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Interpreter's Role throughout History

(Diploma Thesis)

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla jsem úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history, people felt the need to communicate. However, there is a missing link most people do not think about. History is full of wars, negotiations, glorious victories, etc. Many of them took place between peoples who almost certainly did not speak the same language and therefore could not understand each other but still, they somehow managed to communicate. It is a topic not many people probably think about and books tend to ignore this issue and show us pictures of smooth communication between whoever might have been present at the occasion. This seeming gap was filled by interpreters and later by translators too. Those language mediators were often invisible and they are rarely mentioned in historical documents or books, therefore it is quite difficult to find out more about their work or the role they played in the society. As will be mentioned on the following pages, their job was sometimes unenviable. In the ancient times, not many people were fluent in their own language but there are people who deserve to be mentioned – according to Plutarch, Cleopatra spoke so many languages that she was able to greet most foreign ambassadors in their own tongue. Another such person was Mithradates the Great (king of Pontus, lived in the 2nd and 1st century BC) who is thought to have known over 20 languages. However, it needs to be mentioned that those people were exceptional as they would be nowadays. The rest of people needed intermediaries without whom there would have been no international relations.[1]

The aim of this thesis is to find out how the role of interpreters has developed since first notes about this profession emerged. The theoretical part covers history of interpreting from the legend about The Tower of Babel, ancient Egypt, Greece, The Roman Empire and interpreting during the colonial period as well as the role of interpreters nowadays.

In the practical part, I will try to find out how this issue is perceived by today's professional interpreters – whether they know history of interpreting, whether they consider it helpful and important for their work, and most importantly, what their view on the current state of affairs is, etc. The research will be done in a form of questionnaire with predefined answers with the possibility to add another answer not stated in the list as well as possibility to add a comment to each question. Questions will cover nowadays interpreters' attitude to the history of interpreting, their opinion on the role of interpreter

and how it has changed recently as well as their clients' attitude, namely if they know how an interpreter works and what to expect when speaking through an interpreter. In order to gain such information, a questionnaire will be sent to professional conference interpreters. The research will be limited to conference interpreters/court interpreters only in order to receive relevant data from people, who have years of practice and therefore personal experience with interpreters' role and its changes in recent years. Answers will be analyzed and presented in a form of commented graphs.

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[1] Roland, Ruth A.. *Interpreters as diplomats: a diplomatic history of the role of interpreters in world politics*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1999. 7.

1 INTERLINGUAL MEDIATION

Originally, there was no need to differentiate between translation and interpreting because, as will be mentioned on the following pages, the first societies which needed language mediation were oral – translation became used much later with literature.[2] Nowadays, interpreting as well as translation tends to be often interchanged. It is usually said that interpreting means oral form while translation means the written one, which is not entirely true because it would exclude interpreting in sign languages. The difference between those two fields of study lies in immediacy – interpreting is performed "here and now" for the benefit of people who need this interlingual mediation. In the 1960´s, Otto Kade defined interpreting as a form of language mediation in which "the source-language text is presented only once and thus cannot be reviewed or replayed and the target-language text is produced under pressure, with little chance for correction and revision." [3]

If we perceive this topic from the historical perspective, it can be said that social context of interaction in which is the activity carried out is important. As will be described later, this was very common when members of different linguistic and cultural communities needed to communicate. [4]

1.1 Social context

The need of communication with people, who spoke different languages and therefore the need of language mediators rose, among others, for business reasons because people needed to trade and exchange goods. Henri van Hoof mentioned liaison interpreting as a form of interpreting used mainly in commercial negotiations in 1962 in one of the earliest publications dealing with different types of interpreting. Other types of interpreting can be e.g. diplomatic interpreting used to establish political relations. When such negotiations did not end very well and if it was followed by an armed conflict, military interpreters were needed. In more complex societies with institutions which enforced law and justice, we can speak about court interpreting. This type of interpreting was used also in newly colonized

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[2] Wadensjö, Cecilia. "*In and Off the Show: Co-constructing 'invisibility' in an Interpreter-Mediated Talk Show Interview.*" Érudit. Meta: Translators' Journal, Vol. 53. January 1, 2008. (accessed March 15, 2015). 12.
[3] Pöchhacker. Franz. *Introducing Interpreting Studies*. London: Routledge, 2004. 10.
[4] Pöchhacker, 10.

areas where it was necessary to make sure that even those who did not speak the language of the authorities could be held to account.

Apart from the heterolingual interpreting, the homolingual one is used as well. An example could be the American principle of equal access which led to legislation, which gave deaf people equal access to the labor market in 1960´s. Such happening led to higher demand of sign language interpreters. Efforts to incorporate deaf people into society and labor market required educating those people, therefore educational interpreting became very important type of intrasocial and intralingual interpreting.[5]

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[5] Pöchhacker, 13-14.

2   THE TOWER OF BABEL

According to the legend, the need for translators and interpreters emerged after The Great Flood because before that, people used only one language. After the flood, the mythical king Nimrod decided to build a tower tall enough to touch the sky. By this act, the king wanted to gain glory and match the Lord by building a tower so tall that it could not suffer another God's punishment - another flood. However, he was punished for being too ambitious: [6]

> Now the whole earth had one language and a few words. And as men migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land Shinar and settle there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel [meaning 'confusion'], because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth.[7] (Genesis 11, 1-9)

After the confusion of tongues, people were unable to communicate and spread all over the world, where they created societies with different languages and cultures. At least that is how the language diversity, as we know it nowadays, is explained by the Bible. Christianity, on the other hand, is not the only religion dealing with this topic. In antic Greek, multilingualism was connected with god Hermes (Mekur in Latin) who was credited for creation of languages and their division to nations.[8]

Some authors (e.g. German Romantics) believed that there used to be one primordial language before the scattering of tongues. In their view, this language may be regained by translation which would restore the original linguistic unity that was destroyed by the God

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[6] Müglová, Daniela. *Komunikácia tlmočenie preklad: alebo Prečo spadla Babylonská veža?*. Nitra: Enigma, 2009. 82.
[7] Baker, Mona. *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies*. London: Routledge, 1998. 21.
[8] Müglová, 82.

at Shinar, therefore the translator may be considered the world's savior. They believed that the primordial language was the only language which expressed the real meaning and names of things and corresponded to the true essence of things. Languages people began to speak after the scattering of tongues are no longer able to get to the essence and are not able to name things with their true names.[9]

As for the perfect translation or interpreting which should be the key to the primordial language, it is difficult. As far as I am concerned, there is no unified definition of what perfect translation or interpreting, which should lead to the original mythical state of affairs, looks like. Furthermore, there were many different definitions which claimed very opposites. In case of German Romantics, it would most likely be the exotization method (by Schleiermacher), which says that it is the recipient of the message who should move towards the author, in other words, German Romantics were in favor of literal, word-for-word translation. Another point of view claims the free translation which aims at transferring the general message of the text is the right one. Even though translators and interpreters try to reach perfection for centuries, I find it unlikely that they will ever succeed since it is more than just the adequate transfer of the message and form, but also culture and information the reader or listener should have in order to produce the same effect as the original text.

The primordial language called Proto-Indo-European should have been the language from which all the modern languages developed. Although there is no evidence that such language ever existed, linguists keep speculating, where peoples who spoke this one and only language lived, what gods they believed in, etc. Even etymologists try to trace modern words back to their hypothetical Indo-European roots. However, there is no proof of existence of the primordial language which would degenerate and therefore needed to be restored to such purity as well as it is not clear how the original state of affairs should be reached by translation.

It is important to mention that in the antiquity, we do not really distinguish between translation and interpreting. Since those antic cultures were oral and translation (as we

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[9] Bänichou, Paul, and Mark K. Jensen. *The Consecration of the Writer, 1750-1830*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999. 64.

know it nowadays) emerged after beginnings of literature, words translation and interpreting in this period of time are interchangeable.

However, even if the story about scattering of tongues were true, the intention would not be to confuse languages in order to create translation and interpreting but rather to prevent people from understanding each other so that they cannot build the tower – which is the very opposite. This interpretation seems to aim at banning all ways of communication by creating language barriers – this would prevent people from using translation and interpreting as well as learning foreign languages, etc. The myth of The Tower of Babel attacks linguistic diversity because it presents it as a punishment. It portrays diversity as a threat – everybody once spoke the one pure language and everyone should speak one language again, English, Esperanto or whatever the next lingua franca shall be.[10]

2.1 After the Confusion of Tongues

After the confusion of tongues people no longer understood each other, spread all over the world and created groups that spoke different languages. At least that is how Bible explains the great variety of languages which are spoken all over the world. In this chapter, I would rather focus on the communicative aspect of the topic rather than on the religious one.

Since people spoke different languages and their cultures developed different traditions, etc., they had to deal with problems in communication as well as with prejudice or fear of the unknown. Sooner or later people realized that if they did not speak the foreign language and did not know the culture, they needed some kind of interlingual mediator – translators and interpreters. Although antiquity does not distinguish between translation and interpreting, it is known that writing came into use later which means that the first communities communicated only orally. Therefore it may be assumed that those early civilizations needed interpreters rather than translators.[11]

Still, it is important to point out that there is no verifiable proof that people once spoke the same language which was changed by the God. In the pages to come, the reader will notice that there were not many people including royals, etc. who reached fluency in any

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[10] Baker, 21-22.
[11] Müglová, 82-83.

language but their own. Queen Cleopatra who is believed to speak so many languages that she was able to greet most of the ambassadors in their own language may be a rare exception. However, even if she were such a skilled person, she would be a very rare exception at her time as well as nowadays.[12]

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[12] Roland, 7.

3   INTERPRETERS IN ANTIQUITY

Although it is not really known how or when interpreting emerged, we know that there had already been interpreters in ancient Egypt, Rome, etc. The first written proof of existence of interpreters dates back to 3000 BC in ancient Egypt where they used a hieroglyphic sign for a figure of interpreter.[13] As far as it is known nowadays, interpreters were important not only as onlookers, they played their part in shaping history.

3.1   Egypt

An example of importance of interpreters could be ancient Egypt. Egyptians were proud people who tended to look down on other nations and their languages. However, they could not simply ignore them. They needed services of interpreters as well. Ancient Egyptians were so proud that they considered people only their nation and other nations were considered barbarians.[14] Even interpreters did not have very high status, they were thought of as people who spoke strange languages. This may be seen also on arts of the time. An interpreter tends to be portrayed as a tiny person serving much taller people. Since Egyptians tended to show importance and social status of people by their size in such cases, it is obvious that this profession was not considered very prestigious. Such relief showing a dual figure of an interpreter was found in a tomb of general Haremhab in the 19th century (he lived during 14th century BC). The interpreter is portrayed when conveying pleas of foreigners to Haremhab. It is interesting to notice that the interpreter is much smaller in size than the high dignitary in accordance with his lower social status. Another evidence of existence of interpreters in ancient Egypt is a fact, that they had a hieroglyph meaning 'interpreter'.[15]

Those days, to become an interpreter was rather a happenstance. Those people were usually brought up in bilingual areas or by parents of different nationalities who taught the child both languages. A person with such skills in times when education in field of linguistics was not given such prominence and people rarely spoke any other tongue could

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[13] "Wake Forest University." Interpreting for the Community. A Brief History of Interpreting.
http://lrc.wfu.edu/community_interpreting/pages/history.htm (accessed October 31, 2013).
[14] Angelelli, Claudia V. *Revisiting the Interpreter's Role: A Study of Conference, Court, and Medical Interpreters in Canada, Mexico, and the United States*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004. 8.
[15] Kurz, Ingrid. "Danica Seleskovitch Prize 2012. Acceptance speech." Ebsco Host.
http://ehis.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=2733795b-1595-4285-8fbf-5c157abca31d%40sessionmgr14&vid=1&hid=15 (accessed November 3, 2013). 2.

benefit from this skill such as e.g. a Greek-Persian interpreter with parents of different nationalities who interpreted for Alexander the Great during his invasion to Persia. On the other hand, during the reign of pharaoh Psammeticus, boys were chosen for special education and sent to Greece to learn the language. This way, he created his new generation of interpreters which was necessary since Egypt and Greece were in touch frequently. However, it cannot be said that majority of interpreters were nobles especially selected for this job. More often they were freedmen or slaves who interpreted into their mother tongue, especially into Latin and Greek. Those people who learned a second language by birth were also cost-effective because they spared expenses for the special training. Those to-be linguists expected to gain a certain social status and therefore the profession may have seemed attractive to many people. Since many interpreters were slaves, they might have considered interpreting an opportunity to gain at least slightly better position in the society. Also the working conditions were not that bad.[16] Some interpreters of this time were probably princes of Elephantine who lived in 3rd millennium BC somewhere near borders with Nubia. Since they were half Egyptians and half Nubians, they were bilingual and they were put in charge of trade and military expeditions to Nubia and Sudan.[17]

In the 7th century BC, Egypt and Greece began communicating more intensively. It is possible to find the first notes about Egypt-Greek interpreters in this time. One of those sources is a work by Greek historian Herodotus – The Histories. He mentioned children aged 7 – 14 learning the language and culture and he considered them the first interpreters of this time. During the reign of pharaoh Psammeticus, interpreters were valued and they had their place in the society. They were educated to do this job and the profession was hereditary as well. However, their importance and prestige changed during times to come. When Egypt was overtaken by Persia, their prestige began to fail. People were aware of the fact that interpreters were needed for communication with foreigner nations and admired their skills but on the other hand, since they did not understand the language and, unlike in translation, there was no way of checking because the information was not written, they became suspicious and afraid of the interpreter not saying what the speaker said. This anxiety became true also to Herodotus who suspected his interpreter who accompanied him

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[16] Roland, 10-11.
[17] Kurz, 2.

in Egypt of wrong translation of numbers on hieroglyphs. However, it remains unclear whether this interpreter was one of Psammeticus' professionals or just one of amateurish interpreters who often accompanied tourists – those amateurs did not know hieroglyphs (which were used only in religious and legal texts).[18]

The chapter shows that social role of interpreters in ancient Egypt cannot be stated easily. Even if interpreters were needed and people were probably well aware of this fact, there were ups and downs when it comes to social status of Egyptian interpreters as the rulers and dynasties changed over years and centuries. Interpreters were sometimes considered those tiny figures portrayed on hieroglyphs and sometimes they were noble-born people who were chosen for this profession and received at least some training and recognition. The same could be said about their role in the society. Even if interpreters' social status was quite low at times, given that most of interpreters were probably slaves, bilingualism could have helped them to at least slightly better living conditions.

