abbiamo trovato che la persona che intercettava ha già comunicato con le persone intercettate. Perciò queste sono delle cose che i servizi, quando prendono le persone a fare intercettazione al tribunale o qualsiasi servizio, questa cosa devono tenerla come segreto professionale, sia dal servizio che dalla persona che le fa. Se non ha questo segreto professionale è un disastro pericoloso <ehm> tutto il processo è biased <foreign word>. Questo non va bene, assolutamente.

p1#25: invece, tornando alla questione delle Commissioni, per esempio <sp> quando c'è un malinteso di tipo culturale, tende a spiegarlo? Come si comporta in questi casi?

p2#25: faccio un esempio <ehm> prima, la commissione/perché dal duemiladiciotto la commissione è stata fatta diversamente. Il Ministero dell'interno aveva preso tantissimi nuovi giovani e orientato queste persone con formazioni di tre mesi per fare il commissario. Prima, erano/ogni servizio mandava un rappresentante (uno dalla Questura, uno dal Comune, uno dalla Prefettura). Così era composta un/una commissione. Succedeva che ogni volta veniva/il rappresentante della questura, non è unica persona, ci sono diversi responsabili, dal DIGOS <ehm> dal commissario, uno dal <ehm> diversi orientamenti. Succede che queste persone, diventate responsabili di diverse specifiche direzioni, dentro di loro avevano già formato la loro preparazione del lavoro. Perciò in quest'ottica facevano domande. A volte maltrattavano, succedevano tantissime cose. Spesso io ho cercato di fermare <ehm> alcune domande erano troppo dirette, io ho cercato di chiedere: "Posso chiedere, con il suo permesso, di fare questa domanda non così?" Sì, io spesso in quel periodo lo facevo. Ogni tanto succedeva che trattavano le persone abbastanza male. Anche in quel caso cercavo di spiegare la situazione o il contesto di provenienza. Ad esempio, una persona veniva da un centro in montagna. Prima di venire ha dovuto camminare due ore, perciò aveva sudato e puzzava. Questa cosa/quanto potrebbero umiliare questa persona? Perciò io ho cercato tante volte di spiegare questo tipo di cose. Prima

capitava, ma da quando ci sono i giovani più preparati non è più capitato. Loro erano veramente molto molto preparati.

p1#26: quindi capita che magari le persone diano per scontate alcune cose, e lei interviene per chiarire?

p2#26: sì, un po' serve, quando si vede questa cosa. Anche se parliamo di deontologia, questo è un punto molto importante. Se mi trovo davanti una persona in questa situazione, è importante spiegare. Faccio l'esempio di un signore che è stato incriminato dicendo che lui <ehm> ha abusato di un minore. Ha abusato, come? Lui ha abbracciato questa bambina di dodici anni in stazione, ed è stato accusato di questo. Invece questo signore/la Polizia ha verbalizzato tutto quanto, ma al momento della verbalizzazione non è stato chiamato nessuno ad interpretare. Lui che è rimasto in Italia per undici anni che non ha mai visto sua figlia. La vedeva sempre nelle foto mandate dalla moglie. Perciò, dentro di sé, aveva questo desiderio talmente forte di rivederla che <sp> nell'ultimo periodo lui ha perso la casa, non aveva documenti, viveva in stazione. Perciò ha avuto un vuoto di memoria, ha visto questa ragazza, questa bimba che sembrava sua figlia, e lui l'ha abbracciata. Lui cercava di parlare in italiano, ma per tutto questo fattore lui, come verbalizzazione, risultava un clandestino privo di documenti <ehm> ha fatto queste azioni, ma non <sp> al momento del tribunale, quando ho parlato con lui che mi ha spiegato quello che successo <ehm> io poi ho fatto due domande, lui in quel momento ha iniziato a piangere, e io <sp> si è deciso che forse sarebbe stato meglio valutare la sua situazione psicologica prima di decidere qualsiasi cosa. Infatti il giudice ha mandato<oo> questo, che prima va valutata la situazione psicologica per poi far avvenire la seduta col consenso del medico.

p1#27: e questo in tribunale?

p2#27: sì, perché lui era stato arrestato, era in carcere. Era stato chiamato per l'udienza in tribunale, e in quella sede siamo riusciti a chiarire.

p1#28: quindi anche in momenti come questi l'aspetto culturale è importante. Poi le volevo chiedere se le è mai successo che magari ci fosse diffidenza da parte delle persone per cui doveva interpretare?

p2#28: sì, succede molto spesso.

p1#29: e invece è mai successo che le chiedessero aiuti fuori dalle sue competenze?

p2#29: sempre, sempre <ehm> tantissime cose che succedono, tra cui potrebbero essere quelle con l'ambasciata. Poi adesso, come tanti altri Paesi forse anche <sp> ci sono persone che danno questo servizio tra immigrati e ambasciata, in cambio di denaro. La gente, spesso, preferisce fare questi servizi pagando queste persone. Perciò <ehm> capita che qualcuno che non ha il mezzo viene, e trovando questo servizio gratuitamente sparge la voce, e viene anche chi ha la possibilità di pagare. Se succede che io lo faccio perché so che la persona non riesce a pagare, allora aiuto. Ma io divento poi nemica della persona che offre il servizio pagando. Perciò, capita tante volte che queste persone <ehm> mi vedono male. So che non è di mia competenza, ma a volte lo faccio perché so che la persona è in difficoltà.

p1#30: quindi vede una differenza tra il ruolo di interprete e quello di mediatore?

p2#30: oh sì, assolutamente. Il mediatore, come dicevo all'inizio, deve mediare, no? Deve mediare considerando la cultura, e considerando le cose non spiegate, non verbali. Deve spiegare anche il concetto <ehm> dello stato di salute della persona, tutto. Ad esempio, prima dei colloqui, qualsiasi colloquio, un mediatore deve conoscere esattamente il motivo per cui è stato chiamato. Il mediatore inoltre deve instaurare un minimo di fiducia con la persona. In entrambi i casi, un mediatore deve sapere tutto. L'interprete, no. L'interprete invece deve interpretare cosa sta dicendo. Faccio un esempio: l'interprete si utilizza in posti molto specifici, dove i professionisti fanno un servizio per un utente. Un interprete in quel caso deve interpretare senza conoscere la persona, o il professionista e il suo lavoro. Questa è una semplice spiegazione, ma ogni lavoro di interprete o mediatore spesso varia da caso a caso.

p1#31: quindi capita che i due ruoli si sovrappongano?

p2#31: ogni tanto sì. Faccio l'esempio del tribunale per i minori. Quando vado a lavorare lì, sì. Perché<éé> capita che i genitori non capiscono esattamente perché siano lì. Il tribunale per i minori non è per condannare i genitori, assolutamente <laugh> perciò i genitori, quando arrivano lì, per loro sono condannati dai figli o dai servizi. Perciò vengono con un peso molto più grande di quello che in realtà. Perciò lì bisogna interpretare, spiegare Bisogna spiegare, non fare solo traduzione.

p1#32: invece, quando ci trova a interpretare una persona che utilizza espressioni volgari oppure un linguaggio un po'

p2#32: alterato? <laugh>

p1#33: sì, esatto.

p2#33: in quel caso bisogna fare censorship <foreign word>, sia da parte del servizio che della persona. Gli sfoghi sono normalissimi, perché uno che cerca di dare un servizio a una persona <sp> può darsi che questa persona si ribelli, che sia poco istruita, che abbia scarsa conoscenza. Ci sono tantissime cose che ha sofferto questo servizio che sta cercando di aiutare questa persona. E allo stesso modo, la persona in esigenza, che non vedeva nulla a parte un muro oppure black curtain <foreign word>. Questa è la difficoltà maggiore delle persone, perciò in quel caso bisogna usare un linguaggio soft da entrambe le parti.

p1#34: e questo anche in tribunale, dove il linguaggio dovrebbe essere più preciso?

p2#34: io in tribunale cerco sempre di dare una lettura molto molto letterale, e questo è giusto. Però qualche volte capita che la persona non è in grado di comprendere le parole molto tecniche. Ha bisogno di una spiegazione. In quei casi succede che io chiedo sempre il permesso ai giudici di spiegare, perché questa persona forse questa terminologia non la capisce.

p1#35: e invece con i gesti come si comporta?

p2#35: ogni cultura ha i gesti che significano diverse cose. Faccio un esempio del subcontinente India, "sì" si fa così in alcune zone [scuote la testa lateralmente]. Questo gesto significa "sì". Culturalmente ci sono anche dinamiche molto profonde. Soprattutto, in alcune culture le donne non possono entrare nel meccanismo di alcuni argomenti molto maschili, oppure per le donne un uomo non deve interferire. Per queste cose, bisogna essere molto chiaro. Altrimenti la mediazione potrebbe essere un fallimento. All'inizio <ehm> come dicevo, per ogni caso da trattare, dobbiamo conoscere bene cosa stiamo trattando. Faccio l'esempio di un servizio che ha chiamato una ragazza di venti anni a fare mediazione per utenti di sessanta anni che hanno avuto problemi tra marito e moglie. Dobbiamo essere attenti a chi stiamo utilizzando per il servizio. Oppure faccio l'esempio di una persona che ha avuto a che fare con prostituzione o problemi extra coniugali che ha trattato in tribunale. Lì, se chiamo una ragazza di venti anni, fare questo servizio è un fallimento. O un ragazzo che deve parlare con un servizio e utilizza linguaggio alterato, va calmato spiegando il meccanismo del servizio, come si deve comportare. Quindi è così che bisogna fare.

