

**LEARNING TO BE A PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETER:
BOUNDARIES, ETHICS AND EMOTION
IN A MARGINAL PROFESSION**

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To my mother, whose love, support and faith in me know no boundaries.

ABSTRACT

Interpreting between peoples of different languages is an ancient practice, and one that has traditionally been viewed as fraught with ambiguities of trust, status, power and agency. In the last quarter of a century, both national and transnational governmental institutions have addressed particular concerns about interpreting for migrants using public services in their host countries. In order to remove the burden of responsibility for such interpreting from the children to whom it often fell, and in order to ensure social justice for migrants in access to services, considerable resources have been invested worldwide in creating professional infrastructures for public service interpreting (PSI), including training, qualifications and registration for specialist practitioners. This thesis investigates in depth, through the narratives of public service interpreters themselves, the complex nature of their work. It builds on previous critiques which have challenged the profession's formal prescriptions of supposed 'invisibility', as if these practitioners were just 'translating machines' who do not participate in the social interactions they interpret. However, it also goes beyond existing research by drawing on the sociologies of professions and of workplace learning to highlight aspects of this work that have not hitherto been considered.

The research was conducted within a critical interpretive paradigm that seeks to understand the relationship between the micro-level subjective experiences of individuals and macro-level institutional and structural factors. The data were generated through lengthy narrative interviews with 11 experienced public service interpreters in England, and analysed initially through open coding and then through a process of narrative synthesis. Key findings are that public service interpreters, in addition to their overt linguistic and cultural work, are also involved in three hidden forms of work: managing professional boundaries, which are frequently disrupted by public service providers and users; addressing unpredictable ethical challenges arising in those interactions; and performing a range of emotional labour. The formal training and rubrics of the public service interpreting profession appear inadequate for acknowledging or supporting these challenges in practice. The findings also point to the fragile professional status of public service interpreting in an increasingly hostile climate generated by political moves to restrict immigration and reduce public spending.

The thesis makes a number of original and significant contributions to knowledge. It presents a fine-grained account of PSIs' work from their own perspectives, which until now have remained underexplored. It focuses on three largely hidden aspects of their work: boundary work, ethics work, and emotional labour. It has demonstrated that these aspects not only constitute forms of work in themselves for PSIs, but also that they are thoroughly integrated, both together and with the more overt practices of public service interpreting. It locates these clearly in wider sets of social power relations, revealing that national and international policy-makers represent a fourth party in interpreted public service encounters. The thesis builds on and extends existing knowledge of this topic through an innovative interdisciplinary approach bringing together critical interpreting studies with sociological understandings of professions and of workplace learning; and offers a holistic synthesis of these perspectives, integrating them through the lens of Bourdieu's theoretical framework. It ends with a series of recommendations for policy and practice to enhance the effectiveness of public service interpreting through a more comprehensive understanding of its practice.

CONTENTS	Page
Acknowledgements	11
List of acronyms	13
Introduction	15
<i>Developing an interest in researching PSI</i>	15
<i>Framing the thesis</i>	18
<i>Contributing to knowledge</i>	19
<i>Outlining the thesis</i>	20
Chapter 1: Historical origins of Public Service Interpreting	23
<i>Introduction</i>	23
<i>The Genesis of interpreting: the Tower of Babel myth</i>	23
<i>Ancient Egypt: the interpreter as vassal</i>	25
<i>The Spanish colonisation of Mexico: the traitor</i>	27
<i>The French colonisation of Africa: the zealous agent</i>	28
<i>The Christianisation of New Zealand: interpreting or political leadership by indigenous chiefs</i>	31
<i>From ancient interpreting to ‘natural translation’</i>	33
<i>Early recognition of children as translators or interpreters</i>	33
<i>The introduction of ‘natural’ translation</i>	34
<i>From natural translation to language brokering</i>	36
<i>The practice of interpreting: mythologised and misunderstood</i>	37
Chapter 2: The professionalisation of public service interpreting	39
<i>Introduction</i>	39
<i>‘Profession’ and ‘professionalism’: definitions and conceptualisations</i>	39
<i>The professionalisation of ‘community interpreting’ on an international scale</i>	41
<i>The professionalisation of ‘Public Service Interpreting’ in England</i>	46
<i>PSI in England: an emerging profession under threat</i>	55
Chapter 3: Critical perspectives on the Public Service Interpreting profession	61
<i>Introduction</i>	61
<i>Challenging the invisibility of the interpreter</i>	61
<i>Problematizing the Code of Ethics</i>	69
<i>Foregrounding emotion</i>	73
<i>Conclusion, research aims and questions</i>	79
Chapter 4: Researching Public Service Interpreting	83
<i>Introduction</i>	83
<i>Locating the study within the paradigm debate</i>	83
<i>Working with the literatures</i>	88
<i>Generating the data</i>	93
<i>Designing the study</i>	101

<i>Assessing the validity and reliability of the study</i>	103
<i>Transforming the data</i>	107
<i>Interpreting the data</i>	110
<i>Conducting the research ethically</i>	113
<i>Assessing the limitations of the research</i>	114
<i>Focusing in on PSIs' personal experiences of their practice</i>	117
Chapter 5: Learning to manage professional boundaries in PSI	119
<i>Introduction</i>	119
<i>PSIs' initial views on 'invisibility'</i>	120
<i>Physical demands of PSI practice</i>	124
<i>Breaching the boundary of PSI to control or care for users</i>	130
<i>Service users breaching boundaries</i>	131
<i>Service providers reinforcing hierarchical boundaries</i>	134
<i>PSIs blurring their own professional boundaries</i>	136
<i>Summary</i>	143
Chapter 6: Maintaining ethics within PSI work	145
<i>Introduction</i>	145
<i>PSIs' perceptions of ethics: observing the Code is 'not that problematic to deal with if you have your wits about you'</i>	145
<i>From theory to practice: consciously breaching the Code</i>	148
<i>'It's true what we learn but [...] in practice, it might not be that easy'</i>	154
<i>The ethical struggle to 'do the right job'</i>	158
<i>Pressures to remain quiet: 'I knew from her accent she was lying, but you can't do anything'</i>	161
<i>Challenging pressures to engage in unethical practices: 'don't tell the police'</i>	163
<i>Conclusion</i>	165
Chapter 7: Foregrounding emotion within PSI	167
<i>Introduction</i>	167
<i>PSI work: general feelings from interpreters</i>	167
<i>Emotional reasons for choosing a career in PSI</i>	169
<i>Managing emotions at work: training and discourse</i>	170
<i>Compliance with the demand for emotional detachment</i>	171
<i>Dealing with feelings from users and providers</i>	181
<i>Summary</i>	187
Chapter 8: Theorising boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour	189
<i>Introduction</i>	189
<i>Moving beyond the concept of the PSI's 'invisibility' towards 'boundary work'</i>	190
<i>Shuttling between personal, professional and economic values: 'ethics work'</i>	202
<i>Suppressing emotion within PSI work: 'emotional labour'</i>	208
<i>Summary</i>	217

Chapter 9: Synthesising PSIs' experiences: putting Bourdieu to work	219
<i>Introduction</i>	219
<i>Field</i>	219
<i>Habitus</i>	225
<i>Hexis</i>	229
<i>Illusio</i>	232
<i>But what if a mostly unaccounted for but fourth player within the quasi-field of PSI held its existence and survival in its hands?</i>	235
Chapter 10: Conclusions, recommendations and prospects	237
<i>Introduction</i>	237
<i>Addressing the research questions</i>	237
<i>Recommendations for policy and practice</i>	238
<i>Further research agendas</i>	240
<i>Original contributions of this thesis to knowledge</i>	240
References	243
Appendices	
<i>Appendix 1: Information sheet for research participants</i>	265
<i>Appendix 2: Consent form for research participants</i>	267
<i>Appendix 3: Interview schedule</i>	269
<i>Appendix 4: Details of interviewed Public Service Interpreters at the time of the study</i>	271
<i>Appendix 5: Annotated data: PSI Monika</i>	273
<i>Appendix 6: Permission for reproduction of image from Delisle and Woodsworth, 1995</i>	275

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIIC	Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (International Association of Conference Interpreters)
APCI	Association of Police and Court Interpreters
ATA	American Translators Association
Avidicus	Assessment of Videoconference Interpreting in the Criminal Justice Service (EU-funded project, 2008-2011)
BERA	The British Educational Research Association
CACDP	Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People
CI	community interpreting
CILT	National Centre for Languages
CL	Critical Link conference
CioL	Chartered Institute of Linguists
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRC	Community Relations Commission
DPSI	Diploma in Public Service Interpreting
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
FIT	Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (International Federation of Translators, based in Germany)
FITISPos	<i>Formación e Investigación en Traducción e Interpretación en los Servicios Públicos</i> (Training and Research Group on Public Service Translation and Interpreting, based in Spain)
IATIS	International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies, based in England
ICE	interpreted communicative event(s)
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IPRI	Interpreter's Interpersonal Role Inventory
ITI	Institute of Translation and Interpreting, based in England
LIT	legal Interpreters and Translators
M.E.N.	Manchester Evening News
NAJIT	National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, based in Australia
NRPSI	National Register for Public Service Interpreters
PSI	Public Service Interpreter
PSI	public service interpreting
PSIs	Public Service Interpreters
SCRRI	Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration
TRAFUT	Training for the Future (EU-funded project, 2011-2012)

Introduction

Developing an interest in researching PSI

For some time now, there has been an ongoing debate at the local and national level about the role that translators and interpreters play in the lives of foreign communities living in England. During the early stages of my research for this thesis, the UK New Labour government issued a document entitled 'Guidance for Local Authorities on Translation of Publications' (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007), following the publication of the report 'Our Shared Future' by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007).

Supporting the government, the Manchester Evening News (M.E.N.) also published a couple of articles that were very critical towards translators and interpreters, including one which criticised the Council's translating and interpreting agency, M4-Translation for allegedly costing taxpayers too much money and preventing foreigners from both learning English and integrating fully into the British society. If we take a look at British newspapers, we notice that their ideologies, discourses and the way in which they report the facts differ according to their political affiliation, despite being supposedly unbiased. The Guardian, for instance, is classed as a centre-left newspaper, The Times as centre-right, and the Independent as liberal. The discourse of the press is, generally speaking, strongly orientated towards making a profit for its owners, and the news industry is seen as a business where controversial stories are constantly published to capture people's interest and maintain their readership. Often this includes generating and playing on popular fears. If we take the articles published in the populist tabloid M.E.N about M4-Translation, we realise that they reveal such a discourse in texts which are sensational, scandalising, shocking even. By way of example, here is an extract of an article entitled '£800,000 translation bill' published online in December 2007. I have put contentious words in italics:

MANCHESTER council was asked to translate its documents and services into 77 different languages in the past year. *Demand* for translation in the city *has rocketed* due to the *huge increase of foreign nationals* settling in Manchester over the last 15 years. A unit called M-4 Translations [*sic*], set up by the council in 1992, *costs more than £800,000 per year* to run, of which the *council contributes £280,000*.

This article generated 26 comments from the general public as soon as it was published. most of which have a racist connotation characterised by intolerance towards foreigners

as we can see below:

I strongly object to one penny being spent on people who come here and refuse to learn English.

By asking these people to learn English has nothing to do with 'immigrant bashing' it's asking them to show respect for the country that has given them somewhere to live and work.

Now, if we move onto the political discourse used in the guidance document on translation for local authorities mentioned above, we can sense that the government is trying to position itself both in relation to the views promoted by the press, and popular anti-immigrant sentiments. First the document starts by presenting the recommendations made by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in an ambiguous and arguably manipulative way, adding the bold font for emphasis:

*The Commission found that around 60 per cent of people believe that the biggest barrier to 'being English' was not speaking the language ... English **'binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of community languages cannot.'***

(Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007: 5, original emphasis)

In their response, the government promote an image of Englishness and make it clear that foreigners 'flocking' to the country have to be more British and assimilate into English culture, which they present themselves as trying to protect from dilution:

We agree with the Commission's emphasis on the need to speak English and that promoting English is essential for both longstanding migrants ... and new migrants who do not speak English.

(Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007: 9, emphasis added)

One conclusion that might be drawn from the discourses above is that translators and interpreters are taken for scapegoats in the adoption of anti-immigration policies or the promotion of social cohesion, whichever way this is read. Let us now turn to a different example that illustrates how else interpreters have been featured on the news. The following newspaper abstract is extracted from an article entitled 'Scared and alone, interpreters are finally offered a way out', published in The Times:

Haidr al-Mtury, Ali Kamad and Khalil Abraham are just three of the scores of interpreters who have been tortured and killed by militiamen because they worked for the British military in Iraq.

Hundreds more are in fear for their lives, even though most have quit their jobs. Many have fled to Syria or Jordan, where they are in hiding. Others are shut away in houses in case they are spotted... The insurgents regard interpreters as traitors.

(Haynes, 2007: 4)

This short abstract raises two interesting issues. First, interpreting can be dangerous or life-threatening even, not only in places of war. And second, the role of interpreters is ambiguous. Here, as in the examples above, we can see that this role can be perceived differently according to various parties' interests. For the British army intervening in Iraq, local interpreters are considered as allies; but for the insurgents, these interpreters are nothing less than traitors.

My reasons for being fascinated about these issues and for developing an interest in researching PSI are deeply rooted in my own experiences. Some 20 years ago, I came to England as an au-pair to improve my knowledge of the English language. The family with whom I lived was very warm and welcoming, and I soon became part of it. Although I had only planned to stay for a year, I found learning and practising English on a daily basis very stimulating and therefore decided to stay a little while longer. Whilst completing a degree in Modern Languages, I registered with M4-Translation, the Council's agency mentioned above, as a freelance interpreter and translator. I later enrolled on a postgraduate course in Conference and Business Interpreting and Translating to gain further knowledge of these practices. The training was both intensive and challenging. Many students dropped out, as we painfully discovered that interpreting was a much more demanding practice than is envisaged in the widespread assumption that anyone who speaks - or claims to speak - two or more languages can interpret and/or translate.

Interpreting is in fact a complex process that requires exceptional speed and agility of thought, as well as high linguistic and cognitive skills. Like Russian dolls, this process conceals a multiplicity of tasks that must be performed simultaneously, such as: active listening; processing of the message conveyed through verbal and non-verbal cues; fast selection of equivalents in the target language; use of direct speech as if the words were originally coming out of the interpreter's mouth; and mirroring the speaker's tone and intonation to faithfully render the message and produce the effect originally intended. This further implies that skills and qualities such as focus, stamina, short-term memory, split-attention, public speaking and cultural knowledge should be part of the interpreter's fabric.

This course was undoubtedly useful for the knowledge that I gained on different interpreting techniques and vocabulary in conference and business settings in particular. However, it hardly provided answers to the daily issues that I faced, as many colleagues, whilst working as freelancer for M4-Translation in terms of where the boundaries of our role lay, the ethical challenges it presented, and the emotional stresses we incurred. Left with a bitter-sweet taste, I decided to enrol on a vocational training course a few years later to obtain a Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) in Law for England and Wales. The fees were quite expensive, but I considered it an investment, as I hoped to gain a better understanding of public service interpreting (PSI) practice and attain professional and academic recognition. Classes took place once a week for two hours in the evenings for an academic year. Language groups were mixed together and we practised through role plays and scenarios. From this course, I acquired knowledge on how law enforcement bodies and agencies work in England and Wales, how to compile bilingual glossaries and improve interpreting techniques. Stress was put on remaining outside of the interactions in which PSIs interpret, refraining from voicing out personal opinions, and detaching oneself emotionally from assignments, since cases could be upsetting. These recommendations, we were told, were there to protect PSIs. In theory, they all sounded straightforward and easy to apply, but as this thesis strongly argues, in practice this is far from being the case.

Framing the thesis

As discussed above, PSI is a very specific and demanding type of interpreting which involves linguistic sophistication, as well as three aspects on which this thesis will focus, which I term boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour. For instance, PSIs are instructed to remain outside the human interactions that they interpret. They are expected to don a cloak of invisibility whilst performing a highly complex activity. Enacting 'invisibility' in spite of one's physical presence can prove challenging, especially when PSIs are actively involved in interpreted interactions. Official texts place a stringent demand on PSIs' invisibility, impartiality and neutrality by defining their role as little more than 'translation machines'. But how do PSIs narrate their experiences in the workplace? How do they perceive their interactions with public service users and providers? What challenges do they recount in performing their role? What practices do they engage in to meet these challenges? To what extent does labouring with invisibility, ethics and emotion arise in PSIs' practice,

and how? How can we best theorise the complex nature of PSIs' work in a more holistic way? As I will argue in the early chapters of this thesis, this practice is largely misunderstood, undervalued and highly vulnerable to political changes. A small but growing number of critical studies has addressed these issues, but there is still a lack of understanding of the material realities of PSIs' work and of the strategies employed by practitioners to deal with such issues on a daily basis. As such, this thesis does not focus on theories of learning *per se*, but on the *material* practices of PSIs' learning in an innovative way. Indeed, this thesis is concerned with the ways in which PSIs learn to deal with invisibility, ethics and emotion in a highly challenging workplace context. It argues that interpreted interactions within public services are not just about a supposedly transparent bilingual use of words. They are also about several other issues which are culturally embedded, and which create numerous tensions and demands for PSIs. These issues arise from disjunctures between the perceptions and expectations of PSIs' role on the part of service users, service providers and interpreters themselves.

Contributing to knowledge

In conducting this original piece of research, my main aims were to:

- identify how PSIs enact their role in daily practice
- deepen our understanding of less visible aspects of PSIs' work
- contribute to critical theorisations of PSI and
- inform policy and practice about PSI practitioners' experiences in England.

My thesis builds on what is already known about PSI practice in the following ways. On an empirical level, the data generated by my project provides empirical evidence of how PSIs deal with the challenges they face in unprecedented depth. No previous study has investigated the ways in which PSI practitioners perceive their own practice, and in particular, how they manage the boundaries, ethics and emotional demands of their work. These are original foci not only for interpreting studies, but also for studies of workplace learning in the sociology of education. My interpretation of that evidence therefore argues that the PSI practice is even more complex than previously acknowledged in the existing critical literature on the topic. Not only do I therefore deconstruct long-held myths and historical accounts of the ancient practice of interpreting and its contemporary enactments, by drawing on concepts of boundary

work, ethics work and emotional labour from the literature on workplace learning. I also argue that both the micro-level and macro-level contexts within which PSI takes place must be taken into consideration if we are to deepen our understandings of what is happening in this fragile and unstable profession in a more *holistic* way. Some of Bourdieu's sociological concepts have already been used by other authors to generate valuable critical insights into public service interpreting; but here I draw on Bourdieu's theoretical framework *as a whole* in order to synthesis insights drawn from the literature on workplace learning. This combination and synthesis of theoretical frameworks has not been applied yet to the study of PSI in England, and it therefore provides both an innovative and an illuminating way to deepen our understanding of this complex practice.

Outlining the thesis

The structure of this thesis is as follows. Chapter 1 reviews how the practice of interpreting has been expressed in myths and legends in different areas around the globe. It reveals that the practice of facilitating communication between parties that do not understand each other is ancient, and deeply infused with issues of trust, power and agency. The chapter ends with a discussion of growing concerns in the late 20th century about the increasing use of bilingual children who, thanks to their mastery of the dominant language, assist their family and community members to access a whole range of public services vital for their functioning in the host society.

In Chapter 2, I review the emergence of PSI in contemporary England over the last 25 years. Following national and transnational initiatives, the practice has been framed according to a model of professional learning purely as cognitive acquisition, and a model of practice known as the 'conduit' model for its assumptions of mechanistic transmission from one language to another. In particular, I consider the ways in which these models are embedded in the reificatory apparatus of the profession as it has been established. Chapter 3 engages with the emerging critical literature in interpreting studies, which challenges the assumed invisible and a-social role of PSI practitioners in interactions between public service providers and users. It identifies extant gaps in knowledge with regard to the nature of the challenges faced by practitioners and how they deal with them in authentic workplace situations.

In Chapter 4, I explain and justify the overall methodology and the methods adopted to answer the research questions in this study. Since the aims of this study were

to get closer to participants in order to make sense of their work experiences, I privileged ethnographic-style interviewing within the critical interpretivist paradigm in order to generate authentic accounts of PSIs' experiences. I took this approach to identify how PSIs enact their role in daily practice, deepen understanding of less visible aspects of PSIs' work, and contribute to critical theorisations of PSI. Such an investigation is, I argue, necessary in order to inform policy and practice about PSIs' experiences in England. In this chapter, I also discuss practical issues related to the methods that I used such as selecting participants, designing the study, conducting fieldwork and the criteria upon which this study might be assessed.

Chapters 5 to 7 present my narrative constructions of PSIs' accounts of their experiences, considering in turn the challenges they face in managing boundaries, ethics and emotion in the workplace. In Chapter 5, I present evidence of ways in which PSIs manage professional and personal boundaries at work with concrete examples of how practitioners, service users and providers challenge their prescribed yet impossible invisibility. Chapters 6 and 7 extend our knowledge of the challenges that PSIs meet whilst attempting to perform an impartial and neutral role. These chapters bring respective spotlights onto the ethical and emotional challenges that they face in the fulfilment of their role on an everyday basis.

Chapters 8 interprets the data through an initial tripartite framework, explaining and applying separate theorisations of boundary work, ethics work, and emotional labour: challenges which constitute forms of work mostly unaccounted for in the literature. Chapter 9 circles back to the fundamental issues of trust, power and agency that I identified within PSI work in the historical account I gave in Chapter 1. This allows a theoretical synthesis of the data and its initial interpretation presented via the application of Bourdieu's sociology, bringing together his concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *hexis* and *illusio*. This innovative framework reveals that factors at the macro-level must be taken into consideration in the scrutiny of the practice in order to broaden our understanding.

In Chapter 10, I briefly conclude this thesis by discussing future prospects for the PSI practice in England and by making recommendations for the survival of this emerging yet fragile profession.

Chapter 1: Historical origins of Public Service Interpreting

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine historical narratives of early interpreting work to explore some of the complexities in understanding contemporary Public Service Interpreting (PSI) as a social practice embedded in a set of other parallel social practices.

Language interpreting, and especially the role of the interpreter herself, has often been the stuff of myth and legend. Historical narratives about the origins and early practices of interpreting convey fascinating stories of (as we shall see) trust, power, and betrayal. But these are not simply 'fairy tales' without relevance to the modern day experience of interpreting. In their daily work, Public Service Interpreters (PSIs) today interact with service users from various walks of life and with practitioners who provide a whole range of health, legal and social welfare services run by the government. Ancient and less historically distant stories of interpreting provide an important store of themes to explore in understanding the complexities of contemporary practices in this field, and how PSIs learn to navigate them.

First, then, I begin by reviewing prior accounts of informal interpreting to lay the ground for an analysis of the practice of PSI and its origins. I focus on literature which reveals issues surrounding the roles, status and identities of untrained adult and child 'interpreters' in community-based settings - that is, those who, until the recent introduction of PSI, have long undertaken this work. What *can* examples from the past tell us about the ancient practice of interpreting in the public service? What are the power relations at play? What do these examples tell us in terms of power brokering, betrayals, quislings, subordination, subversion or increasing control of immigration from the State? What are the role and positioning of the interpreter? What is the relationship of interpreting with other practices conducted simultaneously? And finally, what is the degree of formality or informality in different contexts?

The Genesis of interpreting: the Tower of Babel myth

Today, it is estimated that no less than 7,000 languages are spoken across the globe (Lewis, 2009). There is, however, a lack of scientific evidence as to why human beings with more or less similar morphological make-ups speak different patois, dialects and languages - not only across, but also within national borders. The origin of

multilingualism is sometimes popularly accounted for by a popular Judao-Christian myth: that of the Tower of Babel. In Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament, people driven by ambition decided to build a tower that would reach heaven. Fearing for his supreme power and authority, God decided to thwart their plans by making them speak in different tongues and thus spreading confusion among them. Unable to understand one another, they could no longer communicate or work as a team anymore. They thus went their separate ways, leaving their tower unfinished. From a religious perspective, this myth is often interpreted as a warning against ambition (the sin of pride) and as disobedience to God. For linguists, translators and interpreters alike, however, it often symbolises the birth of their professions. Had it not been for the emergence of these practices, members of linguistically and culturally diverse communities would not have been able to interact with each other, making the world a much more isolating and fragmented place:

Translation has brought and continues to bring people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds closer together, it has enabled them to share a more harmonious view of the world, it has built bridges of understanding and appreciation among different societies. Even the most sceptical of critics cannot but admit that, if it were not for translators and interpreters we would be living in a far less friendly and less interesting environment.

(Baker, 1992: 8)

Myths are often used to legitimise practices and elevate their status through association with antiquity (Colley, 2003), and this appeal to the myth of Babel is no exception. What implications may that have for the ways in which PSI has been perceived as a professional practice? Human beings, the myth suggests, started speaking different 'tongues' as if by magic. This myth legitimises this profession, as one which is currently is still struggling to be recognised as such despite its importance. However, we can see that it also oversimplifies the practice of interpreting, an oversimplification perpetuated in the popular comedy programme and books *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* with a modern 'take' on the myth of Babel, the 'Babel fish': a device conveniently inserted in the ear to instantly communicate with speakers from different tongues (Bellos, 2011).

Although records on pioneer interpreters in the English language are scarce, it is reasonable to believe that the practice of interpreting is a practice as old as humanity itself. Language and culture mediation must have taken place as soon as people from

different linguistic and cultural backgrounds came into contact. Evidence of interpreting work dates back to 3000 BC. In an impressive multi-authored project that gathers evidence on global translation work throughout history, Delisle and Woodworth (1995) illustrate how translators, and by extrapolation interpreters, played a significant part in inventing alphabets, compiling dictionaries, developing literatures, disseminating knowledge and cultural values, maintaining the reins of power, spreading religions, and so on. In brief, translators and interpreters played a vital, powerful and invisible role in contributing to the making of History. On a smaller scale, additional studies have revealed the existence of countless 'invisible' untrained bilinguals who have mediated interactions between people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds in a variety of settings throughout history (Valero-Garcés and Martin, 2008; Mason, 2001; Baker, 1998). But how have further historical accounts contributed to views and perceptions of early interpreting work? In the sections that follow, I focus in particular on accounts which highlight the sociocultural aspects of the practice, such as the interpreter's status, role and own perceptions of what the practice entails, rather than on its linguistic aspect.

Ancient Egypt: the interpreter as vassal

In antiquity, bilingual interpreters were for instance the 'overseers of dragomans' who insured the longevity of the Egyptian empire, souls blessed by Hermes who could divinely interpret the 'dark words of enraptured seers' in ancient Greece and Rome (Hermann, 1956/2002: 16-18). In previous times, interpreters often occupied a powerful and fluid position, although high status and recognition of their power did not systematically ensue. In Egypt for instance, interpreters during the Pharaonic era were referred to as 'speaker[s] of strange tongues' and seemed to be treated with contempt and disdain (Hermann 1956/2002: 16). However, the reasons behind such pejorative views remain unclear. One hypothesis is that in ancient Greece, Egypt and Rome, languages of other nations were held in low esteem and considered as barbarous (Bowen *et al.*, 1995). As a result, interpreters who spoke these languages may have been accorded a lower status. To which socio-political class did interpreters in Egypt belong? Regardless of their backgrounds, depictions in temples and graves of non-Egyptians from places such as Nubia, Lybia or Asia never show them as equal to Egyptians. They are either 'prisoners or vassals obsequiously bringing tribute' to the Pharaoh whose 'words of entreaty for mercy' (Hermann, 1956/2002: 15-16), as

recorded in the inscriptions, have been put into their mouths by the Egyptians. If Pharaohs were indeed more interested in reinforcing their power and authority than listening to what foreigners had to say, how did they perceive interpreters and what tensions did interpreters face in mediated events? To what extent did Pharaohs, for all their supreme powers, actually rely on them?

An interpretation of the illustration of a 'Double Egyptian Interpreter' (Delisle and Woodsworth, 1995) may provide some answers to the questions above.



Double Egyptian interpreter (Delisle and Woodsworth, 1995: 279)

Two small characters appear at the centre of the scene, turning their backs to each other. They are in a bent position, one arm held along their bodies. The one on the right hand side faces a giant character holding a huge gun-like weapon, his other arm stretching towards it. As for the one on the left, he is facing four foreign-looking bearded people, whose faces and arms piled on top of each other (two faces on the floor, one upside down) are the only body parts depicted. The character's left arm is raised towards them. In addition, the sets of arms stretching towards him and the rest of the scene may indicate that their number is greater than four. This illustration highlights the mediating role played by interpreters in what seems to be an interaction between a powerful authority figure and the powerless, reduced to heads and limbs, who are seemingly imploring her mercy. However, although they occupy the central position, their bodies are smaller and their spine is bent. This may indicate that in Ancient Egypt, interpreters were firstly considered as servants, and secondly that their duties may have gone beyond linguistic mediation to either grant mercy to or condemn enemies to the throne. The words of the more and less dominant parties mediated by the interpreter were meant to be captured in the blank rectangular space above his head, but these never came to

being engraved (Gardiner, 1953). Rather than the purely subordinate role suggested in the Egyptian depiction, other contexts suggest that interpreters occupied a position of power by being the ones who could understand the languages spoken by both parties. Thanks to this unique position, they could choose which side to represent or what to interpret in order to influence the outcome of the interaction (Jones and Jenkins, 2004; Kouraogo, 2001; Lang, 1978). As a result, they were considered as political mediators, advocates or peacemakers, but they were also viewed as the necessary evil, the traitor or potential enemy who knows too much for crossing the boundaries on both sides (Valero-Garcés and Martin, 2008). The social practice of interpreting was deeply infused with doubts about trust, confidence, loyalty and power, as we shall see in some further historical accounts.

The Spanish colonization of Mexico: the traitor

Throughout the history of Spanish colonisation of the Americas, interpreters often had a high status. By way of example, between 1529 and 1630, 15 decrees relating to interpreting were signed by the Spanish crown (Giambruno, 2008). One of the most powerful yet controversial figures of this era is the interpreter Doña Marina, also known as la Malintzin or la Malinche, a native Indian slave acquired by Hernán Cortés in 16th century Mexico. Doña Marina proved to be a real asset to the Spanish during their conquest of the New World. Through her ability to speak Nahuatl, an ancient Aztec language, she soon became the conquistador's 'tongue and ears' (Bowen *et al.*, 1995). She was used to mediate between him and the indigenous people and played a pivotal role in their compliance with the newly established powers. A highly influential 'go-between', Doña Marina occupied the centre of power, even more so than Cortés who inherited the nickname 'Malintzin' after her name, when it was common for slaves to be called after their masters. This powerful position was rather (and still is) unusual for a woman, let alone for an indigenous slave.

However, the status of Doña Marina was nonetheless ambiguous; an ambiguity which may have deepened with the birth of her son fathered by Cortés. From a Spanish colonialist perspective, Doña Marina was a saviour sent by the Lord 'to further their cause' (Bowen *et al.*, 1995); although the authors report that Cortés treated her with disdain, envious perhaps of her status and influence; as in the Egyptian example, even though the interpreter occupies a powerful position, their power is diminished by still more powerful figures who need them. As for Doña Marina's fellow Indians, they

perceived her as a curse, a national traitor who not only denounced spies and conspiracies to the Spanish authorities, but also mothered a 'bastard' race of *mestizos* (people of mixed race) (Bowen *et al.*, 1995). Her historical role in the Spanish conquest of Mexico was so powerful that, according to a legend passed from one generation to another, she paid the ultimate price for betraying her people: her ghost is believed to haunt the former Aztec capital restlessly in lament. Furthermore, widespread disdainful feelings towards her have also been immortalised in the current use of the Mexican word 'Malinchista' to insult someone and accuse them of betrayal (Baker, 2001: xv). Notwithstanding, to counterbalance this interpretation of Doña Marina's role, some feminists have recently argued that she represented a symbol of 'fruitful cross-cultural exchange' and a 'token of peace' by the Indians, who successfully immersed herself in the other's culture and lived ahead of her time. (For further readings on women's roles as past interpreters, consult Giambruno, 2008; Bowen *et al.*, 1995). The perception of interpreters as traitors used as instruments to implement a colonising power has been depicted in other studies (see for instance Le *et al.*, 2009 and Takeda, 2007). However in other contexts, these interpreters may have benefited from an even higher social status than la Malinche, as I shall now discuss.