3.2 Greece

In Greek diplomacy, the diplomat´s voice and style of delivery of information was considered so important, that they were mostly actors, professional orators or entertainers. This means that those people were experienced speakers and if they were not, they were usually accompanied by somebody who was. There was a good reason for such choice of diplomats – they were not just messengers but also advocates who had to argue before the assembly or city state to which they were accredited. [19]

Just like Egyptians, also Greeks did not really have much respect for languages of other nations, whom they considered barbarians. Learning the language of people whom they conquered was considered undignified, therefore slaves, prisoners, etc. were usually forced to learn those languages and interpret for nobility. It is quite obvious that ancient Greeks needed service of interpreters as well. [20] Still, being an interpreter during ancient times was not without risk. According to Plutach, death of a Greek interpreter was granted to people because he dared to "make use of the Greek language to voice the demands of the barbarians."[21] Something similar happened also in the Roman Empire, when Emperor

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[18] Müglová, 84-85.
[19] Roland, 15.
[20] Kurz, 2.
[21] Roland, 12.

Caracalla, who was known for his cruelty, granted Roman citizenship to nearly all inhabitants of the Empire just to suborn people from the outlying regions and urge them to invade Italy and capture Rome at the event of his assassination. Then he concealed his treachery by executing interpreters, who were present at the interviews. Still, such situations were not very usual. This can be demonstrated on the Antimachus, who proposed execution of Odysseus and Menelaus (they persuaded the Trojans to restore the Helen of Troy to Greece). Such suggestion was so shocking that Antimachus' sons were beheaded by king Agamemnon in retaliation for their father's outrageous suggestion. Situations when interpreters and ambassadors were treated badly or cruelly were rather exceptional and that is why they were recorded and therefore are known nowadays. [22]

It is doubtless that interpreters were highly valued in military service. They were often used to interpret orders and war strategy, negotiations with enemies on peace or communicating with local people in order to ensure food supplies, etc. Alexander the Great used those services quite often during his conquest of Persia. However, after he succeeded, he Hellenized the conquered countries – Greek became the lingua franca and interpreters were rarely mentioned by historians, they sank into oblivion again.[23]

The situation in western Mediterranean (Spain, Gallia, northern Africa, etc.) was different. Even though Carthage was Hellenized in the 4th century BC which influenced language as well (Greek was used quite often), there was no unified language in the area. This changed when one of the Punic high state officials wrote a letter in Greek to an enemy during war time and, consequently, was accused of high treason by Punes. This action did not remain secret and consequently, citizens of Carthage were forbidden to speak and learn Greek by the senate. They could communicate with their enemies only thanks to interpreters, therefore education of those people was considered important. During the 6th century BC, relationships between Carthage and Rome worsened and resulted in so called Punic Wars (citizens of Carthage were given this name by Romans). It is known that interpreters participated mainly in peace negotiations. There are records of meeting of Hannibal with a Roman consul named Publius Cornelius Scipio. Both the men had their interpreters at hand during this event. It was quite common to have two interpreters at

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[22] Roland, 12.
[23] Müglová, 85.

one's disposal during peace negotiations even if both the participants knew the language of their opponent because language was used to show power and prestige. In addition to this formal function, it gave speakers more time to think about their answers.[24]

In ancient Greece the interpreters were needed constantly due to this nation´s dislike of other languages. They were valued not only as linguistic mediators but also as semi-divine and able to perform multiple tasks. If it were not for interpreters, the Greeks would be unable to communicate e.g. with high representatives of Roman senate, Egyptians, Celts, etc. [25]

3.2.1 Alexander the Great, The Army of The Ten Thousand and Military Interpreting

In antiquity, military interpreting was just one aspect of political interpreting because there was not separate civil and military sphere. It is known that Cyrus the younger employed linguists in his army, because their existence is mentioned by Herodotus and Xenophon. The army of ten thousand men was lead by Xenophon and hired by Cyrus, who wanted to overthrow his brother, king Artaxerxes. Since the army was bilingual, it was necessary to give orders in two languages as well. In his works, Xenophon described Persian member of Cyrus' personal staff running out to shout that the enemy is approaching before the battle of Cunaxa (401 BC). Cyrus also used interpreters when attacking Babylon to warn locals that everybody should stay inside of their homes if they did not want to be slain. Another time, during the Greek retreat, the army was harassed by some natives in the countryside. Interpreters were sent to deal with the situation. At first, the natives objected that their land was being invaded but after they were given the word of honor that the army was only passing through on their way to the sea, the army was allowed to continue in peace. Later, when the Ten Thousand reached a land called Mossynoicoi, an interpreter was sent to find out whether they may pass as friends or enemies. The Mossynoicoi did not want to let the army pass at all but the interpreter named Timesitheus, who was good at diplomacy, pointed out advantages which the tribe could gain by alliance with the Ten Thousand by reminding them of nearby tribes hostile to them. It was followed by a meeting of Xenophon

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[24] Müglová, 85-86.
[25] Angelelli, 8.

and the Mossynoicoi chief which was interpreted by Timesitheus and which resulted in alliance where the tribe supplied the Greeks with ships and guides. [26]

First of all, let us have a closer look at the origins of this army. The records of the happenings to mention were mentioned by an ancient philosopher, general, writer and a student of Socrates called Xenophon, who often referred to Greek and Persian interpreters. He spoke about Cyrus the Younger, a Persian prince and general, who used several interpreters to communicate his wishes and orders. It is also possible that this man knew Greek because there are records of him encouraging his Greek generals. However, Xenophon did not say a word about interpreters which indicates that they were not there at all or their presence was so obvious. Another interesting situation to mention can be the trial of Orontas, who was accused of treachery. At the trial, there were said to be present seven Persian lords and a Greek general Clearchus, who was the first to pronounce his verdict. It is interesting to mention that there are no records of interpreters being present but still, Clearchus seemed to understand Persian because he was able to tell his friends what was said at the trial. Unfortunately, there is no record at all when it comes to the language in which this general was addressed and in which he said his judgment, therefore it remains unclear whether he really knew Persian language or whether one of the Persian noblemen of even Cyrus himself had to interpret for him. On the other hand, there is absolutely no evidence of Clearchus having any chance to learn the language. It can be assumed that, although not mentioned, there was somebody to translate the trial.[27] However, it is quite likely that the interpreter was not Cyrus himself because of his royal status and the fact that using services of interpreters was used to demonstrate power and pride. I find it more likely that there was someone else to do it, probably one of Cyrus' interpreters who were used to interpret orders as well.

When Clearchus was in exile, he received some money from Cyrus and used it to raise an army. It is known that the younger brother of Artaxerxes II. was closer to Greeks than

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[26] Roland, 14, 16.

[27] Gehman, Henry. "The Use of Interpreters by the Ten Thousand and by Alexander." JSTOR. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/4386944?Search=yes&searchText=(ancient&searchText=egypt&searchText=interpreters)&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicResults%3FQuery%3D%2528ancient%2Begypt%2Binterpreters%2529%26amp%3Bgw%3Djtx%26amp%3Bprq%3D%2528ancient%2Begypt%2Binterpreting%2529%26amp%3Bhp%3D25%26amp%3Bacc%3Don%26amp%3Baori%3Da%26amp%3Bwc%3Don%26amp%3Bfc%3Doff%26amp%3Bsi%3D51 (accessed December 7, 2013).

any other monarch. It can be supposed that he knew their language at least up to a point. If this was not the case, Clearchus must have known at least a bit of Persian. Xenophon mentioned the battle of Cunaxa where Cyrus, accompanied by his interpreters, overlooked the soldiers and shouted orders to attack Persians to Clearchus. However, it is not known whether the orders were said in Greek or Persian. Still, it seems reasonable to say that his knowledge of Greek was sufficient for the purposes of the army and he spoke Greek with this general. On the other hand, his position required him to speak Persian to other Greeks in the army because of his dignity and therefore it seems likely to use interpreters in this case even if he could have spoken Greek well enough. No matter which language he chose to address his general, the army consisted of Persian soldiers as well as Greek ones so the orders, etc. had to be said in both languages. Therefore it seems quite likely that Cyrus had his interpreters both to communicate efficiently with his troops as well as to meet the expectations connected with his royal status. There are also records of an interpreter among soldiers. It is doubtless that those intermediaries were used quite often during retreat of the ten thousand. It may be interesting to mention that those interpreters maybe were not professionals. Another point to make is that even though they spoke Persian, there were many regional dialects and it is highly unlikely that interpreters knew them all. They probably spoke the standard Persian which was spoken at least by some people in each destination. [28]

From the time of Cyrus the Great (also known as Cyrus II., who lived in the 6th century BC), bilingualism became quite common, although Aramaic was mostly used for diplomacy. Still, the Persians had to deal with peoples and lands whose languages were unfamiliar to them. It can be demonstrated on e.g. Artaxerxes I., who sent a bilingual messenger to Sparta to complain that their delegation could not be understood and to ask for providing better interpreter next time. This message was "prepared in Aramaic, written in Assyrian script and then translated into Greek."[29]

Just like Romans, Greeks, etc., Alexander the Great could not do without interpreters during his raids, which led him to far India, Macedonia, Mesopotamia, Persia and Egypt. Although the story of Alexander the Great and the ten thousand army is known, it may

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[28] Gehman.
[29] Roland, 13-14.

easily escape our notice that they spoke different languages and had to face this problem when communicating with the peoples he conquered or those whom he wanted to become his allies. Since many of those soldiers were Greeks who, as was mentioned previously, despised other languages as well as people who spoke them (because Hellenists considered them barbarians) they probably did not know any language except for Greek. Historians tell us that the army dealt with this difficulty by using interpreters.[30] Two years after king Phillip of Macedonia was murdered, his son Alexander crossed the Hellespont and defeated the Persian army. Just like most commanders of his time, he used services of many foreign mercenaries, whom they could address only through interpreters. One day, his beloved horse was stolen by a member of a minority group – the Mardians. Alexander sent an interpreter to warn those people that if the horse was not returned, they could all die. The horse soon reappeared. [31] The situation in the Army as well as Alexander demonstrate that no matter how undignified it was to speak foreign languages, people who mastered such skills were necessary for success of many missions. Although historical books do not mention these difficulties with communication in multiple languages, they must not be forgotten because without interpreters, those famous warriors, princes, etc. would hardly be able to achieve what they achieved.

By 326 BC, Alexander the Great had subjugated Asia Minor, Persia, Egypt and Babylonia and he turned his attention to India. Alexander, who was influenced by his tutor Aristotle, wanted to learn more about the Hindu religion. He could rely on three interpreters to translate the priest´s words. When he observed the interpreters knowing the language but not the philosophy, the priest did not like such state of affairs and said that "to attempt to expound his doctrine through such filter would be like expecting water which flows through mud to remain pure".[32] Another difficulty he experienced with Brahmins was stamping their feet on the ground as soon as he appeared. He wanted to know the reason for such odd behavior using an interpreter. He was told that although he had conquered a huge part of the earth, when he dies, he would posses only as much as is necessary to hold his body. It was the portion the priests were marking out with their feet.[33]

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[30] Gehman.
[31] Roland, 16-17.
[32] Roland, 17.
[33] Roland, 17.