p1#36: quindi, ad esempio nel caso del gesto del "sì" che può sembrare un "no", va spiegato giusto?

p2#36: sì, certo. Va spiegato.

p1#37: quindi quali sono secondo lei le qualità che un interprete o mediatore dovrebbe avere?

p2#37: un mediatore, la prima cosa che deve essere, è una vasta conoscenza e istruzione, il massimo livello della sua cultura di origine. Una persona che non ha avuto una piena istruzione non deve fare questo mestiere. Perché la massima istruzione gli dà sensibilità, conoscenza, e gli dà una cultura tale che riesce a conoscere altre culture e altri contesti e interpretare. Una persona che ha fatto le scuole medie non può. Perciò, questi sono i primi requisiti di una persona che deve fare questa mansione <ehm>

poi deve veramente conoscere ogni servizio, quindi l'aggiornamento è fondamentale in base a dove lavora.

p1#38: tornando ai codici deontologici, crede che sarebbero utili senza la componente della formazione?

p2#38: deve essere sempre ripetuto l'aggiornamento, ripetutamente. Fargli ricordare le cose principali. Non basta leggere il codice, assolutamente no. La formazione è fondamentale, si sviluppa tutti i giorni. Bisogna essere sempre coerenti, aggiornati ogni volta che esce qualcosa di nuovo. Sennò è un servizio molto biased <foreign word>.

p1#39: in Italia, secondo lei, come è la situazione rispetto all'importanza per la deontologia o per la formazione? Queste figure professionali [mediatore e interprete] sono adeguatamente riconosciute?

p2#39: io vorrei dire che ora diverse università offrono formazione di questo tipo <ehm> come voi giovani che state facendo questo tipo di ricerca abbastanza importante <sp> quindi penso che in futuro cambierà. Come servizio, ancora non esiste che anche i lavoratori di questi servizi abbiano l'obbligo di una educazione interculturale. Prima, all'inizio del duemila, c'era obbligo per le scuole di fare un aggiornamento, ora non più. Ma nuovamente, se si riesce a imporre di nuovo la formazione ai servizi, le cose potrebbero cambiare. Sappiamo che ci sono difficoltà da superare, ma per ora non si hanno soluzioni. Qualsiasi cosa si voglia promuovere, bisogna camminare tutti insieme, sennò non riusciamo a risolvere. Tutti devono essere istruiti.

Interview n. 6 – Interpreter/mediator 2

p1#1: good morning, thank you again for your help.

p2#1: you're welcome. How long is this going to take?

p1#2: I think half an hour, forty minutes, more or less.

p2#2: okay, no problem.

p1#3: okay, thank you. So <ehm> first of all, you work both as an interpreter and a mediator, right?

p2#3: yes, I do.

p1#4: okay. So, my first question is why did you decide to become an interpreter and mediator? Are there particular reasons or did it just happen?

p2#4: <ehm> okay, I think <sp> at the beginning it was an opportunity I had, a work opportunity. I had to use my skills and my <sp> knowledge of languages to work and help other people. So, they asked me because they needed someone to help them. So, I gave my consent and I did it. On the line, I decided that it's actually very useful, because they don't have many interpreters who hear Nigerian, who speak Italian, who are willing to help other people. And there are lot of language barriers among people, immigrants. So, it became something useful that I could do to help other people. So that was it.

p1#5: and did you undertake any kind of training or courses to <sp> to do it?

p2#5: <ehm> okay <ehm> at the beginning I started with my knowledge from my <sp> from my degree course. I did something about the English language and international history, like I said, and then I came here, and we had to go to the Italian language school to get the B1. But when we got in, we had to be trained, okay? Like an agency employs, you and then they organize training sessions for all the interpreters, so you get training within the work.

p1#6: oh okay. So, it was after, okay. And <ehm> what are you mother tongues and your working languages, other than you mother tongues?

p2#6: okay. See, I do a lot of languages that are not my <P> for example, the Creole. The Creole language group is very interesting <ehm> very interesting language. It's like a mix of English, and other languages. Sometimes you have a little bit of French, a little bit of everything. And <sp> they speak Creole in some West African countries, so I have learnt that because I realize it's something I can do, and I have friends who speak Creole. So: "Let's speak to them, asking them questions", and they kind of like taught me and I was able to hear it, and it's like <ehm> another language that I do that is not my mother tongue. Then, <ehm>back in school, in my secondary school days and afterwards I learnt some languages that were not my mother tongue because I thought: "Okay I love languages", but they later became useful for my work.

p1#7: so, what would you say you mother tongues are?

p2#7: <ehm> Like my/I don't know. Like my mother tongue <P> my official language is English and, in my house, in my family we use English as a lingua franca. Then we have my dialect of the Igbo, that I learnt after learning the English language. I had to learn the English language as the first language because, I told you, in my country we have <ehm> close to two hundred different languages and dialect groups. Okay, so it's difficult to understand ourselves, so we<ee> thought it was okay when the British introduced the English language, we all thought it was a good idea to use this as a lingua franca. And so that was what I learnt, those are the first things because it was useful for me to communicate with my friends, to communicate at school, to communicate with my neighbours, to communicate with my brothers and sisters. And then I also spoke some of my dialects <ehm> which is the Igbo and other languages that I learnt both in school and <sp> not dialects, they're not really dialects, it's a language, the Igbo language, it's not a dialect. We have dialects of the Igbo language, but this is the language. So, I learnt that too.

p1#8: so, at work you use English, Italian, French you said?

p2#8: creole. I do not work with French.

p1#9: oh right, 'cause it was part of the Creole.

p2#9: and I work with the Aruba, I work with Igbo and I work with the Pidgin English, which is the Nigerian equivalent of the Creole.

p1#10: okay, that's a lot <laugh>

p2#10: you need to work with the Pidgin English because most of the people you deal with are not very educated. So, if you ask them to speak the normal English, the formal English, they may not understand you. It'll be difficult for them to express themselves. So, we try not because they can't speak English, but because we want them to express themselves fully, to really explain the problem because we are going into conflict resolution and we want them to be as fluid as they can be. So, we ask them to tell us whichever language they are very conversant with and whichever one they need. If you are good with it, you go. That's how interpretation works here.

p1#11: okay, thank you. Oh sorry, is it okay if I record this on zoom so I can transcribe the interview?

p2#11: yes!

p1#12: thank you. Okay so, my work/No, sorry! Before going to this, I wanted to ask you where do you usually work, like in courts, Commissions or in offices maybe.

p2#12: we do a lil-/a bit of everything, but obviously sometimes we have time clashes. For example, you are expected to be <ehm> in different places at the same time, so you have to choose whichever works better for you. So, once you give them the professionality, because we are liberi professionisti <foreign word>, that's the way they call us <laugh> then you have to be free. So, if I choose/I have my <sp> my chain of preference. I prefer to work with the Territorial Commissions for the recognition of International Asylum and Protection. That's the U//N, United Nation Commission for Refugees. That's my preference. So, there was the peak period, when I'd do that with the Prefettura <foreign

word>. Sometimes they need me for mediation, in some cases at the Comune <foreign word>. So, I go there when you have a family that has a problem understanding some issues that the Comune wants them to understand. So, I go there as a linguistic <ehm> mediator, a cultural mediator. In the court, sometimes they need me to translate some documents into Italian, so I go back to translation. With the police, they also need me to translate some documents, very little documents, so I work with the Carabinieri <foreign word> and the Polizia di Stato <foreign word>. So, it's like, wherever they call you, and you have a chance, you go. You have lot of movement, of going around.

p1#13: yeah, I can imagine! And so, my work focuses on ethics in interpreting <sp> in community interpreting. So, my question about this/my main question is: what do you think of ethics? Do you think/What role does it play in this work, in this profession, according to you.

p2#13: ethics. Can you/Can you be more specific about what kind of the ethics you're looking for?

p1#14: I mean, specifically I am analysing the role of codes of ethics and <sp> do you think they're useful and do you think that this deontology and this kind of guidelines are useful and play an important role in your job.

p2#14: ethics? In the use of? Sorry I can't hear.

p1#15: yeah, codes of ethics, 'cause I've been analysing them.

p2#15: yes, okay. Yes, I think they are very important. The ethics and all of that. I think it's very important. Before we start, one very important part of our job, which we have to sign before we start, they call it the codici di deontologia <foreign word>, which is close to what you're doing <P> okay, where we have the faint aspects of the interpretation and what we're supposed to do <ehm> well, we all agree to it and we all sign, but it's important because it's how/ it guides us, it tells us what we're to do and what we're not to do. But I can say that most people don't always follow through. Do you understand? They don't keep to it. There are times like <ehm> I'll give an example. <ehm> This issue of being neutral as an interpreter. You have to be very neutral, you don't have to know this person, you don't have to be involved. Some interpreters have problems with this.