The French colonization of Africa: the zealous agent

In the colonial era, interpreters have also been used as instruments to implement power. The authorities were reliant on them to impose and maintain their supremacy, but wanted to obscure this reliance (Mopoho, 2001). The following call made by a senior officer reflects how the recruitment of indigenous people to interpret was part of a strategy to expand colonial rule:

We are in direct contact with populations to whom we have to inspire trust to attract them to us for good. To help us in this, we need zealous agents who know our language well enough and whom we can absolutely trust.¹

(Mopoho, 2001: 616)

The French administration thus relied heavily on 'zealous' bilingual 'agents' to ensure direct contact with the indigenous peoples, impose its authority on them and control every aspect of their lives. New recruits had to swear allegiance to the newly established power, something which would guarantee them a preferential treatment to

¹ My own translation from the original French.

the rest of their compatriots. This was also done to the detriment of the traditional powers in place, something not always viewed favourably by the local chiefs. By being privy to information from both camps, interpreters occupied a privileged position. Their proximity to power as well as access to Western knowledge and culture earned them respect and admiration mixed with envy and jealousy. Indeed, power tensions arose from the fact that their role was considered far more prestigious and influential than that of traditional leaders whose power had been usurped from them by the colonial ruling. At the same time, former leaders expected interpreters to both protect and represent their interests:

As a group, native rulers had been stripped of their ancestral authority [...]. They relied on interpreters to stake out their positions, to negotiate new powers, to define new roles, and to report back to colonial officials. The interpreter's role as mediators was most evident during treaty negotiations. They would draw the attention of traditional rulers on any negative aspects of the proposed treaty, advise them on the best answers to provide or the best attitude to adopt, thoroughly explain the terms of the treaty to help them understand exactly what they were agreeing to.

(Mopoho, 2009: 7)

These expectations undoubtedly put interpreters in a powerful yet ethically challenging position, since both the colonial administration and local communities counted on them to protect and represent their own interests. Access to both parties was granted on the basis of loyalty and trust, and as the quotes above show, interpreters had to make personal choices in terms of whose interests to represent. They were expected to act as mediators and peacekeepers. Therefore, they also had to make choices about what information to relay and how, something they did by resorting to techniques such as 'translation management', that is to say 'the act of intentionally rendering a message in such a way as to achieve a given goal that may not necessarily be the one intended by the originator of the message' (Mopoho, 2009: 5). In other words, far from being neutral, interpreters had a strong influence on the message conveyed as well as on the outcome of the mediated event. Furthermore, in addition to the social prestige described above, as well as the pecuniary and other material benefits that came with it, interpreting was perceived as a highly-coveted job; one that attracted many unscrupulous individuals craving for power. As a result, interpreters would, sometimes, not hesitate to use their position to serve their own interests, manipulate their audience or intimidate local peoples, as Racoutié, a Major's interpreter, zealously reminded his

fellow compatriots:

I am [...] the Major's interpreter. I am his eyes, ears, and mouth. I am the first and the last auxiliary he sees everyday. I enter his office as I wish. I speak to him without any intermediary. I am Racoutié, the one who sits on a beautiful 'caïlcedrat' wood bench in front of the White Major's door. Who amongst you ignores that the major has a right of life and death upon us? May those who do, beware that thanks to God, my mouth happens to be the closest to the Major's ears.²

(Mopoho, 2001: 621)

Racoutié here describes his position as the Major's interpreter as something unique and powerful. He is the closest to the Major, he addresses him without any intermediary, which even senior staff could not do, and he enters his office as he wishes. However, his description does not reveal the daily struggles he may be faced with whilst working alongside the Major. What does it really entail to be 'the Major's eyes, ears and mouth', 'the first and last person he sees everyday'? What tasks is he asked to perform for or against his will? How does he really feel about his subordinate position? What is his status in the Major's eyes? This last question is partially answered when Racoutié mentions the bench, however beautiful, on which he sits waiting for the Major's orders as a servant would with his master. It is clear that he is at the service of the Major, from the moment he wakes up until he goes to bed. He therefore implicitly conveys a state of servitude that may still bear some similarities with the condition of the Egyptian interpreter whose illustration is described above. He is small and the Major is big. His master represents power and he himself, a subject to that power. By pointing out that his mouth is the closest to the ears of the almighty person who has a right of life and death upon his fellow compatriots Racoutié insinuates that he can manipulate speech to influence what the Major hears and consequently save his fellows' lives himself. Does this mean that he is on their side? Or as a master would expect from his servants, that he is on the Major's side? Thirdly, could it be that he is on both sides or neither of them? I now turn to a fourth example of early interpreting work that sheds further light on the agentic role fulfilled by lay interpreters, but which according to history was pure subordination.

² My own translation from the original French.

The Christianisation of New Zealand: interpreting or political leadership by indigenous chiefs?

In dominant historical accounts of New Zealand, the Reverend Samuel Marsden is often portrayed as the British missionary who established the first Western school on the territory in the early 1800s. Indeed, Marsden is such an important figure in New Zealand's history, especially in relation to education, that the country's research council is named after him. According to such accounts, Marsden, who lived in Australia at the time, was welcomed on the Maori territory of Bay Islands with open arms, alongside his teacher missionaries. Three famous tribal chiefs were present to commemorate their arrival with a crowd of locals: Ruatara, Hongi Hika and Korokoro. Westernised history records several key events that marked the initial interactions between the chiefs, their subjects and the first permanent British settlers on New Zealand soil. These commonly include: the 'Sham Fight' on Rangihoua beach, Marsden's Sermon on the 25th of December 1814 and the 'Haka'. Although there are no written Maori records that captured these events at the time, modern critical readings of what happened from local indigenous people's perspective offer an entirely different interpretation from dominant accounts (Jones and Jenkins, 2004). These multiple readings may appear insignificant, but they are worth the detour, since they highlight crucial issues in ancient interpreting that are related to power and struggles between unequal groups with significant implications for the past, the present and future of social beings. To discuss these further, let us revisit the key historical events in question from both perspectives.

Korokoro, a visionary tribal chief from the North of New Zealand, met Marsden on a boat travelling from England to Australia. During the trip, Korokoro convinced Marsden to come to his country to educate his people. Westernised records suggest that the missionary perceived this invitation as a mission in which his role was to evangelize 'primitives'. However, critical readings suggest that Korokoro saw it as a great opportunity to both educate his people and make their economy prosper. Marsden's diary further indicates that he and his assistant Nicholas were greeted with an entertaining 'sham fight' on a beach the day of their arrival. But for the local tribes the ceremony was nothing less than an official and formal acceptance of 'strange men' on their land and the material enactment of a business contract with the West. This event can therefore be held as the most significant event in the history of New Zealand although according to Western accounts, it is not (Jones and Jenkins, 2004). Instead, 'Marsden's Sermon', which took place on the symbolic date of Christmas Day 1814 has

been immortalized in history and academic curricula as the point of departure for multicultural (and multi-lingual) cross-exchanges between the West and New Zealand.

On such day, Marsden was allegedly invited to preach the gospel to a Maori congregation of three to four hundred people. He did so through his lay interpreter, who was no one else than the tribal Chief Ruatara since he could speak good English. Dominant records suggest that the Missionary successfully preached that day, but as in the examples of past interpreting discussed above, his speech was not recorded, nor was its rendering. In his diary, John Nicholas (Marsden's companion) indicated that the crowd rose in a 'haka' in gratitude towards them following Marsden's relayed speech. By this he meant a 'rhythmic, vigorous chanted performance' (Jones and Jenkins, 2004: 154). The crowd apparently all cheered in a wave of applause, but since neither he nor the Missionary could understand their language, they could not possibly know why. According to Maori history, however, there was no sermon that day. Instead, the crowd overwhelmingly responded to what their leader had to say to them, not the missionary. It is therefore more likely that the locals' 'unordinary' behaviour was simply an emotional response to Ruatara's words and expression of their support towards him (Jones and Jenkins, 2004). This example of ancient interpreting and critical readings of it illustrate how the 'superiority' of Western colonisers portrayed in dominant historical accounts reduced the authority, power and voice of perennial tribal chiefs and their subjects to silence. Key historical events in Maori culture such as the Sham Fight, Marsden's Sermon and the Haka, interpreted from a Western perspective, tell us that three powerful tribal chiefs were allegedly stripped of their powers by Marsden's evangelization. Similarly, Ruatara's political speech to his people was re-cast by Western colonisers as a (subordinate) act of interpretation when these chiefs actually worked towards the education of their people for their own interests and better prospects, an account which obscures the colonizing process which was subsequently imposed.

The interpretations of past interpreters above demonstrate how some could be used as tools to maintain and expand the supremacy of dominant powers, although this is not the only model. They were acting as agents, mediators or pacifiers between community members and the authorities. Their duties far exceeded the basic transfer of a message into another language, and they were thus constantly crossing occupational boundaries where they fulfilled multiple roles. According to the socio-political context in which these 'interpreters' performed, their role, status and position were perceived

differently by the other parties involved in the mediated event, as well as by themselves. Often in conflict with each other, these perceptions raised issues that revolve around power, agency, allegiance or in/visibility. They had an influence on the progressive shift from an informal to a formal interpreter role and the way in which interpreting in public service settings has been framed as a practice. As I shall now discuss, its framing was also influenced by the recent emergence of child language and cultural brokering as an academic field of study and the different ways in which it has been conceptualized during its development.

From ancient interpreting to ‘natural translation’

In the post-colonial era, we have seen mass migrations of working people, largely from the global South to the North. In the UK, the minority ethnic population was estimated at 4.6 million in 2001 or 7.6% of the total population (ONS Census, 2001), a figure that grew by almost 40% within a decade. The 2011 Census revealed that 4.1 million UK inhabitants now speak a main language that is not English, including almost 100 different languages (Lansley, 2013). When people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds come into contact, they have to communicate somehow to carry out their daily transactions. Individuals and families often face many challenges when settling abroad, the understanding and acquisition of the host society’s language and culture being one of them. In such circumstances, access to schooling, peers and resources usually equip children with the best tools to adapt the quickest to new environments (Guo, 2014; Hall and Guéry, 2010). As a consequence, it is quite common for parents whose command of the dominant language is lower to rely on their children to communicate with the outside world. This activity performed by children without any special training for it has been labelled ‘language brokering’. Although there are some grounds to assume that they may have always been involved in family life as language brokers, it is only very recently that the topic has emerged as a field of study.

Early recognition of children as translators or interpreters

The claim made above that children may have always language brokered is a hypothesis, for so far no clear evidence has been found of children having actually done so before the twentieth century. The earliest documented example (Ronjat, 1913) appears as a very small part of a wider study, and the next study in which the

phenomenon is documented is that of Leopold in 1939 (see Harris, 2008). Child translation and interpreting was not the focus of these studies for as Harris puts it, ‘they were not interested in translation *per se* and their observations, perceptive and pioneering though they were, came about only as by-products of their other interests’ (Harris, 2008: 3). Ronjat, for instance, was primarily interested in his son’s phonetic development, but his son, Louis, was growing up bilingual, speaking German to one parent and French to the other. By the age of four Louis was interpreting between the two languages. Ronjat wrote, ‘He shows remarkable skill as a translator when it comes to finding equivalents for idioms ... it is far more than everyday lexicography, it is excellent intuitive stylistics’ (Harris, 2008: 11). Leopold’s study was also of his bilingual daughters and includes many examples of the children translating. Both Leopold and Ronjat were linguists and while noting the examples, they made very little use of them; it is almost as if they were just a small curiosity and had no significance beyond the here and now.

It is worth considering why this might have been so. Harris (2008) claims that they did not recognize the significance of this behaviour largely because they had no theoretical framework within which to explain them. This is principally because the activities of translation and interpreting were themselves not objects of academic scrutiny. Clearly there had always been people who had carried out both activities, but investigation of the nature of the process was absent until well into the 20th century, and these activities were only recognised as professions in the second half of the century (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger, 2002; Baker, 1998).

The introduction of ‘natural’ translation

The casual identification of children as translators changed in 1975 when Harris in a study clearly identified the significance of child translation. He provided numerous examples of children translating for family members and named it ‘natural translation’. He defines this as:

The translation done in everyday circumstances by bilinguals who have had no special training for it.

(Harris, 1975: 96)

The following extract is an exchange taking place between BS, an Italian girl who immigrated to Canada with her family when she was 8, her non-fluent father and a third party. At the time of the study, BS was reported to speak no less than four languages.

She was also aware of language and culture switching whilst performing oral and written translation:

Father to BS: 'Digli che è un imbecille!' (Tell him he's a nitwit).

BS to 3rd party: 'My father won't accept your offer'.

Father angrily in Italian: 'Why didn't you tell him what I told you?'

(Harris, 1978: 157)

Whereas it is apparently common for Italians to call each other names whilst bargaining, BS knows this is not acceptable where they now live. By not interpreting her father's words literally, she attempts to attenuate his outburst in order to keep the conversation going between the two parties. In other words, she plays an active social role within this event which goes beyond the sole task of interpreting.

Because Harris' study involved young children, he also claimed that natural translation was an innate skill, a two-way competence that bilingual children developed from infancy. Whereas much emphasis was previously put on remaining faithful to the grammatical and syntactical structure of utterances during translated events (Kelly, 1979), Harris argued that:

In natural translation, transmission of information is the prime aim and criterion of success: linguistic expression is relatively unimportant so long as it does not interfere with information.

(Harris, 1978: 105)

In other words, what really mattered was not the form but rather the meaning of oral and written translations. This was quite a shift, for - as the profession of translating and interpreting was becoming firmly established - the professional interpreter's role was supposed to aim for neutrality, faithfulness and invisibility. By giving the activity a clear descriptive title, Harris focused the attention of linguists on the topic, although relatively few of them began to explore it further. Furthermore, his concept was criticized by translators and teachers (Darwish, 2000; Krings, 1986; both cited in Harris, 2008) for whom there was truly only one type of translation, that performed by professionals: the rest was insignificant, conducted by lay people and therefore not worth studying. For all that Harris gave child translation and interpreting a clear identification, he was a linguist and primarily took a linguistic perspective on the topic. What the topic needed was another conceptual transformation, something that could

give natural translation a central role in its own right.

From natural translation to language brokering

The move that completely transformed the concept was the realisation that while linguistics might have things to say about child interpreting, the activity was always going to be a socio-cultural one which needed to be explored as such. This however did not happen until a decade after Harris.

In a two-year ethnographic study on the everyday language use of five Latino schoolchildren living in California, Shannon (1987) observed these bilinguals translating and interpreting between their family and community members and officials, on an ad hoc and often daily basis. She termed this 'language brokering'. What began to emerge from Shannon's sociolinguistic work was that there was more to interpreting than its linguistic aspect and that children did more than simply interpret, as argued by Harris above (1978). Children mediated all aspects of a relationship between two or more speakers in a dynamic social event. Shannon indeed identified various situations in which they acted as language brokers in a variety of contexts: medical, legal, administrative, financial, housing or commercial. Performing that role was also coupled with prestige and trust within the family. Her findings also revealed that the more contact these children had with the English language, the more proficient they were at language brokering. This in turn seemed to have a beneficial effect on the development of their linguistic and sociolinguistic skills in both languages. At the time Shannon conducted her study, she had taught in schools in New Mexico where Spanish was the prime language spoken by the majority of students. As she explains herself, this is how she 'participated in and observed the miracle of children becoming bilinguals' (Shannon, 1987: iv). Here is how she describes Adán, a boy who significantly brokered for his family and relatives:

Although Adán was between the ages of 11 and 13 during the time of the study, he handled himself with a great deal of confidence. His behavior demonstrated that he not only knew what to say in both English and Spanish, translating in both directions, but also that he understood how to speak in each situation, how to address a professional, how to behave during professional interactions, and how to be an advocate for his relatives while preserving their dignity and assuring respect for himself.

(Shannon, 1990: 264).

For Shannon, language brokering also led to the acquisition of high social and cognitive

skills. She revealed that language brokers do not only have to mediate linguistically between parties that do not speak the same language, but that they also have to negotiate meanings so they can be understood by both parties, whilst defending their and their family's interests in the process. The establishment of the sociolinguistic perspective is what really gave language brokering an impetus in academic research. However, Rack, for example, a medical GP, epitomises strong objections to the use of children as language brokers in medical contexts: 'Under no circumstances should children be asked to interpret medical details for their parents. It appears to us to be unethical, unprofessional, uncivilised and totally unacceptable' (Rack, 1982; cited in Cohen *et al.*, 1999: 166). Such concerns highlight the fact that language brokering – like any other form of interpreting – is undertaken as part of a broader social interaction in which the interpreter is inevitably involved *as a social being*, and is therefore affected by this interaction.

In 2007, Hall and Sham's study on language brokering amongst Cantonese-speaking adolescents in England was published. In it, they provided empirical evidence of the fact that this ancient practice amounted to child labour, a specific type of work experienced as a stressful burden by some participants. As one of the teenagers recalled:

One afternoon, a big tall man came to our take-away shop and showed his identity card and said that he came from the Health and Safety Environment Department to do the inspection. My dad and mum could not understand what he was going on about because they could not speak English. The man talked to me instead of my dad. He asked me to interpret between them. I was shaking with fright. My dad told me, 'Don't answer his questions because we can lose our shop and business'. Every time it's something like this. I could not sleep for nearly a week for worrying about what the report would be.

(Hall and Sham, 2007: 23)

On occasions, feeling afraid, worried or embarrassed also contributed to feeling stressed as another described:

I grow up with fear, worry and uncertainty. Every time when I need to help our parents to translate letters or do interpreting because I get all stressed up and worry if I have done the correct translation or interpretation.

(Hall and Sham, 2007: 23)

The practice of interpreting: mythologised and misunderstood

The examples of early interpreting work and child language brokering discussed

above reveal the complexities of the practice and contradict long-held misconceptions about it. This practice involves mediating language, culture and power in a variety of social settings whilst representing the interests of one party or another and - indeed - sometimes of the interpreter herself, as in the case of la Malinche. These indicate ambiguities of the interpreter's role, status and identity, intricately inter-related to issues of trust, loyalty and betrayal, as well as of power, subordination and agency. We will see in later chapters how relevant these themes remain for the current practice of interpreters today.

However, more recent concerns about the use of informal language brokers, especially children (Cohen *et al.*, 1999; Kaur and Mills, 1993), as well as initiatives at EU and national level to guarantee a fair access to medical, legal and social welfare services to users with limited proficiency in English, have sparked the need for trained professionals to interpret interactions between them and service providers. In turn, this has led to the emergence of PSI (Public Service Interpreting), a new sector of the interpreting profession which inherently places the interpreter 'into the most private spheres of human life' (Hale, 2007: 25). It is the emergence of this new profession, and the specifics of how it has formed itself and laid claim to status *as* a profession, that I move on to trace in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: The professionalisation of Public Service Interpreting

In the past, the primary focus of studies of interpreting has been on communication between groups of people with different languages and cultures on an international level. The present and the future are as much about communication between people of different languages and cultures *within* national borders and concerned with the events of people's everyday lives.

(Corsellis, 2008: 1)

Introduction

In the last two decades, factors such as political unrest, globalization, and mass migration from former colonies, have contributed to contemporary societies becoming extremely diverse in terms of language and culture. In the UK, the rapid expansion of multiculturalism and multilingualism combined with ethical and political concerns about the use of informal language brokers has led to the establishment of more formal public service interpreting (PSI). The practice has had a variety academic labels in different countries, such as: 'community interpreting', 'public service interpreting', 'dialogue interpreting', 'liaison interpreting', '*ad hoc* interpreting' or 'escort interpreting'. Although these do not all mean exactly the same, for the purpose of this study, I shall use the overarching term 'community interpreting' (CI) when referring to the professional development of community-based interpreting on an international scale, and to 'public service interpreting' (PSI), when focusing on specific developments in England. This process leads us to consider not only the formal processes by which PSI has been framed as a profession; prior to that, we also need to consider what professionalism itself might mean. In this chapter, I therefore begin by reviewing how the concepts of profession and professionalism have been defined and theoretically conceptualised from various academic perspectives, and then move on to offer an explanation of what may have influenced the professional framing of PSI in England. I go on to investigate how professional boundaries within CI and PSI have been erected and formalised through official texts, discourse and training. How, then, can the notions of 'profession' and 'professionalism' be understood?

'Profession' and 'professionalism': definitions and conceptualisations

Over the years, a prolific number of investigations, some of them of a critical nature, have explored their meaning and implications. Let us consider some that are

particularly relevant to this study. Chapter 1 provided illustrations of the ancient, widespread and unbounded nature of the practice of interpreting in public life and commerce. Modern efforts to professionalise it have involved defining what a profession is. For Corsellis, who has played a significant role herself in the process of the professionalisation of PSI in England:

A profession is defined as a group of people who share common expertise and 'profess' to a code of ethics and conduct, which is in the interest of their clients, colleagues and body of knowledge and which goes beyond the self-interest of the individual practitioner. Professions come into being where trust is required [...] professions establish: selection criteria, initial training and in-service training, nationally recognised assessments at all levels, guidelines to good practice, disciplinary procedures. All five of the above should be: transparent, nationally/internationally recognised, consistent and accountable to the public and to the profession.

(Corsellis and Fernández Felix, 2001: 147)

Here, the recipe for creating a profession is to establish trust amongst clients, its members and the public at large. It is also to portray professionals as members of a learned community who are ethically bound to safeguard clients' interests. Another crucial ingredient is to implement regulatory mechanisms such as selection criteria, training, national accreditation, good practice guidelines and disciplinary procedures to attain national and international recognition through consistency and public accountability.

The sociologist Evetts (2009) draws our attention to two ideal-types of professionalism: 'occupational professionalism' and 'organizational professionalism'. The first type is a form of professionalisation 'from within'. It favours the development of practitioners' strong occupational identities in what are described as vocations. Clients' interests are centre-stage, and relationships are based on trust, competence and collegiality. Guided by codes of professional ethics, practitioners enjoy a degree of discretion in decision-making, and the impact of external rules on the evolution of their profession is minimal. In contrast, 'organizational professionalism' reflects a form of professionalisation 'from above'. Increasingly used in organisations to attract clients and practitioners, it has been described as a discursive method of managerial control in which professional values have been substituted by organisational values, and managerial and organisational objectives constrained by budgetary restrictions or politics supersede clients' interests or trust. This type of control can be exerted 'at a distance' (Fournier, 1999), as it involves increased standardisation of work procedures,

bureaucracy, externalised forms of regulation and accountability measures. In a nutshell, it is a 'powerful mechanism for promoting occupational change and social control' (Evetts, 2009: 24), one which has increasingly pervaded the ideology of professionalism as an occupational value, leading to its transformation. Fournier (1999) also suggests that professions are not established permanently. They rely on public dependency and trust to exist and survive. Their legitimacy is therefore continuously contested and re-negotiated by the various players in the field. Furthermore, she argues that while professionalism can represent a tool for managerial control, it also creates opportunities for practitioners' resistance or subversion as its socially constructed nature is contested.

Such views place Corsellis's seemingly indisputable definition of a profession, quoted above, in a somewhat different light. Ostensibly it appears to promote occupational professionalism, through its notions of internal and external accountability for the public good. But as Colley *et al.* (2007) have pointed out, in the current neo-liberal climate, it is rarely a case of 'either/or' in terms of occupational or organisational professionalism: often *both* are at play, with difficult tensions for the profession as a whole, as well as for individual professionals, in consequence. Although the contestation that Fournier (1999) identifies clearly resonates with the ambiguities of the interpreter's role discussed in Chapter 1, it seems to be erased in the codification of PSI.

Broader sociological discussions of professionalism tend to focus on relatively well-established professionals employed in large organisations or institutions such as teachers, lawyers, bankers, medics and allied health professions, or social workers (Colley and Guéry, in preparation). As we shall see in the next two sections, which trace the emergence of CI internationally and PSI nationally, the case of PSIs is different. The profession is new and the nature of the work highly individualised. It exists *only* in interaction with other, more established professions, and this is what makes it so interesting to explore: it is both a 'special case', and a sorely under-researched profession.

The professionalisation of 'community interpreting' on an international scale

Despite its widespread ancient manifestations, the practice of 'community interpreting' (CI) only attained professional recognition in the mid-1990s. Until then, conference interpreting, a universally recognised branch of interpreting accredited by the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), was the main focus of

professionalisation and academic attention (Pöchhacker and Shlesinger, 2002). Owing its birth to multilingual events such as the Nuremberg Trials following World War II and the increase in international meetings, conferences and organisations across the globe, conference interpreting is a well-established profession characterised by accreditation, training, research, high professional status, adequate remuneration and working conditions (Harris, 1997). Conference and community interpreting each have their own idiosyncrasies. For instance, conference interpreting is unidirectional (interpreting from source language into target language, traditionally the interpreter's mother tongue), and it is performed simultaneously (instant delivery) via technical equipment in remote booths. Conference interpreters usually work in pairs and relay one another approximately every 20 minutes due to the intensive and stressful nature of the work. Community interpreting on the other hand is bidirectional (interpreting in and out of source and target languages) and is mainly performed in consecutive mode (delayed delivery), which may involve note-taking. Its practitioners usually work alone and on a freelance basis, with service users from various walks of life and service providers in a variety of legal, health and social welfare settings. Unlike their conference counterparts who work remotely, community interpreters are therefore inherently placed 'into the most private spheres of human life' (Hale, 2007: 25). As we shall also see, this lone mode of working may be intensive and stressful over long periods of time, with no other interpreter present to enable short relays and periods of rest.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the growth of multilingualism and multiculturalism led to the fact that service users with limited proficiency in the dominant language heavily relied on untrained bilinguals to access public services on a daily basis. International academic awareness of its widespread nature was raised by pioneer enterprises such as the Critical Link network created in 1992 in Ontario, Canada, under the leadership of Brian Harris who, as we saw in Chapter 1, had already drawn attention to what he termed 'natural translation' two decades before. With an aim to 'raise awareness [of] the practice of the community interpreter as a critical link between service providers in legal, health and social service settings with clients with whom they do not share a common language' (Critical Link International, 2013), the organisation set up the first international conference of its kind, thus giving practitioners, service providers and researchers from across the globe a much-welcomed opportunity to

discuss issues arising from the practice, as well as similarities and differences across national borders.

This conference is widely acknowledged as the first formal international conference established in this 'new' field of interpreting. It is worth mentioning here as an historical antecedent and catalyst to later developments in the profession and academic field of enquiry (Valero-Garcés and Martin, 2008; Pöchhacker, 1999). The proceedings provided an overview of national and international disparities in the professional development of the practice, emphasising the need for formal training, professional accreditation and research (Carr *et al.*, 1997). At the time, the UK emerged as a leading country in the framing of CI, alongside parts of Canada, the US, Australia and Sweden (Wadensjö, 1998a). Whereas the professionalisation and institutionalisation of CI in these countries had begun since the '70s and '80s, these were sporadic in other parts of the world such as Denmark or Austria. Indeed, in Austrian health care settings, one study revealed that untrained 'bilingual' clerical or medical staff were being used to meet communication needs, before concluding that: 'the practice of community interpreting in Austria is poorly developed, and training for community interpreters is altogether non-existent' (Pöchhacker, 1997: 224). Nonetheless, even in countries where community interpreting had been professionally framed for decades, common challenges were shared in terms of perceived interpreter's role, status, professionalisation or quality performance. Recommendations to professionalise it included: clarification of the name and role of the practice; training for professionals working with interpreters; training for community interpreters; training for trainers of community interpreters; and national accreditation of community interpreters (Roberts, 1997).

A shared challenge indeed emanated from the difficulties in adopting a standard terminology that would universally describe the type of interpreting carried out in public services to assist service users who do not master the dominant language to gain full access to them (Roberts, 1997). As Harris observed:

In Europe *community interpreting* would lead to confusion with interpreters working for the European Community, while on the other hand the British term *public service interpreting* is unusable in Canada, where the *Public Service* means what other countries call the *Civil Service*' (Harris, 2000: 4).

Different societal frameworks have thus led countries to adopt various terms such as: *cultural interpreter* (Canada), *interprète culturel* (France), *dialogue interpreting* (Sweden) or *community-based interpreting* (Australia). This has been described as a hindrance to the evolution of community interpreting, leading to disparate practices and academic research across the globe (Gentile, 1997; Roberts, 1997). It may also illustrate the complexity in naming a practice that has been framed from different perspectives. Irrespective of their suitability in one country or another, however, it can be argued that the term 'community interpreting' appears to highlight the interpreter's crucial role from the communities' perspective, whereas 'public service interpreting' seems to designate the interpreter as a tool for the authorities. In contrast, the term 'dialogue interpreting', focuses on the type of interpreting practice and on some factors by which it is influenced such as: speech spontaneity, fast turn-taking, interruptions and overlapping (Wadensjö, 1998b).

Calls made for the adoption of a general consensus on the practices, standards and accreditation of Community Interpreting resulted in the Second Critical Link Conference (CL2) 'Standards and Ethics in Community Interpreting' held in Vancouver, Canada, three years later. Empirical evidence on the international responsiveness to interpreting provision highlighted disparities between countries 'that deny the existence of multilingual communication issues, to reliance on ad hoc services, to generic language services, to fully comprehensive responses' (Ozolins, 2000: 21). Needs for adequate training and service provision as well as assessment and accreditation tools for interpreters were thus further identified (Roberts *et al.*, 2000). Critical Link 3 (CL3) 'Interpreters in the Community' was held in 2001 in Canada (Brunette *et al.*, 2003), CL4 'Professionalisation of interpreters in the community' in 2004 in Sweden (Wadensjö *et al.*, 2007), CL5 'Quality in interpreting: a shared responsibility' in 2007 in Australia (Hale *et al.*, 2009) and CL6 'Interpreting in a changing landscape' in England in 2010 (Schäffner *et al.*, 2013). CL7 'Global Awakening: Leading Practices in Interpreting', recently took place in Canada in 2013. These international conferences have played a significant role in the professional and academic development of Community Interpreting, and so have events organised amongst others by the Training and Research Group on Public Service Translation and Interpreting, based in Spain (FITISPos), the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies in England (IATIS), the American Translators Association

(ATA), the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators in Australia (NAJIT) and the International Federation of Translators, in Germany (FIT).

Within borders, the professionalisation of community interpreting discussed above has been mainly driven and codified by the legal field. The rights for all individuals to gain equal and full access to justice and for those who do not master the dominant language to be freely assisted by an interpreter during court proceedings are often enshrined in national laws, as illustrated by the 1978 Federal Court Interpreter Act, passed in a number of states in the US (Benmaman, 1997). On a supranational level, these rights are expressed by a variety of official texts. By way of example, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) states:

Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and the charge against him.

(ECHR, 1950: Art. 5.2)

Furthermore,

Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
[T]o be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
[T]o have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

(ECHR, 1950: Art. 6.3.a and e)

Over the years, research carried out by the EU has nonetheless revealed varying standards in legal interpretation and translation amongst member states, despite being signatories to its human rights convention (see for instance, Hertog, 2010; Hertog and Van Gucht, 2008; Hertog *et al.*, 2007; Hertog, 2003; Hertog, 2001). In 2010, a further directive on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings was adopted, with an aim to maintain and develop ‘an area of freedom, security and justice’ (Directive 2010/64/EU: L 280/1). Often considered as a legislative cornerstone, this directive was designed to enhance both mutual recognition through ‘judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters within the Union’, as in the case of European arrest warrants, and ‘the judicial protection of human rights’ (Directive 2010/64/EU: L 280/1). It articulates the:

- Right to interpretation (Article 2),
- Right to translation of essential documents (Article 3),
- Quality of the interpretation and translation (Article 5) and Training –for interpreters and legal officers- (Article 6).

Two additional articles from the 2010 EU Directive deserve further attention. Article 4 on the Costs of interpretation and translation which stipulates:

Members States shall meet the costs of interpretation and translation resulting from the application of Articles 2 and 3, irrespective of the outcome of the proceedings.

(Directive 2010/64/EU: L280/6)

And Article 9.1 on Transposition:

Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive by 27 October 2013.

(Directive 2010/64/EU: L280/6)

Not only does this imply that most member states would have to significantly adapt their national judicial systems within tight deadlines to systematically provide quality interpretation and translation, but that they will also have to bear the costs, which in the current global economic crisis, and with the growth of international migration, represents a real challenge. Furthermore, the onus of establishing ‘a [*national*] register or registers of independent translators and interpreters who are appropriately qualified’, to guarantee the quality of and efficient access to interpretation and translation in legal proceedings, also rests with member states (Directive 2010/64/EU: Article 5.2). To assist member states in implementing the Directive, the EU funded project TRAFUT (Training for the Future, 2011-2012) was set up. Workshops across the EU were organised between member states, ministry representatives, legal experts and professional associations of interpreters and translators over a period of 18 months. Recommendations were made on: terminology (definition of practices, role of legal interpreters and translators (LITs) and interpreting techniques), the establishment of codes of ethics, national registers of qualified LITs, training, vetting and fees. Now that a wide range of international initiatives for the professionalisation of CI has been reviewed, let us focus in on developments in England.