3.3   The Roman Empire

When it comes to Roman Empire, it is necessary to mention its difference from the other nations regarding foreigner languages. This difference may have been caused by a fact that the area was bilingual with Latin and Greek having more or less the same status in schools. Although interpreters are rarely mentioned in historical resources, at the times of Roman Empire, there can be found several notes about their work – e.g. Cicero mentioned his interpreter and work he has done for him.[34] Rivalry developed between those two languages. It is known that Cicero´s paternal grandfather considered people who spoke Greek well villains. Marcus Poitus Cato, who was an antihellene, despised his bilingualism and when he served as a military tribute in Greece, he spoke to the Athenians via interpreter because "he despised people who admired only Greek".[35] As can be seen, interpreters in Rome were used even in situations when they were not necessary just to demonstrate assertion and superiority.[36]

When it comes to languages, the country was divided – the western part spoke Latin, the eastern one Greek. However, Latin was the official language of the whole territory. That is why there were interpreters used in senate, when dealing with Greek, etc. delegates (they were not allowed to speak any other language than Latin) as well as during other state occasions. The situation in state administration was quite the same. Interpreters were needed especially when there was a need to communicate with Egyptians, Germans, etc. In this period of time, there may be noticed also an untraditional type of interpreting – the non-verbal one. Such interpreting was performed through dance and pantomime. It was used in case of not having qualified traditional interpreter (e.g. Roman emperor Nero hired such interpreter for King Polemon II. in the 1st century AD).[37]

It was considered a must for an educated citizen to speak fluent Greek. Children usually learned the language from slaves as their first language. It was quite usual to have resident Greek teachers in houses of noble families.[38] Also people who were fluent in various languages and did not need services of interpreters were respected. There were even Roman authors who mentioned interpreters and translators in their works, e.g. Cicero

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[34] Angelelli, 8.
[35] Roland, 19.
[36] Roland, 20.
[37] Müglová, 87.
[38] Roland, 19.

who claimed that "only an inexperienced interpreter translates word for word" or Horace who shared this claim by saying "*nec converti ut interpres; non verbum pro verbo*".[39]

By approximately 30 BC, Latin became the official language of the Roman Empire. Interpreters were used to interpret the audience of King Tiridates of Armenia before Emperor Nero. Names of Roman interpreters were seldom recorded. Still, we can learn about Publicius Menander, who was so talented that Roman envoys heading to Greece tried to retain him. It is without doubt that Romans employed military interpreters because Julius Caesar mentioned the 'usual interpreters' which shows their customary presence. It is a pity that Caesar mentioned the use of interpreters only twice:

> The best course appeared to be to send Valerius Procillus [to negotiate with the German Ariovistus, who had invaded Gaul]. He was a highly accomplished and extremely brave young man, his loyalty was beyond question, and he could speak Gallic, which, after long practice, Ariovistus now speaks fluently.

> Disturbed by these developments, Quintus Titurius sent his interpreter to Amiorix ... to ask for quarter for himself and his men. (Caesar, 1890).[40]

Other interpreters, who deserve to be mentioned, are Alexander of Antiloch, who was retained by Mark Antony to discover which way would be the safest for Mark Anthony to follow, or Flavius Josephus, a Jewish priest, scholar and historian. He served as an interpreter between Jews and the Roman general Titus Flavius Vespasianus. Later, he accepted Roman citizenship. Titus tried to persuade Jews to surrender a city and save their lives. The Jews did not surrender and Titus destroyed the city at great cost of human life.[41]

The presence or absence of an interpreter could carry political implications as well. After the Battle of Zama, there was a conference of Hannibal and Scipio Africanus. Both were accompanied by their interpreters, although their presence was not necessary, since they both spoke Greek. Interpreters were present to demonstrate national pride.[42] It is interesting that although on the one hand, people who spoke foreign languages were respected and such knowledge was considered a must for an educated citizen when, on the

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[39] Kurz, 3.
[40] Roland, 18.
[41] Roland, 18.
[42] Roland, 20.

other hand, they still felt the need to use interpreters to show national pride even if they spoke the same language as the other person which could be understood in a way that speaking foreign language was considered quite undignified. I believe that they used interpreters not because they were necessary for understanding but because their presence and the fact that the interpreter had to translate the message which the recipient understood already when it was said by the speaker gave them more time to think about their answer.

Assistance of interpreters was required especially in areas such as government, military uses or trade. Without them, official contacts with representatives of other countries (e.g. Egypt, Syria, Celts, etc.) as well as administrative dealings would not be possible partly because their job was not only to be at hand in their country but also to accompany official representatives on their business trips to the provinces. Inhabitants of those colonies in border regions spoke many different languages (Romans, Greeks, Danes, etc.) which made it difficult to interpret into so many languages, some of which were not very frequently used. In case none of interpreters knew both the source and target language, they had to use more interpreters with such language combinations to deliver the message. This way of interpreting resembles pilot interpreting. However, in this case the pilot does not provide the speech in a language known to the rest of the interpreters, he provides the utterance in a language known to another colleague who does the same, etc. until the speech is transferred to the required language. [43]

During those travels to colonies, officials could take an interpreter, who was usually paid directly either by the state or by the official himself, from Rome. However more often they were recruited locally. An interesting point about those trips is that Latin was the official language of the provinces. Even though the representatives were fluent in the language, they still used interpreters when dealing with locals because of their national pride, therefore interpreters were not necessary for comprehension but rather to highlight the distance between the so called barbarians and the representative as well as to enhance the official's prestige just as in ancient Greece.

It is beyond doubt that interpreters were highly valued and needed in war times. Although they seem to be rather invisible in history, there are references to military

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[43] Müglová, 87.

interpreters in some historical books, e.g. Hasdurbal's letters to Hannibal were immediately translated for Roman Claudius Nero by an interpreter, or the prince of Gaul who used services of an interpreter to challenge a Roman to a duel. Another time when interpreters were needed were also peace negotiations – Scipio and Hannibal met each other unarmed, accompanied only by their interpreters for peace negotiations in 202 BC. As for trade negotiations, interpreters were needed as well, however their presence was often taken for granted and their role is rarely mentioned in historical resources.[44]

Roman military interpreters were used also in the Danube provinces. It is known that there were interpreters used without knowing more details about their ethnic background or peoples whose languages they spoke. However, it is known that those interpreters were Roman soldiers. They may have been also required to negotiate as well as to do some bureaucratic job such as trading or provisioning.[45] Those linguistic and commercial mediators at the same time were important in the Danube region because "the area was contact zone where the Roman Empire and its inhabitants interacted with groups beyond the frontier".[46]

Regarding the Roman Empire, a problem may occur there when it comes to the term interpreter. There was a group of Roman soldiers in the Danube region as well as various other officials who were referred to as interpreters in Latin and Greek. However, those references are usually addressed to some unnamed interpreter and therefore it is quite difficult to connect the reference to a concrete official of the Roman army in the Danube region. Even if it were never known who those people were, it shows that, in addition to official Roman interpreters, there were also those people who "might run commercial ventures during or after their military service — and for those individuals who are designated as 'interpreters' without fulfilling any obvious linguistic role at all."[47] There are historical resources (e.g. Vindolanda tablets, etc.) mentioning existence of those military interpreters as well as interpreters (also from Egypt) who participated in economic transactions.

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[44] Kurz, 2-3.

[45] Mairs, Rachel. "'Interpreting' at Vindolanda: Commercial and Linguistic Mediation in the Roman Army." Brittania 43 (2012). http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=8726265 (accessed November 26, 2013). 23

[46] Mairs, 25.

[47] Mairs, 17-18.

The tablets, dating back to 1st century AD, mention interpreters not as a military title but rather "interpretari"[48] as a verb. The document, an epitaph by Atilius Primus, is commercial and the text relates to day-to-day business of a camp. The term referring to interpreting is translated as 'so that you may explain'. The role of the so called interpreter may be therefore understood as an intermediary, agent or explanatory.[49]

Interpreters in ancient Rome were sometimes given also various different tasks to do than just transfer the utterance from one language to the other one. There are records of interpreters who were hired to kill someone (interpreter Viglias was required to murder Hun King Attila), spy (interpreter Valerius was looking for secret information for roman politician and lawyer Cicero), etc. However, it is important to mention that those interpreters were dependent on their employers and rejecting such tasks could have tragic consequences for them. Still, the fact that interpreters could be asked for such things made the people hiring them choose properly. Also the criteria a good interpreter should meet were different than they are nowadays. Loyalty was the most valuable one followed by rhetorical abilities, language skills and general cultural knowledge. This made powerful people choose wisely. Gaius Julius Caesar did not use official interpreters but rather people he knew personally. The very same could be said about Cicero and his attitude to interpreters. He did not trust some of them while others became his friends. This attitude may have been caused by a fact that it was not unusual for interpreters to be asked also for some kind of "special" services. Sometimes, they were not expected to provide just interpreting services, e.g. antique interpreter Vigilas should have murdered the Hun king Attila. Another example could be interpreter Valerius, who should have collect information in Macedonia and Sicilia for his employer, rhetor and politician Cicero. On the other side, it needs to be mentioned that interpreters were dependant on their employers and not meeting their employer's requirements could have tragic consequences for them. Those interpreters were also supposed to have different qualities than nowadays – loyalty and rhetorical abilities was highly valued, followed by language skills. Therefore it is not surprising that employers were really careful whom to hire. They preferred interpreters whom they knew personally and who they considered trustworthy to official interpreters.

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[48] Mairs, 19.
[49] Mairs, 19.

Still, being an interpreter in antiquity was a rather dangerous job. Some people had their interpreters murdered or least cut off their tongues in order to prevent them from telling somebody what they heard.[50]

As was previously mentioned, interpreters were needed during diplomatic meetings. Emperor Konstantinos VII. Porfyrogenetos even founded a specialized school where young men were educated and trained not only to do this job but also to become skillful at espionage. Best of those graduates were chosen by a high official to participate on important state occasions. They were also used when the distance between the sender and the recipient of the information was very great. In such situation, the interpreter listened to the utterance, remembered it and traveled for days or weeks to deliver the message. He did not take any written notes and relied only on his memory. Therefore it is quite understandable that he kept in mind only the main points of the utterance, not the original wording. The interpreter was often required to wait for the answer and deliver it the same way.[51]

Unlike Greece, ancient Rome was mostly bilingual and knowledge of Greek was a must for an educated citizen of higher ranks. Still, Greek was spoken mostly on the eastern part of the Roman Empire while the western part spoke Latin, which was also the only official language. Consequently, Romans used services of interpreters during every visit of an ambassador of the Greek speaking region as well as in senate because the law did not allow speaking any other language than Latin there.[52]

This chapter demonstrated the sometimes unenviable role of interpreters. Sometimes they were not given much prominence or they were even feared of by people who did not speak the given language and sometimes they were respected and enjoyed quite good social status because they were necessary and accompanied important and distinguished people. They were used even in situations when their services were not necessary because the participants of negotiation, etc. spoke the language of their opponent just to give the participants time to think about their answers as well as a sign of high social status of the person or a symbol of national pride. On the other hand, being an interpreter was often a happenstance rather than a career choice and it was sometimes very dangerous as well.

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[50] Müglová, 88-89.
[51] Müglová, 89-90.
[52] Müglová, 87.

Antique interpreters were dependent on their employers and were required to do some special tasks such as murders, espionage, etc. Interpreters had to be careful what job to offer or decline, just as employers hat to choose wisely. If they failed to do so, they had to face the risk of the interpreter telling someone about their treachery or murderous plans. The interpreter, on the other hand, could end up dead or with his tongue cut out in order to be prevented from speaking.

4 COLONIZATION OF THE NEW WORLD

Just as in antiquity, also during the contest of America there are not many references to participation of interpreters. It is known nowadays that interpreters played an important role between the colonizers and the colonized who could not understand each other because of language barrier. It is known from rare documents which mention presence of interpreters that the invasion took place in the sixteenth century. Presence of interpreters may be deducted from seemingly natural intercommunicability between members of different cultures who clearly spoke different languages. Until recently, it was not possible to record voices, therefore there is no such record proving interpreters' work, except indirect reference.[53]

4.1 Doña Marina

The exploration, conquest and settlement of the New World led to interaction between Europeans and the peoples they conquered, whether it was a military conquest, spread of religion, etc. Interpreters were important for success of any mission. In practice, sometimes even interpreting teams were used because various language combinations were needed when one interpreter could not interpret directly from the source language to the target language and vice versa; e.g. until La Malinche learned Spanish, communication between the locals and Hernán Cortés was achieved by using two interpreters – Doña Marina (also known as Malinche) interpreted from Nahuatl (the Aztec diplomatic language) into Mayan and Jéronimo de Aguilar, who accompanied Cortés from Spain, interpreted from Mayan into Spanish.[54]

Malinche was a Mayan woman who had been sold into servitude and who accompanied Cortés as his mistress and interpreter during his conquest. Aztecs believed that the end of world would come and when they saw ships on the sea, a lightning was said to strike a temple and a comet was seen on the sky, they believed that the end of world is really approaching. Consequently, when Cortés came into the city, they considered him

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[53] Alonso Araguás, Icíar, and Jesús Baigorri Jalón. "Iconography of Interpreters in the Conquest of the Americas." Érudit. Meta: Translators' Journal, Vol. 17. 2004. (accessed March 22, 2015). 129, 130.

[54] Giambruno (Miguélez), Cynthia. "The Role of the Interpreter in the Governance of the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-century Spanish Colonies in the "New World"" In Crossing Borders in Community Interpreting Definitions and Dilemmas, edited by Carmen Valero-Garcés and Anne Martin. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Pub., 2008. 30.

invincible. He was offered many gifts including twenty young women servants, one of whom was Doña Marina. She is said to be very beautiful and clever, she originally spoke the two above mentioned languages and she learned Spanish in six weeks. Later, she became his most trusted advisor and his mistress. Another interpreter he originally had, Jéronimo de Aguilar, was a Spaniard who survived a shipwreck in 1511 and still lived in Yuacatan and learned Mayan during his involuntary stay. Malinche was present during meetings between Cortés and Aztec ruler Montezuma and she persuaded Montezuma to accept the Spaniard as the returning god Quetzalcoatl and she made him believe that his safety was assured. She did not translate everything Cortés said. It is known because the Spaniards hoped to execute Montezuma as soon as possible and they were convinced by Doña Marina not to do so.[55] From my point of view, it is particularly interesting not only to learn a foreign language in six weeks as literature says but also to adjust so quickly to being a slave given to an invader. Despite such unfortunate situation, Doña Marina was able to gain quite prominent position no other local interpreter probably did and thanks to her abilities she significantly helped her new master.