p1#16: yeah.

p2#16: they tell you: "You have to trust my professionality, because if I am being professional, then you should trust me to do what I have to do without being involved". Sometimes this is hard, okay? But I think it's useful, but it's hard. <ehm> I was talking to a South American interpreter, my colleague who is from South America. Now, they have/the South Americans are very few in <sp> maybe in Italy, because it's very far from their home so there are very few of them here. And when they see each other, there's this bond/they try to create a bond, like: "You're my sister, we're from the same place", so they want you to hang out with them, to go take a coffee with them. This is against our codes, the ethics and all of that <ehm> they don't understand when she tells them: "Sorry". You can't tell people: "This is my code, this is what I'm supposed to do". You can't tell this to a person you're/to the person you're helping, but you have to keep a distance. And so, they're looking at you like: "You're being snobbish, this is not how you are", and you can't tell them: "No, I can't do this because it's against my ethics and all of that". So, there's always a little bit of conflict there but I agree that, for the good of the interpreter and for the good of the person you are assisting, we need to keep our distance and observe all of this ethics. It means that we are more professional. Not to get too involved. But sometimes <P> I don't know if you understand <P> do you understand? But sometimes it's difficult because <lp> if, for example, in Africa we are meant to be one, we're one, we feel each other's pain. It doesn't matter if we've known each other before. If someone has a problem, I'm supposed to like, help him, you know like empathy and so on. But if I'm supposed to be neutral, that kind of makes that impossible. And there's a block, there's a block. I/We insist not to speak in English during a translation <unclear> if we're dealing with someone who is not educated. Now, the person is speaking in a dialect that he's more comfortable with, and then you distance because you're professionally distant <sp> he

189

feels you're cold, so he doesn't really tell you what he's going through. There's/there's <ehm> a barrier. So, sometimes/you know that it's for your own good and it's for this person's good for him to know that you're really like <sp> very very professional, but sometimes it doesn't work. But not always. I think it's a good thing, but you need to get, maybe, the training that we have got to know how to separate these things, okay? So that you're not so cold and, at the same time, you're very professional. Because sometimes we have to deal with lawyers <P> yeah, we have to deal with lawyers and judges tha/who don't want to you<sp> to be too close to your/like very strict. And they judge you as not professional, once you start talking with your<rr> assisted, okay? So, they don't want you to do that, they want you to just be as/you just have to watch all of this. But I think what you're doing is very important, the <ehm> <sp> the interpreter, the mediator has to be someone who is very professional, well prepared and <ehm> who has very good values. I think it's a very important thing and you should keep to it. That's what I think.

p1#17: in fact, impartiality, or neutrality, is one of the<ee> principles that you find basically in every code of ethics of every country. So, I wanted to ask you/you told me that neutrality means to be like separated in way, not to be too close. And do you think there is a difference in this principle, how you <ehm>, I don't know, how you mean it whether you are interpreting and mediating? Does it change something?

p2#17: yes. Yes, it does change something. So, when I am interpreting, it's very easy for me to be neutral, okay? Because <ehm> in an asylum context it's very easy <ehm> all I have to do is<ss> to translate word for word what the person is saying, so it's/they make their decisions and they decide on what to believe and what is credible and what's not credible. So, it's easy for me to be<ee> very very neutral and <sp> that's the first thing they usually tell the asylum seeker, that "the interpreter here is neutral, so don't expect her to be on your side or on our side". So, they tell them this, we don't tell them, the commissioners tell them: "These interpreters are neutral so don't hope they'll help you" So, it makes it easier for me when they tell them: "Look, she's neutral, so she's not on your part, she's not on our part". It helps me, because there are very important <sp> interviews that decide a person's fate. So, he thinks I'm <ehm> I'm on the side of the interviewer, and things go bad for him, he could come out and take it out on me. There have been cases of threats <sp> where he would go out and threat you because it's your fault that they didn't give him this thing. So, in that one it's easy for me to be neutral, but in a conflict resolution/that's when you're mediating <lp> you have to really come down and you can't be neutral. They don't expect me to be neutral <ehm> when I get called <sp> by the Comune <foreign word>, for example, usually there are psychologists present, because these are very difficult cases, with families. So, when I'm talking, they allow me to make suggestions <lp> because there are linguistic-linguistical differences that somebody doesn't understand what you are saying. I/I keep giving this <ehm> this example. For example, I was at the Comune <foreign word> and there was a girl <sp>, a lady who would not look at the person talking to her, she would not look at the psychologist, she would not look at the operator. She kept her face down. And so, the conclusion was: "She's not interested in anything we want to say, she doesn't want to listen, she's altready/she's biased and she's always/ and she's very rude". And I had to tell them: "No, she's being very polite" <sp> because <sp> in her training, in her context, from her country, she can't look at you <sp> she has to look down, as a sign of respect, she has to look down" <sp> because if she looks at you and then she<ee> she's kind of like challenging you. So, I/I am looking at you because I'm rude. So, when they understood this, it calmed them a bit, because they wanted to give her <ehm> an expulsion, they wanted to expel her and tell her to go away and all of that. But when they understood this, that she was just being respectful <sp> she wouldn't talk in most cases even if it was a mediation for her to talk and <sp> for her to tell them what the problem was. But she wouldn't talk. And when I asked her, she's very upset and she said: "Look I cannot talk, because I don't want to say something rude. If I start talking, I'll get angry and I'll say something rude, and I don't want to do that, so I prefer to <sp> keep quiet". In this case, I'm the one going in, I'm not being neutral, I'm just trying to help them resolve a conflict that you have a misunderstanding <sp> and this person <P> because I understand

the culture, this person is not being rude, this person is just <P> so sometimes in one context I'm allowed to be neutral, in another context they let me <ehm> like dig in and help them resolve. They are very happy when you're able to resolve a conflict, yeah.

p1#18: okay, so you'd say that these <ehm> difficulties in<nn> being neutral in some contexts are related to empathy, basically?

p2#18: yeah. Yeah, yeah. It's really very/of course, even in the<ee> asylum context, when you<uu>'re expected to be a hundred percent neutral, sometimes there are cases that you can identify with, you can relate to, and this makes it difficult for you to stay neutral. The other person might not be able to relate to it and he might think it's stupid, but because you can relate to this, you can <sp> you don't laugh, do you understand? So, if he's like "I'm afraid of this". Even if the person interviewing him laugh at him like "oh this is stupid", you don't laugh because you know <sp> what it means to him, do you understand? So, sometimes it's not so easy to be neutral.

p1#19: yeah, of course. I can imagine <lp> so basically <ehm> I wanted also to ask you if you have ever experienced some pressures from one or the other side. Like, for example <ehm> also cases in which people ask you more things out of the<ee> interview context like, they ask you for help. Cases in which they <yy>see you as a reference, maybe?

p2#19: yeah<hh>, yeah, yeah, yeah. This happens a lot, because they don't understand <ehm> what it means to be neutral and<dd> they do/we don't tell everybody: "This is my <ehm> the ethics of my job and these are my codici di deontologia <foreign word>, the ethics and the things that we have to do". You don't say this to anybody, this is for you to know how to prepare yourself, but when get/sometimes I find myself like <lp> someone is explaining some concepts, you know, that's very typical to my culture, very typical to my background <lp> and then, like I said <sp> it's real, but it might not be real to you <P> just like some things that are real here might not just <sp> might be stupid to some people over there. And they don't finish, they're like/sometimes they don't even have the words to express themselves and they're like: "But you know what I'm talking about, you help me tell them what I'm talking about". I'm like: "No. I know what you're talking about, but I can't tell them what you're talking about". So just/sometimes they don't understand. They think you're just trying to deny that/you're not trying to help them. So, sometimes I have to stop <sp> and stop translating to explain to them: "Look, no matter what you think I know, I can't help you<sp> because it's your call, you're the one who has to tell them what's the <ehm> problem and all of that". So, when I tell them, some of them understand if they want to, but not always. This is where it's difficult to be so neutral, because, you know <sp> our professionality <sp> <ehm> is such that we're not to move, we're not to laugh, we're not to cry <lp> you just stay detached from the whole story and<dd> <sp> keep a blank face. Well, I know some of my colleagues, who are very/one of my Albanian colleagues, who is extremely professional because she's been doing this job for close to twenty years and over. So, she's very very focused and very professional. No matter what, she never laughs, she never gives no facial expression, she's just like <P> she's very professional <laugh> but sometimes <ss> I'm with very sensitive <ehm> cases, where there are people who are crying, not because they are hurt, but because they relived some traumatic experience in their past. When they start reliving them, you know <sp> you can't stay neutral. So, at this point, luckily, I'm allowed to leave when I get uncomfortable. So, I just leave. I excuse myself <ehm> and they can also excuse themselves so <sp> I excuse myself and I go. And <ehm> I've worked with people who have seen me actually break down because I don't know, I just broke down <sp> just <P> and it's not new to me because I've also seen some commissioners <sp> break down, because it's not like <sp> you're not dealing with robots, you're dealing with people so sometimes you can feel the pain, so it's not always that easy. Likely, there are very few cases like that.

p1#20: okay, thank you. And<dd> <ehm> in the same way but as the opposite, have you ever experiences like people who expressed distrust, who didn't want to talk to you or were like/didn't' want to open, didn't manage to do it?