The professionalisation of ‘Public Service Interpreting’ in England

In the British societal framework, the profession of ‘Public Service Interpreting’ (PSI) is fairly recent. Formal, written and reified boundaries, which are in the codes of practice, training, accreditation, professional bodies and the academic ways of thinking about interpreting have gradually been erected to address rapid social changes, such as mass arrivals of asylum seekers and economic migrants in the UK (Corsellis, 2008;

Townsley, 2007; Cambridge, 2001; Schweda Nicholson, 1994; Picken, 1987). In the late sixties, racial and social segregation of settlers who mainly originated from the Commonwealth were common features in British society (Baker *et al.*, 1991). Few attempts were made to break down the language barriers that prevented those who spoke limited or no English from accessing the public services in order to improve their daily lives and favour their social integration. In fact, the government hardly acknowledged the communication needs their presence posed, nor felt responsible for providing interpreters. In brief, adult immigrants had to learn English if they wished to integrate society; although paradoxically, no provisions were made to set up English language courses for adult speakers of other languages on a national scale. In 1973, the position of the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (SCRRI) on the issue was as follows:

Resources are limited. We frequently urge the provision of increased facilities for the education of immigrant children. We believe this is the right area on which to concentrate, the younger, the better. It would be unrealistic to suggest that statutory bodies should do this and at the same time make a massive contribution to adult education ...

(Baker *et al.*, 1991: 12)

At the time, the government wanted to avoid being criticised by the local population for 'favouring' immigrants by allocating extra resources to meet their needs and there was 'an often expressed belief that the way to be fair was to treat everyone exactly the same, irrespective of race' (Baker *et al.*, 1991: 15), as the following statement issued by the Community Relations Commission (CRC) further illustrates:

It is very hard to say we are going to provide things for ethnic minorities without creating a very real feeling amongst the indigenous population that to have something which excludes them is wrong, it's not a fair world, it's an immigrant's world ... In x (an area of ethnic concentration) there are a lot of people who have lived there all their lives and they complain very bitterly that they are strangers in their own land. And if we start putting facilities which are for the immigrant community only, we feed this discontent and I am not sure in the long run we do anything to further the cause of racial integration.

(Baker *et al.*, 1991: 16)

Throughout the '70s and early '80s, the threat of discrimination against the indigenous population was held as the reason for not addressing the cultural and linguistic differences of ethnic minorities in an adequate manner. It was commonly believed that assimilation, defined as 'the reduction and, if possible, the elimination of any cultural or

behavioural features of the ethnic minority communities which differentiated them from the white majority' (Baker *et al.*, 1991: 17), would solve this 'temporary' issue, and a politics of dispersion was therefore routinely and rigorously implemented. As it is still the case today, attitudes towards race and race relations are both influenced by and reflected in public policy. A significant shift from racial discrimination and social exclusion of immigrants can thus be noted from the second half of the '80s. This change was first initiated by Section 71 of the 1976 Race Relations Act, which had already made it a legal obligation for Local Authorities to monitor ethnic minority groups and record their needs. From then on, these were legally bound to guarantee equal service access for all community members by carrying out their functions 'with due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups' (Baker *et al.*, 1991: 19). Whereas a few attempts to provide interpreters were made by some Local Authorities, these remained isolated due to a lack of funding. Now that the needs of minority groups had been brought to light, Section 11 of the 1986 Local Government Act, which was concerned with the allocation of funding, specified that it should be used to meet the needs of 'people of Commonwealth origin whose language or culture of origin differed from those of the rest of the community' (Baker *et al.*, 1991: 24).

Accordingly, the first calls for public services for interpreters to be formally trained were officially recorded in the '80s, and training handbooks began to emerge both in the UK and abroad (de Pedro Ricoy *et al.*, 2009; Kearns, 2008; Tennent, 2005; Phelan, 2001; Sanders, 2000, 1992; Gentile *et al.*, 1996; Shackman, 1984). It could nonetheless be argued that institutions rather than the profession itself have mainly driven the development of standards and practices within PSI in England. This has had a huge impact on the profession over the years. In the legal field for instance, actions towards the professionalisation of PSI emanated from specific incidents. For instance, in 1981, a French teenager was arrested for shoplifting in England whilst on a school trip. To avoid keeping her in custody overnight whilst an interpreter was found, the Magistrate's court decided to use an untrained bilingual police officer during the proceedings to overcome the challenge posed by the language barrier (Corsellis, 2008). The same year, Iqbal Begum, a female Punjabi speaker was sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering her husband, following a domestic violence incident. Yet after four years in prison, it emerged that the interpreter used during the entire proceedings could not speak her mother tongue and that she had entered a guilty plea

without understanding the difference between murder and manslaughter. Despite winning the appeal, the defendant - who had been disowned by her family - committed suicide shortly after her release (Corsellis, 2008; Townsley, 2007). In the field of social work, awareness of the need to use professional interpreters to avoid human tragedies and lubricate the machinery of the state was also publicly raised:

Mrs P. had her six day old baby snatched from her during breast feeding without any direct communication between her and the social worker. Neither of the parents spoke English and had no idea why or where their baby was taken. The child was apparently removed by a single social worker accompanied by a police officer – there was no interpreter.

(The 'Observer' newspaper, 1987; cited in Baker *et al.*, 1991: 46)

To answer this need, the Community Interpreting Project was carried out in 1983 under the auspices of the (recently) Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIoL) and funded by the Nuffield Foundation. The project resulted in the establishment of three main professional benchmarks:

- First, the adoption of the label 'Public Service Interpreting' to encompass the whole range of central and local government services: legal, health and social welfare services in which interpreters are expected to intervene as impartial and professional experts, as opposed to 'community interpreting' which 'attracted connotations of a lower standard or of a different and partial role' (Corsellis, 2005: 153). This choice of terminology may however also reflect general concerns about the 'biases' of lay community interpreters and their social rather than linguistic reliability.
- Second, the establishment of the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) in 1991. Equivalent to a BA level, the DPSI is a national vocational qualification which offers a specialization in either: English Law, Scottish Law, Health or Local Government. Examination is available in more than 40 languages and modules include: interpreting using consecutive and whispered techniques, sight translations and written translations in both languages. Today, there are approximately 30 DPSI courses available throughout the country, but attendance is not compulsory to sit the examination. This further raises issues about the training quality of DPSI holders who did not attend the course.

- Third, the setting up of the National Register for Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) 3 years later to both regulate the profession and increase the accessibility of accredited PSIs for service providers. This non-for-profit register currently counts 2,200 police-vetted registrants in 101 languages. Other professional bodies which promote national occupational standards in interpreting and/or hold registers for Public Service Interpreters and Translators include: the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIoL), the National Centre for Languages (CILT), the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI) and the Association of Police and Court Interpreters (APCI).

These efforts to mitigate the interpreter's agency, visibility and in-group loyalty (the problematic issues that we saw in Chapter 1) in formal settings have materialised through the various codes of ethics that generally define and regulate the practice of face-to-face dialogue interpreting in legal, medical and social services settings. In England, PSIs have to abide by a variety of ethical codes issued by service providers, such as the Criminal Justice System, the Home Office and professional bodies. The NRPSI's Code of Professional Conduct prescribes high standards to 'maintain the integrity of the profession' and 'provide assurance of professional standards to users of language services and to the public at large' (NRPSI, 2011: 2.2). To distinguish between lay and professional interpreters, the Code expects practitioners to 'strive to produce work of the highest standard at all times' (NRPSI, 2011: 4.1). In order to carry out assignments, they must possess:

[A] sufficiently advanced and idiomatic command of the languages concerned, with awareness of dialects and other linguistic variations that may be relevant to a particular commission of work; the particular specialist skills required; and, where appropriate, an adequate level of awareness of relevant cultural and political realities in relation to the country or countries concerned.

(NRPSI, 2011: 3.9)

They should also perform their role as follows:

Practitioners shall interpret truly and faithfully what is uttered, without adding, omitting or changing anything; in exceptional circumstances a summary may be given if requested.

(NRPSI, 2011: 5.4)

As the reader may recall, some illustrations of the unbounded practice of PSI in ancient times discussed in Chapter 1 highlighted the potential agency of lay bilinguals during interpreted interactions. The above rigid definition of the interpreter as an invisible translation machine in the background that renders messages from one language into another both ‘truly and faithfully’ may therefore be read as an attempt by dominant powers to prevent their active participation and retain power and control during interpreted events. To that effect, heavy emphasis is also placed on ethics and impartiality:

Practitioners shall not accept any work which would, directly or indirectly, infringe the Code, and shall not knowingly act in contravention of the Code, even if asked or instructed to do so by a Principal.

(NRPSI, 2011: 3.7)

Practitioners shall at all times act impartially and shall not act in any way that might result in prejudice or preference on grounds of religion or belief, race, politics, gender, age, sexual orientation or disability otherwise than as obliged to in order faithfully to translate, interpret or otherwise transfer meaning.

(NRPSI, 2011: 3.12)

A ‘Principal’ is ‘the person or body from whom a Practitioner accepts work’ (NRPSI, 2011: 2). Examples from the past illustrated how expectations of the role of lay interpreters fluctuated – and at times conflicted - according to parties’ own interests. Lay interpreters, just as PSIs today, often belonged to the linguistic and cultural minorities for which they interpreted and could be considered as a tool for the authorities, an advocate or a traitor. They also had their own perceptions of their role such as go-betweens, pacifiers or gatekeepers. Here, we see that occupational boundaries are further erected to prevent the formation of allegiances between PSIs and any of the parties involved. The following prescription reinforces the demand for their neutrality in the interactions that they interpret:

Practitioners shall not enter into discussion, give advice or express opinions or reactions to any of the parties that exceed their duties as interpreters. ...

(NRPSI, 2011: 5.9)

Ethical demands for practitioners’ ‘absolute’ integrity, neutrality and impartiality are particularly stringent in legal settings. The scriptures below constitute additional examples of how the Code attempts to prevent the formation of allegiances between PSIs and service users. Indeed, when working in the legal system, PSIs must:

[D]isclose to the Principal at the outset any previous involvement in the same matter;

[D]isclose immediately if the interviewee or their immediate family is known or related to the Practitioner;

[N]ot accept any form of inducement or reward, whether in cash or otherwise, for interpreting work other than payment from the Principal.

(NRPSI, 2011: 6.1.1 - 6.1.4)

In the year 2000, the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) became enshrined in British Law. Several additional key legal texts, such as Lord Runciman's Report on the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice (1993), the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Lord Justice Auld's Report on the Review of the Criminal Courts of England and Wales (2001), the National Agreement on the Arrangements for the Attendance of Interpreters in Investigations and Proceedings within the Criminal Justice System (2002) and the Home Office Circular 17 (2006) have supported the establishment of a national register for interpreters, the adoption of a code of conduct and the provision of a standardised procedure to arrange for, and verify the competency of interpreters in criminal proceedings. At the beginning of the new millennium, the National Agreement indeed recommended that:

[E]very interpreter working in courts and police stations should be registered with the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI, henceforth referred to as the National Register) or the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) because they offer a minimum and measurable standard of training and quality assurance. Such interpreters can be found in the National Register and the CACDP Directory.

(Crown Prosecution Service, 2002: 2)

These texts have undeniably contributed to the enhancement of the professional recognition of PSI. They have emphasised the need for training, accreditation, adequate remuneration and working conditions within this emerging profession to both attract and retain professionals. In court settings, the status of interpreters has even been raised to that of officers of the court.

In addition, the DPSI Handbook produced by the Institute of Linguists Educational Trust (IoLET, 2010) also supports the NRPSI Code of Conduct. In contrast with the texts above issued by supranational and national institutions, support this time comes from the profession itself. It is perhaps the most crucial textual reification of

dominant discourses about PSI within the field. The handbook stresses the vital need for interpreters to be neutral and impartial whilst performing their role with ethical qualities that include: 'a commitment to the professional code of conduct and guide to good practice produced by the National Register of Public Service Interpreters' and 'complete impartiality of attitude, speech and script' (IoLET, 2010: 3). As a result, DPSI candidates learn that they should refrain from judging the parties involved in the interpreted-interaction (for instance the veracity of users' words, their innocence or culpability) since this could impact negatively on the quality of their performance. Instead, they should always focus on the interpreting process to interpret to the best of their abilities and this, in an unobtrusive manner. To that effect, candidates are instructed to detach themselves from the situations in which they interpret, but with limited guidance on how to do so. They are made aware that their role is merely to enable service users and providers to communicate and that the outcome of the interactions is none of their concern. Similarly, candidates learn to introduce themselves professionally to both parties at the beginning of assignments in a way that signals the impartiality and neutrality of their role. From memory, the introduction which I was taught during my DPSI training goes along these lines:

My name is ... and I am working as a ... language interpreter. I am here to interpret for both of you. I am bound by my professional code of practice to interpret everything that you say, so if you do not want me to interpret something, please do not say it. Everything will be kept confidential. My role is to interpret everything accurately and impartially to the best of my ability. I will not act as an advocate or give advice. It would help me if you could speak to each other directly. I am ready to start.

This interpreter introduction is intended to present the PSI as a professional who can be trusted by both parties to interpret to the best of their abilities whilst observing confidentiality and impartiality. Service users and providers are requested to address each other directly as if the interpreter were not present as a human being during the interaction, but rather only as a mouthpiece. The interpreter is instructed to use direct rather than indirect speech as if the words that they interpret were their own. In addition, their position is constantly shifting as they simultaneously give a voice to both the service user and provider as if the language barrier did not exist. If they personally want to speak, they have to refer to themselves in the third person and say for instance: 'The interpreter would like to request permission to speak'.

Due to the nature of the practice, PSIs are right in the middle of human interactions and in theory, the introduction is there to enable them to withdraw from these interactions and supposedly melt in the background. Parties are also warned that everything said in their presence will be interpreted. Thus, the PSI introduction can be seen as a way of shoring up the interpreter's professional boundaries and extruding them from the service provider-user interaction. From the outset, service users and providers are clearly told what to expect and what the interpreter can or cannot do. To pre-empt boundary breaches from service users in particular, prospective interpreters are further instructed not to remain alone with them. They are also made aware of sitting arrangements as a way of becoming invisible in the workplace. The official recommendation is to ideally sit in a triangle with user and provider closer to each other and the interpreter set back. Although this is not always possible, this triangular arrangement also enables the interpreter to hear better and therefore gives them a better chance of doing a good job.

As discussed above, unlike conference interpreters, PSIs usually work alone and in both language directions rather than solely into their mother-tongue. Their practice consists in interpreting dialogues, the idiosyncrasies of which include fast turn-taking, false starts, overlapping or speech unpredictability, and this in either consecutive (delayed delivery) or simultaneous modes (instant delivery). In addition to mastering varied interpreting techniques, practitioners are therefore required to possess an excellent command of both languages and cultures (for instance, idiomatic use, dialects or linguistic variations), master a broad range of technical vocabulary and display an awareness of current political situations in both countries, public service procedures and protocols. However, candidates preparing the DPSI come from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. For practical reasons, training is provided in English and focuses on the broad acquisition of interpreting techniques and knowledge of public services rather than on language skills. This implies that candidates are expected to independently develop an expertise in fields such as society, culture or politics in both languages studied in order to pre-empt difficulties whilst interpreting; hence the strong emphasis on PSIs' active participation in continuing professional development events and activities during their careers. To achieve faithfulness, candidates are also advised to mirror the speakers' use of language (tone, vocabulary, register and so on) and mimic their body language. The task of conveying messages in such a way that they produce the effect originally intended in the target language whilst melting in the background is

also ethically challenging, in the sense that it requires the self-acquisition of high cognitive and acting skills, coupled with the ability to decipher paralinguistic as well as linguistic cues such as gaze, posture and gesture (Mason, 1999). All of these rubrics may, at first sight, appear to be non-controversial, indeed essential for PSI to function as a practice. These are assumptions which, as we shall later see, need to be brought into question. Next, however, I discuss more recent developments for PSI as a profession in England and the overall working conditions of practitioners.

PSI in England: an emerging profession under threat

Over the years, supranational and national initiatives towards the professionalisation of PSI in England have generally been accompanied by a steady increase in the number of DPSI applicants. Less than 100 in 1994, their number exceeded 1,000 in 2004, and in 2006 the NRPSI counted 1,825 registrants (Townesley, 2007). Seven years later, that figure rose to 2,200. The restricted number of languages in which the DPSI is available (over 40 against nearly 400 languages spoken daily in London) and the lack of trained trainers have nonetheless hindered the expansion of the Register (Perez and Wilson, 2009; Corsellis, 2001). Although the number of DPSI candidates generally fluctuates from year to year, the latest published statistics reveal that in the 2012 session this number had reached its lowest (886 candidates) within the last decade. Entries to pathways were distributed as follows: English Law: 72.4%, Scottish Law: 9.1%, Health: 10.4% and Local Government: 8.1% (DPSI Chief Moderator's Report, 2012). English Law has traditionally been the most popular pathway due to the unprecedented demand for PSIs in the legal field, as well as better remuneration and working conditions. However, the National Agreement on the use of interpreters (2007) is not a legally binding document, and its recommendations are not systematically followed. Faced with the costs and administrative burden in contracting PSIs alongside budget reductions, medical and local government authorities have continued to rely heavily on non-DPSI qualified interpreters provided by agencies or to use *ad hoc* approaches, such as using 'bilingual' family relatives, community members or members of staff to interpret. Despite national and supranational initiatives, then, the need to work with PSIs is still not systematically acknowledged by public services in Britain today. In the field of social services, the Victoria Climbié case reported at the start of the new millennium illustrates the tragic consequences that such approaches can have: in 2000, Victoria Climbié, a young girl aged seven from the Ivory Coast died

from child abuse whilst in the care of her aunt and legal guardian in London. Whereas the official enquiry revealed that officers from the health, social services and police child protection unit were aware of the case, a communication breakdown between them prevented efficient collaboration and child protection. The victim spoke French and her aunt - one of her crime perpetrators - interpreted for her during the interviews. This ultimately cost her her life (Townesley, 2007; Pugh and Williams, 2006; Health Committee, 2003).

This indicates that the PSI profession is still not well-established in England - although PSIs play a significant role in helping public services to comply with laws and regulations on human rights to guarantee free and equal access to services for all, and in enabling community members with limited English proficiency to access services that are vital for their daily functioning, integration and survival in British society.

Additional factors contribute to the precarity of their working conditions: upon fulfilling the entry requirements, PSIs can pay a subscription to have their details listed on the NRPSI, yet this does not guarantee work, and only a few service providers subscribe to it. Subscription is renewable on a yearly basis upon submitting satisfactory evidence of interpreting work undertaken. Practitioners therefore have to apply every year to remain in the profession, unlike most service providers from firmly established professions such as law or medicine with whom they work. The Register is not a representative body either and PSIs mainly work in isolation:

Once interpreters have finished their training, they will probably be quite isolated throughout their professional lives. There are a few institutions in the UK that support practicing public service interpreters and enable them to link up with one another. But relatively few public service interpreters belong to these, and few can afford conference fees to continue their professional development. Local networks of public service interpreters are also few and far between.

(Fowler, 2007: 254-255)

The freelance nature of their work implies that workload and income vary and are difficult to predict. The precarious nature of their work is exacerbated by the fact that remuneration is often poor and varies both within public services and across the country:

An interpreter working for the courts or the police can expect remuneration of between £28 and £35 per hour for their services. However, £15-£20 is a more common hourly rate in the health or local government sectors in Greater

London. Outside the capital, interpreters have reported hourly rates as low as £8 an hour.

(Townsend, 2007: 169)

Overall, poor remuneration is accompanied by a low professional status. On one hand it is indeed recurrent for practitioners to be solely identified with the powerless (service users) rather than with the powerful (service providers); and on the other, the widespread misconception that any bilingual can interpret, along with a general lack of clear understanding amongst service users and providers of what the PSI role entails, devalues their expertise. This in turn overshadows the complexity of the profession and the expert skills that it requires.

In England, the PSI profession was recently affected by a major disturbance mainly due to political and economic factors. Following the spiralling costs of translation and interpreting, a governmental shift ensued from promoting multilingualism and multiculturalism to promoting mastery of the English language as a key to local integration and cohesion:

English is both an important part of our shared heritage, and a key access factor for new communities to the labour market and wider society. It binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of community languages cannot [...]

(Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007: 73)

Local Authorities, which bear the cost of the translation and interpreting provision, were further instructed by Hazel Blears, the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to 'reject automatic translation of all documents into different languages' for it is 'undermining the importance of English as a way of enabling all citizens to communicate and relate to one another' (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007: 5). Further to being increasingly portrayed as a hindrance to service users' social inclusion and a disincentive for them to learn English, as I noted in the introduction to this thesis, PSIs have also been accused by politicians and the media of costing taxpayers too much money. The impact on their professional status and public image has undoubtedly been a damaging one, as additional stress was put on the necessity for long-standing and new migrants to stop relying on PSIs and learn the dominant language. Corsellis' (2008) prediction over the longevity of the PSI practice quoted at the beginning of this chapter thus appears short lived. In 2011 for instance, the Government declared that anyone applying to live in the UK to marry a British

citizen would have to prove that they can speak English before entering the country. Additional decisions were made to cut funding to local governments and restrict immigration more tightly (Home Office UK Border Agency, 2012). For a critical analysis of discursive political and media shifts towards the provision of translation and interpreting in contemporary Britain, see Tipton (2012). Meanwhile, austerity measures within the legal field have involved a move away from the National Agreement (2007) and the adoption of a new Language Services Framework Agreement between the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Capita TI, formerly known as Applied Language Solutions, (MoJ, 2011).

In England and Wales, recommendations to courts and tribunals included the use of a single interpreter booking system for face-to-face, telephone and video interpreting, translation, transcription, British Sign Language and Deaf Blind services provided by the aforementioned agency, and the creation of a three-tier system for the allocation of interpreters within the Criminal Justice System, with varying criteria for required qualifications, expertise, rates and expenses. Despite an avalanche of protests from PSIs, the National Union of Professional Interpreters and Translators (NUPIT, a branch of Amicus), various professional bodies, agencies and service providers, this framework came into effect on 30 January 2012. A year later, the umbrella group Professional Interpreters for Justice (PI4J) commissioned a survey in which 859 interpreters working in public services took part. The questionnaire results resoundingly voiced growing discontent with the new arrangements with regard to working conditions, lower rates of pay and the quality of the services provided. The new system was boycotted by a large number of PSIs who, due to their freelance status, could not call for a national strike. The agency's prior motives were questioned as several breaches to the Framework Agreement were reported, such as the lack of request for qualifications, assessments or Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance before interpreters were offered work. 50% of the NRPSI respondents threatened to abandon legal interpreting whereas 40% of interpreters engaged by Capita IT planned to leave the profession all together, should the situation not improve (PI4J, 2013). The new arrangements have also been perceived as a way for the Government to pay lip service to, and 'covertly' violate existing supranational and national guidance on the provision of interpreting and translation services. An array of costly miscarriages of justice and administration backlogs has also been recorded due to the agency's failure to provide qualified PSIs within deadlines. Indeed, two weeks after being implemented, legal authorities were advised

to revert back to the National Agreement and NRPSI to circumvent this ‘shambolic’ arrangement which ‘failed to heed warnings from the professionals concerned’ (Justice Committee, 2013; cited in PI4J, 2013: 2).

However in these turbulent times, the future of the PSI profession in England remains uncertain. Ten professional organisations, including the Association of Police and Court Interpreters (APCI), the NRPSI, the CIoL, the Society for Public Service Interpreting (SPSI) and the Professional Interpreters’ Alliance (PIA) have joined forces under the umbrella group PI4J to defend the profession and its practitioners. But despite support from these communities of practice, many PSIs have been deprived of their livelihood, marginalised or excluded. The latest developments in PSI illustrate the fragility of the profession despite its rigid reification in pursuit of authority and autonomy. Far from being autonomous, its evolution has mainly been punctuated by policy changes orchestrated by the Government that have first been beneficial then detrimental. Evidently, the firm establishment of PSI as a profession will remain fraught with difficulties until a better understanding of the complexities of the practice and of the role of PSIs is grasped. In the next chapter, I explore existing literature that has challenged the official set of commonly held social beliefs and presuppositions about this field, with a particular focus on challenging the invisible, impartial and neutral role definition of the public service interpreter in the workplace.

Chapter 3: Critical perspectives on the Public Service Interpreting profession

We learned that we don't have to talk to patients. We learned that. We are not allowed, right? I don't like that. I can tell you, 'It's not right.' We are not robots. We have training; I know why we are here. But I say that because it's not true, I am not a robot.

(Russian interpreter quoted by Hsieh, 2008: 1367)

Introduction

As we have seen in Chapter 2, Public Service Interpreting (PSI) is regulated by several codes of conduct issued by government agencies and professional bodies that reduce the interpreter's agency as a human being through a demand for their total neutrality, impartiality and invisibility. Concerns have arisen, however, that this demand is unrealistic and that the new profession has taken on a dehumanizing aspect, sparking a debate on what the practice actually means and entails. For the purpose of this study, then, I review in this chapter the ways in which the notions of invisibility, ethics and emotion attached to the PSI role have been increasingly challenged in the existing literature. What have recent studies revealed? What areas have been explored and which ones have been neglected? And finally, what contribution does my study bring to the field?

Challenging the invisibility of the interpreter

The historical illustrations of interpreting work presented in Chapter 1 all share a common characteristic: they reveal conflicting perceptions and expectations of interpreters' roles, creating tensions between the demand for their invisibility in the workplace and actual enactment in practice. Acting as 'agents', 'mediators' or 'pacifiers' between community members and the authorities entailed much more than the basic transfer of a message into another language. It involved stepping in and out of invisibility to mediate power through agency, raising further issues of trust and status. Racoutié, for instance, a Major's zealous bilingual 'agent' during the French colonization of Africa, visibly reminded his compatriots of the powerful role that he had as the Major's eyes, ears and mouth (Mopoho, 2001). As for la Malinche, her role as a go-between during the Spanish conquest of Mexico was reported as far more influential and visible than that of her master Cortés, despite his efforts to minimize it (Bowen *et al.*, 1995). The depiction of the Egyptian interpreter as a small, servile, but nonetheless

double mediator between dominant powers and barbarous 'foreigners' illustrates well the minimization of the interpreter's powerful role and low status. Finally, the Western interpretation of Marsden's evangelisation of New Zealand through seemingly convert tribal chiefs offers a perfect example of how interpreters' agentic roles might be historically reduced to invisibility, and their voices silenced. However, whereas official texts report that the British missionary successfully spread the word of God on the island through the 'docile' compliance of the tribal chiefs, Maori culture portrays them as both very *visible* and *powerful* leaders who made an alliance with the West to build schools, eradicate illiteracy amongst their people and expand their local economy further.

The modern reification of this ancient practice of mediating language, culture, power and status, discussed in Chapter 2, requires practitioners to 'simply' melt into the background and interpret interactions between service users and service providers, in a neutral and impartial manner. Despite their physical presence, sociolinguistic and sociocultural input, practitioners are now required to don a cloak of invisibility, mediating social human interactions but having no impact on them. The higher the stakes, the more the institutions with which they work seem to wish to retain power and control during interpreted events and demand interpreters' invisibility. In legal settings, for instance, calls were made in the 1970s for interpreters to be trained in order to remove the power and agency that they openly exerted in the courtroom (Lang, 1978; 1976). Observing the behaviour of some indigenous court interpreters in Papua New Guinea, Lang reported that they were doing more than simply transfer messages between languages, as officially requested. They were acting as 'intermediaries' between court officials and the locals and this intermediary position supposedly 'contaminated' their role (Lang, 1976: 136). His findings began to highlight the complex situation in which interpreters find themselves during interactions:

Although his official role is that of passive participant as far as the origination of primary conversation is concerned, the realisation of that role depends on the active cooperation of his clients and the extent to which they wish to include him as an active participant not only linguistically but also gesturally, posturally and gaze-wise. Likewise it is the interpreter who can by these means actively involve himself, or abstain from such involvement.

(Lang, 1978: 241)

This observation indicates that the role of the interpreter is constantly shifting. Their participation in the conversation not only depends on a personal will to take part, but

also on the other parties' wish to include or exclude them. Interpreted interactions are therefore to be apprehended as dynamic exchanges where inclusion or exclusion of the interpreter is negotiated through linguistic, as well as paralinguistic cues such as gesture, posture and gaze. Far from being passive linguistic conduits, the untrained bilinguals observed by Lang can be read as fulfilling an unofficial but active participant role. This role reveals tensions beyond the linguistic issues that the practice of interpreting may pose and relates to more complex issues faced by modern PSIs such as assessing the situation, consulting codes of ethics, making decisions and adopting various roles (Mason, 1999). This was echoed by Berk-Seligson (1990) whose findings, based on one of the first and few large-scale studies to date (alongside Angelelli, 2004a and b), deconstructed the myth of the interpreter's invisibility by providing empirical evidence of visible interactions between the interpreter, court officials and Spanish-speaking witnesses.

The definition of the interpreter as an invisible translation 'machine' in the background that renders messages from one language into another neutrally and faithfully is therefore problematic, because it does not take into consideration the sociocultural aspects of communicative events where meanings are jointly constructed and negotiated according to participants' personal, social and cultural backgrounds, the interpreter included. It wrongly assumes that there are equivalent words and concepts in all languages – but by the very nature of language itself, a verbatim translation is often not possible. Nor does it appreciate the difficulty in rendering spontaneous talk characterized by elements such as fast turn-taking, overlapping, false starts or topic unpredictability. This 'conduit metaphor' (Reddy, 1979) implemented by the court puts interpreters in a difficult position by insisting on the rendition of literal translations (Roy, 1990; Morris, 1989). Word-for-word translations cannot be applied in courtrooms, since languages are constructed differently and are governed by their own cultural concepts. Therefore, interpreters who try to remain faithfully close to original messages in terms of word order run the risk of producing meaningless renditions. The role of the interpreter traditionally defined by the court as a 'conduit pipe', a mere transmission machine, rather than an expert witness whose multiple tasks require high cognitive and linguistic skills has been further questioned (Fenton, 1997). It has also been claimed that this quasi-fictional role definition has been aimed at reducing the element of unpredictability increased by the interpreter's presence in already complex communication exchanges in court. The more formal the setting appears to be, the more

the interpreter will be expected to behave as a machine. In addition, the challenging environment in which court interpreters have to perform and where the power of language, the power of lawyers and the power of rituals dominate is brought to our attention. This environment is described as:

A hostile environment in which the language is nobody's mother tongue, where only the judge and the interpreter are to be strictly impartial. The judge presides in a realm of aloofness, the interpreter perches precariously between the artificially created role of a mechanical device and the realities of complex linguistic and interpersonal demands.

(Fenton, 1997: 32)

This description of the interpreter's unique yet vulnerable position signals tensions between the abstract definition of their role and the concrete issues faced whilst performing that role. It reveals that the interpreter's performance is influenced by linguistic, as well as social, cultural and political factors. On a macro-level, interpreters have to deal with the language and power implemented within the settings that rigidly define the specific roles and practices of the various actors. On a micro-level, they are at the heart of dynamic interactions between actors who enact different practices and have their own expectations of their role. Therefore, the techniques used by interpreters for both signed and spoken languages to cope with the issues faced in the workplace must be made visible to inform practice:

If SLIs [*Sign Language Interpreters*] begin to accept that they are not invisible, that they are going to have an effect on the interpreted event, then they will start to think about how they are going to deal with the issues that arise during those events.

(Dickinson and Turner, 2009: 180)

In the diplomatic context, where interpreters mediate power and politics, the demand for their invisibility is also high. A study on diplomatic interpreters in post-World War II Japan indeed reveals that: 'in Japan, as in many countries, interpreters are deemed invisible, commonly depicted as *kurogo/kuroko*, an invisible figure dressed in black (*kuro*) attire (*go*) in *kabuki* theatre' (Torikai, 2009: 25). This analogy between interpreters and *kurogo*, traditional Japanese theatre assistants, is particularly useful in grasping the complex issues at stake here. Despite their visible and indispensable role, these assistants from the well-established *kabuki* tradition were perceived as shadows, a widely spread and enduring perception coupled with low occupational status. In order to 'avoid being seen' by the audience, *kurogo* had to dress in black clothes, from head

to toes. Nonetheless, their key role was to both assist actors on stage – and perhaps off stage as well – and to adapt the décor throughout the play. As Torikai insightfully observed:

Interpreters are expected to play more or less the same role as *kurogo*. They are there with principal players on stage, doing significant work. Nevertheless, they are not supposed to be seen and are expected to be transparent. Interpreters in negotiations sit between the two parties bridging the linguistic barriers, and yet their own voices are not heard, and their presence is usually not acknowledged in history.