Apart from the so far mentioned interpreters, there were also locals who could interpret between languages of different tribes, e.g. Totonac Indians, who spoke language neither Malinche nor Aguilar were familiar with. The tribe had its own interpreter who spoke Totonac and Nahuatl and therefore a chain of interpreters could be formed – the Totonac's interpreter interpreted from Totonac to Nahuatl for Doña Marina (before she learned Spanish) and she interpreted from Nahuatl to Mayan for Aguilar who transferred the message to Spanish for Cortés. This example of communication through four languages perfectly illustrates difficulties which the invaders had to deal with. However, such tactics was not so new. As you may have noticed, it was used already in antiquity during state officials' business trips to colonies. Cortés also used Malinche to manipulate local officials. Once, he secretly freed two Aztec prisoners whom he enabled a free passage out of the Totonac's territory in order to pledge his friendship to Montezuma and blamed the Totonac guards for letting the prisoners escape. He took the freed prisoners on his ship and presented himself to them as their rescuer. If the story were true, such ruse could not be

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[55] Gonzalez, Deena. "Encountering Columbus." San José State University. http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=naccs (accessed November 25, 2013). 16

done without Doña Marina who was not only an interpreter but also gained Cortés' trust.[56] The example of Malinche may illustrate that those interpreters did not serve only as language mediators but also as lovers or guides. The situation with interpreters was similar in case of Lewis and Clark's expedition on the beginning of the 19th century. They used a whole interpreting team –

> Sacagewa, a Shoshone Indian, who spoke Shoshone and Hidatsa (the language of the Hidatsa-Mandan tribe of what is today North Dacota) formed part of an interpreting team with her husband, Toussaint Charbonneau, who spoke Hisatsa and French and another expedition member, Francois Labiche, who spoke French and English. Thus, during the expedition, the chain of interpretation when Shoshone were encountered was Sacagewa-Charbonneau-Labiche-Lewis and Clark. [57]

Mecalf (2006) mentioned the important role interpreters often played as 'go-betweens' who also affected the course of relations. Sacagewa served not only as an interpreter but also as a guide. According to Clark's journal, her presence at the expedition was perceived as a 'token of peace' by the Indians. In Brazil on the beginning of the 17th century, there is a record by a French Jesuit historian Pierre de Jarric who mentioned a woman from the feared Aimoré tribe who has been 'domesticated' by the Portuguese and learned their language and customs. She was sent with gifts to the tribe to persuade them to live in peace with the Portuguese and because she knew both cultures and languages, she was able to persuade the tribe and she contributed to peace between the Aimoré and the Portuguese who feared and mistrusted each other until then.[58]

Examples of Doña Marina and this Aimoré woman show quite well how demanding interpreters' work was. In addition to providing language services, they often had to serve as guides, lovers, etc. The fact that invaders whom they served did not speak the local language and vice versa gave them power to influence many things and slightly adjust the content or the form of an utterance in order to be understood correctly by the intended recipient. Another point to make is their interpreting strategy which mostly seemed to side with their masters. Such choice could be explained by the fact that they were still no more

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[56] Karttunen, Frances E. "Between the Worlds: Interpreters, Guides, and Survivors." New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994. 6-7.
[57] Giambruno (Miguélez), 30.
[58] Giambruno (Miguélez), 30.

than slaves and, in case of Malinche, she had more to gain by supporting Cortés who was gaining more and more power and could provide her with protection.

4.2   Spaniards in the New World and 'Recruitment' of Interpreters

The Spanish had three goals in the New World. They wanted to spread Christianity, to claim the territory for Spain and to find wealth and take it back home. Meeting of all those goals depended on communication with local peoples. Christopher Columbus took two interpreters with him on his voyage – Rodrigo de Jerez and Luis de Torres. Not surprisingly, he found out that their language skills were of no use in the New World and he realized that new interpreters were needed. The issue of gaining and 'making' new interpreters was solved by capturing a few locals and training them as interpreters.[59] This way of ensuring a way of communication with locals was used also because vast majority of officials as well as colonists was not interested in learning to speak and think like Indians. By kidnapping and training some locals, they gained both. Additionally, by sending those kidnapped to-be-interpreters to Europe for training, they ensured that they would learn not only the language but the culture as well. Then they could not only translate but tell other tribe members about greatness of the invader's cities as well as numerous populations.[60] This practice was used whenever Spain planned to enter a new territory and it became so regular and routine that a policy was codified into a law in 1573 in the "New Ordinances of Discovery and Population"[61] It specified ways in which 'interpreters' could be used to the advantage of the Spanish:

> Try to bring some Indians for interpreters to the places you go, where you think it will be the most fitting, speak with those from the land, and have chats and conversations with them, trying to understand their customs, the quality and way of life of the people of that land, and disperse yourselves, informing yourselves about the religion govern themselves, if they have some kind of doctrine or form of writing; how they rule and govern themselves, if they have kings and if they are elected as in a republic or by lineage; what taxes and tribute they give and pay and in what way to which persons… And in this way

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[59] Giambruno (Miguélez), 31.
[60] Gray, Edward G., and Fiering Norman, eds. The *Language Encounter in the Americas, 1492-1800: A Collection of Essays*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2000. 41.
[61] Giambruno (Miguélez), 31.

you will know if there is any type of stones, precious things like those which are esteemed in our kingdom. [62]

This paragraph seems to not only consider it adequate to take some Indians as interpreters, who were probably not given much choice, but shows an attempt to find out as much as possible about the colonized area. Such information gained thanks to those involuntary 'domesticated' local interpreters were almost certainly used to the advantage of the invaders. It gave them power over locals and information they needed to take treasures this land had as well as power over the area. It seems that the Indians who were kidnapped to be trained and 'domesticated' were used by the colonists as mere instruments on their way to power and glory and there were probably not many interpreters who gained some benefits from their new role.

About fifty years after arrival of Columbus, most of the local tribes and societies were greatly diminished. European culture began to replace Indian, Aztec, etc. cultures by aggressive evangelization and land programs by Spanish government. Indians were forced to work hard for those who decided to reside in the New World – the system of forced servitude was established in the early sixteenth century. It granted Spanish landowners the right to free native workforce to which they should provide protection and instruction in Christianity.[63] Although interpreters did not have a high social status, compared to their fellow tribesmen, they were luckier. Their rights and obligations were codified into laws and they received money for their services unlike those who were given to the settlers as a free workforce. No matter how the locals should had been treated and protected by the settlers they had to work for, they were quite often abused. In order to solve this problem, a number of laws, which aimed at protection of the local population from the settlers as well as from administrators, were created.[64] Number of royal decreed and laws were written in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and were compiled and printed in 1681 by Charles II. It covered surprisingly broad range of issues related to life in Spanish colonies and juridical system, mainly communication between the institutions and natives including fourteen laws dealing with rights and responsibilities of interpreters working in the juridical system.

[62] Giambruno (Miguélez), 31.
[63] Giambruno (Miguélez), 32-33.
[64] Valdeón, Roberto A. Translation and the Spanish Empire in the Americas. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014. 81.

Those language mediators did not enjoy high prestige, they were untrained and often taken unwillingly from their domestic environment. Still the legislation took into account the issue of communication between linguistically different peoples and the need to define the role of interpreters in the governance and administration of the society. Topics covered by laws were e.g. qualifications and skills the interpreter should have had, how he should have interacted with the parties during juridical or state administration proceedings, what interpreter's rights as to workplace were, work hours and what ethical behavior should look like. Each of those topics was accompanied by detailed description and explanation including penalties and consequences for not following the rules. [65]

The first laws dealt e.g. with ethics and it prohibited interpreters to accept any kind of compensation from the Indians; their wages were paid from court revenues. The law considered interpreters instruments by which justice was done and they had to be loyal and of the good faith. Court officials were ordered to ensure that interpreters were skilled and that they had necessary qualities in order to ensure favorable treatment of Indians. It also said that interpreters should be treated with respect they deserve. However, if they had been proven not to be trustworthy, punishment would have followed. They also had to be present during all proceedings, hearings and prison visits and they were banned from discussing legal matters with Indians anywhere apart from the court. They had to bring the Indians to court so that the matter may be resolved in accordance with the law. The law also stipulated interpreters' wage including compensation for traveling when they had to work outside of their normal workplace (established court) and banned them from accepting any kind of additional compensation. Consequences for breaking the law were quite severe, starting with a fee to pay and the most severe 'crimes' may have led up to exile.[66] Interpreters during the colonial period received compensation for their services in different ways, e.g. Doña Marina, who was probably the most respected interpreter of her time, received partly financial and partly social compensation for her services. She achieved such social position not many natives and probably no woman had achieved and she was respected by both the invaders and the natives. She was probably an exception because as was just mentioned, local interpreters were not given much prominence. The

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[65] Giambruno (Miguélez), 32-33.
[66] Giambruno (Miguélez), 32-34, 37, 39, 43.

intermediaries, both Spanish and local, used their role to maintain or improve their position in the society and power they held before the conquest. Still, it is quite difficult to assess the role of interpreters in the colonial society but "there is no questioning of the value and importance of such a person, especially a trustworthy one with talent".[67]

Another law referred to reporting of irregularities Indians needed to be helped with by interpreters. It also says that Indian's rights were sometimes violated because of wrong interpreting. The law tried to find a solution and precautions to limit misinterpreting, both intentional and unintentional. [68] This wrong interpretation was probably caused by a lack of specialized training or it could be done on purpose. For the suggestion that this rights violation were done unintentionally speaks a fact that since the invaders were not interested in learning the local language, most of the interpreters were probably locals who became interpreters involuntarily and they were more likely to side with their fellow tribesmen. On the other hand, they could have done in on purpose because they were hoping to gain recognition and better position in the colonial society.

The law says that "only interpreter's version of court proceedings is official and should be considered by jurors and jurists, even when they speak or understand the language being interpreted".[69] Although the solution found would not be accepted in most countries nowadays (it has been accepted by several US jurisdictions for many years), it shows an attempt to deal with the issue. On the other hand, given that misinterpreting was not so rare, this rule could have possibly led up to sentencing of an innocent person only because of wrong interpreting.

More comprehensive set of rules was created to regulate interpreting in colonial areas many years later. It dealt with workplace, compensation, travel, etc. Most laws also contained punishment for misdeeds. One law, which was created a century later than the first one, still did not state how interpreters should be chosen and what qualification they should have had. Even though there were a few references to laws on interpreting from this period, the complete translation of the laws with an analysis was not yet published in English.[70]

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[67] Valdeón, 80.
[68] Giambruno (Miguélez), 34.
[69] Giambruno (Miguélez), 34.
[70] Giambruno (Miguélez), 34-35.

Interpreters were used to translate conversations between the Spaniards and the natives, convey sermons to the natives as well as to explain Christianity. Indians, who accepted such position, had better access to political or spiritual power. They explained administrative issues and laws. They also helped to smooth relations between Spanish people and Indians through misinformation – native interpreters softened governor's demands or edited responses of the natives. They sometimes also refused to translate the tone of certain statements or omitted violent language. Such knowledge of the language gave them great power. On the other hand, using this power was quite risky – one interpreter[71] "was hanged because he did not interpret faithfully what he was told."[72] In some areas (e.g. the Adean region), interpreters were needed in so many aspects of colonial life that they took advantage of their indispensableness and language skills and abused their monolingual countrymen so much that they were considered a threat to the new colonial order. The crown had to do something because such state of affairs was unacceptable, therefore a set of rules followed. It specified what duties interpreters had, what salary they were entitled to receive and what skills they must have had in order to be appointed as public servants. The laws were signed between 1529 (by Charles V) and 1619 (by Philip III) and, apart from the above mentioned, a professional ethical code was also defined there. The most salient points were the following:

1. Interpreters were required to have knowledge and the religiousness necessary for the post.
2. Interpreters would receive a salary from the state. It was established how much this amounted to and how much they would receive as travelling expenses. They were not allowed to receive presents.
3. They had to swear that they would perform their duties well and faithfully.
4. They were not allowed to receive Indians in their homes and were not supposed to act on their behalf.
5. The governors and town mayors were not allowed to select interpreters unless the candidates had passed and exam and have been approved by the Indian council.[73]

These laws came into force in the seventeenth century. There was also a very interesting regulation which allowed Indians to take a friend to the court. It was not

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[71] Galgano, Robert C. Feast of Souls: Indians and Spaniards in the Seventeenth-century Missions of Florida and New Mexico. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 84.
[72] Galgano, 85.
[73] Valdeón, 81.

specified of what origin the person should be and he could check whether the interpreter translated faithfully. The simple fact that such law was created implies the possible lack of professionalism of interpreters as well as Indians' right to be heard. At the same time it limited the risk of altering meaning of the original speech by an interpreter. The law also protected locals from abuse of interpreters, who were of Spanish, Indian or mixed origin. This may also be the source of the commonly spread belief that native interpreters were traitors (as is often said about Malinche). On the other hand, some of them probably were traitors who enjoyed the privileges they had before the conquest and wanted to keep them after creation of the new order.[74] The rest probably did not do it on purpose, it was probably caused by lack of specialized training or knowledge.