191

p2#20: yeah, yeah. We'd had people who would come in and say they don't want interpreters. They see you sitting there and say they don't want interpreters, that they don't want you to <sp> have<ee> <ehm> anything to do with their interview. So, sometimes people tell them: "Okay", and they excuse you. Sometimes they insist that they have to, because sometimes it has to do with how much trust they have in you. If the Commission, the Prefettura <foreign word> or the Comune <foreing word> they have a lot of trust in you, they insist that you must stay, and so after a while these people, they <P> but they still don't trust you. But if they notice that the Comune <foreign word> trusts you for a lot of reasons, for example, then they can kind of like calm down. For example not/ it had happened to me that at the Prefettura <foreign word>, when you'doing an asylum case, there are people who really don't trust you because of what they want to say but there's a few<P> but in conflict resolutions among families and the Comune <foreign word>, there was a day I came and actually there was a family with a very particular case. These are families with problems, issues <sp> and they said that no, they don't want an interpreter and/even if they wanted an interpreter, they didn't want one from Nigeria. So <sp> they insisted that they would not do any interview with the Comune <foreign word> if I was present. So <sp> I had to excuse myself and then they had to explain to them that I'm one of the most trusted, because they have done some background checks on me, and I was one of the most trusted and I came highly recommended. So <sp> the Comune <foreign word> would have to use me. So, somehow it <lp> it bothers me, but I understand, you know? Because we live/the Nigerian community in Italy is not really that big. There are lots of people saying: "There are lots of Nigerians here", but it's not as big as Nigerian communities maybe in the United States, in the UK, where you have a large community. So <sp> a word from me, and the fact that <sp> just like: "Oh you know this people, with these problems here". It would have effects on them. So, they are right to want to protect their family from something scandalous, so I don't get angry, <tt> I just try to be as professional as I can be and once I'm gone, I also remember that the ethics of my job does not allow me to share particulars of the interview, so I just walk my way and if they don't hear anything, they become more relaxed.

p1#21: and another principle that is recurring in these codes is this principle of accuracy. So, it seems to be a vague principle, it is simply written that the interpreter and the mediator need to be accurate. According to you, what does accuracy mean, and does it change in interpreting or mediating, or is it the same thing?

p2#21: okay. Accuracy represents things like/the accuracy is good, it's important to be accurate I <sp> I totally agree. But this is it: I speak Italian as a second language, like most of those people speak English as a second language. Now, English is a little <sp> is<ss> easier, much easier than Italian language for me. Okay, you study English you know we don't have this gender thing. It's like/It's like that, you know, every verb, every adjective <sp> it's/it's a problem for me. But I think the most important thing is to understand the vocabulary very well and to get the context meaning, okay? So sometimes, you have people who might think that the interpreters are not as accurate as they should be. Okay, I mean, it's always going to be a problem. We learnt Italian as a second language, so we might not be perfect. Okay, I have my son who started his kindergarten and now he's in the superior school. He speaks much better Italian than I do, he speaks very good English, but his understanding of the culture and the linguistic peculiarities of Nigeria is missing. So, what do you prefer? <sp> Someone whose Italian is good, not perfect, good, but who has an understanding of what you need, or someone whose Italian is perfect but has no understanding of all the all cultural background and everything that makes that person unique? So, you have had to<oo> <ehm> argue with this back and forth. Yes, I know there are some languages that are so difficult to<oo> to get. Like somebody just comes from one country and need a particular language, and that's the only language he understands. They have to go looking for an interpreter who speaks that language. And you might get an interpreter who speaks that language, who doesn't speak good Italian, so what do you do? You still have to mak/you have to do the interview anyway, so this kind of like <P> well before they start, they are already biased, they are talking like: "We're going to get an interpreter whose Italian is not perfect", and sometimes because of my English accent or intonation, it doesn't make the word sound as it

should. For example, I was in the court once and the judge wanted to make a story out of palma and p<aa>lma, and I was like: "Please, you understand, vino di palma", and they're like: "No". Okay, "di P<aa>lma". When did Italian become as stressed? You/you get the message, you understand, you're just trying to make a big deal out of a soft thing. So, with all due respect, Judge, you got the message, he's talking about this wine. And so sometimes they're trying to make these things, but it's just because they're just biased. So, we have some Italians like you who <ehm> who studied English and/so they speak English, they speak Italian perfectly, so they go to an asylum context, it has happened all over. Our best Chinese interpreter is an Italian lady, she does Chinese very well, extremely well. She's really good, but sometimes when people/just because you speak English, there are so many aspects of this interpretation that you don't understand, and so they we- like: "Okay, so we prefer it when we're writing, because it makes our writing fluid". So, sometimes they are biased. But let it go. And they go with these people and after two, three interviews <sp><laugh> they discover that they don't have it, and they have to let them go. And then they call us back again, because well <lp> you know the asylum thing is so<oo> dicey, that's/if it goes well <sp> at the Commission, then everything is okay, but if it goes bad at the Commission, it's going to get to the judge. And the judge is going to tear it apart. And if it goes well with that first judge, it gets to another judge. So, people will keep asking: "Who did this translation?" So, they can't just know some things. So<oo> I don't know <sp>, the important thing is to be accurate and<dd> don't <ehm> but we also realize that the verbs, you have to have an understanding of all the facts. So <lp> something that might be difficult for whom <ehm> who has/was not born here. So, I don't know what they mean by accuracy, they are/<ehm> for people who speak English, they really do not complain about us, you understand? Because they understand some of the English thing. If we tell them: "Okay, if we have a problem, we say it in English" <unclear> but it is more difficult for a language like Eritrean, where <sp> nobody understands how to help them. You just have <sp> trust the interpreter and do nothing.

p1#22: yeah, so <sp> according to you, accuracy is more about transmitting the message.

p2#22: yeah, it's the message. That's in my opinion. But in their opinion, I have to translate word for word, and I do that. Okay, behind every word <sp> there's a meaning, and they want to know everything they say, so they can decide. And so it's <laugh>

p1#23: about this, I wanted to ask you <ehm> when you're in a situation where the person starts to<oo> swear or says like vulgarisms or coarse words, what do you usually do? Like <sp> do you soften them or<rr> repeat them?

p2#23: okay, luckily for me <ehm> I have the/I've worked with these people for years, so they are kind of like my friends <lp> so some privileges I take, okay? I take privileges <laugh> If someone's being rude, I can just say to him: "Just cut that that out right now" and <sp> without repeating it to them. I'd just tell them: "Look, I prefer not to use/not to repeat this", like <sp> but then I just told to cut it, it's not useful to get the picture. Like there was a man who trying to describe, in detail, some aspects of an intercourse and I was like: "Stop it already!", do you understand? <ehm> and they ask: "What is he saying?", then I say: "You don't need to hear this, because he's trying to be <sp> extra, do you understand?" So, I don't think/we get the picture <P> you know, just summarize and we get the picture. And sometimes too I've been with <ehm> someone who was not so nice and she said she wanted to hear everything, so <laugh> they put in a very uncomfortable position and <sp> when I couldn't take it anymore I said: "Sorry, me, I'm a lady. I don't think I want to say this anymore", and they said: "Okay, okay". But I heard of my colleagues who even got insulted, threatened by <sp> those people because they are desperate, no? <Aa>nd if you are not comfortable, you are allowed to leave. You're allowed to leave, you just tell them: "Sorry, he's being/ he's not being courteous and I can't stand it anymore", so I can leave. It makes it easier because I don't think it's even that necessary to start exchange words with anybody, so you just walk away. If I was in that situation, that's what I would do, I'd walk away.

p1#24: okay and when it comes to gestures? Like some gestures that in some cultures mean something particular, do you explain what they mean, if you understand them of course?

p2#24: no, I'm a translator and an interpreter, I interpret words. So, if anybody/ if he makes a motion with the head <sp> this/I don't interpret that. If the person keeps on nodding, I'd call the attention, because sometimes the person interviewing is busy writing, they don't see all of what I see. So, I have to point to the attention that she didn't say anything. Because if I say: "Yes" and all she did was <nodding>, she might come back as "I never said that", and she's right, she didn't say so. So, I have to limit myself to what they say. But if <ehm> they keep doing this, maybe because they're traumatized, they're crying, and at the same time they need to talk and they keep doing [nodding], maybe giving me the nod and all the stuff, I could call the attention of the person interviewing them and telling like: "She's nodding, so you might want to look at it". Because I didn't say: "She said yes", I'll say: "She is nodding", okay? So, the/they write that she's nodding. So then <sp> nothing would be said like: "She said yes", okay? But, "she's nodding". So that makes it easier.

p1#25: And so, according to you, does the <ehm> the interpreter has a visible role in the interaction or is he/she just an invisible entity? There are many <sp>opinion about this.