(2009: 2-3)

In light of these complexities, a wealth of literature has increasingly challenged the myth of the invisible interpreter in a variety of settings (Inghilleri, 2012; Le *et al.*, 2009; Hale, 2007; Morris, 2007, 1999, 1995, 1993; Valero-Garcés, 2007; Angelelli, 2004a and b, 2003a and b; 2001; Pöchhacker, 2004; Bot, 2003; Tribe and Raval, 2003; Mason, 2001; 1999; Wadensjö, 1998a, 1998b, 1997, 1995; 1993/2002; Colin and Morris, 1996; Raval, 1996; Benmaman, 1997; Fowler, 1997; Berk-Seligson, 1990; Knapp-Potthoff and Knapp, 1987).

Wadensjö's (1998a) interdisciplinary study of interpreted asylum and medical interviews is often regarded as a major contribution to the field of interpreting studies. The study draws on both sociolinguistic (Bakhtin, 1990; 1986b; 1986a; 1984) and sociopsychological theories (Goffman, 1990; 1981; 1974; 1971; 1967; 1961). The social dimension it has contributed to the understanding of PSI has been invaluable in deconstructing the myth that interpreting takes place in a 'social vacuum' and has led to a social and sociological turn in interpreting studies (Inghilleri, 2012, 2005, 2003; Pöchhacker, 2006; Angelelli, 2004a and b, 2001; Pym *et al.*, 2003). Drawing on Bakhtin (1986a, 1979) as a point of departure, Wadensjö considers language and language use as dialogic (talk as social activities) rather than monologic (talk as text). This approach consequently departs from the (monologic) traditional role definition of interpreters as neutral conduits, or 'non-persons': individuals who are physically present in an interaction but are treated as absent for their non-involvement as performers or audience (Goffman, 1959/1990), just as Torikai's (2009) *kurogo* above. Her study also questioned the traditional expectations of the interpreter's role by using Goffman's (1961) definitions of normative role (what is officially expected), typical role (actual performance) and performance role (performance dictated by situations and contexts that are partly influenced by social and cultural factors). Whilst observing police and

medical interviews conducted in Swedish and Russian, contrasting data were gathered on 'how interpreters should perform', 'how they actually do perform' and how external factors such as working conditions and diverging expectations from users impacted on their performance. It is the very discrepancy between the three and the routines developed by individuals 'to handle typical situations *not* foreseen by shared established norms' (Wadensjö, 1998a: 83) that I shall further explore in my study.

In her acknowledgments, the author interestingly notes: 'Interpreters are used to not being seen, and sometimes pride themselves on 'disappearing in the background', for according to official texts, it is a sign of professionalism' (Wadensjö, 1998a: xi). Despite these claims, her findings not only revealed that interpreters are *in situ* human beings visibly taking part in social interactions, but that they often do so whilst choreographing a previously unaccounted for triadic dance or 'pas de trois' (Wadensjö, 1998a). The interpreters she observed indeed occupied a 'strategic' and potentially 'powerful' position in co-creating meaning, editing text or coordinating talk. Paradoxically, their role was far from being neutral whilst attempting to remain invisible. The data also revealed that interpreters occupied an ambiguous position. They simultaneously acted as 'gatekeepers' between powerless lay people in enabling them to access a specific service on the one hand, and powerful institutions in assisting them to exercise control over that service on the other. Interpreters thus acted as 'double-gatekeepers' for the institutions. But as Isabella, one of her participants, experienced, being perceived by service users as gatekeeping institutional interests alongside other 'professionalized intermediaries', may give rise to issues of trust. Following guidelines, the Chilean interpreter faithfully reproduced the firm and formal tone of an officer informing a Spanish-speaker that his residence application had been rejected and deportation imminent. The service user's immediate reaction was to direct his anger and despair towards Isabella and shout: 'And me, I always thought you were my friend!' (Wadensjö, 1998a: 239). In this example, the interpreter's price for attempting to do a good job was associated by the applicant with siding with the institution and safeguarding its interests. Perhaps because she and the service user shared a common linguistic background, he had presumed that she was on his side. He therefore took the rejection as coming directly from her and felt betrayed. Conflicting perceptions of interpreters' roles based on their sociolinguistic and sociocultural identities are therefore an additional factor to take into consideration whilst exploring issues surrounding their invisibility at work.

Wadensjö's (1998a) seminal work has shed significant light on the nature of talk as a set of complex social activities and on the active role of the interpreter as co-participant in triadic social interactions. Goffman's symbolic interactionist theories on which she drew have nonetheless been critiqued for being too individualistic and not sufficiently integrating structure and agency (Bloomer and Hodkinson, 1999). Moreover in her study, little analytic attention was paid to the nature of the interactions themselves, leaving several questions unanswered such as: how do PSIs perceive their roles, in particular the demand for their invisibility? Do perceptions differ according to the interpreting settings? What social factors, if any, influence the ways in which invisibility is perceived?

Angelelli's cross-cultural/linguistic longitudinal study of the interpreter's interpersonal role in 'interpreted communicative events' (ICE) provides some answers to these questions. It offers a broader perspective on interpreters' experiences by exploring this phenomenon through the triple lens of social theory (institution and society level), sociological theories (interpersonal relations level) and linguistic anthropology (discourse level) (Angelelli, 2004b; 2001). A quantitative questionnaire and measuring instrument, the interpreter's Interpersonal Role Inventory (IPRI), were designed to investigate interpreters' perceptions of their in/visible roles across settings. Interpreters' attitudes towards the in/visibility of their role were measured against five subcomponents:

- Alignment with the parties
- Establishing trust with/facilitating mutual respect between the parties
- Communicating affect as well as message
- Explaining cultural gaps/interpret culture as well as language
- Establishing communication rules during the conversation

(adapted from Angelelli: 2004b: 50)

Responses from 293 participants interpreting in conference, court and medical settings in the US, Canada and Mexico generated the data. These revealed a strong relationship between interpreters' social backgrounds and their perception of invisibility, influenced by social factors such as self-identification with dominant or subordinate groups, age, socio-economic status and self-perception of invisibility according to interpreting settings. These interpreters were portrayed as powerful, visible and agentic individuals in ICE (Angelelli, 2004a and b; 2001). Interpreting settings were also found to influence interpreters' perceptions of their role, with a further impact on their

behaviours. Medical interpreters, for instance, viewed their roles as more visible than their court or conference counterparts in: aligning with the parties, establishing trust, facilitating mutual respect, communicating affect as well as message, explaining cultural gaps and establishing communication rules. Drawing on Bourdieu (1997), the author further asserts that PSI is a *situated practice* 'constrained by the institution in which it is embedded' (Angelelli, 2004b: 83). There is therefore a need for in-depth analyses of the consequences of such constraints on the practice(s) of PSI. My sociological study addresses these issues by exploring the day-to-day work experiences of PSIs as human practitioners who actively take part in social interactions as powerful and visible key players.

In human interactions mediated through an interpreter, institutional power relations are at work and a power imbalance is often noticeable between users and service providers. By not having mastery of the dominant language and being in a position of need, users almost systematically inherit a low social status, whereas providers benefit from a higher status due to their command of the language, their knowledge of how the system works and their gatekeeping role within it. A heavy responsibility falls upon interpreters as they are expected to invisibly put service users on the same level as English speakers, through the faithfulness and accuracy of their performance. As argued: 'triadic exchanges take place at the intersection of competing discourses' (Mason, 2001: ii). In these competing discourses, a shift in power dynamics operates. Although interpreters have supposedly been stripped of their agency by the Code and the invisibility it prescribes, they are still powerful figures (Fenton, 1997; Fowler, 1997). They inherently occupy a position of power by being the ones who receive the information first-hand, understand both languages and decide what to interpret and how. They also engage in three-way power struggles to assert their professional identities (Jacobsen, 2009; Mikkelsen and Mintz, 1997).

Although such critical studies have shed light on the visibility of the interpreter in various settings, PSI nonetheless remains an obscure profession. As I shall now discuss, the general lack of awareness amongst service users and service providers of what the practice entails and the way in which it is framed by the Code have led to conflicting perceptions and expectations of the interpreter's role and given rise to a whole set of ethical issues faced by practitioners.

Problematizing the Code of Ethics

In England as in other countries, the gradual shift towards the professionalisation of PSI materialised through the adoption of rigid Codes of Ethics, Practice or Conduct with an aim of firmly establishing the practice as a 'bona fide profession on a par with law and medicine' (Mikkelsen: 2000/2001: 49). Given the intimate situations in which practitioners work, the professionalisation of PSI reflected a need to build trust amongst service users and providers, and safeguard their rights through the promotion of professional values such as reliability, integrity and high ethical standards. As Gentile and his colleagues asserted in their pioneering handbook on liaison interpreting: 'professionalism and ethics are inextricably linked' (Gentile *et al.*, 1996: 56). Moreover, as we have already noted, PSI is a specific type of human practice that places practitioners right 'in the middle' of users' intimate lives (Knapp-Potthoff and Knapp, 1987) whilst interacting with providers for matters vital for their daily functioning in society. The consequence of this intermediary position is twofold: first, practitioners experience directly the reaction of speakers to the message they convey. By using direct speech, they give life to the words they interpret. Second, they are privy to sensitive information which must remain confidential at all times. They may, for instance, interpret for a terminally-ill patient at hospital, an asylum seeker at an immigration interview or a mother engaged in a battle for custody of her children with social services. They therefore often work with distressed, traumatised or reluctant human beings in situations that are ethically challenging and emotionally charged and which cannot be dehumanized. It would be facile to suggest that interpreters only need to enact the 'translation machine' model prescribed by the Code to prevent their emotions, personal judgment and values (religion, culture or beliefs) from clashing with their professional values and thus hindering their performance. The enactment of concepts such as neutrality and impartiality within PSI is a challenging one for human practitioners and it certainly deserves further attention.

There is not always a clear understanding amongst service providers and users of what the PSI's role entails (Butow *et al.*, 2012; Napier, 2011; Hsieh and Hong, 2010; De Vries, 2008; Hsieh, 2008; 2006; Hale, 2007; Edwards *et al.*, 2006; Edwards *et al.*, 2005; Alexander *et al.*, 2004; Angelelli, 2004a and b, 2001). Service providers and users alike often expect PSIs to fulfil roles that conflict with the Code; and it is these expectations that produce problems for PSIs. Similarly, practitioners themselves may also interpret the Code in ways that contradict the intention originally intended. In the

context of (at least) a three-way social interaction, it is of course possible that the other parties may – wittingly or unwittingly – challenge this ethical boundary, thereby placing the PSI in a difficult situation. On the one hand, dehumanizing codes of practice may be unacceptable from a service user’s perspective: ‘[*the PSI*] must be someone who is sympathetic to people generally. Some people are better than others at this. It doesn’t matter if their Polish is fantastic if they are cold to people’ (Alexander *et al.*, 2004: 2). Service users may also expect advice and support from an interpreter who is clearly knowledgeable about the public service they are trying to access:

An interpreter should give good advice. That’s what I believe. Giving good advice is helpful, whatever the case. Clients can benefit because they don’t have the knowledge of the laws and procedures.

(Service user quoted in Alexander *et al.*, 2004: 2)

On the other hand, service providers may also perceive the PSI as a tool that will assist them in doing their job and demand that they step beyond the official boundaries of their role, as De Vries’ (2008) study within the probation service reveals. In mental health settings also, professionals have acknowledged the increased complexity of communicating with their patients through an interpreter (Tribe and Raval, 2003; Raval, 1996). To guarantee the successful outcome of this three-way relationship and re-establish the intimacy between them and their patients, research has emphasised the need to work closely with the interpreter as a professional who ‘serves a greater role than just carrying out translations’ (Raval, 1996: 41). As famously claimed: ‘interpreters don’t have a problem with ethics, they have a problem with the role’ (Fritsch-Rudser, 1988, cited in Roy, 1993/2002: 347). In parallel, this machine-like definition has caused practitioners’ reluctance to open up about the active role that they play in ethically challenging situations. The strict confidentiality rule which they have to observe has thus created a lack of a ‘professionally proper space’ for them to publicly resolve role-related dilemmas:

The hegemony of ‘machine is the only way because it is the only way to be uninvolved’ has created a conspiracy of silence – not an actively desired one on the part of practitioners, but one which they feel duty-bound to observe nonetheless – about the very real *disempowering* effects of a blanket aspiration to machine-like behaviour.

(Tate and Turner, 2002: 375)

This ‘conspiracy of silence’ has contributed to practitioners’ disempowerment and reluctance to discuss the agentic decisions that they make about what to interpret and how – decisions that are mostly made covertly and in isolation. A growing number of studies has nonetheless illustrated the unfeasibility of such a neutral and impartial role, whilst highlighting the (un)ethical strategies adopted by practitioners to overcome them (Hale *et al.*, 2009; Valero-Garcés and Martin, 2008; Kearns, 2008; Hale, 2007; Rudvin, 2007; Wadensjö *et al.*, 2007; Jarkman Björn, 2005; Tennent, 2005; Brunette *et al.*, 2003; Mikkelsen, 2000/2001; 1999; Pym, 2001; Roberts *et al.*, 2000; Pöchhacker, 1999; Carr *et al.*, 1997; Gile, 1995a; Roy, 1993/2002, 2000; Berg-Seligson, 1990). Light has been shed on the different needs and perceptions that institutions have of the interpreter’s role and how this role consequently varies according to institutional settings. In one participant observation study in courts, the production of verbatim translation was shown to have resulted in incoherent renditions and communication breakdowns (Hale, 1996). Another study, of the famous O.J. Simpson trial in 1995, captured the frustration of a legal team with an interpreter not abiding to their traditional role:

The problem, though, that we were aware of, is the translator was interpreting instead of interpreting what she [*the witness*] was saying and changing words and cleaning up her language, not even interpreting some of the things she was saying at all.

(Prosecuting Counsel quoted by Pym 1999: 272)

Whereas the debate over the professionalisation of PSI has been ongoing for some time, it is important to consider professionalism as a ‘socially constructed and subjectively situated act’ (Rudvin, 2007: 48). This conceptualisation allows for a socio-cultural element to be taken into account whilst studying ethics. It also implies that prescriptions of the Code should take into consideration the specific institutional settings in which PSI takes place, as well as practitioners’ perceptions of ethics, for the enactment of interpreting in the workplace ultimately depends on them:

[E]thics goes beyond the call of duty and the minimal standards of professionalism; it is that aspect of life that is most interconnected with other socio-cultural practices and is most culture-bound.

(Rudvin, 2007: 66)

Ethics is thus a sociocultural construct whose meaning and enactment vary according to the context and the perspective of the individual. Within PSI, its teaching

has traditionally been carried through group discussions of ethically challenging situations. In a case study carried out amongst British Sign Language Interpreters, practitioners were presented with a set of scenarios packed with ethical challenges and invited to justify the decisions they made. Researchers were guided by a hunch that 'scriptures of the Code or interpreters' readings of its prescriptions were often at odds with actual practice' and that interpreters often resorted to 'spur-of-the-moment' strategies to deal with ethical dilemmas (Tate and Turner, 2002: 373). As expected, findings revealed discrepancies between the Code's prescriptions and their enactment in practice. The following dilemma represented the one that interpreters felt mainly torn about:

You are interpreting with a Deaf mother-to-be when she goes for a scan. You know that she doesn't want to know the sex of her baby, but the gynaecologist suddenly comes out with the information that it's a boy! What do you do, and why?

(Tate and Turner, 2002: 376)

It is interesting to note that no less than 77% of the participants indicated that they would not faithfully interpret the gynaecologist's words, whereas 23% stated they would. This high percentage clearly indicates a clash between practitioners' personal and professional values and further points to the fact that the enactment of ethical rules also depends on practitioners' own understanding of them. One interpreter explained their stance as follows:

I think I would tell her that the doctor has just said the sex but 'you don't want to know, right?' (also explain what I said to the doctor). It's difficult 'coz if hearing, the slip would have been heard.

(Tate and Turner, 2002: 377)

Inghilleri's (2012) study on interpreters working with asylum applicants in the UK and the US military during the Iraq war further illuminates the controversial ethical stance taken by practitioners in judicial and political contexts. It questions the extent to which the prescriptions of existing codes of ethics are compatible with interpreters' simultaneous fulfilment of their professional and civic duties as regards social and ethical responsibility. Most importantly, it refutes the idea that impartial or neutral communication - that is dominated and constrained by legal and political institutions or between nations at war - can be achieved in interpreted events, for it is ultimately influenced by politics. As Inghilleri argues:

Interpreters, like many other professionals, experience tensions between their everyday moral institutions and the demands of their role within a particular institution. Professional codes and institutional demands do not make difficult ethical and moral decisions any easier, and they do not make immoral actions moral. These decisions are influenced by pragmatic, personal, and political realities which create various kinds of partnerships between interpreters and interlocutors. Interpreters are active, key players in interpreted communication, facilitating open negotiations over meaning and maximising the possibility that the communicative objectives of all participants are met; they require codes of practice in which principles like neutrality or impartiality are not taken to mean the abdication of personal and social responsibility in their role.

(2012: 51)

Although in contrasting ways, the studies above have pointed out to the high ethical demands that the professional framing of PSI has placed on practitioners and to the decision-making process that they undertake while performing in ethically-challenging situations. As in the past – despite the reification of their practice, their professional qualifications and status – PSIs, like their legendary counterparts, are still confronted with mixed feelings from service users and providers that range from trust to suspicion. Expectations of their role vary according to the other parties' interests and their own understanding of what that role is. Although the general consensus in interpreting studies is understandably that the Code cannot anticipate all the ethical dilemmas that the interpreter may face (Hale, 2007; Baker, 1992), guidance on how to deal with spontaneous and unpredictable ethical dilemmas is still limited. In practice, dealing with ethics is therefore influenced by practitioners' socio-cultural backgrounds and it is mainly learnt on the ground. Little is known still about the ethical dilemmas that PSIs face in the various settings in which they work. How are these dilemmas raised and by whom? What are the strategies employed by practitioners to deal with them? What do they learn about 'doing ethics' in the workplace? The ethical dilemmas faced by PSIs discussed above further indicate a strong link between ethics and emotion. In the penultimate section of this chapter, I thus investigate how the notion of emotion within PSI has been conceptualised in official texts and in the literature.

Foregrounding emotion

The tenets of the culture of emotional detachment perpetuated by dominant academic and professional discourses within PSI can be summarised as follows: the role of PSIs is not to 'help' users or providers but merely to facilitate communication

between them. In order to perform a neutral and impartial role, prospective PSIs are instructed to detach themselves emotionally from the interactions which they interpret by refraining from judging the parties involved, suppressing their emotion and feelings and focusing on the interpreting process instead. These stringent demands for interpreters to perform as mechanical devices void of human feelings are equally omnipresent in official texts. But their critical reading reveals that there is little or no mention of the emotional challenge(s) that practitioners may face whilst attempting to perform an emotionless role, particularly in interactions where emotions run high, and of their management. Instead, stress is on Public Service Interpreters to possess 'an ability to function professionally in all situations' (IoLET, 2010: 3). They are also instructed by the Code 'not to express reactions to any of the parties' (NRPSI, 2011: 5.9) and by extrapolation, emotions. Interestingly, the examples of exceptions in which practitioners are allowed to interrupt, pause or intervene 'to signal a condition or factor which might impair the interpreting process' favour technical difficulties such as 'inadequate seating, poor sight-lines or audibility' over human difficulties such as 'inadequate breaks' (NRPSI, 2011: 5.12.4). There is no mention of a possible impairment due to emotional challenges. The demands for professionalism therefore do not seem to address directly the emotional challenges that PSIs may face but rather to bypass them. Similarly, the emotional rather than financial investment mostly made when choosing a career in PSI is often overlooked:

Interpreters working in the public services have made the same decision as lawyers taking publicly funded cases. They know they could earn considerably more in the commercial sector, but this is the work they want to do. Nonetheless, neither group can live on fresh air.

(Cambridge, 2001: 15)

Neglecting the fact that PSIs are human beings with feelings and emotional needs has been described as an oxymoron. Since they are perceived in the 'conduit' model as objects, their motivations, needs or reactions as humans are downplayed or even ignored. The situations in which PSIs perform are often emotionally charged since they concern the daily struggles of non-native service users with inherently unequal status, power and position in the host society. These are usually when they face an urgent, serious or even life-threatening crisis that touches upon critical aspects of their intimate lives. In other words, the content of interpreted events is often emotional and can range from exhilaration to trauma. For the interpreter right at the centre of direct and dynamic

interactions where respective interests may not coincide, power dynamics constantly fluctuate, and emotions run high, not to 'express reactions' can therefore prove very challenging. Furthermore, there is no gainsaying the fact that confidentiality is paramount to PSI due to the sensitive nature of the information that practitioners interpret. However, the strict confidentiality rule that instructs PSIs not to discuss the content of assignments with anyone has, as argued above, created a 'conspiracy of silence' amongst practitioners, leaving them to deal not only with the ethical but also the emotional demands of their practice on their own (Tate and Turner, 2002). As observed: 'PSIs work in the same sorts of potentially distressing situations as the other professional disciplines in their work teams' (Cambridge, 2005: 150-151). Yet unlike for other professionals, there is no specific support or counselling structure in place for PSIs. Since the NRPSI is not a membership body, it cannot provide its registrants with emotional support. As a result, observing the duty of confidentiality can become a burden for isolated freelance practitioners. In recent years, this anomaly has been acknowledged by some codes of conduct:

Interpreters and translators must treat confidential any information ... This does not preclude making use of such experiences on an anonymous and strictly confidential basis, within the recognised structures of professional support and training where colleagues are bound to observe the same codes.

(Corsellis, 2008: 42)

And PSIs have been encouraged to both acknowledge and learn from their emotion in order to perform a better job:

There is a need to avoid hardening emotional responses and to absorb and learn from these experiences so that the job can be done better next time. Interpreters need to retain their sensitivities rather than blunt them.

(Corsellis, 2008: 77)

Although a large body of literature has examined the complexities of the practice of PSI, there has not been a strong focus on its emotional aspect. As a result, academic awareness of the emotional challenges faced by PSIs in the workplace is still limited. Most of this awareness has increasingly been raised in mental health settings where interpreters often work with victims of crimes against humanity such as refugees or asylum seekers, and are considered as active participants in the therapeutic process of patients. In these particularly emotionally-challenging settings, empirical research has highlighted several issues with using interpreters. These include: interpreters' feelings

of stress, distress, helplessness and guilt even towards patients and strategies to deal with them; their impact on the therapy; conflicting role expectations, perceptions and blurring of personal and professional boundaries; the need for specific support, training and guidelines for both interpreters and mental health providers (Green *et al.*, 2012; Hsieh, 2012; 2008; 2006; Molle, 2012; Shakespeare, 2012; Butow *et al.*, 2012; Hsieh and Hong, 2010; Splevins *et al.*, 2010; Tribe and Lane, 2009; Tribe and Thompson, 2008; Fox and Aviga, 2007; Fox and Gander, 2004; Raval, 2006; Miller *et al.*, 2005; Parnes and Westfall, 2003; Temple, 2002).

In the interpreting field, the psychological, physical, emotional and professional risks associated with PSI have been described as inherent occupational health and safety hazards (Darwish, 2008; Pöchhacker, 2004). In addition, the rigid ethical framing of PSI and demand for practitioners' neutrality, impartiality and invisibility in the workplace discussed in the previous sections have, as argued, created tensions between what they are expected to do and what they actually do in practice. Contrasting data on how PSIs feel about their job, how they perceive their role and how it is perceived by service users and providers have shed light on the innumerable ethical dilemmas and boundary disturbances that they experience, due to conflicting expectations and perceptions of their role, role enactment and settings. In doing so, these data, as well as additional ones, have also flagged the emotional aspect of the PSI practice (Wolf, 2013; Tryuk, 2010; Le *et al.*, 2009; Hale, 2007; Alexander *et al.*, 2004; Cambridge, 2005; Angelelli, 2004a and b; Corsellis, 2002; Wadensjö, 2001; 1998a; Fenton, 1997). There is nonetheless a dearth of literature which focuses in any depth on the experience of emotion within PSI, despite its significance. Notable exceptions include studies on trust (Tipton, 2010; Edwards *et al.*, 2006; Edwards *et al.*, 2005), and interpreters' feelings towards their practice in a variety of settings (Hale, 2011; Valero-Garcés and Abkari, 2010; Butler, 2008; Valero-Garcés, 2005). Valero-Garcés' (2005) comparative study on the emotional and psychological impact of interpreting within European NGOs, in various settings, in healthcare in particular, and on untrained interpreter volunteers, has undoubtedly shed some light on the broad emotional scope of the PSI practice. Interpreters' tendency to relate to patients and subsequent need to build a strong emotional relationship with them were reported. The quantitative survey method used to gather the data has nonetheless hindered the capture of practitioners' in-depth experiences, as qualitative methods such as interviews or personal diaries might have done.

In a subsequent study on the difficulties of interpreting during the court proceedings that followed the March 11, 2004 terrorist attack on Madrid's central railway, qualitative methods were used (Valero-Garcés and Abkari, 2010). Several factors that contributed to the stress experienced by interpreters were highlighted, including the sheer magnitude of the attack, which claimed 192 lives and left over 1,000 people injured. The Islamist group accused of perpetrating the attack in New York on September 11, 2001 was held responsible. Heavily mediated, the trial was broadcast live, putting interpreters under considerable pressure to perform to the highest standard. When technical difficulties hindered their performance, their competence was publicly questioned by judges and the lay public, prompting many interpreters to feel that they were performing a 'thankless job'. The atmosphere in court was emotionally intense. As the painstaking reconstruction of events from victims and defendants took place, interpreters faced the heavy burden of processing the information from one language into another. In the midst of heightened emotions, they also had to control their own feelings and tame 'the fear of participating in a trial such as this one' or 'the fear of possible acts of revenge' (Valero-Garcés and Abkari, 2010: 53). As incisively observed by an interpreter during a round table:

The emotional aspects of interpreting are usually overlooked in interpreter training. It is somehow assumed that professional interpreters can and must hide their emotions in order to project the image of an impartial, professional interpreter who is capable of working in any situation. In fact, it is not always easy.

(Valero-Garcés *et al.*, 2009, cited in Valero-Garcés and Abkari, 2010: 52)

And struggling with emotion can have dire consequences for both interpreter trainees and experienced practitioners:

I have seen how, unfortunately, many students crumble during their first experiences, specifically due to emotional reasons. I have even seen professional interpreters have these problems.

(Valero-Garcés *et al.*, 2009, cited in Valero-Garcés and Abkari, 2010: 52)

To illustrate further how even experienced interpreters are not immune to emotion, I finally turn to an 'unusual' and 'sensational' case recently reported from within the profession. Camayd-Freixas is a certified interpreter and professor of ethics in interpreter training unwillingly involved in the aftermaths of the largest Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid in American history. In a poignant and much

publicised personal account posted on the internet, he offers a unique insight into his experience (Camayd-Freixas, 2013; 2008a, b and c). As he states, this was a learning experience for all people involved, 'an educational case study in interpreter ethics' (Camayd-Freixas, 2008b: 2). And indeed, what he lived has been usefully analysed from an ethical perspective (Inghilleri, 2012). It will be, however, my contention that ethics, invisibility and emotion are inextricably linked and interconnected within PSI. Thus far in the literature, the *integration* of these three important aspects of PSIs' experience has not been considered. Bearing this in mind, I therefore revisit Camayd-Freixas' account of the incident.

Orchestrated by the ICE, the infamous raid took place in May 2008 in Postville, Iowa, and targeted illegal migrants working in a meat processing factory. Officially categorised as 'aliens', these workers constituted 75% of the workforce and mainly came from neighbouring countries such as Guatemala and Mexico or remote lands such as Israel and Ukraine. Most of them had peasant origins, could not speak English and were illiterate. As a consequence, 36 interpreters - who were lured into accepting the assignment 'under false pretenses for a secretive mission' - were brought in whilst they were prosecuted (Camayd-Freixas, 2013: 18). These interpreters only discovered that they were covertly required to participate in the largest immigration case in American history on their arrival. The author was amongst the sixteen interpreters who remained during the two-week proceedings, but he was torn between walking out, thus helping the government to send innocent people to prison or have them deported, or remaining to try to ensure that they received a fair trial.

Out of the 697 warrants issued, nearly 400 workers were arrested, a majority of them being men, followed by mothers and adolescents. Television cameras were not allowed on the factory premises. As an insider and in his capacity as 'both an officer of the court *and* an expert witness' (Camayd-Freixas, 2008b), this interpreter chose to step out of invisibility to blow the whistle on irregularities witnessed during the proceedings. Whilst carefully observing his duty of confidentiality and impartiality, he shed light on the intimate yet emotionally and ethically challenging role that he and his colleagues played during the prosecution of 306 arrested people for aggravated identity theft through Social Security fraud. In his words, the Postville events were 'an extreme situation' with '*force majeure*' circumstances; a financial and political case that involved fast-tracked proceedings, bogus charges, violations of human rights, lengthy incarcerations and deportations. Ultimately, this judicial masquerade tore hundreds of

families apart and cost the town a third of its population, leaving schoolchildren traumatised for losing scores of friends at once; but these were not the only casualties.

In Camayd-Freixas' account, the life experiences of harmless defendants held captive in inhuman conditions are described: people whose only crime was to have risked their lives to come to the US in a desperate attempt to find work and provide for their needy or sick relatives. But in the eyes of the ICE, these people posed the same threat to the nation as terrorists. Thus, they were chained like cattle and treated as such. Powerless, some detainees were severely distressed while others were worried, afraid or even embarrassed, as they collectively appeared before the judges. Thorough investigations revealed that they were pressured to plead guilty without fully understanding the charges held against them. Professionals on the other hand were also pressured to work extremely long hours, as long as their 'emotional fortitude allowed' (Camayd-Freixas, 2008a: 6), since the clock of *habeas corpus* - which states that charge or release for deportation of detained persons must take place within the 72 hours following their arrest - was ticking. Postville was a traumatic event not only for the defendants, its remaining inhabitants and empty businesses, but also for the professionals involved in the proceedings. The interpreter recalls feeling 'downtrodden by the sheer magnitude of the events', a feeling shared by many of his colleagues and members of the legal team who worked with the defendants (Camayd-Freixas, 2008a: 8). Although mention is made of the emotional support provided to emotionally distressed schoolchildren, nothing is said about such support for the defendants or professionals. From the PSI's perspective, writing a personal account of the events was perceived a way to 'debrief emotionally with those who were there, after the trauma of Postville' (Camayd-Freixas, 2008b). Despite more than 30 years of experience, this interpreter's narrative clearly indicates an inextricable link and interconnection between ethics, in/visibility and emotion that must not be overlooked whilst investigating the issues faced by interpreters in the workplace.

Conclusion, research aims and questions

In this chapter, critical studies on the myriad of ethical, in/visibility and emotional challenges faced by interpreters working in public services have been reviewed. Unanimously, these studies have revealed discrepancies between how PSIs ought to perform and how they actually do so, revealing the complexities of their role. To varying extents, they have also demonstrated that the issues of invisibility, ethics and

emotion within PSI are inseparable. Yet, none of these studies have offered a holistic view of the work that practitioners undertake to reconcile the demand for their impartiality, neutrality and invisibility in the workplace. The role of PSIs is complex, yet work experiences from their own perspectives remain underexplored and mostly hidden. As a result, there is a need to consider the possibility of what has been neglected so far, and to explore the prospect that these aspects of the PSI role *constitute forms of work in themselves*. The investigation of interpreting simply as a linguistic activity must be transcended to see the practice not just as a social activity with cultural elements still focused on conveyance of linguistic meaning, but as a much broader set of social practices that includes the inseparability of dealing with ethics, invisibility and emotion.

PSI is a type of human service work where empirical evidence of the interconnectivity between these three types of work can be found, as I will discuss in detail in Chapter 8. It is surprising that its significance within practitioners' individual and daily accounts has remained underexplored. The in-depth study presented here thus offers a very particular and innovative insight into the profession. It seeks to address a gap in the literature by understanding the significance of such accounts and analysing PSIs' actual performances in dealing with invisibility, ethics and emotions in situations unanticipated by the Code in order to contribute to a better understanding of their practice. From this perspective, many of the issues identified in the historical examples – the interpreter as object of suspicion, as supposed guarantor of neutrality, as assumed holder of allegiance either to the non-native speaker or to the public service, as covert surveillor of the client, as subordinated handmaid/lackey in the courtroom – are brought into our field of vision.