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[74] Valdeón, 82-83.

5 INTERPRETERS NOWADAYS

Services of interpreters are used nowadays as they were in the past. On the other hand, their role, as well as expectations they should meet, has changed over the past centuries.

Nowadays, interpreters receive specialized training, which was quite rare in the history, and their work and their role has already been described by theorists, although there are many different opinions on the topic. Jacobsen (2002) divides interpreting studies into two subcategories – conference interpreting and community interpreting. In both of these categories, the focus is on the interpreter rather than on interpreting. Such difference may be caused by presence of an interpreter during the communicative act, while a translator is usually not present and therefore his existence and influence on the resulting text might be quite easily forgotten. Since the interpreter performs immediate translation of the source text, his presence at the speech event is required, either physical in the room with the participants or in an interpreting booth, present as "a voice" the listener hears or sees on a screen in case of video-linked interpreting. Because of the obvious 'visibility' of an interpreter, the immediateness and oral character of the communicative act, an interpreter must master more competences than a translator, e.g. good working memory, "a capacity for dividing one's attention between various simultaneous operations", etc.[75] When it comes to visibility and invisibility of an interpreter, there is an interesting metaphoric statement saying "The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator."[76] If we turned these words around, it would say that the more the interpreter is invisible, the greater the illusion of communication without mediation is. Venuti refers to interpreters' role as receiver of text in source language. His task is to provide the same text in the target language aimed at target audience and the target culture.[77]

However, it is still true that many people see an interpreter as a kind of invisible translating machine, transferring the message from one language to another without further understanding of interpreter's work, which is structured by interpreter's understanding of the situation as well as by the translation itself. It is also important to mention that the way primary participants perceive interpreter's involvement is influenced by how they see

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[75] Jacobsen, Bente. "The Community Interpreter: A Question of Role." Hermes – Journal of Language and Communication Studies. 2009. http://download1.hermes.asb.dk/archive/download/Hermes-42-8-jacobsen_net.pdf. (accessed March 6, 2015).155-156.
[76] Alonso Araguás, Icíar, and Jesús Baigorri Jalón, 130.
[77] Alonso Araguás, Icíar, and Jesús Baigorri Jalón, 130.

themselves as partakers in the situation. The interpreter is often (in a certain sense) not considered a part of the event but rather some secondary element which stands out. However, it is necessary to point out that the interpreter is often taken as a simple language instrument, as a mere translation machine. This idea is based on "monological model of language and mind". [78] It portrays the situation as unidirectional flow of thoughts from the speaker to listeners, where lexical items are carriers of meaning which the speaker sends and the listeners receive. Interpreters' work is perceived as monologic. He creates corresponding versions to the ongoing sequences of the 'original'. Still, a specific turn-taking system, which is different from the one found in ordinary conversations, is typical for interpreter-mediated interactions. People who talk through interpreter must make sense of the content of the talk are therefore are somewhat disregarding it's progression. Another point to make is the expected behavior of an interpreter. He is expected to have the behavior of non-person as defined by Goffman (1990). Such model of behavior relates to "a model of discrepant social roles and normal social behavior"[79] According to Goffman's definition, non-persons are individuals, who are "present during the interaction but in some respects do not take the role either of performer or of audience"[80] A classic type of such non-person is, in his view, a servant because it is somebody, who is expected to be present during certain occasions and he is expected to act as if he was not there. At a dinner party, the servant acts neither like a host not like a guest. Another example could be photographers or broadcast technicians. They may move around the place, etc. while the audience is being seated during public events. When working, they can do whatever their work requires, e.g. act and talk without interrupting the ongoing event. Their activities are not expected to contribute to or to be part of the event as such. Those on the stage will continue with whatever they are doing, ignoring the people broadcasting them. In Goffman's view, this non-person role applies to interpreters as well as to servants, broadcasters, etc. In an exaggerated way, the interpreter may be considered a servant rather than the main figure of the interaction. However, people who understand the non-person

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[78] Wadensjö, Cecilia. "In and Off the Show: Co-constructing 'invisibility' in an Interpreter-Mediated Talk Show Interview." Érudit. Meta: Translators' Journal, Vol. 53. January 1, 2008. (accessed March 15, 2015). 185.
[79] Wadensjö, 186.
[80] Wadensjö, 186.

role of an interpreter may not see them as mere translation machines. Those people could be e.g. clients who had been working with interpreters long term and are familiar with interpreter's role. It may also seem advisable to talk to the client before the beginning and agree on a strategy. On the other hand, interpreters may also assert their personhood if they think their personal space is violated when interpreting. Frishberg (1990) mentions an example where there was a professor giving lecture, an interpreter and a deaf student. At some point, the lecturer physically touched the interpreter in an undesirable way. During the class, the interpreter did not show any personal reaction but when the class was over and the teacher touched the interpreter again the same way while she was interpreting, she acted more actively and asked him not to touch her. According to the behavior of this interpreter it seems that she was attentive not only to her social role but to the timing or communicative space as well.[81]

Studies on conference and community interpreting differ in the issues they are focused on. Whereas research in conference interpreting focuses mainly on cognitive issues and performance, e.g. memory span of an interpreter, the time-lag between input and output or anticipation, research in community interpreting usually focuses on perceptions and expectations among users of interpreting services as well as among interpreters. Such difference may be caused by different characteristic of conference and community interpreting.

Community interpreting is typically a spontaneous dialogue between two (or more) speakers who take relatively short turns. Such interpreting is bi-directional. On the other hand, conference interpreting is usually a pre-planned monologue with written source material. Such interpreting is called uni-directional.[82]

The role of an interpreter is considered according to his social activity because people tend to typify people based on this characteristic – e.g. student, doctor, patient, employer, employee, interviewee, interviewer, etc. Still, the role of an interpreter does not define e.g. medical encounter as medical, etc. This may be the reason why interpreters seem to fill in the role of non-persons.[83]

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[81] Wadensjö, 186-187.
[82] Jacobsen, 155-156.
[83] Wadensjö, 187-188.

It is important to find out what audiences' expectations are. This can be done e.g. in a form of research, which should focus on definition and evaluation of interpreter's quality because it is of crucial importance for a profession which aims at establishing effective communication between the speaker(s) and the audience. It can be said without doubt that the user, customer or whatever he may be called wants a 'good' interpretation. The problem is to define what a good interpreting is because it does not have to mean the same thing to different people. AIIC (The International Association of Conference Interpreters) sees the quality of service and professional standards as one of the most important things and it has strict conditions for accepting new members in order to ensure quality now as well as in the future. The objectives were summarized by Déjan le Féal (1990). He says that the listeners should receive a message that should have the same effect on them as the original speech.[84]

As for the interpreter's loyalty to the speaker, Gile says that the interpreter in fact works for the sender of the information, receiver and client who may have different intentions, e.g. the speaker may try to persuade someone who does not want to be persuaded or a chairperson may ask the interpreter to summarize information that the speaker may intend to include in his message. In such cases, the interpreter may be stuck between conflicting interests. In such case, Gile argues, it is a question of professional loyalty, which is also an ethical issue. He also claims that such situations are quite rare and that the generally accepted view is that the interpreter is the 'alter ego' of the speaker. In his opinion, the interpreter should consider the speaker's aims and intentions his own and act accordingly. As long as he speaks in the first person, he should formally identify with the content of the speech – Gile calls it 'the Sender loyalty principle'. The same principle should be applied when the interpreter interprets alternately for opposing speakers, he should apply this loyalty principle to the one who currently speaks and switch it whenever the other one takes turn. This view presented by Gile is in accordance with AIIC's Practical Guide where such side-taking or sender-loyalty principle is considered to be quality interpreting, ethics and fidelity demand[85]: "the conference interpreter's primary loyalty [be]

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[84] Kurz, Ingrid. "Conference Interpreting: Quality in the Ears of the User." Érudit. Meta: Translators' Journal. Vol. 46. 2001. (accessed March 17, 2015). 394-395.
[85] Zahran, Aladdin. *The Consecutive Conference Interpreter as Intercultural Mediator a Cognitive-pragmatic Approach to the Interpreter's Role*. Salford: University of Salford, 2007. 142-143.

always owed to the speaker and to the communicative intent that the speaker wishes to realize, whatever the speaker's position or point of view (AIIC 2004, emphasis in original)."[86] However, it is important to mention that the loyalty principle means loyalty to the person of the speaker and that the interpreter is his spokesperson and serves only the speaker. On the other hand, speaker's intentions may differ from what he intends to say and the interpreter cannot identify with the speakers' intentions but with what he is trying to say. Subsequently, it may be said that that the loyalty should belong to the original rather than to the speaker or audience. Since the aim of interpreting is to ensure effective communication between the parties, loyalty to the original ensures that the needs of both the speaker and the audience are pursued are met.[87] Furthermore, interpreters are used to enable communication between two or more parties who do not speak the same language and would be unable to communicate without an intermediary. The sender-loyalty principle seems to be a used solution but I believe that the key to successful communication means not only to transfer the speakers' utterance along with his intentions faithfully. It needs to be adequate as well – it must be said in a way which enables the other party to understand. If a doctor speaks to a colleague, he would probably use different terms than if he speaks to the patient. If he spoke to both in the same way, the patient, who does not know much about medicine, would not understand and would be unable to react accordingly. The situation is the same with interpreting – if an interpreter uses too technical, legal, etc. terms, the translation might be good but the interpreter would fail in his task to make mutual understanding possible.

5.1 Community and Conference Interpreting

In addition to the above mentioned distinction between community and conference interpreting, Pöchhacker distinguishes between inter and intra-social settings based on the social context of an interaction. It shows very different settings of events, when conference interpreting is used compared to community interpreting events. Pöchhacker defines inter-social settings as business or diplomatic settings – it involves contact between different social entities. Intrasocial setting deals with multi-ethnic societies (e.g. courtrooms, police stations, hospitals, social institutions, etc.).

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[86] Zahran, 143.
[87] Zahran, 143.

Still, there is a terminological confusion between the terms. Although community interpreting seems to be a widely accepted term, sometimes it is used as liaison interpreting, cultural interpreting, ad hoc interpreting, etc. It is sometimes also referred to by its particular settings, e.g. healthcare interpreting, legal interpreting, police interpreting, court interpreting or social interpreting. In fact, court interpreting is sometimes considered a specialized field with different role perceptions and expectations. This may be caused by formality of such occasion as well as by its fixed agenda and the fact that legal interpreting, although in different forms than it is used nowadays, was used for a longer period of time than other types of community interpreting. Despite the diversities between e.g. legal and healthcare interpreting, there are also similarities. In both these interpreting subcategories, the interpreter has to deal with sensitive issues (criminal offence, serious illness, etc.).[88]

5.1.1 Conference Interpreting

The topic of the role of conference interpreter was brought up as early as in 1919 during the Paris Peace Conference after the World War I. It is reported that Colonel Stephen Bonsal, who was president Woodrow Willson's interpreter, reports Colonel Lawrence of Arabia, Emir Faisal's interpreter (Emir Faisal is son of Sherif Hussein of Mecca, he became the King of Syria in 1920) was asked by one of the 'Big Four' (representatives of the superpower of that time – United States, United Kingdom, France and Italy) to

> soften the impact of some of Faisal's words that were giving offence in influential quarters [… and] follow the precedent of Professor Mantoux, the official interpreter at the plenary sessions of the Conference, who smoothed out so many rough places in the impassioned appeals of the nationalistic speakers (Bonsal 1946: 33) [89]

However, Lawrence declined this suggestion:

> I see the point and I have the greatest respect for this gentleman […] but I cannot follow his suggestion. You see, I am an interpreter, I merely translate. The Emir is speaking for the horsemen who carried the Arab flag across the great desert from the holy city of Mecca to the holy city of Jerusalem and to Damascus beyond [… and] the thousands who died in that long struggle. He is

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[88] Jacobsen, 159.
[89] Zahran, 134-135.

the bearer of their last words. He cannot alter them. I cannot soften them (Bonsal 1946: 33f).[90]

Some interpreters might prefer a certain degree of 'appropriateness' in order to prevent offending someone but it should not be done in a way that would change the sense of the original utterance. Therefore it is not so difficult to understand why Lawrence declined to alter the impact because Faisal must have been aware of the strength of his speech and probably said it the way he did because he wanted it to have the forceful impact on the other delegates. If he wanted it to be uttered in such forceful manner, he would not say it that way and then expect the interpreter to soften the utterance. If the interpreter softened the utterance as requested by the representative in the above mentioned example and if such manipulation with the original speech was noticed and objected to, the interpreter could be accused of misinterpreting not only by the speaker but by the audience as well. Such change to the speaker's utterance could possibly do more damage than good and it is not in the interpreter's interest to be blamed for it.[91]