p1#25: it depends on where you go, who you are with. Like I said, in the asylum context, you're almost invisible <sp> you are almost invisible. In a mediation, if it has to do with linguistic and cultural, then you are visible. And then, as I said, it all depends on where you find yourself. If it's a place where/in the court, you are super visible <laugh> it's like you're almost/you're the one on trial because then it's going to appeal, and they are looking for everything and then someone's "crucified". Then you become very visible, so it depends on where you are and on what you're doing.

p1#26: okay. I also wanted to ask you <sp> according to you, what are the main qualities that an interpreter and a mediator should have? Like personal or not.

p2#26: okay <sp> a good understanding of the language, okay? As much as you can, try and improve yourself. Have a good understanding of the vocabulary because it's not like just/you can't limit yourself to one vocabulary, you have to like try the medical vocabulary, the legal vocabulary, everything, because you never can say who is coming your way so you can't always say: "Ah quella cosa, quella cosa" <foreign words>. No, you have to know what you're talking about, and that's good. You have to have a minimum of preparation, okay? Here in Italy <sp> they don't really insist on/they just use the people that they see in most contexts. And then, when they get a good one/and it's also because they don't want to pay, so when they see a good one who is always/who is really well prepared, then they/they're happy but they don't want to pay and so many people don't want to waste their time getting a degree, getting a master's, going professional, because they don't pay you well. But I think if you really want to help someone, really help the person, it gives you satisfaction and you get satisfaction from resolving conflicts <P> I get that when I help a family to understand an issue, I get satisfaction when a family sticks together. So, if I'm able to explain everything and resolve that conflict, I think I'm happy. I'm not really so particular about the money, the money will come, I hope. But I'm more fulfilled with that. I think that you should go with this preparation, you know you're doing something important for someone, okay? Not just/when people give me: "Oh thank you so much, thank you so much for everything". I think it's okay, I think it's okay. I think you need a very good/you need to invest on yourself, you shouldn't stop learning, you shouldn't stop learning. You should really really get information about so many things. You can't just stay like <P> I was telling you, I do Creole which is a <P> spoken in Liberia and some countries in Africa, and you have to understand what they're talking about. So if they have a peculiar problem, you have to <sp> you google it, you have to do research, you have to do everything you want so that you know something and you don't just go there saying: "I don't know, I don't know". It's good.

p1#27: and <ehm> a question that is really complicated for me <sp> according to you, what is the main difference between interpreters and mediators? Because in Italy, if you look at the legislation, they kind of look like the same thing, sometimes. But what do you think the main difference is?

p2#27: yeah this is actually <ehm> this is the problem we have here in Italy. Like in America/in America, in the United States and in some English-speaking countries like in England, mediation is higher than interpretation. Because a mediation/sometimes you have to do an arbitrarium una cosa cosi <foreign words>, arbitrato <foreign word> to do this mediation <unclear> that's/here in Italy, I think interpretation is lower than mediation/sorry interpretation is higher than mediation, so when you're going as an interpreter, they are supposed to pay you more. When you're going as a mediator, they pay you less. And I noticed that in Italy <ehm> they don't/they treat mediators as people who/you know anybody can do mediation. They don't ask you anything they're just like: "Okay do you understand her language? Okay please tell her bla bla bla". And then you go away, because the Comune <foreign word> already want you/they made up their mind what they're going to do. They just want you to convey the message and they do what they want to do. And sometimes they do bad, because they don't understand what they're doing. So, in that case, as a mediator, it should be more/you should be better prepared, you should go for training, you should do a lot of things. You should have a knowledge of anthropology, you should a knowledge of so many things, so that you help them to really resolve the issue, you mediate between two parties. They look at you with respect, saying: "Oh we need people", but it's not enough. For interpretation, I know you get a school of interpretation where you are taught languages. So, a higher school, scuola superiore <foreign words> so because you invest a lot in that one, here in Italy they just rate you higher. But they are two different things. Interpretation is for you to convey a meaning to another person, mediation is to understand the thought. In interpretation you convey words, in mediation you convey meanings, what they want to do, what they want to say, what is causing the problem, what is causing the conflict or what can resolve the conflict. They are two different things. But you just have to really think on your own understand what you're doing and do your best in each context and change roles. These are personal things I argued about it because I understood that in Italy <ehm> I had a contract with some people and <sp> and I was doing interpretation. And when it was time to pay, they wrote there that I was a mediator. So, I said "why did you write in the contract that I'm a mediator?" Because I realized that interpreters in Italy should be paid from twenty euros and above, that's the law <unclear> while mediators can be paid from twelve euros to eighteen or twenty- So, they don't want to get tight by the law using you as a mediator for interpretation. So, they wrote this. And <sp> Italy's like this <laugh>.

p1#28: so would you/I mean, that was the next question but I think you answered, because I wanted to ask you if you think there is a lack of recognition of the roles of mediators and interpreters, also because of <sp> like, many institutions use ad hoc interpreters, just people who know the language and that's it, without being trained.

p2#28: well, that's what they do, because they <sp> most of them work with immigrants <sp> with immigrants and most of them are working with asylum seekers, people who came with the <sp> ships or the barche <foreign word>, which Italy treats as an emergency, a crisis. So, when there's a crisis, you use everything that you have to manage the situation. So, we are paid for/as interpreters from a fund that comes from an emergency fund. So, everything works still like that because they really didn't see that someone has come to stay. Mediators, on the other hand, are supposed to be around and available at every step of the way. Like, we help in schools, we help in local government, everywhere. Now, there should be a specialization, there should be <ehm> an albo <foreign word>, if you want, where everybody can be written and listed and all that. But we don't have this, because <sp> we are foreigners, most of us are foreigners, and they don't want to look/okay, this thing is an issue, it has come to stay. And also, because most people don't want to really stay, like most people do this interpretation work as <ehm> a side work, do you understand? They want a fixed job that pay them goods, bills. They don't want to do it as a fixed job <lp> there's no nee/so they are not interested whether or not you organize this. So, they go in, and when they go sometimes you get someone who

is not as good, sometimes you get someone who is better. But most times you get someone who's not good, who is also looking for a temporary job. So, this is a problem on which the government has to <ehm> look into. Because now the schools are realizing it. When they get a very good mediator and they're able to resolve more conflicts, they are happy. The Comune is realizing this, that they really need a good mediator, and it's helping. But it's one thing to realize, it's another thing to pay someone. I'm not gonna stay here to help until you make up your mind to give me what it's due to me. So, I think that's just the problem, that they really need/they can't keep people using people like that just like that because they don't want to pay.

p1#29: I completely agree, yeah. And the last thing I wanted to ask you is <ehm> what do you think about training in this profession? How important is it, to become an interpreter or a mediator?

p2#29: it's very important, it should be. Like, we're talking about in an ideal situation. In an ideal situation, the training of interpreters should be paramount to every other need. But, for example, when we had to do training <sp> they would sometimes tell me: "don't go, okay? We/we want to train the ones that are really bad, so you stay because we can't afford to close the Commission at the peak, we can't afford to close the Commission. So, you just have to keep working, some of you will have to keep working while we train these ones". So, for three years there were trainings and I only took part in like two: one was because it was for victims of trafficking because I was very very involved with victims of trafficking, so they had to put me there. The second one was <ehm> it was just <ehm> the president of the Commission who said: "Ohh, the interpreters must be trained", because that's actually what the agency promised the government, that it would train the interpreters. So, when somebody comes who asks for it, then they do it. Otherwise they do it once in two years or once/you know because it's money. They don't want to do that, but I think it's an ideal situation with a real contract, everything, training. In every field, not just in interpretation, there should be periodic training of people. So that, even if you're good, they would brush you, it's good.

p1#30: Yeah, I agree <lp> yeah, I think we've covered everything. Thank you very much, it was really important and you helped me with some topics that are really controversial like <sp> not only in Italy but in every/I've seen in many guides or documents from every countries, even the ones which have an history of migration. Even Italy has it but, as you said, it's seen as an emergency, a crisis, something new, so <P>

p2#30: Now it's over, everybody's resting. I noticed that we don't have a lot of jobs anymore because there are no new <ehm> there's no new emergency, everyone is okay, so we just stay waiting and we do more mediation in this period than interpretation, because more problems are coming up. That was nice.

p1#31: Thank you again very much!

<center>**Riassunto in Italiano**</center>

Introduzione

Questa tesi si colloca alla fine di un percorso di studi che mi ha permesso non solo di approfondire le mie conoscenze linguistiche e traduttologiche, ma anche di confrontarmi anche con una serie di tematiche estremamente attuali e di rilievo, quali le migrazioni e il multilinguismo. Proprio l'ulteriore approfondimento di questi temi, oltre che della disciplina del *liaison interpreting*, mi ha spinta a scegliere un argomento di tesi che mostrasse come le lingue e, in particolare, l'interpretazione, possano diventare uno strumento di inclusione. Per questo motivo, ho scelto di basare la mia ricerca sulla complessa disciplina dell'interpretazione di comunità e, nello specifico, sugli aspetti etici di questa professione. Infatti, lo scopo di questo lavoro è stato quello di definire il ruolo dell'etica nel contesto dell'interpretazione di comunità e, in particolare, dei concetti di accuratezza, imparzialità e ruolo.