The aims of the present study are therefore to:

1. identify how PSIs enact their role in daily practice
2. deepen understanding of less visible aspects of PSIs' work
3. contribute to critical theorisations of PSI
4. inform policy and practice about the ways in which the realities of PSI work can be better reflected both in formal protocols and in authentic workplace contexts.

The research questions therefore posed are:

1. How do PSIs narrate their experiences in the workplace?
2. How do they perceive their interactions with public service users and providers?
3. What challenges do they recount in performing their role?

4. What practices do they engage in to meet these challenges?
5. To what extent does labouring with invisibility, ethics and emotion arise in PSIs' practice, and how?
6. How can we best theorise the complex nature of PSIs' work in a more holistic way?

In the next chapter, then, I discuss the methodological approach I adopted in this study, the particular methods used to meet its aims and answer its research questions, and the challenges encountered in conducting it.

Chapter 4: Researching Public Service Interpreting

Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals.

(Flyvberg, 2006: 224, original emphasis)

Introduction

In the first two chapters of this thesis, I traced the origins of Public Service Interpreting (PSI) in history. I presented both ancient and modern illustrations of the practice and issues that they raise with a particular focus on invisibility, ethics and emotion. In Chapter 3, I drew on a small but growing body of research from the field of critical interpreting studies to argue that the official demand for PSIs' invisibility, neutrality and impartiality in the workplace is anything but realistic from a human practitioner's perspective. As discussed in Chapter 3, PSIs' Code of Professional Conduct and other official texts that currently frame the PSI practice are rigid and unrealistic. In contrast, very little has been known until now about how PSIs actually deal with these demands in the workplace. In this chapter, I discuss the broad methodological framework and particular methods applied to this research project, and how they have enabled me to meet the research aims and answer my research questions.

The chapter consists of seven sections. In the first two sections, I explain the paradigmatic approach adopted for this study and how such approach helps to fill a gap in existing literatures. In the middle part of the chapter, I review the overall methodology applied, and challenges met along the way. The final section of this chapter discusses the criteria that I argue should be used to assess my research project.

Locating the study within the paradigm debate

Given that the research aims and questions focus on how PSIs experience the official demand for their invisibility, impartiality and neutrality in the workplace from their own perspectives, I have adopted an interpretive approach for this project. My aim was first to explore the strategies adopted by PSI practitioners to deal with daily disturbances to their occupational boundaries, ethical and emotional conflicts and the learning that ensues; and second, to conduct such an exploration in a holistic manner that has not been attempted before. This study has therefore been located within a *critical* interpretivist paradigm which aims to foreground both the micro-level subjective experiences of individuals as well as the macro-level institutional and

structural contexts in which they act (Anderson, 1989). Using narratives, such research enables us to explore how identity and personal experience are bound up with power:

...narrative inquiry, through rich accounts of the complexities of real life and an emphasis on the particular, may call into question dominant narratives that do not match the experience of life as lived.

(Bathmaker, 2010a: 2)

Traditional approaches to research have been guided by two dominant paradigms or 'regimes of truth': positivism and interpretivism. Positivism is mainly associated with quantitative research methods such as experiments, questionnaires or personality tests; and interpretivism, with qualitative research methods such as life histories, observations or depth interviews. Within the positivist and interpretivist paradigms, particular methods for research may vary. The paradigms themselves are nonetheless characterised by three main elements: ontology (what we can know, and the researcher's relationship to the social world), epistemology (how we can know that world, what counts as knowledge), and methodology (what methods we deem appropriate to generate knowledge according to our own ontological and epistemological stance) (Ernest, 1994; Guba, 1990). Indeed, 'the way in which our ontological perspective feeds into our epistemological perspective is further reflected in our methodological approach' (Henn *et al.*, 2006: 17).

Such differences go beyond oversimplified paradigmatic dichotomies such as: 'quantitative versus qualitative, scientific versus naturalistic, empiricist versus interpretive and so on' (Smith, 1989, cited in Sparkes, 1992: 10). In broad terms, positivist approaches generally assume that:

- modern science is concerned with concrete facts based on empirical observations
- power can be exerted over the natural world through the observation of facts, explanation and development of laws
- the application of natural laws based on observable facts enables us to discover the 'truth' about the world
- human behaviour can be controlled, measured and predicted
- social research should be conducted in ways similar to the methods adopted within the natural sciences, such as physics, chemistry, and biology.

(adapted from Henn *et al.*, 2006: 11)

On the other hand, the key assumptions of interpretive approaches can be summarised as follows:

- social reality is the product of consciousness, it is socially constructed
- knowledge is intersubjective, it is constructed through social interaction and different according to different perspectives
- human agency is active, human behaviour is imbued with meaning and is determining of culture, social systems, structures
- human beings interpret the world and give meaning to situations, understanding is what is important
- research subjects interpret the social world
- researchers interpret the social world, they do not stand outside of it
- social life is complex, the more you control experimental situations, the less generalisable are the results to ordinary situations
- social researchers must deal with (collect and interpret) the interpretations of others

(adapted from Torrance, 2007: 5)

As summarised above, positivist researchers believe that the world is 'out there'. Any phenomena which take place within it are ready to be discovered and can be scientifically measured. What counts as valid enquiry is what can be observed and tested. Positivist enquiries follow a hypothetico-deductive method which places emphasis on testing a given theory in order to apply it to a specific case. They are typically highly structured, large-scale and statistically based. The emphasis is on precision, reliability, validity and generalisability, although it must be noted that these are defined very narrowly, in order to support the development of universal theory, from a study of independent variables and causal relationships between them, which can in turn permit prediction and control (Sparkes, 1992). Research 'subjects' are positioned as passive participants in the research process, and researchers are supposed to 'bracket off' all beliefs and values, which are construed as 'biases' which might corrupt the objectivity of the research process (Henn *et al.*, 2006).

In contrast, there is a belief amongst interpretivists that the social world admits of multiple subjective truths, without any possibility of defining one absolute, objective truth (Sparkes, 1992). Truth is therefore a social construct in which both the researcher and researched play a significant and active role. Thus, the purpose of social research is

not to test theories or explain human action in relation to cause and effects. It is rather to explore a phenomenon within a specific social context and provide accounts of participants' interpretation of it in order to make sense of how such interpretation impacts on their actions and behaviours. Therefore, enquiries generally begin with a broad question and researchers' understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny gradually broadens whilst collecting data. The method followed in qualitative research is an analytic-inductive or 'research-then-theory' approach. Emphasis is on the researcher's active participation in participants' world as an insider and on the joint construction of subjective yet valid data. This positions the interpretivist researcher as an internal-idealist who is interested in participants' subjectivity, interests, emotions and values. As a result, qualitative studies are generally small-scale, intensive and unstructured. Data analysis is based on rich descriptions of social phenomena rather than on tangible 'facts' (Henn *et al.*, 2006).

At the same time, some paradigms can overlap, as in the case of critical interpretivism. In his review of the paradigm debate, Sparkes (1992) also discusses the critical research paradigm. The aims of such an approach are to emancipate people by enabling them to 'gain the knowledge and power to be in control of their own lives' (Sparkes, 1992: 37). According to the critical paradigm, participants' 'objective' interpretation of reality is not to be taken for granted anymore, nor should it be explained through some 'inescapable laws'. Instead, the focus of research should be on 'the formation of consciousness, culture and everyday life, and how these formations maintain legitimacy of existing political and social interests' (Popkewitz, 1984, cited in Sparkes, 1992: 37). As argued further:

Critical social research is underpinned by a critical-dialectical perspective which attempts to dig beneath the surface of historically specific, oppressive, social structures ... At the heart of critical social research is the idea that knowledge is structured by existing sets of social relations. The aim of critical methodology is to provide knowledge which engages the prevailing social structures. These social structures are seen by critical researchers, in one way or another, as oppressive structures ... A totalistic approach denies the relevance of looking at one element of a complex social process in isolation and argues that elements have to be looked at in terms of their interrelations and how they relate to the social structure as a whole. So critical research is concerned with the broad social and historical context, in which phenomena are interrelated. It is concerned with revealing underlying social relations and showing how structural and ideological forms bear on them. Critical social research, then, is interested in substantive issues, and wants to show what is happening, it is also concerned with doing something about it. Critical social research includes an overt political

struggle against oppressive social structures.

(Harvey, 1990, cited in Sparkes, 1992: 37-38)

Critical researchers are therefore concerned with how social reality is shaped by social, historical and political elements as a whole. They explore the power relations and oppressive structures that rhythm the material lives of participants. The ultimate goal of critical research is to initiate social change by giving a voice to excluded and marginalised groups to expose inequalities, malpractices or injustices.

Sparkes' (1992) discussion on dominant paradigms is useful. However, it has been critiqued for making too much of a separation between the interpretive and critical paradigms. The demarcation between the two has appeared too rigid in its external/internal analysis (Colley, 2003; Anderson, 1989). Therefore, I am adopting a critical interpretivist paradigm which enables me to combine *both* an external-realist *and* an internal-idealist position whilst investigating the material realities of participants in order to understand the complexities of the social world. I am refusing binaries of internal versus external ontology, and of idealist versus realist ontology to emphasise materialities as well as social constructions; that is to say, the bodily/material effects of boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour on PSI practitioners. It is this interaction of material realities and social constructions that appears to me to be most illuminating.

Whilst positivist approaches to my project might have enabled me to conduct a large-scale study on PSIs and to gauge their attitudes to a certain number of pre-constructed questions, they would not have helped me to answer my particular research questions. Indeed, as I have already noted, previous studies using such approaches, for example on emotion in PSIs' work, tend to raise more questions than they have answered (e.g. Valero-Garcés, 2005). Moreover, I am resistant to the notion that human participants could be reduced to measurable 'subjects'. I felt that such an approach would fail to take into account the personal and individual experiences of PSIs in the workplace as human beings - a key issue itself in debates about the profession, as we have seen in Chapter 3 in particular. It would miss out on the complex processes in which PSIs deal with invisibility, ethics and emotion when very little is known about these issues. I also felt that gathering statistical data would not do justice to what each participating PSI had to say about their practice in their own ways, nor would it convey their accounts of their feelings in detail.

Therefore I argue that a critical interpretivist approach is most appropriate for

this study, because my project aimed to explore the daily experiences of PSIs at a micro-level, albeit located in a macro-level context, and provide a rich qualitative description of them. I wanted to understand the complexities of participants' social world through their own perspectives by giving them an opportunity to discuss their practice in a free and uncontrolled manner, and develop what Weber termed 'verstehen'; that is to say, an 'empathetic understanding of the lived experiences of people in their natural settings' (Henn *et al.*, 2006: 172). Positivist critiques may argue that 'subjective' data is not valid and therefore inadmissible. However, from an interpretivist perspective, what matters is to be transparent about both the methods used and the researcher's positionality during the entire research process, so that the reader can make their own judgments about the research. In the third section of this chapter, I shall discuss data generation in greater detail but now, let us explore the strategies that I used to work with the literatures.

Working with the literatures

I have entitled this section working with the literatures, not only because this significant task has formed an integral and evolving part of my research project throughout, but also because 'reviewing the literature' (as it is usually termed) has necessitated my active engagement with different bodies of research in order to integrate them. As I began my academic journey, one of the responsibilities that I faced was to work with the existing literatures related to my field of enquiry in order to:

1. sketch out the nature of the field or fields relevant to the inquiry, possibly indicating something of their historical development and
2. identify major debates and define contentious terms, in order to
3. establish which studies, ideas and/or methods are most pertinent to the study and
4. locate gaps in the field, in order to
5. create the warrant for the study in question, and
6. identify the contribution the study will make.

(Kamler and Thomson, 2006: 28)

For a novice researcher like me, this task was daunting at first. It was akin to 'searching the night sky without a telescope for connections between illuminated stars' (Kamler and Thomson, 2006: 33). Indeed, for an inexperienced eye, the body of literature on community interpreting 'out there' seemed vast. During my original quest for existing literature in my field, I often used 'community interpreting' as an umbrella

term to maximise results (see Chapter 2 for a discussion on the differences and similarities between the two). Keen to broaden my knowledge, for months I attempted to read anything and everything related to my field, including literature on conference, business and sign language interpreting and this, both from the fields of interpreting and translation studies and others. The more I read, the more I felt that I knew little about my area of research. Lost, stumbling and unable to find my way as somehow accurately described by Kamler and Thomson (2006), my supervisors advised me to stop reading and write, but I still could not resist the urge to dig deeper and keep reading. As I came to learn, the epistemological error of this urge are deconstructed by the belief that it is possible to read and master everything in the field, and that this is necessary.

Most worryingly, I felt that I could not write. This 'writer's block' lasted a while, until I came across a useful explanation of the process that I was going through:

When the doctoral researcher writes about literatures, she is constructing a representation of the scholar and her scholarly practice. The struggle with writing occurs because of the difficulty of negotiating text work and identity work simultaneously. The challenge is to learn to speak/write with authority, standing back with 'hands on hips' in order to critically survey and categorize texts and the field itself.

(Kamler and Thomson, 2006: 32)

Having to negotiate text work and identity work at the same time was particularly hard at first and it still is. However, becoming aware of the significance of identity work whilst doing the literature work and how it contributes to becoming a scholar was for me extremely helpful. 'Hands on hips', I took a step back and visualised the task of reviewing the literature as that of 'persuading an octopus into a glass' (Kamler and Thomson, 2006). I found and still do find this metaphor powerful because it positions the researcher as an active agent who gets on with dealing with what seems like an impossible task, despite all odds. As I gradually felt more comfortable in working with the literatures relevant to my project, I did not simply review them: I became actively involved with the debates they raised, and critically assessed and built on them in order to expand our understanding of how PSIs daily deal with the official demand for their invisibility, neutrality and impartiality at work.

To select the literatures with which I have worked in this thesis, I have therefore used four strategies. The first of these has been to draw on the ancient history and legends of interpreting. This is relevant because it enabled me to set a historical background to my study, and to explain how such a phenomenon has been perceived

publicly - however inaccurate those perceptions might at times be. As discussed in Chapter 1, records of ancient interpreting work are far and few between, compared to records of ancient translation work. One reason for this gap in knowledge may be that, as an oral activity, interpreting has been more difficult to capture and record. Nonetheless, the review of diverse historical accounts of ancient interpreting across the globe has enabled me to get an approximate picture of what the practice may have looked like in the past and the way in which narratives about it have been constructed. Most significantly, it has enabled me to establish that the practice was complex, very long-established, largely misunderstood and deeply infused with issues of trust, loyalty and power - and this has been the case for millennia. In parallel, I have learnt from multiple readings on the phenomenon of child language and culture brokering that bilingual children often acted as gatekeepers for their parents, wider family and communities at large without any training, by enabling them to access a whole range of public services thanks to the children's linguistic and cultural skills. Increasing global academic awareness of this phenomenon mainly pointed to problematic ethical, psychological and child development issues, as well as to its benefits.

My next move was to investigate the literature on professionalism and the professional framing of practices. I also reviewed key official national and supranational texts that currently frame the PSI practice in England (see Chapter 2). This is relevant because such move enabled me to understand how PSI has been framed here both from a professional and academic perspective in the UK and abroad. From these texts, I draw the conclusion that the role of PSIs was defined in a rigid, mechanical and emotionless way, despite their very human input. Feeling that a significant piece of the jigsaw puzzle was missing, I then reviewed the growing corpus of critical literature on PSI in modern times, and in particular accounts of practitioners' personal experiences with the official demand for their invisibility, impartiality and neutrality at work (see Chapter 3). I came across a vast array of studies on standards, ethics and training within PSI in a variety of countries. But as I narrowed my search, I soon came to realise that only a few numbers of studies addressed the issues explored in this study, or that they did so in an underdeveloped and therefore unsatisfactory manner.

Whilst working with the literatures, I unexpectedly experienced 'a light-bulb moment' at last. Indeed at some stage, I felt comfortable enough to personally and critically decide on whom to invite to my 'research dinner party', whom to exclude or invite for further encounters. This exhilarating yet relieving experience has been

describes as follows:

Because it is her dinner party the doctoral researcher has a great deal of agency. The dinner party metaphor makes it clear that she cannot invite everyone because they will not all fit at her table. She is not just a bystander or 'reviewer' of the conversation, but a participant. While she may not always comprehend the conversation or catch of all its nuances and complexity, she is present. And she can reflect on these conversations later, mulling them over as one might do at the end of a good night out. But having made the contact and the connection (between their work and her own), there is a starting point for other dinners, coffees, conversations and the option of not inviting some guests back and including others.

(Kamler and Thomson, 2006: 38)

In summary, working with critical literatures on PSI was extremely useful, since it enabled me to expand my knowledge of the field and identify gaps in knowledge to make a warrant for my study. From it, I discovered that attempts to standardise PSI in England and beyond have met many hurdles. The role of modern practitioners is still complex, largely unknown and misunderstood. Despite professional and academic efforts, the practice is still deeply infused with issues of trust, loyalty and power, just as in the past. But, in order to make sense of what is happening within the PSI practice on a material and micro level from a sociological perspective, I had also to turn to literatures on workplace learning.

My acquaintance with social theories on vocational learning proved to be fruitful in several ways. First, they have enabled me to provide theoretical frameworks to explain (separately at first) participant PSIs' experiences of how they deal with invisibility, ethics and emotion in the workplace. Second, through the work of Bourdieu, I was able to provide a synthesis of the data generated in this study, and the initial tripartite analysis thereof. In her cross-cultural/linguistic longitudinal study of the interpreter's interpersonal role in 'interpreted communicative events' (ICE), Angelelli (2004b; 2001) called for a 'new' and more 'encompassing' theory of interpreting that would enable the field of interpreting studies to grow stronger. To do so, she suggested theories and research exchanges with other fields such as: cross-cultural communication, applied linguistics, social psychology, cognitive psychology, social and critical studies, education and feminist studies (Angelelli, 2004a: 90-91). Following her steps, I argue that there is a need for an interdisciplinary approach that sheds light on practitioners' 'opaque role' and daily 'obscure dilemmas' faced in the workplace, since:

By opening up the circle and allowing research and theories of related fields to inform interpreting studies, we understand that each interlocutor brings a unique set of dispositions, perceptions and beliefs to the interaction. The interlocutor exercises agency and responsibility as she interacts within an institution that is part of a society. The forces at play within the institution and the society cause an impact on the interaction. All interlocutors, including interpreters, are key player in the co-construction of meaning as they interact with the other parties and juggle the impact of both the institution and the society in which the interaction is embedded.

(Angelelli, 2004a: 44-45)

As discussed in Chapter 3, the aim of the present study is therefore to ‘open up the closed circle’ further. Through a bottom-up approach, it provides empirical evidence of the daily work experiences of eleven PSIs based in England in dealing with invisibility, ethics and emotion, from their perspectives. The sample of participants is small but rich (as I shall discuss in the next section of this chapter): they belong to various sociolinguistic and sociocultural backgrounds, they have worked in a variety of settings and have varying degrees and lengths of PSI experience. Although no theory can explain all aspects of a phenomenon, it is my contention that a deeper reflection upon PSI through the lens of Bourdieu’s social theories can prove useful in widening our critical understanding of the practice within broader historical, political and socio-cultural contexts.

In performing the literature work, I have demonstrated an ability to develop detailed knowledge of the topic that I am studying in order to define the terms that I shall be using and present readers with a ‘map’ of that field to justify my selection of the literature. I have demonstrated a critical engagement with previous research with hindsight, to highlight a professional grasp of the background theories to my research. I have provided a framework for analysing my empirical data to compare my own ideas and finding with those of others in order to present the context for my own research, justify why I am doing it, define the gap in knowledge and make the case for my own research (Colley, 2007: 2). To do so, I have reviewed, critically assessed and used literatures on ancient interpreting, language and cultural brokering, the professionalisation of PSI in England, critical studies on PSI with a particular focus on invisibility, ethics and emotions, relevant studies on workplace learning. Bringing these strands of literature through Bourdieu’s conceptual tools of *field*, *habitus*, *hexis* and *illusio* has enabled me to further explain and synthesise PSIs’ experiences at work, despite theoretical limitations discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9. In the first

section of this chapter, I discussed the reasons why my study locates itself within the critical interpretivist paradigm. In the section that follows, I justify the particular methods I chose as appropriate for my study.

Generating the data

The title that I have chosen for this section is data generation rather than data collection, because the interpretive approach to research stresses the researcher's active participation in participants' world. According to such approach, the researcher and participants are close to each other and jointly construct subjective data (Henn *et al.*, 2006; Wolcott, 1994). Within the critical interpretivist paradigm, a number of approaches could be taken to the actual design of research. For this study, I chose narrative ethnographic-style interviewing. Ethnography is a naturalistic approach to social research which derives from anthropology. It focuses on writing about people and their lived experiences in a social context. Furthermore, ethnography aims not only at relating people's personal story, but also to do so through their own words. Back in 1922, Malinowski argued that ethnography's primary role was 'to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize *his* vision of *his* world' (1922: 25, original emphasis). By choosing ethnography (in its broadest meaning, rather than a narrow definition associated with long-term observation) as a research method for my project, this is exactly what I wanted: to learn from practitioners' experiences of working as PSIs and be provided with a meaning of that subjectively constructed reality (Goldbart and Hustler, 2005; Sparkes, 1992).

As an approach that seeks to get close to people, ethnographic-type approaches have a prominent focus on ethical issues, such as honesty in the relationship between researchers and participants, and the rights of participants to be fully informed about the research process. It also poses dilemmas for researchers, in that the closer one gets to participants, so the more difficult it is to play the part of the traditional detached researcher of many other research paradigms. Equally it also generates issues as to how one represents the experiences, given the inevitability that any account written by a researcher will be an outsider's representation of the participants' reality. I will want to reconsider these points later on in this chapter after having actually had the experience of trying to put ethnography-style interviewing into practice. But I will now explore the nature of the ethnographic-style interview itself to justify why this method is

appropriate to the aims of my study.

What is an ethnographic-style interview?

In fieldwork, the ethnographic-style interview provides researchers access to the participant's world and permits them to generate qualitative data. At the same time, it gives participants the opportunity to tell their story freely and in their own words, through the reconstruction of lived experiences. Reconstruction not only enables the interviewer to learn from the participant's experience, but also the participant to make sense of it. This is all done through verbal language (although where interviews are filmed physical behaviour could be included for analysis). Ethnographic interviewing may appear simple at first, but it is in fact a complex process that requires openness and flexibility on behalf of the researcher. As warned:

Don't be misled. The interview is not a simple tool with which to mine information. It is a place where views may clash, deceive, seduce, enchant. It is the inter-view. It is as much about seeing a world – mine, yours, ours, theirs – as about hearing accounts, opinions, arguments, reasons, declarations: words with views into different worlds.

(Schostak: 2006: 1)

In the subsections that follow, I therefore discuss some aspects of ethnographic interviewing that emerged whilst *doing* fieldwork, conducting the study and potential criteria for judging it.

Language

As we are consciously or subconsciously aware, language plays a significant part in our society. It determines how we communicate, interact, behave or react to each other; how we think, understand or give a meaning to things. Language is present at every stage of the ethnographic-style interview process: from formulating a research question, selecting and contacting participants, interviewing them, taking field notes, analyzing the data, writing the report to sharing the acquired knowledge. In an interview situation, language is the vehicle through which the interviewer will discover and learn from the participant's reality. The success or failure of an ethnographic interview and/or report depends highly on the choice of language and questions that are asked, since they can distort the meaning of the participant's reality if used incorrectly. As I shall now discuss, setting up an ethnographic interview can prove to be a more

complex activity than one could have imagined.

Planning the interview

Before designing the ethnographic-style interview and whilst conducting it, the researcher should, as previously mentioned, always position themselves as completely ignorant towards the phenomenon they are being acquainted with, in order to fully embrace it. Spradley (1979) encapsulates the stance the ethnographic researcher should adopt towards their project and people taking part in it:

I want to understand the world from your point of view. I want to know what you know in the way you know it. I want to understand the meaning of your experience, to walk in your shoes, to feel things as you feel them, to explain things as you explain them. Will you become my teacher and help me understand?

(Spradley, 1979: 34)

As we see here, the emphasis is not only on the wish to collect data from the participant's perspective, but also on wanting from them. Observational methods are often central to ethnographic approaches. For some, they are 'the most powerful source of validation' in the methodological spectrum of social research (Adler and Adler, 1994, cited in Angrosino and Mays de Pérez, 2000: 674). Observation enables the researcher to immerse themselves into participants' world. They can access and generate ongoing data in order to understand participants and make sense of their beliefs, motivations and behaviours within a specific context (Tedlock 2000; Spradley, 1979). As such, it would have been insightful to immerse myself into PSI settings to investigate practitioners' experiences in the workplace. However, such a technique would not have enabled me to generate data on their *personal* experiences from *their own* perspectives. Due to the confidential nature of PSI work, it would have also been difficult to obtain ethical approval to generate and record data on intimate interactions between service users, providers and PSIs. Furthermore, observational methods are often described as time-consuming, although setting up interviews can also be. They require the researcher's immersion in natural settings for a prolonged period of time and the researcher needs to be in the right place at the right time in order to make fruitful observations. These additional constraints would not have been practical for my study. On embarking upon my research journey, my aim was to give a voice to PSIs to tell their stories because as marginalized practitioners, their voices are often unheard. This is the reason why I

chose ethnographic-style interviewing.

The status of interview data needs to be discussed further here. Concepts such as the 'Hawthorne effect' (Kumar, 2005) or 'Observer's paradox' (Labov, 1972) explain that participants may be on their best behaviour and alter responses to meet the researcher's satisfaction, thus leading to questionable data. Although it has been acknowledged that the performance that participants' play for the researcher as their audience cannot be taken as 'the' truth, it nonetheless provides a way for qualitative researchers to defend its validity as data and to explain the role of researchers in interpreting and assessing it to produce rigorous findings (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983).

A key debate in ethnographic and other qualitative research is about the researcher as insider or outsider in the setting being researched. My initial position in this research was as PSI practitioner. It changed over time as researcher or 'practisearcher', to use the term coined in interpreting studies to refer to interpreting and translating practitioners who become researchers or practitioners-cum-researchers (Shlesinger, 2009; Gile, 1995b; Pöchhacker, 1995). It is worth dwelling on this process since it played a significant role in shifting my identity from PSI to researcher. Indeed, as argued: 'it would seem unusual for anyone to initiate fieldwork yet gain nothing from the experience' (Wolcott, 1994: 9). The insider/outsider issues that arose for me were that similarly to participant observers who have to avoid the risk of distorting data by 'going native', I had to refrain from 'being native' and adopt an outsider's position. This was not easy at first. Upon starting my project, I was very grateful for being offered the opportunity to investigate the world of PSIs and enthusiastic.

However, I often used the pronouns 'we' or 'our' whilst describing PSI practitioners' experiences in general, mine included, to the wonder then exasperation at times of my supervisors. This was until I finally understood that what I wanted to do was to make sense of the ways participants experienced their practice and the meaning it had for them from their own views, rather than mine. In qualitative methods of enquiry, the researcher actively participates in research and is perceived as 'the research instrument *par excellence*' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983: 18, original emphasis). The central role of the ethnographer in research nonetheless requires the ability to shuttle between the insider's and outsider's position in an objective and effortless manner (Bahadir, 2004). This process can be described as follows:

Not only do researchers go into unknown territory, they must go unarmed, with no questionnaires, interview schedules, or observation protocols to stand between them and the cold winds of the raw real. They stand alone with their individual *selves*. They themselves are the primary research tool with which they must find, identify and collect the data ...

(Ball, 1990, original emphasis, cited in Sparkes, 1992: 29)

Wolcott (1994) further stresses the necessity for researchers to be self-reflexive whilst conducting research, although such useful recommendation lacks the critical edge that Bourdieu's concept of epistemic reflexivity offers (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). For the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, reflexivity is a '*requirement and form of sociological work*' (Wacquant, 1992: 38, original emphasis). His concept of reflexivity can be explained as follows:

Bourdieu's concern for reflexivity, like his social theory, is neither egocentric nor logocentric but quintessentially embedded in and turned toward, scientific practice. It fastens not upon the private person of the sociologist in her idiosyncratic intimacy but on the concatenations of acts and operations she effectuates as part of her work and on the collective unconscious inscribed in them. Far from encouraging narcissism and solipsism, epistemic reflexivity invites intellectuals to recognize and to work to neutralize the specific determinisms to which their innermost thoughts are subjected and it informs a conception of the craft of research designed to strengthen its epistemological moorings.

(Wacquant, 1992: 46)

Since '*[t]he preconstructed is everywhere*', the researcher, then, must engage in radical doubting and establish links between preconstructed representations of the world (social structures) and the construction of these representations (mental structures) to apprehend the world (Bourdieu, 1992: 235, original emphasis).

During my journey from practitioner to researcher, I had to constantly be aware that my own background, beliefs, motivations and professional experience as a PSI could easily entice me to side with fellow practitioners and blame service users and providers for any difficulties that PSIs may encounter in the workplace. Unlike positivists who believe that it is possible and advisable even for researchers to detach themselves completely from the research context and have no influence on the data, I was all too aware of my double role as PSI and researcher, and of the influence that this may have on the validity and reliability of my research (Sparkes, 1992). During the interviews, participants may have seen me as a colleague and may have therefore felt uncomfortable about being judged. As a result, they may have altered their answers or

provided unexpected explanations on their thoughts, views, feelings and behaviours in order to justify them (Ernest, 1994). But since 'to know the limits of the possibilities of our knowing is to know more, not less' (Ernest, 1994: 35) and what really matters in qualitative research is to acknowledge the subjective nature of the data generated by both the researcher and the researched and to draw inferences from it (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983), I aimed to limit such an influence. This is something that I have achieved to some extent by not assuming that my experiences of being a PSI were similar to that of participants. I strove to approach each and every interview from an outsider's perspective, so much so that on feigning ignorance on common issues shared amongst PSIs, or on asking participants to describe or explain further what they meant, they often looked at me puzzled and made comments such as: 'you look surprised', 'you know what I mean' or 'well, as you know...'. By positioning myself as an outsider, I often felt that I was asking obvious questions despite stressing in the introduction to the interviews that my role as ethnographic interviewer was to listen to participants PSIs' narrations of their work experiences from their own perspectives. The comments that they made, made it difficult for me to resist joining in the invisible crowd and comment further, but I hope that my efforts to distance myself from participants and generate meaningful data were successful, as the next three data chapters shall reveal.

Although my position as practisearcher felt uncomfortable at times, it nonetheless enabled me to gain valuable insights into what PSIs meant. I was curious to hear PSIs' narratives and second, I was interested in figuring out what their professional experiences meant from a theoretical perspective (Pole and Morrison, 2003). I was not interested in drawing parallels between participants' experiences and my own, but in hearing their *unique* experience as PSIs, how they made sense of their material realities and how these could be further explained by putting social theories to work. In doing so, I had to be consciously aware of how I selected and approached potential participants for my study, and it to such issues that I now turn.

Sampling and access

Issues around selecting and making contact with potential interviewees reveal that those two steps must be completed carefully. Bearing in mind that the ethnographic 'inter-view' is a relationship between the participant and the researcher, the latter must consider every aspect that can facilitate the outcomes of an interview. To summarize briefly the ethical principles the ethnographic researcher should observe, they must give

priority to the participant's values and choices, obtain their informed consent before conducting the interview, protect their rights such as the right to remain anonymous or refuse that any recording device be used and not exploit them in any way, explain the research aim and purpose of the interview, emphasize that the study is confidential and feed the findings back to the participants (Seidman, 1998; Beauchamp *et al.*, 1982; Spradley, 1979). (Further discussion on the ethical implications of this study can be found later in this chapter.)

The type of sampling that I chose for this study could be seen as a form of opportunity sampling (inviting volunteers from an entire, accessible population), because this is appropriate for researchers who aim to:

...target a particular group and are not always seeking to generalize findings to the population overall. This kind of approach is commonplace in small-scale research... [*particularly for*] qualitative approaches such as ethnography, case studies or action research... It is widespread when time constraints and costs force the researcher to make compromises.

(Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 218-219)

Following the BERA's (2011) ethical guidelines, I invited fellow PSIs I knew from various linguistic backgrounds and varying lengths of professional experiences to participate in my study. In this respect, the opportunity sample was further narrowed by a kind of 'purposive sampling', through which I tried to include individuals whose narratives might be particularly interesting (Henn *et al.*, 2009). At the end of the interviews, I also asked participants if they could recommend colleagues that may be willing to participate in my study ('snowball sampling'). This approach proved to be fruitful since I was provided with several additional contacts for potential participants. Given the time restraints within which this study had to be completed, it also enabled me to access participants quickly. Other types of sampling such as probability sampling might have enabled me to draw generalisations from the sample studied and apply it to the PSI population overall (Somekh and Lewin, 2005). However, probability sampling was not appropriate for my study, since I aimed to capture the *uniqueness* of participants' narratives of their own experiences at work and what these meant.

The data presented across Chapters 5 to 7 were generated through semi-structured narrative interviews with eleven PSIs working in and out of English and Arabic, French, German, Spanish, Polish or Portuguese and with different lengths of career. To the convenience of participants, the interviews took place either at their

home or mine, their workplace or cafés. Despite a limited budget, I felt the need to thank participants for their invaluable assistance in my project by offering them a box of chocolates at the end of the interviews. My decision to wait until the end of interviews to perform this small but significant thank you gesture was simply because I did not want it to be perceived as a form of 'bribery' which might have influenced the data. On doing so, I was repeatedly humbled by participants' genuine surprise and heartfelt support for my study. Indeed, many offered to help me further if need be. They also made comments on the fact that the interview had felt like a much needed therapy which had enabled them to reflect further on their practice.

On average, interviews lasted about one hour. However, the longest interview lasted two hours and 30 minutes and the shortest, 47 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded and fully transcribed. Fictitious names were given to ensure PSIs' anonymity. As summarised in Appendix 4, participants sometimes held one or two DPSI qualifications, in addition to other qualifications in interpreting. At the time of the study, they were all NRPSI registrants - except for Samir – a detail that I was not aware of before performing the interview with him. On asking Samir why he had not applied to join the National Register, he simply replied that he had not felt the need because he already had enough interpreting work through agencies besides his other job. On reflecting upon how this selective yet unknown detail could threaten the validity of my data, I took comfort in the fact that NRPSI registration was not an essential criterion for selecting potential participants for my study. Following the tenets of qualitative research, the loose criteria for selecting participants for my qualitative study were that participants should:

- hold a DPSI qualification in health, legal or local government *and*
- possess professional experience as PSIs.

As it is often the case with qualitative research, serendipity played its role. Upon analyzing the data, I came to realise that a majority of participants (6 out of 11) turned out to be DPSI trainers. Although this was not a selection criterion for my study, the dual experience that these participants shared as both PSI practitioners and trainers has undoubtedly provided valuable further insights into the PSI practice. The sample of PSIs interviewed are summarised in Appendix 4.

Listening

One must also consider that since the ethnographic interview is about the

researcher relinquishing control of the interview whilst being told 'a story', the most important and hardest rule to master during interviewing is, as Seidman put it simply, 'listen more, talk less' (1998: 63). As I have experienced during my fieldwork, listening actively to the participant without interrupting them can be quite a challenge. However, active listening has many advantages, such as showing interest in what the participant is saying and therefore encouraging them to carry on talking, focusing on the aim of the interview, guiding the questions towards that objective in a non-authoritarian manner and asking follow-up questions. From what I read, I understood that as an interviewer my role was to be a listener rather than an interrogator. But, how could I design questions that would allow exploration instead of interrogation?

Designing the research instruments

Some researchers often compare the ethnographic interview to an informal or friendly chat between two people. To stimulate the natural conversation flow it is generally argued that open-ended questions like: 'tell me what it feels like for you to...' should prevail over leading questions, as they enable the participant to fully express themselves. Avoiding asking questions to which the interviewer might already know the answer and focusing on obtaining concrete information can be done by asking what Spradley (1979: 67) calls, 'descriptive', 'structural' and 'contrast' questions. I will briefly say that descriptive questions are to me a kind of ice-breaker as the participant is asked to provide information about a situation familiar to them in the studied context. Structural ones are a way of understanding how the participant logically builds their concepts and contrast questions enable the interviewer to verify the meaning of the words spoken by the participant. Last but not least, the interviewer should appreciate silence as a 'pause for reflection' rather than an awkward incident which has to be remedied. Now that I was aware of all those principles, how many could I really apply during my own interview practice?

Designing the study

I have four main aims for this small study, to:

1. identify how PSIs enact their role in daily practice
2. deepen understanding of less visible aspects of PSIs' work
3. contribute to critical theorisations of PSI

4. inform policy and practice about the ways in which the realities of PSI work can be better reflected both in formal protocols and in authentic workplace contexts.

As summarised at the end of Chapter 3, the research questions addressed are:

1. How do PSIs narrate their experiences in the workplace?
2. How do they perceive their interactions with public service users and providers?
3. What challenges do they recount in performing their role?
4. What practices do they engage in to meet these challenges?
5. To what extent does labouring with invisibility, ethics and emotion arise in PSIs' practice, and how?
6. How can we best theorise the complex nature of PSIs' work in a more holistic way?

One critical part of the research plan was the development of these questions into a research instrument (or schedule) for the fieldwork interviews. I would be looking for a relatively small number of questions that would not close down responses, would invite the interviewee to elaborate and reflect, and which would not cause any negativity on the part of the interviewee. I also needed an appropriate number of questions for what was planned to be one hour-long interviews. I started with a group of about twenty questions, which were gradually reformulated so that they were simpler, covered the areas which were of most interest to me, and were more invitational in style and structure. The final interview schedule used can be found in Appendix 3.

Another critical part of the plan would be my own behaviour during the interview. There were a number of points of which I needed to take cognisance. As an active listening interviewer, I had to allow the participant to tell her 'story', maintain eye-contact, keep track of time and avoid treating her as an object (Wolf, 1996b). Now that I was mentally and physically prepared, would I obtain appropriate data for my research during the interview? Would I perform as a good interviewer? This is what the data transformation and interpretation in later chapters shall reveal. In defense of my project, I would like to remind the reader that in qualitative methods of data generation, fieldwork is a major component of ethnographic styles of research. It is a means to an end, 'one answer – some say the best – to the question of how the understanding of others, close or distant, is achieved' (Van Maanen, 1988: 2). Indeed, for interpretivists:

Everything has the potential to be data, but nothing becomes data without the

intervention of a researcher who takes notes – and often makes note – of some things to the exclusion of others.

(Wolcott, 1994: 3-4)

The paradigmatic position adopted by the researcher as far as ontology and epistemology are concerned therefore bears a strong influence on the approach taken to investigate a particular phenomenon. Nonetheless, fieldwork is ‘unruly, conflict ridden, and always problematic’ (Van Maanen, 1988: 139). Indeed, research design ‘is not a linear process, but rather it is cyclical and on-going, or *iterative*’ (Henn *et al.*, 2006: 3, original emphasis), it is therefore acceptable in qualitative research to amend the interview schedule over time. The realities of PSIs’ professional experiences that I had to deal with were messy, not straightforward, and sometimes shocking. In some respects, therefore, my behaviour as a researcher had to follow some of the same protocols as interpreters themselves. Most PSIs echoed aspects of the critical issues raised in Chapter 3, but I really tried to offer participants an open space during the interviews in a relaxed and non-pressurised manner.

During the whole process, I also took field notes to record participants’ reactions, my impressions of their reactions and the interviewing process, ask follow-up questions and record feedback. This recording process is nonetheless never straightforward in research and I had to contend with the fact that participants struggled to answer questions at times, that they went off a tangent or remained aloof. For example, it was rather difficult to extract details from some PSIs, since they feared breaching confidentiality, whereas others did not. These comments in my capacity as researcher are by no means intended as narcissistic. Instead, they aim to achieve transparency and clarity amongst readers. In the section that follows, let us examine the limitations of my research and criteria for judging it.

Assessing the validity and reliability of the study

Across the research community, it has long been acknowledged that all research has limitations. The more I progressed on my doctoral journey, the more I could perceive the limitations of the present project. By way of example, the narratives of PSIs presented in Chapters 5 to 7 are by no means intended to be representative of all practitioners acting as PSIs in England and across borders. Instead, their stories should be taken as ‘a vehicle for constructing an argument for others to assess and respond to’ (Cribb and Gewirtz, 2006; Flyvberg, 2006). Furthermore, my approach in conducting

this study might be perceived as subjective, especially since I occupied (initially at least) a 'practitioner-researcher' position within it. Nonetheless, the influence of the researcher on the research, through their background, writing style, data generation, transformation, and interpretation, has long been acknowledged in social research (Wolcott, 1994; Van Maanen, 1988). To limit such an influence, I have been rigorous and conscientious about the ways in which I performed data generation, transformation and interpretation in order to present real-life work experiences of PSIs. Some may argue that ethnographic interviewing is an 'artificial procedure' or a 'forced situation' (Miller and ten Have, 2012), or that it may have only enabled me to record data in an episodic and structured manner, whereas observations may have allowed an ongoing generation of data in natural settings. I nonetheless argue that my interview schedule and approach were flexible. The open-ended questions that I asked opened a space for participants to reflect and expand on the realities of their material world that they deemed significant. It also enabled them to evoke topics that were unexpected in my project. (For a further discussion on these, please see the next section of this chapter.) Finally, ethnographic interviewing has allowed me to generate thick data on practitioners' experiences in informal yet natural settings.

If I were to do things differently, I would perhaps conduct follow-up interviews with participants to further assess their trajectories within the PSI practice. Unfortunately, the resources were not available to do this within the scope of this project. I would also attempt to obtain a broader overview of the practice under investigation by generating data from service users, providers and practitioners. Triangulation of data from all parties involved in interpreted events would not have provided a 'more accurate' truth, but may have provided further insights into what is happening in this fragile, misunderstood and unstable practice of PSI. Whilst studying a Masters in Research Methods at Manchester Metropolitan University, I had the opportunity to interview a few service providers on their perceptions of PSIs. The preliminary data which I generated were extremely insightful and worth pursuing.

Thanks to opportunity sampling and networking, it is true that I could have conducted more than 11 interviews for this study, not because this would have validated my study amongst some researchers (Adler and Adler, 2012; Mason, 2012), but because I found PSIs' stories fascinating and wanted to learn more from them. Due to time constraints, I nonetheless reached a point when, as many other researchers, I wondered: 'how many qualitative interviews is enough?' (Baker and Edwards, 2012). The

common answer to that question is that it broadly depends on the paradigmatic approach to the specific study. For instance, some think that the acceptable range of interviews is between 12 and 60 (Adler and Adler, 2012), whilst others argue that a single interview is both acceptable and valid (Denzin, 2012; Passserini, 2012). From a quantitative approach, therefore, the data in the present study would not be viewed as generalisable, reliable and valid, nor allow for prediction and control. However, generalising and predicting PSIs' behaviours have never been the aims of my project. Instead, I have striven to offer deeper insights into PSIs' experiences of their daily practice from their perspectives through the use of biographical narratives. In this, I am not trying to essentialize PSIs in general or as individuals, but to present *my* interpretation of their individual narratives and the way in which each enables insight into the social world they inhabit, which is inevitably co-constructed by the actions of others (Bathmaker, 2010a). There can be some parallels, then, between qualitative interpretive research and visual art:

Qualitative researchers pay careful attention to highly nuanced qualities in both their uptake and their output; they are focused on cases, that is, on the particular; they use forms of communication that are intended to do more than tell, but to show, that is, to convey a sense of feeling of person or place. Qualitative research has much to do with making vivid what had been obscure. Like the arts themselves, good qualitative research contributes to what Maxine Greene calls 'wide awakeness' (Greene 1995). Nuance, particularity, emotion and perceptual freshness characteristic of the arts are also critically important features of good qualitative research.

(Eisner, 2003: 53)

From the above, it can therefore be argued that very good qualitative research can convey a powerful sense to the reader of what is happening in a given context. Ultimately, if we are to conduct that type of research, we need to forget about patterns of similarities and difference, and look at particularities that express certain broader phenomena. To strengthen this critical interpretive argument, Flyvberg (2006) usefully deconstructs five commonly held misconceptions related to case study research, which could be applied to most other forms of interpretive research. These are that:

- theoretical knowledge is more valuable than practical knowledge
- one cannot generalize from a single case, therefore, the single-case study cannot contribute to scientific development
- the case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypotheses testing and theory building

- the case study contains a bias toward verification
- it is often difficult to summarize specific case studies

(Flyvberg, 2006: 219)

Following Flyvberg (2006), to argue that the value, validity and reliability of my thesis should not be assessed against such misconceptions, I would argue first that, context-dependent knowledge provides us with a *concrete* rather than an *abstract* reality of participants' social worlds. It is produced by 'virtuoso experts' (Bourdieu, 1997). Second, although it is possible to generalise phenomena from a single case sometimes, generalisation is not the aim of this qualitative study, as argued above. Instead this study is concerned with gaining knowledge and contributing to the development of theory. Third, interpretive research can be used to generate and test hypotheses but this may not always be its aim. What matters is the validity and status of the claims that researchers make about their studies within the research community. Fourth, by highlighting new and in-depth insights, interpretive research is not inherently biased towards verification, but actually offers greater potential for 'falsification'. According to Popper (1959), this approach consists in testing a theory until the identification of one or several exceptions invalidate it. Fifth and finally, the difficulty with summarising qualitative research is related to the complex realities that it investigates rather than to its nature as research method. Therefore, generalising and summarising are not always appropriate nor desirable for interpretive studies. Instead, like case studies, they should be read as narratives:

Case studies often contain a substantial element of narrative. Good narratives typically approach the complexities and contradictions of real life. Accordingly, such narratives may be difficult or impossible to summarize into neat scientific formulae, general propositions, and theories ... To the case-study researcher, however, a particularly 'thick' and hard-to-summarize narrative is not a problem. Rather, it is often a sign that the study has uncovered a particularly rich problematic. The question, therefore, is whether the summarizing and generalization, which the critics see as an ideal, is always desirable.

(Flyvberg, 2006: 237)

In relation to the criteria for judging the research, Sparkes (1992) also argues that good interpretive and critical research should be judged by an 'open-ended, always evolving, enumeration of possibilities that can be constantly modified through practice' (Smith, 1984, cited in Sparkes, 1992: 35). Therefore, such an organic list for judging research may include the following:

- how research *can* or *may* be done
- the trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and authenticity of research (Guba and Lincoln, 1989)
- how the research must be grounded on three levels of interpretation: a shared culture between the researcher and the researched, the researcher's understanding of the culture of the researched and theoretical generalisations to link the study to existing ones (Harris, 1983)
- how the research contributes towards the development or furthering of new concepts or theories, whether it is empirically grounded and scientifically reliable (Athens, 1984)

(adapted from Sparkes, 1992: 35)

In the final section of this chapter, I will assess how my research has met these criteria. In the next section, however, I discuss another significant process in this study: that of data transformation.

Transforming the data

I have called this section data transformation because 'analysis' all too often suggests a mechanistic, technical process of categorising and coding data. This process has been described as: '*cautious, controlled, structured, formal, bounded, scientific, systematic, logico-deductive, grounded, methodical, objective, particularistic, carefully documented, reductionist, impassive*' (Wolcott, 1994: 23, original emphasis).

Interpretive research, however, may call for a far more heuristic immersion in the 'raw' data (Bathmaker, 2010b; Moustakas, 1990); with a view to transforming the data in ways that have been described, in contrast to analysis, as '*freewheeling, casual, unbounded, aesthetically satisfying, inductive, subjective, holistic, generative, systemic, impassioned*' (Wolcott, 1994: 23, original emphasis). Wolcott suggests that in qualitative inquiry, data transformation can be conducted in three distinct but inter-related steps, description, analysis and interpretation:

Description addresses the question, 'What is going on here?' Data consist of observations made by the researcher and/or reported to the researcher by others.

Analysis addresses the identification of essential features and the systematic description of interrelationships among them-in short, how things work. In terms of stated objectives, analysis also may be employed evaluatively to address questions of why a system is not working or how it might be made to work 'better'.

Interpretation addresses processual questions of meanings and contexts: 'How does it all mean?' 'What is to be made of it all?'

(Wolcott, 1994: 12)

For my study, I followed this description, analysis and interpretation (D-A-I) method, this might be considered more a process of narrative synthesis than of data analysis, since 'analysis' implies taking apart and 'synthesis' bringing together (Colley, 2010; Polkinghorne, 1995).

In working with my data, I started this process of transformation by transcribing all the interviews fully myself. (At the same time, I protected participants' identities by anonymising the transcriptions immediately and storing them securely in password protected electronic files.) Although this task was time-consuming, it gave me an invaluable opportunity to immerse myself completely in the data. My endeavour was to transcribe participants' words as accurately and faithfully as possible. Nonetheless, since transforming qualitative data is an act of interpretation in itself, it is highly influenced by the researcher's position within the paradigm debate and by their socio-cultural backgrounds (Wolcott, 1994; Van Maanen, 1988). The difficulty in balancing accuracy, faithfulness and potential bias is encapsulated below:

Realist ethnographers are at pains to produce the native's point of view. Extensive, closely edited quotations characterize realist tales, conveying to readers that the views put forward are not those of the fieldworker but are rather authentic extensive and representative remarks transcribed straight from the horse's mouth.

(Van Maanen, 1988: 49)

But in this process I have made painstaking attempts to avoid distortion, even if, as Wolcott (1994) avows, the interpretive researcher can never guarantee to 'get it all right'.

The transcription conventions that I followed are:

(.)	to indicate a pause
(..)	to indicate a long pause
-,	to indicate when the speaker did not finish their sentence
[...]	to indicate when the speaker were interrupted
[**]	to indicate a lacuna in quote
[in city's name]	editorial insertion to protect anonymity
[PSIs]	editorial insertion to make sense of data extract
[<i>laughs</i>]	editorial insertion to indicate body language or tone of voice

On quoting the data, I also edited participants' quotes for readability purposes by ironing out speech idiosyncrasies such as stutters, false starts or syntactical errors. For

ethnographers and other interpretive researchers, this step is perfectly acceptable, although:

Followers of various technical forms of conversation analysis are no doubt less impressed by the authenticity of the quotes that find their way into ethnographic texts than are other readers. They would criticize a quote pulled out of a stream of discourse. They would also fuss when the pauses, ahems, coughs, stutters, fractured syntax, asides, skipped phonemes, hiccup, and other speaker twitches are edited out of native quotes. Such editing is necessary (arguably) to make a readable manuscript.

(Van Maanen, 1988: 69-70)

Furthermore, I also had to make decisions about what to include and what to exclude since ethnographic writing is a complex process:

Ethnographic writing is anything but a straightforward, unproblematic descriptive or interpretive task based on an assumed Doctrine of Immaculate Perception. Rather, ethnographic writing of any kind is a complex matter, dependent on an uncountable number of strategic choices and active constructions (e.g. what details to include or omit; how to summarize and present data; what voice to select; what quotations to use).

(Van Maanen, 1988: 73)

I felt very torn about having to omit some details, but I made the decision on the basis of addressing the specific aims of my project, and judging what data were most germane to this. I was comforted in this process by being told by my supervisors that all qualitative researchers have to 'leave stuff out', but that this process was really about making decisions transparent and justifiable to the reader in order for them to understand my decisions.

To transform the data, I first relied on my fieldnotes about how the interviews went, the impressions that participants left on me, and salient themes discussed. I then focused on the technical data of the interviews. I first used an 'open coding' process to identify the themes emerging from the data, (Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 50). I did not use data analysis softwares such as NVivo or SPSS, but made great use of coloured pencils, mind maps and flip charts (see Appendix 5 for an example of annotated data).

The *a priori* themes that I used were drawn from the cross-disciplinary literature I had studied. On the one hand, these included PSIs' accounts of their relations with service providers and users, of their practices in authentic work situations, and of their perceptions of official prescriptions about their invisibility, neutrality and impartiality in the workplace. To this, the literature on workplace learning suggested also the addition

of ethics work and emotional labour. Perhaps the strongest unanticipated theme which emerged from the data concerns aspects of PSIs' experience that other studies of professional and workplace learning (e.g. Seddon *et al.*, 2010) have termed 'boundary disturbances' or 'boundary work'.

There were also potentially rich themes I chose not pursue, in order to maintain a clear focus on the specific aims and questions of this thesis. One such theme, for example, concerns data about how PSIs managed their practice in their private lives, since they often referred to the support of a wife, husband or partner to explain how they coped with the realities of their practice. Furthermore, participants varied greatly in age, gender, socio-cultural background, professional experience, beliefs, and attitudes. These issues have not been explored in any sort of depth in the literature so far, nor in this thesis, although they could be a fruitful area for exploration in future studies. In the section that follows, I move on to discuss the subsequent steps taken to interpret the data at hand.

Interpreting the data

The title of my research project is: 'Learning to be a Public Service Interpreter: boundaries, ethics and emotion in a marginal profession'. However, as argued in the introduction to this thesis, my project does not focus on theories of learning, but on the *actual* practices of learning of PSIs, which is innovative. I am aware that there are particular views of learning, such as the informality and formality in learning and that the central debate over learning has been between whether it is cognitive acquisition or social participation (Wenger, 1998; Lave and Wenger, 1991). These two contrasting views are at two ends of the spectrum. One is that learning is about cognitive acquisition and the other that it is about social participation. In my thesis, I have taken an implicit stance on theories of learning. In a sense, the conduit model and the official prescription of PSI training are founded on a cognitive acquisition model. DPSI candidates need to learn general everyday vocabulary and the specific vocabularies of the sectors they are working in. Then, what they learn goes in and out there, in theory. Wadensjö (1998a) and Angelelli's (2004b) position is one which highlights the centrality of social participation, but that is not what I am currently investigating. I am assuming a social participation view, but it is not the remit of this thesis to engage in detailed debates about those issues. When I come to the discussion of Bourdieu, I shall be looking at the weakness of the vocational *habitus* (Colley *et al.*, 2003). However,

given that most of the work on situated learning as social participation focuses on communities of practice (Wenger, 1998; Lave and Wenger, 1991), I did not feel that this concept was very helpful in the context of freelancers in a fragile, poorly established and poorly reified profession. I do think that there is a great deal of social participation going on and I discuss this phenomenon in great depth, but the framework of situated learning does not seem the best way to do so.

Following Wolcott's (1994) D-A-I processes of working with data in qualitative research, I first provided a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of PSI participants' material realities in the workplace by relying on raw data, and my fieldnotes at times. Since this process is iterative, I also spent some time initially to examine the themes emerging from the data and establish connections between them. As I progressed on my research journey, I became more involved in this process of data synthesis. I then turned to the literature on workplace learning rooted in the data to make sense of the critical accounts of PSIs' professional experiences presented in Chapters 5 to 7. As argued above, in interpretive studies, the researcher is the main instrument of research. Critical interpretivists like me must therefore acknowledge the influence that they bring (personal values, beliefs, past experiences and so on) to the description, synthesis or analysis and interpretation of the data. Such subjectivity cannot be avoided, just as the reader will also assess the value, validity and reliability of this study from their own subjective position. Indeed, within the interpretive paradigm, what matters is for the researcher to be transparent about their decisions and choices and to justify them in relation to the tradition, as I have done throughout this study.

In interpreting the data, I began by using conceptual frameworks relating to each of my three key themes. I first chose boundary work, which assists us in reflecting critically on how global economic, political and social changes disturb occupational boundaries in human service work and how practitioners manage these boundary disturbances in an *agentic* manner. This enabled me to argue that PSIs' attempts to comply with the official demand for their invisibility is an impossible fiction since it overlooks the physicality and physical demands of their practice. As a result, this unrealistic demand requires PSIs to engage in boundary work on a daily basis within the human social interactions that take place between them, service users and service providers. But as highlighted in the data, this is something that they do in a very agentic way. Second, I chose ethics work, which conceptualises ethics as a situated practice *vis-à-vis* the impact that policy and institutional goals have on the transformation of role

construction and professional ethics. Such critical concept explains that the strategies used by human service practitioners on a day-to-day basis in order to reconcile personal and professional values constitute work. This theoretical framework enabled me to explain the challenges that PSIs faced in an attempt to observe the Code's stringent demand for their neutrality and impartiality in the workplace and the agency of their role in bridging the gap between 'doing one's job' and 'doing the right thing'. Third, I chose emotional labour to provide a theoretical understanding of how practitioners learn to manage and sell their emotion for a wage. This enabled me to argue that PSIs daily engage in emotional labour, and this in three-way rather than two-way interactions that help to illuminate different forms that emotional labour may take.

The heuristic advantage of this overall approach to interpret the data is that it provided a theoretical framework for making sense of the often invisible ways in which PSIs manage boundary, ethical and emotional conflicts in their day-to-day practice. As such, this study contributes to fill a gap in the literature from a sociological perspective. However, the limitation of this heuristic separation does not reflect the fact that the three major themes that emerged from my interviews are in fact intrinsically inter-related and intertwined. In the data chapters, I have indeed presented these themes separately, however challenging I actually found this process. Nonetheless, this separation is artificial since any attempt to separate invisibility, ethics and emotion within PSI work would represent a utopia. For heuristic purposes only, I am dealing with these issues separately to some extent. These disjointed bits of theories enabled me to shed significant light on the obscure boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour that PSIs frequently engage in whilst enacting their professional role. In order to provide a holistic understanding of the issues that they face, I decided to synthesize them in a more relevant and integrated way by using Bourdieu. This enabled me to provide further theoretical illustrations of how his concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *hexis* and *illusio* could contribute to our understanding of what is going on within the PSI practice (this discussion is explained in detail in Chapter 9). The sociology of Bourdieu was particularly helpful in synthesising the themes of the present study.

One danger of applying theory is that one may distort the data to fit the theory (Lather, 1986, cited in Colley, 2010). I avoided this by providing a rich sample of data so that the reader could verify their authenticity and interpret them both from mine and their own perspective (Wolcott, 1994). Therefore, another aspect of the significance as well as the rigour of my contribution to knowledge lies in adopting a bottom-up

approach to theoretically and holistically interpreting the often invisible forms of work in which PSI practitioners frequently engage, although such interpretation is open to debate.

Before finally addressing the criteria upon which my project should be assessed within the critical interpretivist paradigm, let us consider some ethical issues that arose during the project and the ways in which I responded to them.

Conducting the research ethically

The guidelines that I adopted in conducting this research were those of the British Educational Research Association (BERA). The main principles of these guidelines are that ‘all educational research should be conducted within an ethic of respect for persons, respect for knowledge, respect for democratic values, and respect for the quality of educational research’ (BERA, 2011). As briefly indicated in an earlier section of this chapter, I used the following protocols to conduct research ethically: project information sheets, consent forms (see Appendices 1 and 2), assurances of participants’ right to withdraw, secure storage, anonymity, and confidentiality. However, beyond such technical protocols, researchers are often confronted with more complex real-life ethical issues. In this research, these included gaining participants’ trust to share their experiences of PSI work, preserving their anonymity in reporting the data, and reproducing their accounts authentically, although in a manner that would not jeopardise their anonymity in any way.

The first of these ethical challenges that I encountered was to gain participants’ trust to tell me their stories freely and in a setting in which they would feel comfortable. I addressed this by offering to meet them in a place of their choice: their home or mine, workplaces or cafés. On introducing my research project, I explained that the interview was more like an informal chat and I did my best to behave in a non-intimidating way to make participants feel relaxed. I also made little or no comment on what they said, despite an urge to do so given my own identity as a fellow practitioner. To reassure participants, I reiterated the fact that I would be the only one listening to the interviews for transcription purposes, that their accounts would be systematically anonymised during this process, and that the audio recordings would be subsequently destroyed.

As a colleague, I recognised that PSIs might talk about sensitive issues. For instance, during the interviews, participants talked about home office interviews, police interviews, court proceedings and other extremely contentious issues about ethics, trust

or betrayal, perennial concerns that we encountered in Chapter 1. Whereas most PSIs felt surprisingly comfortable in sharing sensitive information, others were reluctant at first to provide concrete examples of what their practice entailed, for fear of breaching confidentiality. When I explained that it was fine for them to provide such examples without mentioning any names or places, they opened up and shared their stories with me.

The second of these ethical challenges was to preserve the anonymity of participants whilst reporting the data. I addressed this by giving PSIs fictitious names and by omitting any details that would make them easily identifiable, both in my fieldnotes and in the raw interview data. I also removed any names of people and places that they mentioned from the transcripts. The third challenge that I met was to reproduce PSIs' accounts authentically but without jeopardising their anonymity. For instance, on recounting a particular incident, one respondent included personal details about herself and then worried that her identity could be easily identified. I addressed this by promising her that I would not transcribe that specific passage and showed her the transcription afterwards to reassure her that her trust had not been abused.

In this project, I have dealt with very sensitive data. On some occasions, I left sensitive information in to present concrete and rare illustrations of PSIs' work experiences, but I took great lengths to protect their anonymity in these instances. On other occasions, I left sensitive data out, despite their richness and research potential, as I did not feel I could adapt the data sufficiently for participants to remain anonymous. The conclusion of this painstaking process of making decisions about 'what goes in and what stays out' constitutes a kind of 'ethics work' (see Chapter 6) for the researcher. PSIs are constantly making ethical decisions and so have I, as 'practisearcher'. I could have reported some PSIs to professional bodies for the 'unethical' decisions that they made according to the Code, but this would have betrayed their trust and defeated the very aims of this study, which were to give PSIs a unique voice to narrate the complexities of their practice and the challenges that they met whilst fulfilling their role, rather than to pass any judgement on them.

Assessing the limitations of the research

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, all research has limitations. The limitations of this study from a positivist perspective would be that it 'only' recounts the work experiences of 11 PSIs in England; that my position as 'practisearcher' might be

deemed biased; and the ethnographic-style interviewing technique that I have used might imply that data was gathered in a 'forced' or unnatural setting. However, any research deserves to be assessed within its own paradigm. The criteria for positivist research are validity, reliability and generalisability, but those might have very different meanings or might be irrelevant for other forms of research. Sparkes (1992), for example, gives the word 'validity' a very different meaning for interpretivists than for positivists:

Validity in new paradigm research lies in the skills and sensitivities of the researcher, in how he or she uses herself as knower, and as inquirer. Validity is more personal and interpersonal, rather than methodological.

(Reason and Rowan, 1981, cited in Sparkes, 1992: 30)

For interpretivists, then, validity is rather a 'matter of *coherence*' and the alternative concepts of authenticity, rhetoric and persuasiveness are significant criteria for good qualitative research (Sparkes, 1992: 30). My study locates itself within the critical interpretivist paradigm, which acknowledges the legitimacy of small-scale study as a method of scientific enquiry for its in-depth approach. The sample of 11 participants used for my research project is therefore 'valid', since it enabled me to provide thick authentic descriptions of real life situations in a specific context. Qualitative researchers must acknowledge their own subjectivity whilst conducting research, engage in reflexivity and be transparent about the decisions that they made and why. As the reader may agree, my engagement in these processes has been continuous throughout this project. In positivist research, these may be perceived as completely bias, since that view holds that research should be completely neutral and objective, but (as I have already argued earlier) this cannot possibly be. Indeed, it has long been acknowledged within the interpretivist paradigm that there should be some rhetoric in scientific enquiries since we are arguing a case, we are making an interpretation of a social phenomenon, and we are advancing that interpretation as a more *valuable* one (if not, in positivist terms, a 'valid' one). Therefore, rhetoric and persuasive writing should be included in the writing process, as I have attempted to do, and my aspiration has been that this should be a strength of this thesis.

If I were to do this research again, with greater resources, I would certainly aim to conduct follow-up interviews with participants to further assess their trajectories within the PSI practice, particularly given the rapid-moving nature of policy and policy-driven funding in this field. Further development could include to research PSIs'

experiences across the United Kingdom rather than just England, to explore any differences in the devolved countries of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; or even to engage in broader international comparisons of the profession in different countries and global regions. Another development could be to interview all parties involved in interpreted events: service users, providers and practitioners to develop broader insights into the PSI practice. If anything, if I had more resource, I would investigate further unexpected themes that emerged from the data such as gender and how practitioners cope with the emotional demands of the job, and their support needs in this regard.

However, as I have already argued, the present research is nevertheless of high quality and significance since it is innovative in several ways. First, it contributes to the dearth of literature on how PSIs deal with the official demand for their invisibility, impartiality and neutrality at work. Second, the research provides invaluable insights into the challenges that they face on a daily basis and strategies used to deal with them. Third, in so doing, it offers often invisible and marginalised practitioners a voice to narrate *their* stories through critical interpretivist accounts. Fourth, the study draws on both the literature in critical interpreting studies, workplace learning and sociology to offer a holistic theoretical framework that assists us in making sense of what is happening within the marginal and fragile practice of PSI from practitioners' perspectives. I therefore argue that this study presents doctoral research that is at least 'good enough' because:

Good social science is problem driven and not methodology driven in the sense that it employs those methods that for a given problematic, best help answer the research questions at hand.