Another feature which needs to be taken into account is the role of interpreter as a cultural mediator. The term was mentioned by Bochner in *The Mediating Person and Cultural Identity* where he focused on the mediator and his roles – intermediary, moderator, facilitator, diplomat, etc. Bochner distinguishes between two types of cultural mediators – the 'mediator-as-translator' and 'mediator-as-synthesizer'. The mediator-as-translator type aims at representing one culture to the other one in order to contribute to mutual understanding. The mediator-as-synthesizer type aims at reconciling disparate cultural stereotypes. This type of mediation is important especially when there is an action to follow. Thus, while the first type provides neutral and accurate representation of a culture and no more, the second one goes a little bit further. Another difference between those types is that the mediator-as-translator is rather excluded from the action while the mediator-as-synthesizer is more likely to extend his role beyond cultural representation and take more action. However, the mediator-as-synthesizer concept cannot be applied to conference interpreting because interpreters probably would not be willing to abandon their role and start making decisions, taking action, accepting or refusing proposals, etc. If they

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[90] Zahran, 135.
[91] Zahran, 135.

did so, they would become primary participants who translate as well. It is also unlikely that interpreters would be willing to take the responsibility. Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that interpreters are linguistic and cultural mediators, not leaders, politicians, scientists, etc. Even if they had such specialization in the area which is being discussed, their knowledge would be mostly sufficient for the purpose of accurate interpreting but not for the decision-taking process and accepting such resulting responsibility. Consequently, it can be said that it is the concept of mediator-as-translator which fits conference interpreting. Even if his role is limited to faithful cultural representation, he is still able to help mutual understanding by faithful representation of both (or more) cultures to each other. If the interpreter succeeds at this, the parties will gain mutual understanding of the opposing culture and it would help them find a compromise because if the participants know the attitude represented by the other culture, they are more likely to try to find a solution suitable for everybody even in case of conflicting goals or motives.[92]

5.1.2   Community Interpreting

Role, perceptions and expectations became a widely discussed topic after the first studies on community interpreting were published (e.g. study by Rainer Lang (1976, 1978), who focused on untrained interpreters working in a courtroom in Papua New Guinea). In his earlier paper from 1976, Lang focused on the local interpreting service and came to a conclusion that formal training of interpreters is necessary. He also discussed methodology of interpreting and said that "the role of interpreters 'was contaminated' from the beginning by their roles of intermediaries (resulting from the fact that they were bilinguals)."[93] In his second paper, which was focused on behavior of interpreters, he came to a conclusion that "although the 'official role was that of a passive participant', the interpreter in fact participated actively."[94] He also concluded that the level of interpreter's involvement in the interaction was based on negotiation, the 'primary participants' used linguistic and paralinguistic features to show how much they wished the interpreter to be included or excluded. Therefore the interpreter could easily get involved or restrained from the situation. At least that would be the ideal situation for an interpreter working in a legal field described by Lang, where interpreters, who perform in legal setting are even

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[92] Zahran, 149.

nowadays expected to be as invisible as possible, working rather as a translating machine delivering a precise translation of the source utterance.

> The first step to attain recognition is that of providing a better understanding of the role(s) of the community interpreter, both to service providers and to individual clients (i.e. the minority speaking languages) (Roberts, 1997) [95]

The quote demonstrates that there is confusion about the role of a community interpreter among users of interpreting services. In Robert's view, rectifying this situation would help professionalization of the profession and interpreter's work. Another author who mentions the role of court interpreters is Berk-Selingson, who says that those who speak through an interpreter have difficulties distinguishing what his role should be. He claims that it has consequences for the interpreter as well as for the other involved parties, especially for lawyers and defendants for whom the interpreter provides services.[96] Since there is no uniformed prescription regarding interpreter's role, only various recommendations by interpreting organizations, etc., it would help to talk to the client and discuss the topic with him in order to prevent misunderstandings.

A few studies (e.g. Berk-Seligson, 1990/2002; Jansen, 1995, Morris, 1989, etc.) were done on the topic of interpreter in legal environment and his role there. They demonstrated how US legal interpreters are used as passive translation devices by pointing out their latitude and preparedness to modify originals to transfer their perception of the speaker's message or to adjust or soften the impact of the text on the target audience. Most of the studies agreed that the reason for such action was "the interpreter's objective of effective communication."[97] On the other hand, the researchers did not agree when it came to the degree of latitude. While Morris and Shlesinger argued that certain level of latitude is necessary to convey the speaker-intended meaning, Berk-Seligson considered it 'intrusive behavior'. In his research from 2002, Jacobsen sided with Morris and Shlesinger. He said that he has "found evidence that the interpreters in [his] study were preoccupied with pragmatics, i.e. with building a mental model of speaker meaning and with conveying this

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[93] Jacobsen, 159.

[94] Jacobsen, 159.

[95] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, eds. *Crossing Borders in Community Interpreting: Definitions and Dilemmas*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2008. 99.

[96] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, 99-100.

[97] Jacobsen, 160.

mental model to end receivers, despite an official requirement for verbatim translations."[98] Based on this, he claimed that the key element in the interpreter's performance is his task to ensure successful interaction. However, such presupposition requires all the participants to understand each other as if they spoke the same language and therefore the interpreter must inevitably play more active role than the official guidelines expect.

Unlike all the so far mentioned studies regarding the interpreter's role of translation machine or active participant, Cecilia Wadensjö (1992, 1998) focuses on interpreters as translator and coordinator in her studies. She analyzes the relationship of primary participants and an interpreter. She is interested in the relationship between primary participants as well as the interpreter's relationship to both parties. She analyzed Goffman's concept of 'footing' (1981).

The model of footing explores social encounters with respect to who participates in them and who contributes to them. An example could be a television interview, where there are the interviewer and the interviewee(s), who are ratified participants. The one in charge (the interviewer in this case) may occasionally engage some bystander, e.g. someone from the audience to ask a question. Such situation would be called crossplay (in Goffman's view). He defines it as "communication between ratified participants and bystanders across the boundaries of the dominant encounter".[99] Another such case is byplay, which Goffman defined as "subordinated communication of a subset of ratified participants"[100] or sideplay – "respectfully hushed words exchanged entirely among bystanders"[101]. Therefore it seems logical that the status of non-persons in such interaction would be flexible. They are physically present, they may be engaged in byplay, crossplay or sideplay, while their talk may or may not be taken as a contribution to the dominant encounter.[102] Goffman also said that participants instantly change footing because it is natural feature of human speech. Wadensjö applied this framework to her study of Swedish healthcare clinics' and police stations' interpreters and demonstrated that shifts of footing were common in these speech events. She also mentioned various reception and production roles which can be adopted

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[98] Jacobsen, 160.
[99] Wadensjö, 188.
[100] Wadensjö, 188.
[101] Wadensjö, 188.
[102] Wadensjö, 188.

by participants and she showed how it affects what and how is communicated. She also showed that the interpreter may adopt all of identified reception roles in different stages of the speech event not only by his choice but also as a reaction to the primary participants. The interpreter therefore plays an important role as coordinator of communication.

In the beginning of the 21th century, the main focus in community interpreting research, mainly the topic of interpreter's role, was on legal and medical settings. However, the focus has moved from the question whether an interpreter should be visible and active or invisible and inactive to how much visible and active he should be and with what consequences.[103] The question of interpreters' presence was dealt with also by Danica Seleskovitch, who believed that an interpreter is a cultural mediator and intermediary "whose task is to help participants understand each other's cultural differences rather than pretend that they do not exist."[104] The interpreter is thus actively present as the primary participants. On the other hand, Seleskovitsch stressed that the active participation of the interpreter should be only to the extent which is necessary to rely the message in a way which ensures effective communication between the participants. This should be done in a way which does not conflict with his role or involve him too much in the dialogue to the point when he could change the message according to his ideas. Such suggestion may be understood in a way that the interpreter should be active but he should not assume the role of a primary participant or delegate. It must not be forgotten that his role is to help establish effective communication and understanding between the participants and keep the message as accurate to the speaker's utterance as possible. Seleskovitch's point of view may be considered significant because she is not only the author of one of the theoretical models forming Cognitive-pragmatic approach (theory of sense) but her work is based on solid experience in interpreting as well as training of students.[105]

In a research done by Seyda Eraslan Gercak at the Dokuz Eylul University in 2008, she asked end-users to rate the position of an interpreter during the interpreting process on a scale ranging from "0 - actively shaping communication" to "7 -absolutely neutral". The respondents tended to prefer the more neutral and uninvolved part of the scale. On the other hand, over 50 % of agreed that interpreter should correct the speaker in case he

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[103] Jacobsen, 161-162.
[104] Zahran, 136.
[105] Zahran, 136-137.

makes a mistake and almost 70 % said that interpreter can add his explanations in order to avoid misunderstanding,[106] which makes the interpreter intervene more in contrast to the tendency in the first question where respondents believed that the interpreter should remain uninvolved.

Still, Gentile believes that there has been a lack of critical analytical study on community interpreting. He, as well as Hale (2005), believed that there is a professional crisis in the discipline because people who speak through interpreters have different role expectations. In order to unify it, a strong professional identity, which would impose its own role on those who use the service with respect to needs of the institution as well as to those who require services, is needed. Most views on interpreter's role were based on one's personal preferences and beliefs and some on descriptive studies of the current state of affairs. A very few views are based on research which would take into account consequences of the proposed roles. Jansen said that [107]

> it is striking again that these instructions, codes, laws, etc., which prescribe how an interpreter should or should not act, seem to be based on mere impression of individuals, no matter how experienced. The fact that these views are hardly neutral or independent and that they themselves reflect the values of one particular moment in time is either overlooked or suppressed.[108]

There is no standardized prescription when it comes to a professional code of ethics. However, the code needs to be prescriptive because that is the nature of a code. Berg-Seligson (2002), Gentile et. al. (1996) say that confusing role or absence of clearly defined role of an interpreter leads to negative consequences and lack of uniformity, which makes it difficult for clients to know what to expect. This statement was confirmed also by respondents in my research who either said that they are not aware of existence of something like this or mentioned the code of ethics or various recommendations of professional interpreting organizations, which are not very uniformed. No matter which role the interpreter chooses to take, it is necessary to move away from those prescriptions based only on one's personal preferences and believes to those based on consequences of such choice. It is also important to realize that interpreters will still have to make decisions

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[106] Eraslan Gercek, Seyda. "Cultural Mediator" or "Scrupulous Translator"? Revisiting Role, Context and Culture in Consecutive Conference Interpreting. Dokuz Eylul University. 2008. 22-23.
[107] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, 101.
[108] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, 101.

based on their discretion and judgement to make appropriate decisions (led by the code of ethics) suitable for each situation.[109]

   Another field with similar approach is pediatrics, where the doctor tends to consider the interpreter a neutral translating machine. However, Leanza (2005) suggests that the interpreter may adopt four different roles:

> the role of system agent (transmitting the dominant norms, values and discourse to the patient, ignoring cultural differences), the role of community agent (presenting the minority norms and values as potentially equally valid, thus acknowledging cultural differences), the role of integration agent (finding resources to facilitate integration by helping migrants and people from the receiving society understand each other, a role that takes place outside medical consultations), and the role of linguistic agent (attempting to maintain impartiality, intervening only on language level).[110]

The interpreters in Laenza's research mostly choose to perform the role of linguistic agent and system agent and preferred to keep different status from the migrant patients. Laenza also believes that if interpreters were granted more autonomy and if they were acknowledged as professionals, it would help them adopt all four roles and facilitate the success of the interpreting event. Hale (2008) has the same opinion on interpreters in legal environment. She claims that the role of a legal interpreter is controversial because development of this profession differs around the world and a unified profession that could help with different role expectations of users of interpreting services is missing. Hale also presents five roles, which have been either 'openly prescribed' or 'deducted' from the interpreter's performance:

1. advocate for the minority language speaker
2. advocate for the institution or service provider
3. gatekeeper (controlling the flow of information from e.g. lawyer to defendant by introducing, reinforcing and excluding topics)
4. facilitator of communication (feeling responsible for the success of the interaction)
5. faithful renderer of others' utterances [111]

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[109] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, 101.
[110] Jacobsen, 162.
[111] Jacobsen, 162.

She believes that the interpreter must take into account the possible consequences of the choice of a role before he adopts it. She also thinks that the fifth role is the only adequate one for interpreters who work in legal environment. Still, the interpreter should not work as translation machine but rather try to be as accurate as possible.[112] Since an interpreter's goal should be to make communication possible by removing language barrier, he should do his best to remain neutral in order not to influence the content of the speech by his personal views or opinions.

Although there are many different opinions on the role of an interpreter as well as its definitions in literature, the following table shows five court interpreter definitions which have been either prescribed or deducted from the performance of practicing interpreters as seen by Hale.

	Description of the task	Role identity	Accuracy required	Impartiality requirement
1.	To help the minority language speaker present his/her case in the best possible way	Advocate for the powerless participant	Medium	Nil. Partial to the minority language speaker
2.	To help the service provider/institution. To serve as an institutional assistant	Advocate for the powerless participant	Medium	Nil. Partial to the mainstream language participant
3.	To be an active third participant in the interaction and decide on what should be and should not be uttered	Gatekeeper. The interpreter becomes the only powerful participant	Low	No partiality to ether party – power to the interpreter
4.	To ensure effective communication between the participants	Filter, embellisher, clarifier, speech assistant	Medium to High. Content alone	Impartial. Both parties "helped" by the interpreter
5.	To remove the language barrier and place the minority language speaker in as similar a position as possible as someone who speaks the mainstream language	Faithful renderer of the original utterances	High. Content and manner	Impartial. Responsibility for communication left to authors of the utterances

Table 1. [113]

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[112] Jacobsen, 162-163.
[113] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, 101-102.