L'introduzione della tesi si apre con una contestualizzazione e una descrizione dell'interpretazione di comunità che, oltre che per altri aspetti, si differenzia dalle altre tipologie di interpretazione per i *setting* in cui viene utilizzata. L'interpretazione di comunità, infatti, si utilizza principalmente nel contesto delle istituzioni e dei servizi pubblici, fornendo supporto linguistico a servizi governativi locali, sanitari, legali e sociali, permettendo loro di comunicare con persone che necessitano di un particolare servizio e che non parlano la lingua dell'istituzione. Tuttavia, nonostante questo tipo di interpretazione rivesta un ruolo evidentemente fondamentale a livello statale, questa attività non sembra ancora essere riconosciuta come una professione a tutti gli effetti. L'inizio della professionalizzazione di questa attività viene in effetti fatta risalire solo agli anni Novanta, nel momento in cui ha iniziato a uscire dall'ombra della più prestigiosa interpretazione di conferenza (Mikkelson, 1996). Proprio a causa di questa tarda evoluzione, l'interpretazione di comunità ancora oggi manca di un effettivo sviluppo professionale, sia dal punto di vista formativo che etico, aspetto centrale di questa tesi. L'obiettivo di questo lavoro è infatti quello di approfondire il ruolo dell'etica nel contesto dell'interpretazione di comunità, concentrandosi in particolare su principi etici quali l'accuratezza, l'imparzialità e il ruolo. Per raggiungere questo scopo, ho svolto uno studio qualitativo che ha coinvolto sei professionisti che lavorano in Italia in qualità di interpreti e mediatori, a cui sono state poste una serie di domande sui temi sopracitati. A tal proposito, è importante sottolineare che il coinvolgimento di professionisti operanti in Italia non solo permette di analizzare gli aspetti etici della professione, ma rende anche possibile condurre un'analisi sullo status attuale dell'interpretazione di comunità in un Paese soggetto a significativi flussi migratori.

<center>197</center>

Dopo questa breve panoramica, ho spiegato come i contributi acquisiti dalle interviste con gli interpreti e i mediatori siano stati analizzati e successivamente messi a confronto non solo con aspetti teorici, ma anche con i risultati di un'ulteriore analisi. Quest'ultima è stata condotta su un corpus di undici codici etici ("Codes of Ethics" corpus) con l'obiettivo di verificare se e come i concetti di "accuratezza", "imparzialità" e "ruolo" fossero stati trattati in questi documenti. Lo scopo ultimo di queste analisi, e in generale di questo progetto di tesi, è rispondere a due domande di ricerca. La prima domanda riguarda il modo in cui l'etica e, in particolare, i concetti di accuratezza, imparzialità e ruolo vengono percepiti da interpreti e mediatori. Per rispondere a questa domanda, sono stati considerati sia i dati raccolti durante le interviste, sia quelli derivati dall'analisi effettuata sul "Codes of Ethics" corpus. Lo scopo della seconda domanda di ricerca è invece quello di individuare le difficoltà che interpreti e mediatori si trovano ad affrontare nel tentativo di rispettare i principi dell'etica professionale. Attraverso le interviste a interpreti e mediatori è stato possibile rispondere a questa domanda e, allo stesso tempo, anche presentare problematiche legate alla professionalizzazione dell'interpretazione di comunità in Italia.

Capitolo Uno

Il primo capitolo di questa tesi, che delinea la cornice teorica alla base del lavoro, inizia soffermandosi su tre temi tra loro connessi: globalizzazione, migrazione e interpretazione di comunità. A questo riguardo, ho spiegato come è proprio nel contesto della globalizzazione, intesa come una serie di fenomeni che uniscono il globo dal punto di vista economico, politico e mondiale (Turner, 2010: 5), che i flussi migratori hanno iniziato ad affermarsi come fenomeno di rilevanza internazionale. Di conseguenza, proprio a causa dell'aumento di contatti tra Paesi e culture diverse, la traduzione e l'interpretazione hanno iniziato a ricoprire un ruolo sempre maggiore. A questo proposito, ho fornito una breve panoramica sulla storia delle migrazioni, sottolineando la portata che questo fenomeno ha assunto ai nostri giorni, innescato da due tipologie di cause, note come fattori di spinta e di attrazione (Canagarajah, 2017: 5). Alla luce degli ingenti flussi migratori che si individuano oggi a livello internazionale, è importante quindi sottolineare il ruolo rivestito dai servizi di interpretazione nei Paesi che si trovano ad accogliere numerosi gruppi di persone provenienti da altre nazioni. Servizi di questo tipo, oltre delineare il grado di "ospitalità" che un Paese dimostra verso l'Altro, sono fondamentali soprattutto per garantire un punto di contatto tra le istituzioni pubbliche e il migrante, i quali comunicano in lingue diverse.

La parte finale del primo capitolo è interamente dedicata all'interpretazione di comunità, alla sua storia, denominazione e professionalizzazione. Considerando l'aspetto storico, è importante sottolineare come l'interpretazione di comunità sia comunemente considerata come una delle pratiche più antiche della storia (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015; Bancroft, 2015). Attività paragonabili a questo tipo di interpretazione infatti, oltre ad essere menzionate per la prima volta dallo storico greco Erodoto nel 430 a.C. (Baigorri-Jalón, 2015:12), erano infatti comuni anche nell'Antica Roma, nell'Antico Egitto e al tempo delle Crociate (Giambruno, 2008: 48). Interpreti e mediatori, spesso prigionieri o schiavi appartenenti a popolazioni soggiogate o nemiche, erano infatti utilizzati per comunicare con esponenti o rappresentanti di tali popolazioni.

L'interpretazione di comunità e la mediazione linguistica si affermarono però in maniera definitiva soltanto a partire dal 1492, quando tra gli esploratori alla ricerca del "Nuovo Mondo" si diffuse l'abitudine di inserire nell'equipaggio persone che parlassero le lingue dei territori da conquistare. In questo caso, si trattava molto spesso di ragazzi o ragazze membri delle popolazioni locali i quali, dopo essere stati rapiti dai conquistatori, erano tenuti a interagire con gli autoctoni per facilitare le attività di conquista (Alonso-Araguás: 2016). L'uso di interpreti e mediatori in questo contesto si diffuse così tanto che il governo spagnolo, nel 1681, adottò una serie leggi ("Leggi delle Indie" o "*Las Leyes de las Indias*") che, per la prima volta nella storia, regolavano i diritti e i doveri di queste figure (Gianbruno, 2008). A questo punto, ho ritenuto opportuno introdurre la figura de "La Malinche", una ragazza di origine Azteca che divenne celebre per essere stata l'interprete di Cortés a partire dal 1518, durante la conquista dell'attuale Messico. Studiare questa figura non solo permette di approfondire aspetti legati all'interpretazione di comunità, ma è anche utile per familiarizzare con aspetti etici e con controversie legate agli interpreti; La Malinche, trovandosi a fare da intermediaria tra il suo popolo e i conquistatori fu infatti spesso additata come traditrice (Zimanyi, 2015).

Tuttavia, nonostante il suo diffuso utilizzo, l'interpretazione di comunità fu gradualmente oscurata dalla più prestigiosa interpretazione di conferenza che, avvalendosi di tecniche di interpretazione simultanea, venne pubblicamente utilizzata per la prima volta, nonché coperta dai media, durante il processo di Norimberga (1945-1946) (Andres, 2013). Proprio in quegli anni si assiste inoltre alla nascita dei primi corsi universitari in interpretazione di conferenza, nonché alla creazione delle prime associazioni professionali (AIIC) (Mackintosh, 2006).

Dopo aver fornito una panoramica storica su questa disciplina, il capitolo si incentra sulle varie denominazioni a cui l'interpretazione di comunità è associata. Infatti, pur essendo notoriamente definita come forma di interpretazione volta a mettere in contatto i membri di una comunità e le istituzioni, l'interpretazione di comunità è conosciuta e connotata con nomi molto diversi a seconda

delle aree geografiche (Mikkelson, 1996a). Infatti, mentre l'espressione "interpretazione di comunità", calco dall'inglese *community interpreting,* risulta essere la denominazione più popolare, molti Paesi sembrano preferire l'espressione "interpretazione per i servizi pubblici" o "mediazione linguistica" (Bancroft, 2015).

In seguito, ho deciso di dedicare qualche parola al livello di professionalizzazione di questa attività. In generale, l'interpretazione di comunità appare infatti come un'attività che ancora necessita di un'organizzazione strutturale, il cui sviluppo a livello internazionale appare molto disomogeneo sia dal punto di vista legislativo che formativo (Tipton, 2020). A questo riguardo, Ozolins (2010) spiega come i differenti livelli di professionalizzazione in diversi Paesi sembrino dipendere dall'esperienza che i rispettivi stati hanno con i fenomeni migratori. Per esempio, in Australia, Paese da sempre caratterizzato da multilinguismo e flussi migratori, i servizi di interpretazione sono regolati a livello nazionale a partire dal 1977. Uno stato di professionalizzazione simile si registra anche in Paesi come la Svezia e il Regno Unito il quale, per esempio, dal 1994 dispone di un albo nazionale degli interpreti di comunità (NRPSI) (Ozolins, 2010). Questa disomogeneità tra i vari Paesi, secondo Ozolins (2010), ha causato un evidente ritardo nella creazione di leggi e accordi che regolino l'interpretazione di comunità e, in generale, l'organizzazione dei servizi linguistici, sia a livello europeo che internazionale (Remael & Carrol, 2015).