(Flyvberg, 2006: 242)

It has met the criteria for interpretivist and critical research reviewed above by:

- presenting a strong case of how good critical interpretivist research may be conducted through ethnographic-style interviewing and narratives in relation to the practice of PSI;
- being trustworthy, credible, transferable, dependable and authentic throughout;
- focusing on the lived experiences of a marginalised group of professionals and thereby challenging dominant narratives that do not account for them;

- producing three levels of interpretation: I have shared a professional and personal culture with participants, I have demonstrated an understanding of PSIs' practices in the workplace and I have linked their experiences to existing literatures both in Interpreting Studies and the Social Sciences;
- contributing significant original knowledge to a growing body of knowledge of the PSI practice in England across disciplinary fields, both empirically and sociologically.

Focusing in on PSIs' personal experiences of their practice

Chapters 1 and 2 provided both the historical and contemporary backgrounds for this study. In Chapter 3, critical studies in Interpreting Studies in relation to PSIs' management of invisibility, ethics and emotion were reviewed. This chapter has explained the overall methods and methodology employed to meet the aims of the present study and answer its questions. In the following three chapters, I present critical narratives of how a small yet rich sample of PSIs in England actually manage the official demand for their invisibility, impartiality and neutrality in the workplace.

Chapter 5: Learning to manage professional boundaries in PSI

When the baby was born, they showed her [*the service user*] the baby, they went to clean it and they brought it back and she was actually still shaking, you know from the drugs and things, and she couldn't hold the baby, so they gave it to me, because I was closest to mum. I was sitting at her head, right by her side, so they gave me the baby to hold, so that she could see it, be as close to her as possible, so it was quite an experience.

(PSI Monika)

Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 introduced two themes that are central to my thesis. They respectively traced the origins of PSI in history and legend, and the recent official professionalisation of the practice, particularly in England. Chapter 3 reviewed the emerging body of literature which offers critical perspectives on these themes, and to which this thesis further contributes. In the next three chapters, I present data on three key aspects that emerged from PSIs' narratives: managing professional boundaries, managing ethical conflicts and managing emotions.

In this chapter, I mainly focus on the theme of boundaries, what these are and how they can be managed. I begin by presenting PSI's overall experiences of the physical demands of their practice according to settings, following training and practical experience. I also refer back to Wadensjö's (1998a) challenge around the interpreter's invisibility discussed in Chapter 3, and to the fundamental issues of the interpreter's trust, loyalty, status and power raised in Chapter 1 - issues that the official discourse and training on PSI do not address. As we shall see, the accounts given by practitioners themselves raise a number of questions in relation to their initial training and the official codes which are supposed to prescribe their professional conduct and boundaries. What are PSIs' actual experiences of professional boundaries in their work? How adequate is the official discourse about professional boundaries, in relation to these experiences? What accounts do PSIs give of disturbances to their professional boundaries by service providers, by users or by themselves? And how do they learn to manage such disturbances?

This chapter briefly considers examples of the impossibility of 'invisibility' discussed by Wadensjö (1998a), but goes on to show how this issue needs to be extended to consider the management of professional boundaries, since the realities of PSI are shown here to be more complex than simply being visible or 'invisible'. I

present some of the ways in which PSIs commonly encountered contestation of their professional boundaries, and how they responded. These examples include:

- complete disregard or ignorance of any boundaries, usually by service users
- breaching boundaries in order to control or care for service users, instigated by the service provider or the PSI
- the shoring up of boundaries, sometimes by the PSI, sometimes by service providers
- the blurring of boundaries by the PSI themselves.

These may not be an exclusive list of the possibilities, but they appear to be the most common ones in the data. I begin by presenting a few examples of how the PSIs in my study experienced and interpreted the training and discourse about invisibility, already discussed in Chapter 2, before going on to consider examples of their contestation.

PSIs' initial views on 'invisibility'

In Chapter 2, we have seen that PSI is a complex activity that requires high linguistic, cultural and cognitive skills (concentration, stamina, split attention, fast-thinking), coupled with good general knowledge of the field (legal, medical or social service-related) in which the interpretation is taking place. Some studies on language brokering have pointed out that high-level social skills are also necessary to interpret, although PSIs are officially instructed to use their professional skills invisibly in the workplace (NRPSI, 2011). As discussed in Chapter 1, issues surrounding lay interpreters' neutrality, impartiality and trustworthiness have led to calls for the professionalisation of PSI in different parts of the globe. In England, the official discourse during training is that DPSI candidates must remain neutral and impartial whilst interpreting to provide faithful renditions of what is said. The display of neutrality and impartiality is also of paramount importance to inspire trust, since the people involved in the interaction must feel comfortable enough to communicate freely through a third party.

PSIs are therefore taught that one way of appearing neutral and impartial is through physical passivity, regardless of the challenging nature of some assignments. On a surface level, all PSIs who participated in my study seemed to accept the demand for their invisibility in the workplace as a way of showing professionalism, neutrality

and impartiality. Whilst on the course, Mateo for instance remembers being shown a video of typical mistakes made by interpreters. From it, he learnt that: 'You shouldn't be using your body language when you're interpreting, because you may give out different signals during the interview'. His appreciation of the neutral role of PSIs was echoed by Andrew, who was taught that as an invisible 'tool for communication', the interpreter is not 'involved as such in communication', but just 'there as a way to facilitate communication through language transfer'. Both discovered that giving unfaithful signals to the ones originally intended, voicing an opinion or reacting to what is said or shown may have a crucial impact on the outcome of the interpreted interaction, hence the need to control spontaneous body movements as human beings. Performing an invisible role seemed easy for Larry:

You [*the interpreter*] are only there to be almost just sort of an invisible person whose mind is being used, but not me the person. I take off my person hat and put on my interpreter hat.

But as Mary explained, PSI requires certain qualities 'to resist the urge to make your own comments about what's going on, even though you might be thinking inside: "What? How can you say that?!" or: "This is ridiculous, no one believes you"'. Therefore, to remain passive, the interpreter needs to be 'more of an observer than someone that gets involved.' Patience is another attribute which Mary considers important to remain invisible whilst at work. As most PSIs complained, waiting times can be rather long and police interviews and court hearings particularly lengthy. Having to wait for hours before assignments started and feeling bored are some of the factors that ultimately prompted Mateo to leave the profession. In a police interview situation, Mary explained that patience is important because: 'You can keep coming back to the same point over and over again.' In such instance, her tools to remain invisible and not show signs of irritation are physical restraint and focus:

You just have to be quite restrained ... and you just have to make sure that you concentrate on what you're actually doing, rather than what you're thinking about the conversation, so you can't let yourself get too lost in the conversation, you have to just think about the actual process of interpreting.

Some PSIs reported that they managed to do this quite well, even when the service user's story sounded highly unrealistic. Monika for instance was even complimented by a service provider for remaining passive during such a challenge:

The world's tallest ever story you heard from somebody accused of burglary, something that was quite stunning, it was quite amusing. I came out and the solicitor said to me, he said: 'You did very well at keeping a straight face when you were [laughs] interpreting for him.' Some quite amazing things that people come up with!

However in the data, there are many accounts from PSIs of the challenging work that is involved in suppressing body language to appear neutral. For Andrew, the challenge of interpreting nonsense during a police interview involved saving face:

They were accusing him of having assaulted them and in the middle of the interview, the police officer said: 'Can you tell me where you get this money from, then? You say you have a lot of money, you're quite wealthy, where did you get the money from?' And he said: 'Yes, so Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair gave me the money', and I was like [laughs], I didn't know what to do with myself, I said: 'OK, so he said this in French', and I looked at them and said: 'Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair gave me the money', and just looked at the police officers and they looked at me like-, it stood out because I thought that they may think: 'This interpreter doesn't know what he's doing.'

In the interview, Lucy, a very experienced interpreter, describes herself as a 'very tactile person' who instinctively touches people and kisses them when they meet. On becoming a PSI, she has had to learn to control her body to avoid offending service providers for instance, but it has not been easy:

Muslim men really don't like that [*being touched*] from a non-related female [laughs], I'm so tactile I'll say: 'Oh, I'm ever so sorry', then I touch them to say sorry [laughs].

Similarly, she has had to learn how to maintain a blank face when she thinks that service users are blatantly lying when questioned in court or in interviews:

I will not show any sign of disbelieving them, and that can be quite difficult [laughs] because I'm a very open extrovert person, and I'm used to kind of my eyebrows zooming up and down in shock or horror or whatever, and I have to work very hard sometimes to maintain a sort of blank expression [laughs], sometimes in some of the immigration hearings, they're just blatantly contradicting what they've just said 20 minutes ago and I used to kind of show it on my face, I'm sure that I just showed: 'What a load of rubbish!' 'coz everybody in the room can see that they were saying 20 minutes ago that they went from Cameroon through Algeria through such and such country, now they're saying they didn't go through such and such country because they went through such and such other country. Now I'm just maintaining this sort of blank expression and I sort of nod in an understanding way at them, not showing-, giving them any indication that they're really contradicting themselves, or

alternatively I'm not putting a worried expression on my face to sort of hint to them: 'Actually dear, you need to change your story here because it doesn't add up.'

Although displaying passivity was difficult at first, Lucy has discovered that relaxing her facial muscles helps and it has now become second nature for her, even with providers:

Sometimes I can see, for example, the Home Office lawyer raising his eyes to the ceiling, and it would be quite natural for me to do the same, because in a room of people it's quite easy to mirror each other's body language, but I just look away when they do that, just to try to stop myself doing the same thing.

In parallel, it is interesting to note that in order to melt in the background, Lucy has also learnt to adapt her attire according to service users:

I used to go out in dresses and stuff like that to work, looking smart and so on, now I am much more comfortable if I'm pretty covered neck downwards, because sometimes with male persons that I'm interpreting for, they feel uncomfortable if my legs or even my arms actually are exposed ... It doesn't encourage a good rapport if they're feeling uncomfortable, so for that reason I will give in, and also because sometimes if you're interpreting for males of whatever religion, culture or country, whatever, instead of looking at your face, they look at your legs ... and I want them to concentrate on my face and my mouth and not my nice legs.

Whereas Larry provides us with an example of a similar learning experience according to settings:

For a Crown court trial I wear a suit all the time: short hearing, trial, it doesn't matter, you get suited up. For a police interview, the dress code frankly if you turn up at the police station in a suit it's a very nice touch but really you don't need to. You get detectives wearing jeans and trainers from the CID [*Criminal Investigation Department*].

Despite a general acceptance for the demand of their invisibility in the workplace, many interviewees reported that they soon realised that the PSI practice was physically demanding and impacted on their bodies, upon starting public service interpreting work. Let us now turn to empirical evidence that first illustrate their overall experiences of the physical demands of their practice and second, according to settings.

Physical demands of PSI practice

PSIs are often needed in times of human crisis which are difficult to predict. They frequently have to make themselves available at short notice and they do not always know when or where they will start work and finish. Oliver's strategy to cope with this unpredictability and the lack of time to prepare for assignments is as follows:

Most of the time in terms of preparation you don't have time to prepare a lot before a job, simply because they need you there and then so that's why you have to be quite well organised and have everything ready to go, I even have a bag, my interpreting bag where I've got my interpreting-, my NRPSI card with me, so I can just grab the bag and go.

Even when PSIs have been booked in advance, their schedule is often subject to late cancellations or last minute demands from providers to take extra bookings. Monika recalls an incident when she agreed to take on an additional assignment in court although she already had one scheduled that day. 'The general rule is', she explains, that 'if you've got a court job, you don't book anything else that day' because the organisation of the court work is 'slightly chaotic' – one never knows when a case will be heard despite the listing nor how long it will truly take even if according to the providers as in this particular instance, the job is only supposed to be short: 'Just sentencing ... or a charge'. On the phone, the service provider sounded desperate and Monika accepted on the condition that she left at a specific time since she had to travel approximately forty miles to the other court location and could not risk being late. Despite this, she did not make it on time for her second assignment and ended up feeling very stressed and neglecting her body's basic dietary needs:

I didn't have lunch, I just pigged myself on unhealthy biscuits in the car and stuff, so it's not very, no it's definitely not healthy and not good for your diet and yes I just went straight to the other and there were road works and I was very stressed by the time I arrived ... I was actually late that time which is, as I say I mean it's a golden rule not to be late so I try not to be late, but I was actually late that time, fortunately the tribunal chairman was quite sympathetic.

On another occasion, Monika was asked to interpret for another service user in the same court at the last minute. She found the experience very stressful and physically demanding as the cases were on two different floors of a big court. Here she describes the incident:

I did just about manage to run down to the cells, run to court, run to the interview, run to another, you see what I mean? So I made it, but it was fairly hectic, and you feel, I mean I actually did that particular day just to give an example of the workload when it does happen, on that particular day I did two court cases in one court and then drove off over an hour away to do a hospital appointment and then I drove over another hour to another hospital to do a mental health appointment and I got back home and I was absolutely shattered.

From the interviews, it emerged that PSI can also be physically demanding due to the lengthy and tiring nature of some assignments. The general lack of awareness of the complexity of the PSI practice amongst service providers often makes it difficult for practitioners to request a break in order to maintain the quality of interpreting, as Larry explains:

Occasionally, they [*service providers*] don't realise that we're not kind of robots ... they don't really want to break the flow for the reasons of their procedure ... and I go: 'I'm sorry, I need ten minutes just to clear my head' and everyone else is just getting on with it, I'm sure it's quite annoying to them and they think: 'Bloody interpreter!'

Several other participants made some interesting comments on the physical demands of their practice. They also indicated that the settings in which they work have an impact on how physically demanding their work is, and it is to examples of this that I now turn.

Due to the nature of their job, PSIs work in a variety of settings. It is their responsibility to find the venue of the assignment and to arrive at least fifteen minutes before it begins. With experience, PSIs learn that some settings are more challenging than others. With time, they may choose to work only in the ones where they feel that they have a higher status and their roles are more valued, as in Monika's example:

Home visits I've slightly mixed feeling about 'coz it tends to be quite tough for the interpreter, people don't think about your role, I mean I've done a number of home visits ... and the issues that come up there are: the other person is not always very punctual, so you can be hanging around wondering whether they're turning up or not, sometimes in dodgy areas, sometimes it's just freezing, ... you're not supposed to go in [*the service user's home*] on your own, so you wait for the other professional to arrive before you go into the house ..., then when you go in, similarly the environment can be quite unhelpful so you can end up standing for an hour in an overheated room where the mother is with the baby and the midwife's sitting and you're standing there and usually they're good, although I have had an instance where she-, where they're not at all and you think: 'Well, why do I bother doing that if it's not appreciated?'

However, once Monika had climbed the professional ladder and started working in courts, she realised that the environment still made it difficult for her to do a good job:

The other one that I find very frustrating is the old-fashioned court rooms with the very high glass barriers, and the ones where you have the dock which is raised, which is at the same height as the judge with the barristers below, with their back to you, so you completely can't hear what they say, absolutely abysmal, if you can't hear what somebody's saying, you can't interpret it and the physical environment makes a huge difference.

Mary also found that even in settings where awareness of the practice is supposed to be greater, this is not always the case:

There is also sometimes the issue of whether or not you're allowed to go into the dock if the person's in custody and the courts ... have their own sort of set procedures on that. Usually they do let you go into the dock before the defendant comes up, but just occasionally there's been some courts where they say: 'No, you're not allowed to do that, you have to talk through the gap in the glass', which personally I find really, really difficult to-, I mean it's impossible to do simultaneous interpreting like that, so you have to do it consecutively and then everyone in the courtroom can hear what you're saying and it just doesn't work at all, so that's been quite difficult, and I have said something to the judge to say: 'Are you sure that I can't go in?' But if they've got their procedure, then they're not going to change it for me, so yeah, that's a difficult situation as well.

The fact that Mary cannot go into the dock makes her job difficult and her practice becomes very visible to others: everyone can see her and hear her voice. In her opinion, the unrealistic demand to stand outside the dock and whisper through the glass panels is due to the fact that people 'haven't appreciated how the actual physical active interpreting works.' Having to perform consecutive rather than simultaneous interpreting is not practical: 'The court would have to stop every two seconds while you interpreted', which would lead to serious delays. Mary attempts to alert the judge to her professional needs but she fails.

Mary's perception of the demand for PSIs' invisibility suggests that it is a double-edged sword. As discussed above, on one hand she seems to understand this demand, but on the other hand, she has learnt that being too invisible in the workplace may lead to a whole range of issues. As discussed in Chapter 2, official guidelines issued by Her Majesty's Court Service specify that in court settings, PSIs are considered as officers of the court, which means that their status should be equal to that of other court staff (Lord Justice Auld, 2001). However, in practice this is not often the case. Unlike for other court professionals, there is usually no staff room for PSIs and they are

made to wait with service users, which as I shall discuss later in this chapter can lead to boundary disturbances. For Mary, this has a negative impact on the status of PSIs:

I feel like sometimes ... being an interpreter or Public Service Interpreter isn't appreciated as a profession in its own right in the same way as being, say, a solicitor or barrister, because you're just sort of left in the waiting room, just sort of left to your own devices, and the solicitors walk around, sort of like they own the place sometimes, I don't know, maybe it's just the impression that I have, but you sort of feel like you haven't got the same status as they have I suppose. I'm not sort of trying to compare the two professions in any way or say one's better than the other or anything, but I just think it should be recognised as a profession in its own right, and I think interpreters should have somewhere, at least in the bigger court, where they can congregate, and just be recognised a bit more 'coz sometimes you just feel a bit anonymous really, like you're not really supposed to be there almost.

Mary feels quite strongly about the isolated nature of the practice. She does not often see her own colleagues due to the lack of designated waiting-room for PSIs, and is left to her own devices to represent the profession in the workplace. In her opinion, 'it would be much better if there was an interpreter waiting area where you could just wait there, you could see other colleagues and then they just call you from that room.' Many PSIs commented on the need for their visibility to be increased, not only to market their services more, but also to raise awareness of their professional role amongst service users and service providers. As Mary experienced, being an 'invisible' practitioner has a further impact on her status:

It's probably because I don't see many other interpreters around, but usually when you go and wait, you've got a defendant waiting, and then maybe their families or friends, and then you've got barristers and lawyers, and then there's me and no one tends to know who I am, so often you get someone else asking: 'Are you a solicitor?' And I say: 'No', but people aren't really-, I'll say I'm an interpreter and they'll just say: 'Oh, right!' I think they sort of think: 'What's an interpreter?' That's the impression I get anyway, but maybe I should be a bit more forthcoming and sort of say: 'Oh, and this is what I do', but yeah usually I just tend to sort of sit there and wait till they call me really.

In the following example, Mary explains her issue about not always knowing where to physically position herself whilst waiting in court:

I suppose one of the others issues as well is where you're actually supposed to be in the court because once you sort of reported in at the reception or to the usher, I mean sometimes you'll be waiting there for quite a long time, so you don't really know whether you can go anywhere, and they might call you or whether you should stay outside the courtroom or -, and there's been times

where I've missed people because I wasn't in the right place at the right time, so that's quite difficult.

The lack of visibility cost Mary in not being seen by the people with whom she was supposed to work on more than one occasion. Samir likewise gives an example of how service providers in health settings may react if the PSI is late or does not turn up:

'The bloody interpreter is not here!' That kind of thing that they say when PSIs are late. You can hear the negative comments or the negative viewpoints they have of the interpreter if he doesn't turn up on time, because they have a time slot for the patient with the consultant and they needed that interpreter to be there on time, but if he doesn't turn up, we seem to all be tarred with the same brush: 'They're not reliable, they're not good enough,' or something like that.

In contrast to Mary who lost clients for being too invisible, Larry reported an incident when his visibility and making his voice heard are what made him lose a long-term client. As for many interpreters, Larry discovered that PSI involves a large amount of paperwork such as invoicing and chasing up payments. Payments sometimes take several months and it is reasonable to argue that this is perhaps linked to PSIs' low professional status, their 'invisibility', the fact that there is no professional body that represents them and that they work freelance. Once the assignment is over, they become invisible again and often have to fight to get paid. This can end up being very stressful and on one occasion when Larry got angry with a provider, they never called him again.

The examples above demonstrate that on a primary level, PSIs adhered to the professional demand for their invisibility in the workplace. As prescribed by the Code, they viewed their roles as mere communication tools that must remain outside of the interactions that are taking place between service users and providers. These examples also seem to indicate that it requires considerable efforts for practitioners to become 'invisible' in the workplace. To melt in the background, they indeed learnt to suppress their body language, alter their dress codes or adapt to the various physical demands of their practice or settings in which they work. However, interpreters' compliance with the request for and enactment of their invisibility can be more problematic than just the effort involved. The idealistic and impossible demand that excludes PSIs as human beings from the social interaction in which they play an active role can be contested in several ways (Wadensjö, 1998b). In what follows, I am building on and go beyond Wadensjö's work to investigate how professional boundaries within PSI are negotiated

by service users, service providers and practitioners themselves. There is, of course, an undeniable need for impartiality and neutrality on the part of interpreters, and for boundary-setting in terms of their remit. However, there is also a need to investigate the extent to which this injunction is understood and acted upon not only by PSIs, but by service providers and users as well. In the context of (at least) a three-way social interaction, it is of course possible that the other parties may – wittingly or unwittingly – challenge this ethical boundary, thereby placing the PSI in a difficult position. On one hand, as illustrated in Chapter 3, dehumanizing codes of practice may be unacceptable from a service user’s perspective. Service users may also expect advice and support from an interpreter who is clearly knowledgeable about the public service they are trying to access (Edwards *et al.*, 2006; Alexander *et al.*, 2004). On the other hand, service providers may also demand that the PSI steps beyond the official boundaries of their roles to be conveniently used as a tool to extend their power and authority (De Vries, 2008; Tribe and Raval, 2003). The data findings presented above therefore seem to indicate that there is also a second level at which we can understand professional boundaries, a level beyond that of formal reification, and that is in terms of their *enactment*, and the work entailed in negotiating professional boundaries (Grbić, 2010).

No matter how tightly bounded a profession may be in terms of its official regulations, in practice these boundaries may be disturbed. They may often be resisted, challenged or even breached by other parties, and there may be circumstances in which the PSI themselves may feel obliged or willing to breach them – possibly because of clashes with their own personal ethical values. That is to say, boundaries are not impermeable, but may be subject to breaches or transgressions on the part of the PSI and others. Whilst previous research has examined how the boundaries of PSI are viewed by service users and providers, there has not, hitherto, been any research in England that has investigated boundary disturbances from the detailed perspective of PSIs themselves, or studied the ways in which PSIs learn to deal with them and its consequences. This is a gap in knowledge which my doctoral study addresses. Indeed, certain questions from PSIs’ prescribed invisibility in the workplace still remain. How do different parties view the boundaries of the PSI role? When and where are they strong? When and where are they weak or breached? How and why does this disturbance happen, and from whom does it originate? How do PSIs experience these instabilities in their professional boundaries? In the section that follows, I begin by

presenting examples of service providers provoking PSIs to transgress professional boundaries and how these may react.

Breaching the boundary of PSI to control or care for users

The interpreters whom I interviewed reported numerous instances where they were asked to perform tasks outside their roles by service providers, such as make hot beverages, take a patient to another health department or directly arrange a patient appointment with the interpreter without involving service users. As stipulated by the Code, PSIs are not permitted to voice an opinion, their interpreting should only be the faithful rendering of what is said by the other parties. Yet, whilst working on immigration cases for instance, Larry recalls being asked from which part of the globe the user's accent seemed to be. In cases when someone is suspected of lying about their country of origin, it can be problematic for immigration officers to determine. Larry was consequently asked to judge where the user came from according to their accent. Providers perceived him as a tool to help in their investigations. Notwithstanding, Larry explained assertively:

There are other ways that can be discovered ... it's not my job to do the police's or immigration's job for them ... I'm an independent interpreter, so if I voice an opinion ... I'm effectively not independent anymore.

Lucy similarly recalls being recurrently treated as an instrument to assist solicitors in their work in court settings:

Constantly in court you'll get solicitors asking you just to help their clients fill in legal aid forms or various other forms, and because they say to you: 'Oh, I'm too busy! I'm just gonna see another client, can you just do that? I'm busy and I'll come back and check it', and I always say: 'No, because if I'm doing that I'm not interpreting, all I'm doing is a sort of clerk's role of assisting your client to fill in a form', and they don't like that, they think because you're being paid and you're there and you've got nothing else to do that you ought to be doing that sort of work, but I always say no, but I know a lot of interpreters don't want to make a fuss and they'll just say: 'Oh, alright then', but they shouldn't.

What is particularly interesting here is that solicitors openly admit to Lucy that they wish to use her as a clerk to help their clients fill in various forms because they are under time pressure. They are prepared to relegate these administrative tasks to PSIs when it is not their roles and they have not been trained to do so. Lucy indicates that she was assertive enough to shore up her professional boundaries and educate solicitors

on why she could not accept, something which less experienced PSIs may not always manage to do. It is also interesting to see that her refusal is not well accepted by solicitors, since PSIs are perceived as 'free' and unoccupied labour.

Monika provides an example of a similar situation in health settings. The hospital appointment for which she was booked was only supposed to take an hour, but due to complications and the need for the medical staff to communicate with the patient, Monika ended up staying for ten hours. Feeling 'quite nervous' and 'squeamish', the patient's husband refused to go into the operating room with his wife and the medical team asked Monika to go instead. Despite her excitement, Monika tried to 'tactfully stay out of the way' whilst interpreting. She was however pulled out of invisibility when the following event took place:

When the baby was born, they showed her the baby, they went to clean it and they brought it back and she was actually still shaking, you know from the drugs and things, and she couldn't hold the baby, so they gave it to me, because I was closest to mum. I was sitting at her head, right by her side, so they gave me the baby to hold, so that she could see it, be as close to her as possible, so it was quite an experience.

Here, Monika's boundaries are disturbed following transgression from the medical team. Originally there as an interpreter, she becomes a birth partner with a very visible role. She does not take the lead but becomes involved in the interpreted event by others. Monika is sitting 'right by the side' of the mother and she even gets to hold the baby before her. This seems to suggest that she is perceived as a medical auxiliary or as a companion of the mother, and is trusted as such by the mother and the staff. As the data in this section illustrate, service providers may indeed conveniently use (or attempt to use) PSIs as an instrument to assist them in their work or extend their power. PSIs then have to choose whether to comply with their demands and breach boundaries or not, and react in different ways. Boundary disturbances may also be provoked by users' attempts to befriend PSIs or ask them advice, and it is to empirical evidence of these that I now turn.

Service users breaching boundaries

All PSIs reported tensions in shoring up boundaries with service users. As they commented, users are usually grateful for enabling them to communicate with providers, with only a few exceptions. At the end of assignments, they often wish to

exchange details and keep in contact. Mateo seems to have found a very efficient way of shoring up boundaries by saying to users: 'Unfortunately I cannot exchange details with you, it's part of my regulations of being an interpreter, it's been very nice to meet you and I wish you all the best with your case.' However, in certain cultures, exchanging details is perceived as a way of saying 'thank you', which adds to the pressure felt by PSIs of appearing rude by refusing. But as Samir explained, some users wish to exchange details with the interpreter for future assistance in accessing resources as they would often say to him: 'You know the system better than me in case I need some advice.' As Lucy illustrates, users may also seek PSIs' advice right in the middle of interpreting:

Quite a lot of the people I interpret for will actually say to me: 'What do you think I should say now?' And I often know, certainly as a lawyer what I think they ought to say, but I have to repeatedly say: 'I'm only here to interpret, I'm not allowed to give you advice in any way.'

Although Lucy indicates that she knows what advice to give users thanks to her past professional experience as a lawyer, she cannot do so as an interpreter, and constantly has to remind them of her neutral role. In the interview, Lucy explained that the transition from an active role as lawyer to a passive one as PSI had not been easy at first. Larry also felt very strongly about the need for PSIs to remain invisible and resist the urge to use their experience as a compass to predict the outcome of a case. 'You could be completely wrong', he asserted, 'the person could end up getting a much less or much greater punishment.' To pre-empt boundary transgression from users, Larry and other interpreters have added the phrase: 'I'm not your friend, I'm not your enemy' when introducing themselves. But since these boundaries often do not exist for users, interpreters often engage in shoring up boundaries to keep a distance from them. As Larry further observed:

The presence of the interpreter is only really meant to bring somebody in custody whose language is other than English, but to the same level as somebody who is an English speaker, but not to give them an advantage. So again just as an example the person who is brought in as interpreter they say: 'Do you want a solicitor?' And I'm asked: 'Well should I, shouldn't I?' If I say first of all an opinion, they're getting an opinion and one that is subjective on my part anyway, I'm not meant to give, but secondly is one that they wouldn't have the benefit of if they were an English speaker.

Resisting boundary disturbances is therefore crucial for him in order to perform a neutral, impartial and invisible role and not give service users an advantage by giving them advice. Similarly, Maureen's account offers several illustrations of negotiating boundaries with service users and providers. Boundaries are rigid for her, she complies with the rules set by the Code 'full stop'. On one occasion, she refused to drive a pregnant woman from her home to a hospital as requested by the medical staff and on another, she turned down a dinner invitation from solicitors with whom she had worked in court, when her colleague accepted. Maureen is aware that she may have appeared 'difficult', but as she explains: 'it wouldn't be appropriate, I didn't want to socialise with them'. Throughout her account, Maureen seemed to be shoring up boundaries with users with a similar ease. For instance, when users interfere with her interpreting work and stop her from doing her job, she does not hesitate to threaten them that she will leave, should they continue. She equally refuses to socialise with grateful service users or receive tips from them because, as she says to them, 'it could be seen as a bribe'. However, in the following instance, the rigidity of her professional boundaries was seriously challenged by a mental health patient with whom she had worked on several occasions:

The job was in mental health for a lady who was going through to treatment for depression and it got to the stage where-, and the trouble is, it was happening in her home as well, 'coz I met the community psychiatric nurse. I always made sure I met her outside, so we went in together, but then she [*the patient*] started writing letters to the community psychiatric nurse for my attention, 'coz I wouldn't give her my address, saying that she wanted to be friends with me and I had to withdraw and ... the community psychiatric nurse rang me saying, could I not continue? Because the patient was getting more upset about the fact that I didn't want to be there. Why did I not want to be her friend? ... She was latching onto me and I was not her friend, I was just helping her get through the depression with the treatment that I was interpreting for her, but it wasn't me helping ... It was the nurse helping.

In this example, Maureen's attempts to shore up boundaries failed due to the patient's emotional attachment to her, which she saw as an 'inherent problem'. Whereas the psychiatric nurse tried to persuade her to continue to participate in the therapy, Maureen felt that she had no other choice but to withdraw from the assignment in order to remain neutral. Now, as we shall see with Monika, the ways in which PSIs are perceived by service providers can be ambiguous and lead to boundaries being disturbed in additional ways.

Service providers reinforcing hierarchical boundaries

Monika had only been working as freelance PSI for three years at the time of the research interview. Yet within that short time span, she had managed to gain considerable experience, having progressed from interpreting in settings such as 'social security tribunals which are easier' to employment tribunals that 'are highly demanding and have a lot of specialised vocabulary.' Before entering the interpreting profession, Monika occupied a high status role in senior management within a big business for several years. Redundancy and the severe demotion of jobs available on the market prompted her to opt for a career change. As she had been brought up bilingual, Monika therefore decided to exploit her linguistic skills to make a living. In her account, Monika talks at length about being valued. She really likes doing her job and thrives on doing it well, despite finding it stressful and demanding. As a highly qualified person, she does not think that it is paid very well either. PSI is for her like other underpaid jobs such as nursing, but it is a job that has an intrinsic value to people of being a good person, doing a good job, a job that is necessary. She also believes it is as highly complex a job as being a doctor, one that you mostly learn from experience.

Throughout her account, Monika makes interesting comments about understanding practices, and is quite reflective about how she learns on the job. She views the DPSI course as just a 'springboard', since on the job 'you learn a great deal. You learn what things work, what don't.' Furthermore, the general lack of awareness of or interest in what her job entails amongst service providers makes her job even more difficult as the following statement illustrates:

I've just had one occasion in a tribunal a judge said to me- *[laughs]*, I stopped him and I asked for the meaning and he said: 'It doesn't matter, just translate' ... fortunately I was confident enough to turn round and say: 'I'm afraid that's not possible, I have to understand it in order to translate it'.