Both Laenza and Hale argue that different expectations of people, who use interpreting services, make it more difficult for interpreters no matter what the setting is. The solution they see is to professionalize interpreters and provide them with good working conditions. Although they do not agree on the roles the interpreter should take, these, as well as other studies, illustrate increasing focus on quality of interpreting.[114] However, since this thesis focuses on the role of interpreters, the topic of quality will not be included.

According to Hatim and Mason, there are many factors which contribute to confusion about the role of an interpreter. They say that in liaison interpreting each person defines his own procedures ad hoc. It happens because of lack of uniformity because there are not any standardized requirements in the field of community interpreting. The level of development of this field also differs across the world. Even in countries where the profession is better established persists confusion because not all people who work as interpreters have received the same training. The code of ethics is not of much use without proper reflection and explanation of the concept. Therefore, untrained interpreters, who learn these rules automatically, may have difficulties applying them to practice. Another point is the unstructured nature of the profession, when community interpreting work is most often provided on contractual and free-lance basis is not so well paid for and does not receive much recognition.[115]

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[114] Jacobsen, 163.
[115] Valero-Garcés, Carmen, and Anne Martin, 100.

6 RESEARCH

The research was done in a form of questionnaire, which was sent to conference interpreters – members of AIIC, ASKOT (Association of conference interpreters in the Czech Republic), etc. The research was limited to conference interpreters/court interpreters only in order to receive relevant data from people, who have years of practice and therefore personal experience with interpreters' role and its changes in recent years. I have chosen members of those organizations because in order to join such organization, interpreters have to meet some requirements, which should guarantee that they are not inexperienced and can provide relevant answers.

The questionnaire was sent to approximately 100 interpreters, members of the above mentioned organizations. I have received 29 answers. Questions focused on their attitude towards history of interpreting, interpreter's role from interpreter's point of view as well as their opinion on their clients' attitude. Respondents could choose more than one answer or write their own.

The first question aimed at finding out whether interpreters find history of interpreting influential for their job. From my experience, I expected the answers to be mostly negative but I was very surprised. 43 % found history of interpreting just interesting and 25 % said that they think we can learn from it. There were notes saying that it enables us to learn from our past mistakes and that it influenced development of the entire world. Interpreters considered history of interpreting an important source of information on the role of interpreter in communication, expectation of their clients or their education and background. The rest of respondent did not find it interesting (11 %), said that they are too busy (11 %) or never thought of looking at it (10 %).
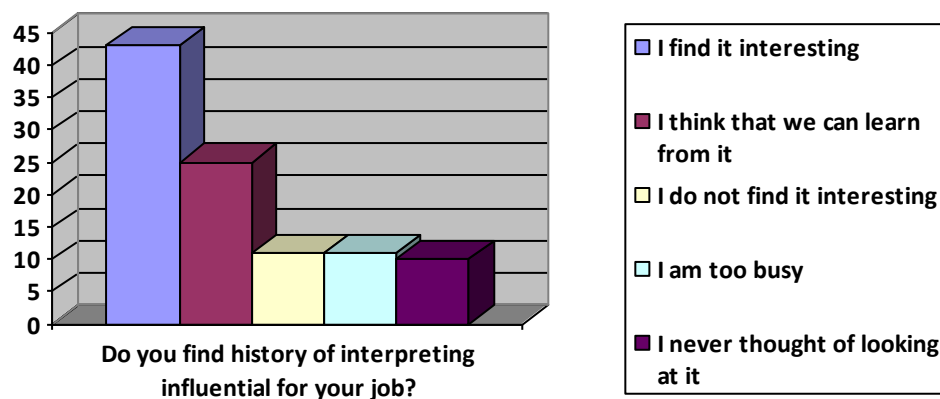
The second question focused on recent changes of working conditions (since their country joined EU). Most respondents agreed that more and more people speak foreign languages and therefore interpreters are needed less than in the past (16,5 %) followed with opinion that nowadays, price is often more important than quality (14 %). Those two answers seem to be interconnected, since more people speak foreign language, more people are willing to interpret (some even without specialized training and education), which leads to price decrease (10,2 %). Interpreters also said that clients are more demanding and critical (11,4 %). As for the social status of a present-day interpreter, the number of answers saying that it has improved (5 %) was almost the same as those saying that it has worsened (3,8 %). Regarding working conditions, 11,4 % thought that it has improved compared to 5 % who found it worse nowadays than in the past. They saw the change of working conditions in better technical equipment and technology in general. On the other hand, they were critical in terms of cheaper equipment which leads, from their point of view, to worse acoustic conditions and makes interpreting even more demanding.
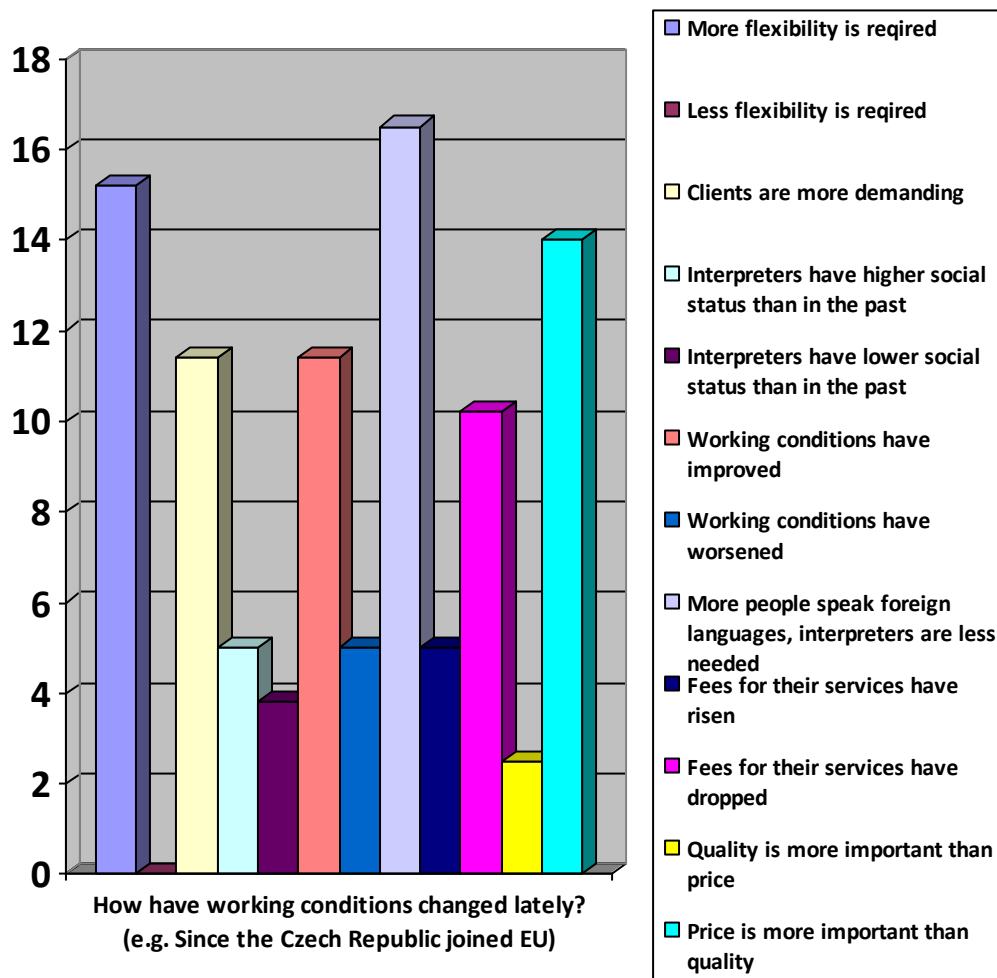
The next question asked for an opinion on definition of interpreters' role. The answers were mostly in accordance with what we were taught, although there were also some interesting opinions saying the very opposite. Vast majority chose answers "someone who makes understanding/communication possible" (37,2 %) and "intercultural and interlingual mediator" (25,5 %). Some interpreters (5,9 %) chose the "translation machine" option. They often mentioned that this attitude is expected by judges, public notaries and some companies.
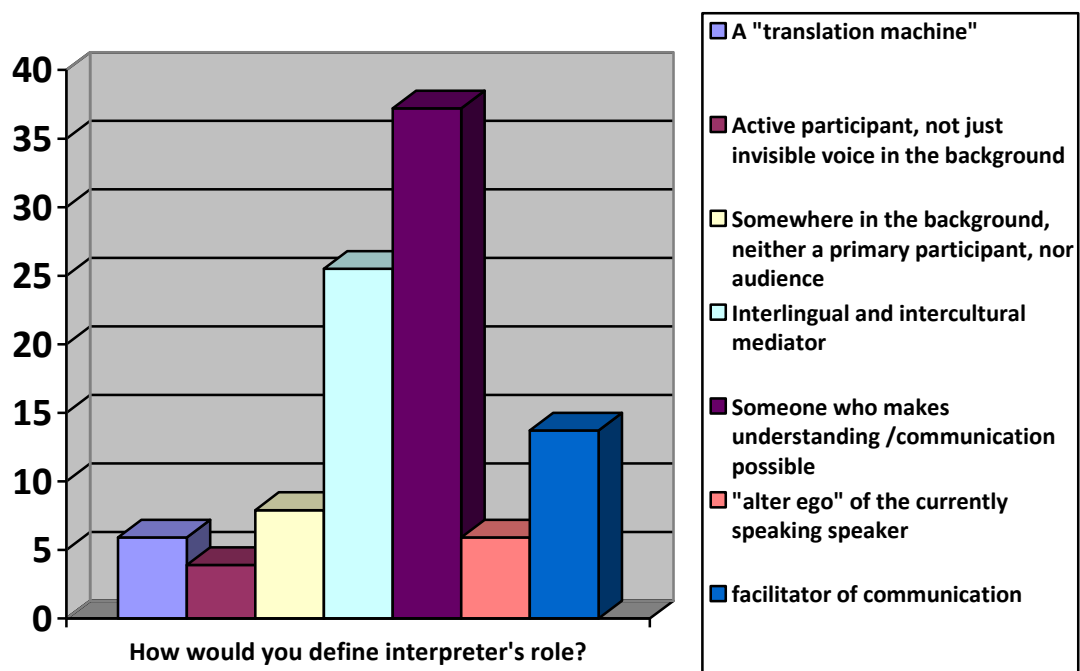

Another question focused on whether interpreters know their clients' opinion on their position in negotiations. Regarding this issue, vast majority of respondents answered that their clients consider them an "impartial element" (63,7 %). They believed that they prove their loyalty to their customer by doing high quality work. On the other hand, after many years of cooperation, clients sometimes became interested in interpreter's opinion and wished the interpreter actively joined discussion, which was not considered appropriate by the interpreter. This seems to be in accordance with the second most frequently chosen option – the interpreter is expected to stay in the background (21,2 %). One respondent even wrote his/her own answer saying that though (s)he is ashamed to say that, (s)he is not interested in clients' opinion but rather in money. I believe that such attitude is quite rare since everybody else had an idea regarding this issue and because in this case, interpreting is just as any other business - knowing what your client wants helps meeting his expectations and contributes to his satisfaction with the service he paid for. In view of the

fact that a satisfied customer is more likely to use the service again, interpreters should be interested in their clients' point of view.
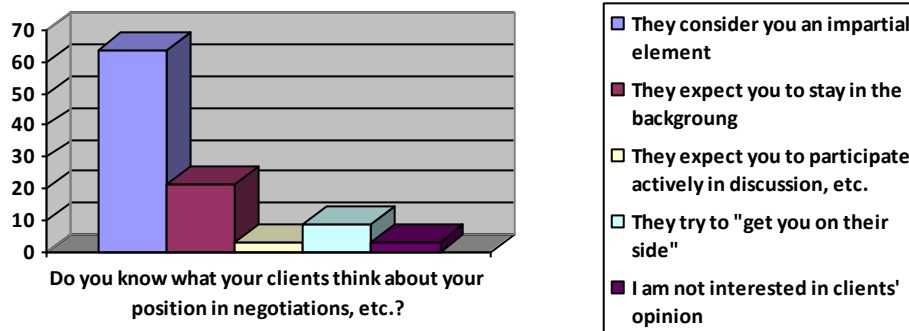

Another question focused on prescription regarding the interpreter's role. I was interested in whether there is something interpreters could use as a 'guide' and which would help their clients gain information about interpreters' work and what to expect when working with an interpreter. About 39 % said that they do not know whether something like this exists, 35 % answered that it exists and that they find it useful – they named code of ethics, information on AIIC and ASKOT web pages or ISO norms. They also mentioned that such information is useful only when clients know about it and are familiar with it, which is, in their opinion, not often. 8,7 % of respondents said that such information is available but they do not find it useful and 13 % answered that they do not know about such a thing and that do not miss it.
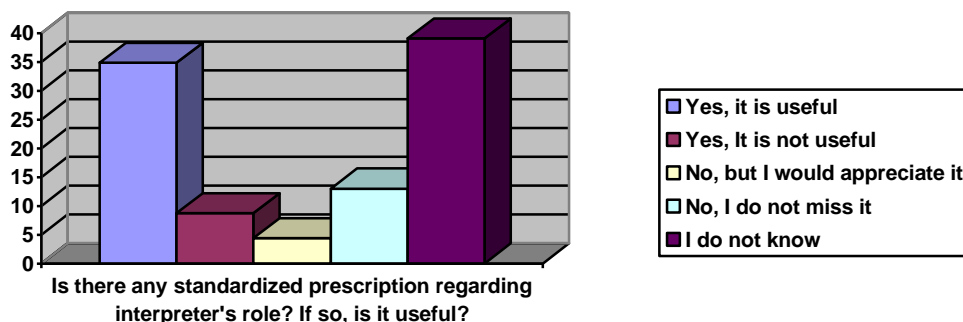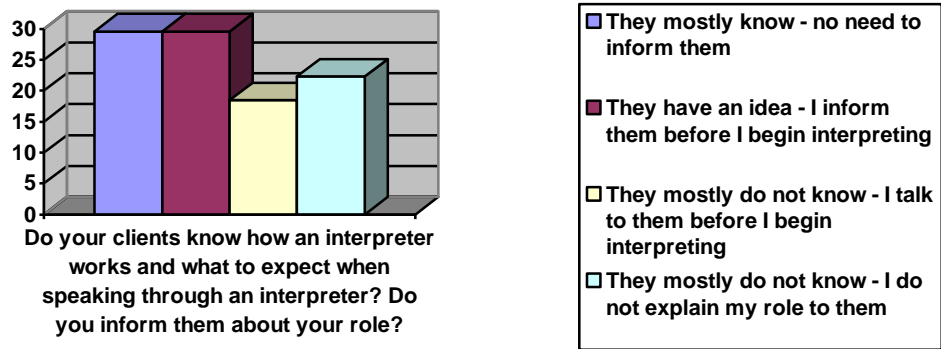

Regarding the next question, all answers were chosen equally. The question asked how their clients perceive their role as interpreters. 31 % said that they are considered an active participant, 34,5 % believed that they are considered rather a translation machine and the

rest (34,5 %) said that interpreter is simply someone who is there an makes communication possible, but he should be neither an active participant nor a mere translation machine.