Capitolo Due

Il secondo capitolo è dedicato al concetto di etica e di codice etico nell'ambito dell'interpretazione di comunità e, più precisamente, ai tre concetti al centro di questo lavoro: accuratezza, imparzialità e ruolo. Tuttavia, prima di concentrarmi sul ruolo dell'etica in relazione all'interpretazione di comunità, ho ritenuto opportuno spiegare brevemente il significato del concetto di etica a livello generale. L'etica, spesso vista come disciplina che regola il comportamento umano, può infatti essere considerata in due modi: uno standard comportamentale che ogni persona dovrebbe seguire, oppure uno strumento atto a vietare modelli comportamentali sbagliati che possono causare danni a terzi (Kalina, 2015). L'etica è infatti al centro di numerose dottrine teologiche e filosofiche che tentano di fornire alla società delle norme utili che spingano gli individui ad agire nell'interesse degli altri membri della comunità (Rudvin, 2015).

In virtù di quanto discusso nel paragrafo precedente, l'etica gioca un ruolo importantissimo anche in ambito professionale, poiché spinge i professionisti ad adottare un comportamento esemplare nei confronti di clienti e colleghi (Parsons, 1978). In questo senso, la formazione sembra svolgere un

ruolo fondamentale poiché, oltre a garantire qualifiche e titoli che attestino le competenze professionali, fornisce strumenti per affrontare dilemmi etici a livello lavorativo (Skaaden, 2019). Avere questo tipo di strumenti si rivela fondamentale soprattutto in professioni in cui il benessere del cliente è particolarmente a rischio, come ad esempio accade per la medicina, la giurisprudenza, ma anche per l'interpretazione di comunità (Gentile et al., 1996). Molte associazioni professionali di interpreti di comunità, proprio per questo motivo, redigono appositi codici etici volti a fornire regole e linee guida per un comportamento etico a livello professionale (Phelan, 2019). Questi documenti, che possono essere di diverse tipologie, tendono a differire per lunghezza e specificità, variando in base all'ambito di riferimento (alcuni codici sono per esempio redatti per interpreti di comunità impiegati nel settore medico, mentre altri per quello legale etc.) (Baixauli-Olmos, 2017).

Tuttavia, è importante sottolineare l'assenza di un ampio consenso riguardo l'uso di questi codici nell'ambito dell'interpretazione di comunità. Molti studiosi infatti, come ad esempio Barsky, Kaufert e Jacobsen, sembrano ritenere le norme descritte nei codici etici inapplicabili, in quanto irrealistiche ed impossibili (Hale, 2007). In particolare, secondo Rudvin (2006), i codici etici sembrano descrivere l'interpretazione di comunità come un'attività meccanica, non considerando gli aspetti culturali, sociologici e ideologici legati a questa pratica e non trattando, di conseguenza, una serie di importanti dilemmi etici (Inghilleri, 2012; Phelan, 2019). Altri studiosi, invece, come ad esempio Hale (2007) e Baixauli-Olmos (2017), non sembrano condannare del tutto l'uso dei codici etici, i quali risultano strumenti utili se utilizzati da professionisti già formati e in grado adattare al contesto le linee guida fornite da questi documenti.

 A questo punto ho scelto di parlare brevemente della formazione degli interpreti di comunità, la quale risulta essere estremamente disomogenea. A livello generale si registra infatti una scarsa disponibilità di corsi di formazioni per interpreti di comunità, la quale sembra essere causata proprio dal basso livello di professionalizzazione legato a questa attività. Non essendo infatti richieste specifiche qualifiche per diventare interpreti di comunità, ed essendo la remunerazione di questi professionisti molto bassa, molti scelgono di non investire in corsi di formazione. La bassa richiesta di corsi porta quindi a una scarsa offerta degli stessi, causando un notevole abbassamento della qualità dei servizi forniti (Hale, 2007).

La seconda parte del capitolo si apre con i risultati dell'analisi condotta sul "Codes of Ethics" corpus. Dall'analisi effettuata su 11 codici etici, sia il principio di accuratezza che quello di imparzialità sembrano apparire in 10 dei codici analizzati, mentre il concetto di "ruolo" soltanto in 6 di questi documenti. Avendo appurato l'importanza dei tre principi in questione, mi sono successivamente

concentrata sull'analisi dei singoli concetti a livello teorico e sull'individuazione delle difficoltà che possono verificarsi nel tentativo di rispettarli.

Nel discutere il concetto di accuratezza nell'ambito dell'interpretazione, molti studiosi, a partire dagli anni '90, si sono appoggiati al concetto di "equivalenza", principalmente utilizzato nell'ambito degli studi di traduzione (Pochhacker, 2004). Con il termine "equivalenza" si indica infatti il rapporto che intercorre tra il testo di partenza e quello di arrivo e, proprio come accade in traduzione, anche nell'ambito dell'interpretazione questo concetto assume diversi significati. Secondo studiosi come Herbert (1952) e Barsky (1996), il concetto di "accuratezza" sembra essere sinonimo di equivalenza a livello contenutistico, mentre altri, come Wells (1996) sembrano intendere l'accuratezza come una resa parola per parola. Tuttavia, la maggior parte dei ricercatori operanti nell'ambito dell'interpretazione di comunità sembra concordare sul fatto che l'accuratezza debba essere intesa come equivalenza a livello pragmatico e come conservazione dell'intenzionalità e del messaggio del testo di partenza (Hale, 2004). A questo punto, dopo aver brevemente presentato alcune descrizioni del principio di accuratezza emerse dall'analisi del "Codes of Ethics" corpus, ho descritto alcune difficoltà legate al rispetto di questo principio, dividendole in tre categorie: difficoltà interne legate alla comprensione; difficoltà interne legate alla resa; e difficoltà esterne. Nella prima categoria si inseriscono le difficoltà di comprensione scaturite da diversità culturali o da equivoci a livello pragmatico (Hale, 2014), mentre nella seconda sono confluiti tutti i problemi legati alla resa di volgarità o espressioni taboo (Mouallem, 2015). Nella terza categoria, invece, sono confluite difficoltà esterne e legate a problematiche di tipo organizzativo.

Spostando l'analisi sul principio dell'imparzialità, invece, gli elementi alla base del rispetto di questo principio sembrano essere due: l'interprete non deve avere contatti o relazioni con le persone per cui interpreta; non devono esistere conflitti di interesse tra l'interprete e il cliente (Hale, 2007). A questo punto, ho pensato fosse necessario approfondire questo tema e capire come debba effettivamente comportarsi un interprete di comunità per essere imparziale, oltre a rispettare le condizioni sopracitate. Secondo Hale (2007), Rudvin (2002) e Wallmach (2002), il compito principale dell'interprete, in questo caso, è quello di garantire la massima oggettività ed equidistanza tra le parti, facendo in modo che il suo bagaglio personale, che è chiaramente da tener da conto, non infici la neutralità dell'interpretazione. In questo senso, l'interprete di comunità è tenuto quindi a interpretare ciò che sente con la massima oggettività, senza schierarsi, proprio come un attore che reciti una parte (Laster & Taylor, 1994). A questo proposito, ho ritenuto opportuno menzionare un concetto che è definito come uno dei più controversi nell'ambito dell'interpretazione di comunità: il concetto di *advocacy*, ovvero l'atto di supportare una specifica causa o parte in causa (Phelan, 2019). Mentre, da

una parte, questo concetto sembra cozzare con l'imparzialità che l'interprete è tenuto a rispettare, molti studiosi sembrano definire l'*advocacy*, sottoforma di interventi volti a chiarire aspetti culturali di diverso tipo, assolutamente necessaria a garantire che entrambe le parti si esprimano equamente (Inghilleri, 2012). Non è raro che l'interprete riscontri serie difficoltà se messo di fronte a queste due posizioni, essendo chiamato a decidere se intervenire per chiarire differenze culturali o elementi di linguaggio non verbale (Falbo, 2013). È importante inoltre sottolineare che ulteriori difficoltà nel rispettare il principio di imparzialità possono essere legate alla carica emotiva dei racconti che l'interprete si trova a riferire, la quale potrebbe portare a una eccessiva empatia verso una delle parti e, di conseguenza, a uno squilibrio.

Il capitolo si chiude infine con l'analisi del concetto di ruolo il quale, pur non potendo essere classificato come vero e proprio principio etico, è fondamentale in quanto definisce i doveri e i diritti dell'interprete di comunità. Per prima cosa ho illustrato come il modello dell'interprete "specchio" teorizzato da Avery (in Ciordia, 2017), il quale supporta un tipo di interpretazione parola per parola, sia stato gradualmente abbandonato dagli studiosi nell'ambito dell'interpretazione di comunità. Questi ultimi sembrano infatti percepire l'interprete come un vero e proprio partecipante nell'interazione, ammettendo che il professionista assuma, se necessario, il ruolo di mediatore culturale. Il capitolo si conclude quindi illustrando alcuni risultati dell'analisi effettuata sul "Codes of Ethics" corpus dei codici etici in riferimento al concetto di ruolo.

Capitolo Tre

Dopo aver illustrato gli aspetti teorici dell'interpretazione di comunità nel primo e nel secondo capitolo, nel terzo capitolo mi sono concentrata sull'analisi tematica delle interviste svolte con i sei interpreti e mediatori menzionati all'inizio di questo riassunto. Tuttavia, prima di procedere a illustrare i risultati della ricerca, ho fornito una breve panoramica sull'interpretazione di comunità in Italia, soffermandomi in particolare sulla figura del mediatore linguistico-culturale. Questa figura è stata infatti fondamentale quando, negli anni Settanta, l'Italia si trovò a gestire l'arrivo di ingenti flussi migratori senza il supporto di un sistema di accoglienza e senza alcuna legge volta a gestire questo fenomeno. In questo contesto, i mediatori, persone bilingue che operavano all'interno di organizzazioni religiose o non governative, si occupavano di fare da tramite tra i migranti e le istituzioni. Di conseguenza, essendo i servizi linguistici basati sull'operato di singole associazioni, il modo in cui i mediatori venivano formati o selezionati tendeva a variare da regione a regione e la

situazione, ad oggi, non sembra essere cambiata di molto. Tutt'ora, infatti, né la mediazione né l'interpretazione di comunità, sono regolate a livello nazionale.

Successivamente, tornando a concentrarmi sulla parte pratica di questo lavoro, ho dedicato la sezione centrale del terzo capitolo alla spiegazione della metodologia utilizzata nel corso della ricerca, nello specifico nella conduzione delle interviste e nell'analisi. Essendo questo studio di tipo qualitativo, la Professoressa Dalziel mi ha suggerito di svolgere una serie di interviste semi-strutturate per permettere agli intervistati di parlare liberamente e di toccare temi che esulassero da quelli delle domande da me preparate, che vertevano sui temi di etica, accuratezza, imparzialità e ruolo. Dopo aver raccolto e trascritto le testimonianze dei sei interpreti e mediatori, ho analizzato i dati per tentare di individuare delle tematiche ricorrenti, come indicato dalle studiose Braun e Clarke (2006).

Da questa analisi sono emersi sette diverse tematiche: etica; accuratezza; imparzialità; ruolo; qualità ideali di interpreti e mediatori; conseguenze di una mancata professionalizzazione: demotivazione e bassa retribuzione; formazione. Questi temi sono stati sviscerati e analizzati nell'ultima parte del terzo capitolo, ricca di riferimenti alla teoria discussa nel primo e nel secondo capitolo ma, soprattutto, di nuovi spunti. Dall'analisi è emerso, per esempio, un ampio consenso nel considerare l'etica un elemento fondamentale dell'interpretazione di comunità, garantendo performance di alto livello. A questo riguardo, inoltre, tutti gli intervistati hanno sottolineato la grande responsabilità che gli interpreti e i mediatori hanno nei confronti delle persone per cui interpretano, facendo notare come la loro performance professionale possa avere serie ripercussioni sulla vita dei clienti.

Tuttavia, mentre l'importanza dell'etica sembra pressoché indiscussa, lo stesso non si può dire dei codici etici, i quali sembrano essere visti con scetticismo e considerati poco efficaci in assenza di un'adeguata formazione. Considerando invece i tre concetti al centro di questo lavoro, accuratezza, imparzialità e ruolo, tutti i partecipanti hanno espresso un'opinione positiva riguardo l'importanza di questi elementi, dando particolare rilievo all'imparzialità, definita la "Bibbia" di questa professione. L'accuratezza, per esempio, sembra essere considerata alla base dell'interpretazione di comunità e della mediazione e, nonostante venga intesa come la capacità di riferire un messaggio in modo esatto, non viene comunque associata a un'interpretazione parola per parola. Per i mediatori, in particolare, essere accurati significa anche intervenire per chiarire eventuali differenze culturali, così da permettere alle parti di raggiungere un accordo. Allo stesso modo, questi professionisti sembrano vedere i loro interventi come fondamentali per garantire il rispetto del principio dell'imparzialità, che prescrive che entrambe le parti abbiano la possibilità di esprimersi pienamente. Questa tendenza dei mediatori a intervenire piuttosto liberamente sembra trovare riscontro nelle percezioni che questi professionisti hanno del loro ruolo. Infatti, nonostante sia gli interpreti che i mediatori si definiscano

come partecipanti visibili nell'interazione, tutti gli intervistati tendono a rivelare una maggiore complessità nel ruolo del mediatore piuttosto che in quello dell'interprete. I mediatori sono infatti chiamati a risolvere conflitti e a svolgere diverse mansioni, che vanno dall'interpretazione all'assistenza legale.

Per quanto riguarda, invece, le difficoltà riscontrate nel rispettare i principi sopracitati, i maggiori ostacoli incontrati da interpreti e mediatori scaturiscono da fattori emotivi e legati al rapporto con gli altri partecipanti nell'interazione piuttosto che da difficoltà a livello linguistico, come forse ci si aspetterebbe. Un eccesso di empatia, per esempio, può causare difficoltà nel mantenere l'imparzialità, allo stesso modo in cui ricevere pressioni da parte dei clienti può impedire agli interpreti e ai mediatori di svolgere il proprio lavoro in tranquillità. I partecipanti all'interazione, che spesso non sembrano comprendere a pieno il ruolo di questi professionisti, sembrano infatti assumere tre tipi di atteggiamenti nei confronti di interpreti e mediatori: estrema fiducia, che spinge il cliente a percepire il professionista come alleato; diffidenza; mancato riconoscimento professionale. Secondo gli intervistati, quando questa errata percezione del ruolo dell'interprete e del mediatore è manifestata dai migranti, essa sembra essere compresa e facilmente superabile. Tuttavia, quando sono i rappresentanti delle istituzioni a non comprendere ed a ostacolare il ruolo del professionista, l'intervento e la performance degli interpreti e dei mediatori professionista rischiano di essere limitati e poco efficaci. In queste situazioni, qualità come pazienza e sicurezza di sé si rivelano fondamentali per fare in modo che i principi etici vengano comunque rispettati.

Conclusione

Questo studio, che potrebbe essere ampliato con il coinvolgimento di professionisti impiegati anche nel settore sanitario o professionisti senza formazione, mi ha permesso di concludere la tesi con alcune riflessioni personali che evidenziano quanto ancora si debba fare in Italia per valorizzare figure come gli interpreti di comunità e i mediatori. Queste professionalità giocano infatti un ruolo importantissimo non solo a livello istituzionale ma anche, e soprattutto, umano. Dalla performance dell'interprete può per esempio dipendere il destino di un richiedente asilo, mentre la presenza di un mediatore può fare in modo che l'inserimento di un bambino straniero a scuola non rappresenti un evento traumatico. Per questa ragione, ritengo che riconoscere interpreti e mediatori non solo come figure professionali, ma anche come garanti di equità e diritti umani sia fondamentale. Questo implica, inoltre, iniziare a prendere coscienza delle pesanti ricadute psicologiche che queste professioni possono avere. Non è raro infatti che interpreti e mediatori, dopo aver interpretato

testimonianze dolorose e traumatiche, possano soffrire di stress e affaticamento emotivo; considerato ciò, sarebbe auspicabile mettere a disposizione un supporto psicologico che possa tutelare la salute mentale di questi professionisti.

Inoltre, alla luce di ciò che è emerso dalle parole dei professionisti intervistati, sarebbe opportuno, prima ancora di insistere sull'adozione di codici etici, lavorare affinché queste figure vengano riconosciute a livello nazionale e affinché siano, di conseguenza, adeguatamente retribuite e tutelate. Attraverso un adeguato riconoscimento e una chiara definizione del ruolo che queste figure ricoprono, diminuirebbero inoltre le difficoltà scaturite dall'atteggiamento dei rappresentati delle istituzioni, che molto spesso sembrano ostacolare l'operato di questi professionisti.

In conclusione, credo che ulteriore ricerca in questo campo sia necessaria per identificare le difficoltà riscontrate da interpreti e mediatori operanti in Italia e poterle quindi risolvere. Tuttavia, affinché ciò si realizzi, è anche indispensabile che sia i responsabili politici, sia l'opinione pubblica italiana inizino a vedere l'interpretazione di comunità e la mediazione come risorse in grado di mettere in contatto migranti e istituzioni in modo efficace, di prevenire i conflitti e facilitare l'integrazione. Prima di tutto, però, sarebbe necessario che l'Italia inizi a riconsiderare il fenomeno migratorio e che, utilizzando le parole di una delle intervistate, smetta di trattare questo fenomeno come "un'emergenza e una crisi".