How do your clients perceive your role as an interpreter?

Active participant

Translation machine

Someone who is there and makes communication possible
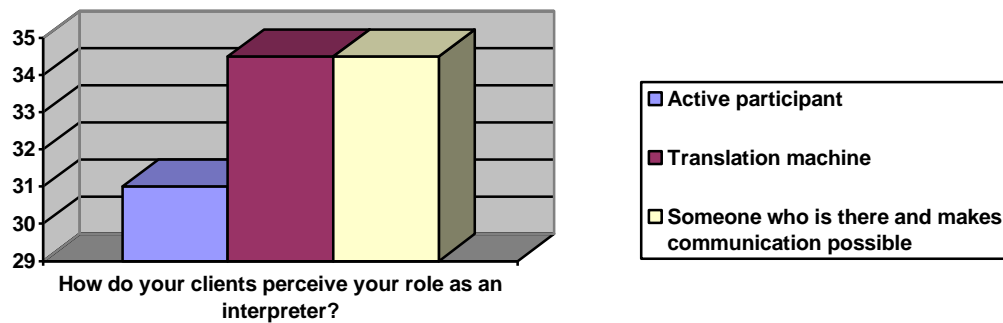
The last question dealt with clients' knowledge as to knowing what to expect when speaking through an interpreter and whether interpreters inform their clients or not. Most of the answers were positive – interpreters said that their clients mostly know what to expect as well as basic information regarding interpreters' work. 29,6 % did not find it necessary to inform their clients if they knew what to expect and the same amount rather informed them anyway. They said that sometimes they found out that the speaker had no idea when he addressed the interpreter directly asking how fast they can speak and how often they should stop and let the interpreter translate. It seems to be beneficial to both parties to agree on a strategy before the beginning in order to avoid misunderstandings. On the other hand, 18,5 % informed their clients because they mostly did not know and 22,3 % knew that their clients do not know and did not inform them anyway. Those who informed their clients said that it is a never ending process and that even after many years of practice, they keep receiving the same questions – why they interpret in pairs, why they need technical equipment, why they need breaks every 20 minutes, why they need information about the speech in advance, etc. There was also one very interesting note saying that JTP has issued a publication for users of interpreting services where the client can learn a lot. I tried to find the publication on the internet but unfortunately, it is not available online. In order to get a copy, it is necessary to buy it in JTP office or order it via e-mail for a symbolic price.

Do your clients know how an interpreter works and what to expect when speaking through an interpreter? Do you inform them about your role?

- They mostly know - no need to inform them
- They have an idea - I inform them before I begin interpreting
- They mostly do not know - I talk to them before I begin interpreting
- They mostly do not know - I do not explain my role to them

Answers gained through this questionnaire show, that interpreters mostly think that their working conditions are changing to the worse. It is caused by rising numbers of people who speak foreign languages, especially English, and who try to earn money by interpreting. This rising number of new interpreters causes pressure on the price, which is lowering. Interpreters did not appreciate this tendency which leads to situation when price is more important than quality as customers try to minimize their expenses. As for the role of an interpreter, they considered themselves intercultural and interlingual mediators who make communication and understanding possible. On the other hand, interpreters had no outstanding opinion on their clients' attitude towards the role of an interpreter. However, most of them said that their clients expect them to be impartial and rather in the background. Interpreters also believed that clients mostly know at least up to a point how an interpreter works and what to expect when speaking through an interpreter and if they do not know, they mostly tend to inform them. Those who did not find it necessary to inform clients who know what would come explained it e.g. by interpreting for EU institutions where interpreting is used frequently and listeners are used to it; or by long term cooperation with a certain client who already has experience with such cooperation and it is not necessary to inform him before every interpreting.

CONCLUSION

Throughout history, people felt the need to communicate e.g. for business reasons. Since early civilizations were oral, they needed services of interpreters. The first written notes about existence of such profession date back to ancient Egypt. In the 19th century, there was found a relief portraying a dual figure of an interpreter conveying pleas to the pharaoh in a tomb of pharaoh Haremhab who lived in 14th century BC. Interpreters did not have very high social status at that time, which is demonstrated by the figure of an interpreter being much smaller than Haremhab's. Those days, to become an interpreter was rather a happenstance. Those people were usually brought up in bilingual areas or by parents of different nationalities who taught the child both languages. On the other hand, during the reign of pharaoh Psammeticus, boys were chosen for special education and sent to Greece to learn the language. During his reign, interpreters were valued and had their place in the society. They were educated to do this job and the profession was hereditary as well. However, it cannot be said that majority of interpreters were nobles especially selected for this job. More often they were freedmen or slaves who interpreted into their mother tongue, especially into Latin and Greek. Egyptians were proud and considered other nations barbarians and therefore were not interested in learning foreign languages. Since interpreters were mostly slaves who learned a language, those to-be linguists expected to gain a better social status and therefore the profession may have seemed attractive to many people. Those examples illustrate that interpreters' role in ancient Egypt was quite unstable.

The situation in Greece was quite similar. Just like Egyptians, Greeks did not have much respect for languages of other nations, whom they considered barbarians. Learning the language of people whom they conquered was considered undignified, therefore slaves, prisoners, etc. were usually forced to learn those languages and interpret for nobility. On the other hand, interpreters were highly valued in military services. They were often used to interpret orders and war strategy, negotiations with enemies on peace or communication with local people in order to ensure food supplies, etc. Their services were also used during peace negotiations even in case when both the participant spoke the language of their opponent because language was used to demonstrate power and prestige. In addition to this formal function, it gave speakers more time to think about their answers.

In contrast with ancient Egypt and Greece, Roman Empire had a different attitude towards languages. Since the country was bilingual, it was a must for an educated citizen to

speak Greek in addition to Latin, which was the official language. Also people who were fluent in various languages and did not need services of interpreters were respected. Still, interpreters were used in senate as well as other during state occasions when dealing with foreign diplomats because they could speak only Latin there. Unlike nowadays, interpreters were often expected to provide the client with some special services – they served as spies, killers, etc. Being an interpreter was quite dangerous because interpreters were dependant on their employers and rejecting such tasks could have tragic consequences for them. Consequently, their clients had different expectations than nowadays. While nowadays, interpreter is expected to be an impartial mediator of language and culture, loyalty was considered the most valuable quality in antiquity followed by rhetorical abilities. Such choice is logical because an interpreter who would talk about his special tasks could have got his employer into trouble, therefore they had to be chosen very carefully. Employers preferred interpreters whom they knew personally and whom they considered trustworthy to official interpreters. Still, being an interpreter in antiquity was a rather dangerous job. Some people had their interpreters murdered or least cut off their tongues in order to prevent them from telling somebody what they heard.

In the colonial era, the situation was different because the invaders entered a new territory and they had no interpreters who spoke local languages. This complication was solved by kidnapping locals and teaching them Spanish. In the meantime, interpreting teams witch such language combinations to deliver the message were used. As for the origin of interpreters, they were again mostly slaves – some were enslaved by invaders and e.g. Malince was given as a slave to Hernán Cortés. According to literature, she must have been very talented and exceptional because she is believed to learn Spanish in six weeks. Furthermore, she served not only as an interpreter but also as a guide and a mistress. Despite such unfortunate situation, Doña Marina was able to gain quite prominent position no other local interpreter probably did. Another point to make is her interpreting strategy which mostly seemed to side with her master. Such choice could be explained by the fact that she was still no more than a slave and she had more to gain by supporting Cortés who was gaining more and more power and could provide her with protection.

Although interpreters did not have a high social status, compared to their fellow tribesmen, they were luckier. Their rights and obligations were codified into laws and they received money for their services unlike those who were given settlers as a free workforce. Topics covered by the laws were e.g. qualifications and skills the interpreter should have

had, how he should interact with the parties during juridical or state administration proceedings, what interpreter's rights as to workplace, work hours, etc are. Each of those topics was accompanied by a detailed description and explanation including penalties and consequences for not following the rules. Those language mediators did not enjoy high prestige, they were untrained and often taken unwillingly from their domestic environment. Still the legislation took into account the issue of communication between linguistically different peoples and the need to define the role of an interpreter in the governance and administration of the society. It was also commonly accepted that only interpreter's version of court proceedings was considered official during trials, etc. and judges had to decide according to interpreter's version even if they understood the original utterance. This rule combined with misinterpreting could have led to sentencing of an innocent person only due to lack of interpreter's training and professionalism.

Indian's rights were sometimes violated because of wrong interpreting. The law tried to find a solution and precautions to limit misinterpreting, both intentional and unintentional. This wrong interpretation might have been caused by lack of specialized training or it could be done on purpose. For the suggestion that this rights violation was done unintentionally speaks a fact that since the invaders were not interested in learning the local language, most interpreters were probably locals who became interpreters involuntarily and they were more likely to side with their fellow tribesmen. On the other hand, they could have done in on purpose because they were hoping to gain recognition and better position in the colonial society. Such misinterpreting issue, as well as a fact that Indians were allowed to take a friend to the court to check interpreting, signals lack of professionalism. Laws also protected locals from abuse of interpreters, who were sometimes well aware of their importance in the colonial society and they misused their skills. This may be the source of the commonly spread belief that native interpreters were traitors (as is often said about Malinche). On the other hand, some of them probably were traitors who enjoyed the privileges they had before the conquest and wanted to keep them after creation of the new order. On the other hand, if such manipulation was discovered, their punishment ranged from a fine to execution.

Compared to history, nowadays, interpreters receive specialized training which was quite rare in the past. Also the attitude of people towards foreign languages has changed and most people speak or understand at least one foreign language up to a point nowadays. Just like in the colonial era, interpreters are sometimes considered mere translating

machines - mostly by companies or courts, said interpreters. Interpreting has become a specialized field of study and unlike in the past, when people were interested mostly in interpreter's loyalty, nowadays they are busy discussing how active and visible interpreter should be, etc. Interpreters tend to be seen as non persons who are there to help understanding but they are not the primary participants. This, along with the translation machine opinion, was also the most frequent answer on clients' expectations regarding interpreters' role. As for the interpreter's loyalty to the speaker, respondents disagreed with Gile who promotes the "sender loyalty principle". Only about 5 % of answers were in accordance with Gile's principle. Vast majority believed that interpreter's role is to make communication an understanding possible and they believed that an interpreter should be rather impartial and stay in the background. Additionally, the loyalty should be focused on the accurate transfer of the content rather than on voicing speaker's personal views only. They rather agreed with Bochner, who said that the mediator-as-synthesizer concept, which does not stop at providing neutral and accurate representation of a culture but goes further, cannot be applied to conference interpreting because interpreters probably would not be willing to abandon their role and start making decisions, taking action, accepting or refusing proposals, etc. This was confirmed by the research when an interpreter added a comment saying that some clients (after years of cooperation) are interested in interpreter's opinion and they try to include the interpreter in discussion, which the interpreter did not consider appropriate. The topic of interpreters' role is further complicated by absence of uniformed prescription dealing with the topic. Although literature as well as respondents mentioned the code of ethics or recommendations by interpreting organizations (AIIC, JTP, etc.), those are only recommendations and it depends on every individual whether he follows them or not. I found out that JTP has issued publication for users of interpreting services. I tried to find the publication on the internet but unfortunately, it is not available online. In order to get a copy, it is necessary to buy it in JTP office or order it via e-mail for a symbolic price. On the other hand, it is useful only if people know about its existence and it they are interested in learning more and are willing to buy it.

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