Being good at her job and confident in doing it seemed for Monika to be partly a matter of professional maturity. She often talks about interrupting service providers to assert her own professional competence and shows that she knows what she is doing. She is aware that the demand for PSIs' invisibility reflects how they are valued by others. From her account, it is almost as if PSIs are not valued by others, but paradoxically, the more invisible they are, the more valuable they are. This strange contradiction within this professional identity is encapsulated below:

I was in a civil court ... one of the barristers had to be in Leeds by two o'clock, and she spoke at a lightening pace, a pace that was difficult to just listen to in English ... and then the judge was in a hurry, and the other people were in a hurry and the interpreter is not their concern, they're the last person they're interested in and therefore in that situation where they're not really interested, it is very difficult to interrupt, because they don't want you to.

However, as discussed above, Monika's story is about how she soon becomes an expert in her job within a short period of time. Her strong credentials and professional ethics give her confidence to negotiate boundaries and challenge people who do not understand her job and want her to remain invisible. As discussed in Chapter 2, since the EU legal requirement for every human being to be tried in a language that they understand, the demand of PSIs in the UK has increased. However, it is clear from Monika's comment that she is treated as an unwelcome necessity. What seems to matter, then, is the interpreter's presence in court to show compliance with the EU requirement, rather than the completeness and accuracy of their renditions and the support this provides for a fair trial for the accused.

Monika suggests there is a general lack of interest or awareness of what PSI entails amongst other professionals. The overall illusion that PSI may look easy makes it difficult for her to do a proper job. In the following account, she recalls another court assignment where one of the lawyers spoke so fast that:

It was almost hard to interrupt, but I did interrupt, and I think he was quite shocked to be interrupted, but it needed doing because even though I'm fast, it was not possible to keep up at the speed that he was going at.

When I prompted her to tell me more about what happened next, Monika further explained:

I mean some lawyers are very good and they pause and they give you a chance and it makes it more doable, but I did actually interrupt this lawyer, and I'm afraid I didn't use the correct procedure in this case, because I realise I should have asked the judge to ask him to slow down, and that is what I normally do, normally I manage that, but the realities are that it's very tough, he was going so fast that I couldn't have got a word in edgeways and I would have lost five sentences by the time, so I did actually just looked round the corner and asked him to slow down, and as I say he was quite gobsmacked and said: [*in an incredulous and indignant tone*] 'Slow down?!'. He didn't expect me to have the impertinence to ask this, and as I say I didn't quite do it in the right way, because I should have asked the judge, and that's the pressures of the job...

As I shall discuss in greater detail in Chapter 8, this lawyer's outraged reaction towards Monika's request to slow down can be read in different ways. For now, let us focus on a fourth disturbance of professional boundaries caused by PSIs themselves this time.

PSIs blurring their own professional boundaries

Several of the PSIs interviewed, such as Lauryne and Andrew, have extensive experience in working in health settings. Being DPSI holders, they are aware of the stringent rules of conduct imposed by the Code, but from experience they have come to the conclusion that interpreters have to adapt their conduct in accordance with the settings in which they interpret. Their understanding is that rules are usually tighter for legal assignments than for medical assignments. According to Lauryne, the issue of trust is particularly relevant in mental health settings. From experience, she has learnt that mental health is very different from other PSI settings, because 'you deal with emotions and feelings.' In the interview, Lauryne looked extremely serious as she explained that the interpreter plays a significant and active role in enabling psychologists to get through to patients. The therapy is therefore a three-way relationship and the PSI needs to build a rapport with the patient to be trusted, otherwise the psychologist will not be able to 'get anywhere'. For Lauryne, the interpreter must be able to relate to both the psychologist and the patient for the therapy to be successful. From the compliments received from staff, this is something that she does quite well.

However, Lauryne's account of invisibility at work can be interpreted as being full of contradictory narratives. In Chapter 2, I provided an example of how candidates learn to introduce themselves professionally to both parties at the beginning of assignments in a way that signals the impartiality and neutrality of their role. On the one hand for Lauryne, it is quite important to say the interpreter's introduction:

At the beginning because it tells both the service provider and the patient that you are a professional interpreter, you're not just there as a friend ... It shows how serious you are about your job and professional and also it gives an atmosphere of trust in the relationship between the patient and the service provider.

In her eyes, the introduction enables her to be taken seriously as a professional rather than lay interpreter. It also encourages the building of a trustful relationship between the patient and the service provider, with the interpreter on the outside of that

relationship. Similarly, she finds the sitting arrangements problematic in health settings because:

You're sitting next to the patient ... but then that can lead the patient to think that you're on their side or they often see the interpreter as their friend.

But on the other hand, she finds chatting to patients in waiting rooms normal:

Usually when the patient arrives, they come and sit next to you and they can start chatting, so you have a bit of that in a normal health interpreting ... so that's when the patient might think then: 'Oh well, you're a bit of a friend!' And you do it, you do have a chat, but when you're in the appointment, then obviously you're not a friend, you just keep your professional stand-back really. So I think you have to know when to have a chat and when you're in an interpreting situation.

Although Lauryne's professional boundaries may be interpreted as becoming blurred between what the Code prescribes and her enactment of it, she explains that her behaviour depends on the settings in which she works. Her understanding of when it is acceptable for boundaries to become blurred or permeable appears to depend on the expectations that service users and providers have of PSIs' role and to be shaped simultaneously by the settings in which they work. Lauryne also indicates that she knows when to relate to patients as a human being in the waiting room and as a professional when the appointment with the provider starts. Thus, she can be seen as responding to the demands and exigencies of the situation. However, as we shall see next, there are also occasions on which PSIs themselves blur their professional boundaries.

When Andrew and I met for the research interview, he spoke about his experience of being a PSI with great enthusiasm. His passion for his job was palpable, something he later confirmed: 'I do love my job ... and I do enjoy it. I enjoy it because-, it sounds really clichéd, but I like helping people.' This statement reveals a lot about Andrew's motivation for choosing a career in PSI. Although during training PSIs are taught that their role is not to 'help' people, but rather to enable others to communicate whilst maintaining their own professional distance, this is exactly how Andrew perceives his role. He undeniably enjoys the adrenaline rush that he gets from interpreting because 'you're decoding information and putting it into another language very quickly, and you do have an important role as well', but what he enjoys first and foremost is to help service users to communicate, regardless of what they have done.

Putting himself into their shoes, he explains that if he were in a difficult situation in a foreign land, he would find it comforting to speak to someone in a language that he understands and 'fairly stressful' otherwise. After working as PSI for less than five years, Andrew had already felt a considerable change in his personality:

I feel more empathetic towards people, people who are in difficult situations ... and I feel that I enjoy helping them out, so it's changed me in that sense.

Andrew takes his job very seriously, he describes his role as a go-between who is privy to information on both parties and confidentiality is for him of paramount importance:

I almost feel like a bit of a halfway house between the police officers and the client, so in my role I feel that ... I'm privy to some information from the police officers which I obviously don't pass onto the client ... but I'm also privy to some information from the client that I know that would perhaps stay between me and my client.

Andrew's human stance on the practice may be due to feeling empathy towards service users. Interestingly, it may also come from the fact that for him: 'there's a social side to interpreting as well. You do have to communicate with the people that you're working with.' As a result, his account abounds in examples where boundaries are crossed to care for the service user. Andrew is aware that the Code defines his role as that of an invisible tool for communication. Yet, through work experience he has learnt that:

There are other elements that are important that you only learn once you're on the job, once you're actually interpreting, once you're in the police station, once you're in the clinic, you learn things on the job that you don't necessarily learn from any diploma.

For instance, Andrew has learnt that although the PSI introduction is meant to 'emphasise the invisibility of the interpreter', it does not always work in his favour since it can inspire mistrust from both the service user and service provider:

One of the first times it was in a holding cell below a police station, and I did this [*the PSI introduction*], and the police officer asked me what I was doing and thought I was holding a conversation with the defendant, he thought I was just having small talk with the defendant, and I thought: 'Well actually ... this doesn't really work because ... they would assume that ... I'm just talking to the defendant and they don't know what my background is, they don't know if I've encountered the defendant before, do I know them? Do I know a friend of theirs? Do I know someone that they know? What kind of conversation are we having?' ... And also if it's the other way, if you're speaking to the police officer and saying: 'My name is ...' there's no time for that and then also ... you're putting

the client out as well because it looks like you're having a conversation with the police officer, will the client start to believe that you're on the police officer's side? Will they think that you're interpreting for the police officer and not them?

It would be fair here to inform the reader that DPSI candidates are usually instructed to signal to each party that they are going to explain their role first at the beginning of the assignment, but as Andrew questions: how can this be done 'by the book' when time pressure is part of the equation? Which party does the PSI introduces themselves to first, since the other party does not understand what is being said and may therefore suspect that the introduction serves the purpose of an alliance between the other two? Andrew's strategy to deal with this conflict has been rather radical and as a colleague, I felt both shocked and privileged that he willingly shared it with me:

One of the strategies that I've learnt was not to do the interpreter introduction, was to just omit that, not do it, introduce myself, say: 'I'm your interpreter today', double-check that obviously the client understands me and that I understand them as well.

However, following his agentic decision to disregard the PSI introduction, Andrew later admitted that it then made it difficult to alert both parties on his neutral and impartial role. To overcome this hindrance, he would still instruct them to address each other directly and if after repeating his instructions the service user would still address him rather than the service provider, he would then proceed to:

Interpret the questions still in the first person, because I've already explained to them that I'm invisible, so if the police officer says: 'Can you tell me why you were at such and such a place at whatever time?' I will interpret the question and I feel that the client is answering the question, but he is answering me, not the police officer, not the health professional and they will say something like: 'Why does he want to know this? What does he want to know? Does he want to know where I was exactly at the time?' And then I will interpret their question as: 'What would you like to know? Would you like to know exactly where I was at the time?' So I will change the subject, I will change it from: 'What does he want to know?' to: 'What do you want to know?' So I will almost force the situation in the sense that I will force them to speak directly to each other, so the police officer will believe that the client was asking the question to him, but in actual fact the client was asking me the question, and through my transfer I kind of manipulate that, I manipulate it in the police officer's direction, so those are the kind of things that I mean, those things that you weren't really taught on the DPSI, the things that you just learn on the job.

As discussed in Chapter 3, interpreters may invisibly engage in speech repair to force the other parties to address themselves directly (Wadensjö, 1998a). From the comments

above, Andrew visibly engages in such work and he does it because although this was not covered on his DPSI course, he has learnt that if he were not to 'manipulate' speech that way:

Then an hour interview could turn into a two-hour interview or a three-hour interview, because you'd have to stop the client each time or you'd have to explain, things that would confuse the situation, so I think that the interpreter has a certain amount of power there whereby you do have to make that decision, you do have to say: 'I'm going to interpret this this way, because if I don't, then it's going to confuse things and this interview could take six times longer than it should take'. And that's just one of the decisions that you have to make as an interpreter I think, on the job, that's one thing that you don't learn on the qualification.

Another lesson that Andrew has taken from the learning ground of the workplace involves maintaining boundaries with users. On one hand he sees it problematic for them to consider him as a friend despite putting himself in their shoes, as illustrated above. On the other hand, when left alone with them he experiences boundary disturbances because he apprehends the situation from a humanistic perspective:

We were two human beings being left together and we were talking about the weather, talking about just things in general, nothing to do with the case, so this time round when I was in the waiting room I felt obliged to for want of a better word to humour the client, to speak back to the client, I thought that it was rude not to say anything, I felt that I owed him some sort of comfort, so I said to him: 'Well, you're going to court, it doesn't mean that you'll be put in prison for whatever you-, you're going to be fully charged for it, you're going to court, the magistrate or the judge will have to review the case and we don't know the outcome of it just yet, so don't worry too much right now'.

Because Andrew is very sensitive to the social aspect of PSI, he finds it 'very uncomfortable to sit in a room with a client and sit there in silence.' In his eyes, his objective is to facilitate communication by building a bridge with the client through 'a minimum of small talk.' Ignoring the client would therefore hinder his objective:

You would think that it would be easy to ignore those kind of comments from the client, but in actual fact it's not, you can't just ignore a person speaking to you, you can't just ignore that person, 'coz at the end of the day that person has feelings regardless of where they come from, regardless of whatever their background is, we're all worthy of some kind of response from a human being. If you speak to someone, you expect a response back, so you have to make the decision to whether you say point blank: 'I'm sorry I can't discuss this with you' or whether to say, or to be vague in your response so for example just to say:

‘Yes I know, yes I know, yes I know’, so you have to-, those are the kind of things that you learn.

In the workplace, Andrew has therefore learnt that the rigid boundaries set by the Code, which specify that PSIs should not enter into a discussion with service users, are inevitably permeable, and that practitioners can enjoy a certain degree of agency in deciding whether to transgress professional boundaries or not.

Framed by different personal and professional boundaries, PSI is a profession which can be disturbed in many ways and by different main agentic actors. The following table summarises the boundary disturbances experienced by PSIs at work illustrated in this chapter:

	Disturbance(s)	Agency	Examples
- Official professional practice	- Breaching: control / care of users	- Service provider and PSI	Constantly in court you'll get solicitors asking you just to help their clients fill in legal aid forms or various other forms, and because they say to you: 'Oh, I'm too busy! I'm just gonna see another client, can you just do that? I'm busy and I'll come back and check it', and I always say: 'No' ... (PSI Lucy)
- Dehumanized technical interactions and human social interactions	- Shoring up non-existent boundaries for users	- Service user and PSI	The job was in mental health for a lady who was going through to treatment for depression ... but then she started writing letters to the community psychiatric nurse for my attention 'coz I wouldn't give her my address, saying that she wanted to be friends with me and I had to withdraw ... (PSI Maureen)
- Professional hierarchy / low status of PSIs	- Reinforcing: professional hierarchy	- Service provider	The lawyer was going so fast that I couldn't have got a word in edgeways ... so I ... asked him to slow down, and as I say he was quite gob smacked and said: [<i>in an incredulous and indignant tone</i>] 'Slow down?'. He didn't expect me to have the impertinence to ask this ... (PSI Monika)
- Personal and professional ethics	- Blurring / Breaching	- PSI	You can't just ignore that person, 'coz at the end of the day that person has feelings regardless of where they come from, regardless of whatever their background is, we're all worthy of some kind of response from a human being. (PSI Andrew)

Table 1: Four types of boundary disturbances experienced by PSIs in the workplace.

Summary

As we have seen, the official boundaries framing the profession of PSI appear to be rigid, but in practice they are not, because of the way in which people act in the inevitably social situations in which they work. The data presented in this chapter indeed reveals tensions between what PSIs are prescribed to do, what service users and providers expect them to do, and what they actually do. Breaching boundaries can be mutual or it can be imposed on PSIs, which in turn disturbs different types of boundaries and impacts on the status of PSIs. These resonate with the age-old ambiguities and marginalities of the interpreter's role that we discussed in Chapter 1.

In Chapter 8, I offer a sociological interpretation of these disturbances by drawing on Seddon *et al.*'s (2010) concept of 'boundary work' to argue that compliance with the demand for their invisibility constitutes an unaccounted for type of work undertaken by PSIs on a day-to-day basis. This interpretation also uncovers the multifaceted invisible work that PSIs undertake in the workplace as a learning ground whilst being faced with the unrealistic expectation situation that they will not interact socially as humans. As my data illustrate, that it is an impossible fiction. And the interpreter plays a very agentic role in the human social interactions taking place between them, service users and service providers. Furthermore, managing boundaries and managing ethical conflicts appear to be inextricably linked in PSI work. Indeed, the last comments from Andrew for instance reveal that PSIs also experience conflicts between personal and professional ethics in the fulfilment of their professional roles. In the next chapter, I therefore focus on illustrations of these ethical conflicts and their management from the data.

Chapter 6: Maintaining ethics within PSI work

'I knew from her accent she was lying, but you can't do anything'

(PSI Leila)

Introduction

Chapter 5 focused on a series of critical incidents which took place whilst Public Service Interpreters (PSIs) dealt with the professional demand for their invisibility in the workplace. It illustrated some of the strategies adopted by practitioners to comply with or resist the unrealistic demand for them to act as invisible ciphers, as almost non-human participants in the social interactions which they interpret. This chapter focuses on how interpreters learn to negotiate their role in relation to ethics as a socially situated practice. Its aim is to pinpoint the ethical conflicts that may confront interpreters in the workplace, potential pressures to engage in unethical practices and how interpreters respond. By taking examples from the data, I first present some PSIs' perceptions on the professional ethics prescribed by the NRPSI's Code of Practice. I then illustrate how some practitioners fairly consciously breach the Code, despite purporting to be neutral and impartial. Finally, I explore instances in which PSIs experience ethical conflicts depending on the people with whom they work and the settings, and consider the strategies that they use to deal with them.

PSIs' perceptions of ethics: observing the Code is 'not that problematic to deal with if you have your wits about you'

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, ethics is the fulcrum of the professionalization of public service interpreting. For millennia, daily life interactions between linguistically and culturally diverse communities across the globe were mainly carried out by untrained bilinguals, including children. The twentieth century witnessed a growing awareness of this ancient and unbounded practice, bringing to the fore issues of trust, ethics, loyalty and power. The neutrality and impartiality of lay interpreters came to be questioned and consequently, so did the faithfulness and accuracy of their renditions (Valero-Garcés and Martin, 2008; Kouraogo, 2001; Lang, 1978). The (un)ethical nature of using children to broker in adult situations was similarly challenged (Cohen *et al.*, 1999; Kaur and Mills, 1993). In the UK, these concerns led to the emergence of PSI: a 'new' human service profession rigidly framed by various

codes of ethics such as the Code of Professional Conduct issued by the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI, 2011).

In Chapter 3, I argued that learning to do ethics within PSI has traditionally been taught through role-plays or scenarios that present ethically challenging situations followed by group discussions. The reader will remember Maureen from Chapter 5, where she recounted several incidents in which she negotiated boundaries within her professional role. Here, her views are of particular interest, as she is also a DPSI trainer. Boundary negotiation to occupy her role also involved dealing with ethics to remain neutral, as when she refused to accept tips from grateful service users or to socialise with solicitors. In so doing, Maureen seemingly adopted the same ethical stance for both service users and providers. Educating them on the ethical boundaries of her role is of paramount importance for her and she will not 'budge' when being implicitly or explicitly expected to transgress them. Her account is redolent with instances in which she faces ethical issues, although in her opinion observing the Code is 'not that problematic to deal with if you have your wits about you.' It is only a matter of being 'trained well enough to know what your boundaries are in the code of conduct.' Over the years, Maureen has developed several strategies to be as neutral as possible in her role:

At the end of the day, all I am there to do is to interpret between two people. So if there's not two people in the room or if someone's saying something and says: 'Don't say it to the other person', which happens a lot, I don't stick to it. Now, I've developed over the years a way of dealing with that: 'Don't say that to him', what I do is I introduce myself and I say straight on introduction: 'I'm neutral' because obviously you're being paid by one side and the other side might think that you're not neutral, and I say that I will interpret absolutely everything that is said, so: 'Don't say it if you don't want it interpreting.' I added that sentence after a few years because I realised the first bit wasn't sufficient. That tells them that I'm going to do as good a job for the paedophile as I am for the police officer or the suspected paedophile I should say, but equally when they [*service providers*] say that person's smelly, then I will say: 'God, he smells!' Like one police officer did and he nearly had a heart attack when I interpreted it.

These strategies are shared with her students. In the classroom environment, teaching ethics is for Maureen both easy and straightforward by putting things into context:

I think it's really important not just to read the code of conduct but to put it into context of examples, then it becomes clear what it means and it's really very straight forward when you do that.

When asked what examples she uses to teach students, Maureen replied:

The impartiality one is actually probably the most complicated one ... Students often say to me for example: 'How can I be impartial if he's a paedophile and he was caught red handed?' ... What I say to them is: 'At the end of the day, you weren't there, you don't know what went on, what you have to do as an interpreter, you can have your thoughts, but they must not be reflected in what you do. So the job you have to do for a paedophile or for the paedophile's victim has to be equally good. Your quality shouldn't suffer because of who you're interpreting for.' And I always say to them the way I do it is, I just don't think about what they've done until they've been found guilty because in this country, they're innocent until they've been found guilty [...]

From her stance, teaching ethics to students is simple, although teaching them how or why they must be impartial can prove challenging. In the above quote, she uses extreme examples to illustrate the crucial need for their impartiality, for the benefit of service users regardless of what they have done. However, as argued in Chapter 3, the easiness and straightforwardness of maintaining ethics within PSI has been contested by a vast body of literature. By way of example, Tate and Turner's (2002) enquiry amongst sign language interpreters highlights how maintaining ethics in the workplace is influenced by practitioners' personal appreciation of ethical conflicts. Another study reveals that cultural backgrounds also influence the ways in which interpreters assess and respond to them (Rudvin, 2009). So how did the other PSIs who participated in my study understand and interpret professional ethics?

Participants were all individuals with strong credentials, having obtained one or two DPSIs in addition to university qualifications, and acquired professional experience in high responsibility roles in a variety of occupational fields such as law, IT, business, health or education. Without exception, they acknowledged the significance of their role, especially with regard to ethics. This concept was often associated with doing a good job, and being neutral, impartial and professional. As a result, they expressed a strong commitment to performing well as PSIs, despite the complex nature of their practice and general lack of professional recognition. As Andrew observed:

[T]here's a lot of things that are out of your control, a lot of things you can't prepare for ... this is why as an interpreter, as a Public Service Interpreter, you have to be on your toes, you have to be able to manage things and manage a lot of things at the same time as well, so we need more credit for that [...]

Due to the nature of their work, PSIs deal with matters of very great importance. They learn through training and practice that the quality of their performance can have a serious impact on service users' fate and on their own, as Larry explained:

Sometimes you're just concentrating on what you do. You're so deep in concentration to make sure that what they say is correctly conveyed to their barrister or as a witness and not to mention again the least of their worries but something that you obviously have to be mindful of is that if you make a mistake, you could be liable for something, you could be in a lot of trouble.

In his view, doing a good job can be ethically challenging, due to the intricacies of the PSI practice such as the ad-hoc and intimate nature of assignments and physical proximity to service users:

[I]n the practical sense it just means you're actually plunged all of the sudden, sometimes without any preparation, on a practical level you are called at nine in the morning and asked to attend a police station and by eleven o'clock you're sitting with somebody who's been involved in whatever, it can be domestic violence or intimidation or harassment, victims of all sorts of crimes and people accused of committing all sorts of crimes and you're very rapidly in their world [...]

Faced with the heavy responsibility attached to their role, the interviewed PSIs indeed often stressed the need for accurate renditions in order to do a good job as professional interpreters. They claimed that compliance with the ethical prescriptions of the Code was paramount and all purported to be neutral and impartial in the workplace. For Larry, neutrality and impartiality are simply achieved by being 'totally independent' and always keeping 'an open mind.' Monika strongly believes that acting as a professional guarantees practitioners' impartiality: 'if you do your job properly, if you act as a professional then you'll be impartial.' On a primary level, these accounts therefore seem to suggest that maintaining ethics within PSI is both simple and straightforward, and that practitioners only need to adhere to the Code's prescriptions to perform a neutral and impartial role and pre-empt ethical conflicts. But as I shall now explore, they also share more ambiguous understandings and interpretations of professional ethics, which indicate that putting theory into practice is not such an easy task after all.

From theory to practice: consciously breaching the Code

As previously discussed, participants unanimously adhered to the professional demand for their neutrality and impartiality in the workplace in theory. Yet, the data

strongly suggest that their own readings of the Code mean that they oscillate between ethical stances depending on the situations they are in. Consider this example from Mateo, in which he describes the process of developing and maintaining an ethical stance:

I developed a kind of, almost like a cold attitude, I didn't mean to do it, you just have to do it, you know what your boundaries are, you know what your regulations are as a PSI, and so you just get on with it, even at times where the person I'm interpreting for has accused me of, how can I say it? Of being on the police's side, or being on the side of somebody else and I've had to interrupt the meeting and be excused to leave the meeting to speak to the persons in the interview to explain the situation and say: 'I'm sorry, I can't interpret for this person anymore because they are wanting me to give them advice on what to do or-', you see what I mean?

Mateo's comment seems to indicate that he wants to appear neutral for both parties. To display his neutrality, he alerts providers if he is suspected of being on their side by users or asked to give advice. He clearly does not want to be seen as being on any side.

However, as with many of the PSIs interviewed, Mateo then provides an ambiguous reading of the Code:

[T]here were times where I had to ask to have a break in an interview because sometimes the interviewer did not take into consideration that the person was crying, or the person needed a break, so sometimes I, the interpreter, I had to physically request that-, sometimes you would have a-, I think with the Home Office you cannot have a meeting for a period of more than an hour and a half without having a break, but there were some cases where I would be in a meeting for two and a half, three hours while the interviewee's being grilled by this person, and sometimes I felt that the interviewers did not take into consideration the feelings or the mood of the other person ... and as the interpreter you almost don't know what to do, 'coz it's not for you to say, but I must admit there were times where I said: 'Excuse me, look, we need to stop this interview right now, can we have a break?' But I would always make it look like that it was me that wanted the break to save face on the other person.

During the interview, Mateo insisted on the significance of ethics whilst carrying out PSI work. He considered the interpreter's introduction as a powerful way of alerting parties to his neutral and impartial role. It is therefore surprising to realise that his original rigid ethical stance is not so rigid after all. On one hand, he steps out of invisibility to interrupt the assignment altogether when he feels that his role is threatened by suspicious users; but on the other hand, he accommodates their feelings of distress or fatigue by asking for a break as if it were meant for him. This paradox

illustrates how Mateo shuttles between ethical positions. In the second instance, he fairly consciously decides to breach the ethical prescriptions of the Code to side with service users when he deems that they are treated unfairly by providers. Despite the dehumanisation of his role, he cannot resist reacting as a human being towards them.

Mateo's experience is far from being isolated. Indeed, many other practitioners primarily considered service users as human beings. Although the Code specifies that they shall not enter into discussion with any of the parties, this was often a good enough reason to bend the rules and 'talk about the weather' with users, humour or comfort them. In other cases, interpreters' fairly conscious breaching of the Code was due to the demands of their job. As previously argued, PSI is a highly complex linguistic and social-cultural practice that consists of interpreting dialogues between service users and providers. Interactions are fast paced and unpredictable, and talk is spontaneous. As Monika pointed out in Chapter 5, it is therefore crucial for PSIs to understand what is being said in order to interpret it, although some providers unaware of what their practice entails may think otherwise. Furthermore, it is often assumed that the less PSIs know about the details of assignments before they interpret, the more impartial they will be. As a result, very little background information - if any - is usually provided to them, unlike the other professionals with whom they work, which raises further issues of trust despite their professional status. In what follows, Monika describes how the lack of context can in reality hinder the interpreter's performance:

[I]f you're given a little context in advance, it's very useful and helps you interpret and helps you to keep calm and do it more effectively. I also think that impartiality through ignorance is not a very clever way of doing it because the fact that you don't know something means you do your job worse and it doesn't actually make you impartial, it just makes you ignorant [...]

For Monika, ignorance of minimal contextual information for the sake of the interpreter's impartiality's is clearly not bliss, for it may prevent calm and effective interpreting when her ethical aim is to be good at her job as a professional.

It can also be argued that PSIs' ability to readily interpret specialist and non-specialist terminology in both working languages can represent a further challenge for practitioners that is often overlooked. To prepare for assignments and keep up-to-date with the dynamic evolution of languages, participant interpreters evoked several techniques such as: compiling glossaries, watching specific television programmes or listening to the radio. Samir mentioned an additional technique that may be deemed

controversial: talking to patients in waiting rooms enables him not only to familiarise himself with their medical backgrounds, but also to promptly check any unknown terminology in online dictionaries before the start of appointments. Indeed, Samir makes it a rule to arrive to medical assignments early in an attempt to gather as much background information on the patient's medical history as possible, since new terminology that unexpectedly crops up can be problematic:

I remember one of the first times I came across is it sciatic nerve? And I knew what it was, but I didn't know the word in Arabic for it, because I haven't been using it, I hadn't heard it for years, so I had to go and research it quickly. I always carry an electronic dictionary with me for any job and I usually go early and speak to the patient and have a chat with him about his ailment in Arabic [...] and then he might say: 'Well, the doctor told me you've got sciatic nerve' and I said: 'Yeah, ok, fine' then after we finished the conversation, I just took my electronic dictionary and I put sciatic nerve and it told me what the Arabic equivalent was, so it was an education for me.

In the workplace, PSIs learn like Samir that one way of overcoming linguistic obstacles is to equip oneself with electronic devices that will enable them to look up unknown terminology very quickly. It is also common practice to arrive early to obtain background information on the case from providers, not users. Interestingly, when I challenged Samir about the fact that having private conversations with users was deemed inappropriate by the Code, he replied:

Well, I wasn't involved in a private conversation, I was trying to get a background knowledge about the assignment I am going to face, so I'm not going to ask him about his personal life, I was asking about the medical condition that he's suffering from, which he is going to speak to his doctor about in case I need to arm myself with some more terminology that I am not familiar with, but it's nothing personal, no.

Through his reaction, Samir was adamant that discussing patients' medical conditions alone had nothing to do with crossing private and public spheres. Unknown terminology is one of PSIs' most recurrent fears and he was just trying to arm himself against it. Although I understood his position, I still wondered if the difference between a private or public topic did not also depend on socio-cultural perceptions. PSIs come from a variety of language and cultural backgrounds. Their personal history as to why they choose this profession is unique and so is their understanding of the practice. My thoughts were reinforced when Samir explained that on arrival at the venue, it is entirely

up to him to decide whether or not to speak to patients once he has signalled his presence to providers:

[I]f the patient is there, they [*service providers*] would point out to the patient and say: 'This is your patient, this is your case' and then it's entirely up to me whether I go and sit with them and have a chat to try to get familiar with the condition or sit somewhere else and walk into the room when they are called in.

I was struck by Samir's sense of power and agency when PSIs' role had been so diminished by the Code, but I had not heard the last of it. As Samir went on to explain his behaviour further, I realised that it also involved active surveillance of invisible colleagues. While chatting to patients, he would ask:

'[I]s this your first time that you've come here or you've come here before?' If he's come there before, I say: 'Did you need an interpreter or not?' And I say: 'Ok, how did you find the interpreting job before? Was there any kind of the interpreting that you needed and didn't find so I can make sure that you get it? In terms of professionalism, did you receive the service you were expecting from the interpreter or not?'

Samir's attempts to find out if the patient was satisfied with past interpreters seem genuine enough, but they may also be perceived as a blurring of roles since monitoring clients' satisfaction is the responsibility of service providers, not his. His active agency may be interpreted in many ways, one of them may be to denounce bad practice and raise his status as professional. His own interpretation of the Code allows him to think that his approach is not unethical. It is for him a legitimate way of preparing for assignments to enhance his performance.

Samir provides further illustrations of how practitioners may breach the Code when personal and professional ethics are misaligned. From his account, it transpires that he has strong personal values and likes to be treated with respect. Samir holds a DPSI in Law, although the majority of his assignments are in medical settings. Surprisingly, he admits that he does not enjoy his job as a PSI, especially working with the police. This dislike comes from several factors. For instance, he finds the content of some assignments embarrassing:

I had an example that was embarrassing to me more so than any other one else because it was a hospital and it was two ladies and three men in the room, that was a consultant team, it was a man and then the doctor was asking about what he feels before he goes to sleep or while he is asleep, that was the person who had that feeling of two personalities and then he starts to get into details about

some dreams that he's been having that had a sexual nature and he was trying to explain exactly what they were and I felt really uncomfortable about trying to explain what he was saying in the presence of ladies, so for me personally it was uncomfortable, but I just tried to get over it by saying it less explicit as possible without distorting what he was trying to imply so the doctor would actually get a full picture of what's been said.

It is interesting to note that in this example, the interpreter edits the user's speech in order to save face himself. This is formally forbidden by the Code, but Samir feels the need to do it because he feels embarrassed both about what the user says and having to interpret his exact words in the target language and in front of 'ladies.' He somehow minimises his action by saying that despite toning the user's words down, the consultant team still managed to 'get a full picture' of what was said. Similarly, Samir here explains why he does not like working with the police:

I would say I dislike working with the police because you're always working with criminals, or they're assumed to be criminals until proven innocent ... you're always dealing with devious minds and twisted questions and that kind of things and I don't feel comfortable sitting there in the middle of trying to listen to somebody swearing at the police and the police asking: 'What is he saying? What is he saying?' And you have to interpret. Sometimes it's really, really filthy language. Why do I have to sit there to translate that kind of language? I can do without it [*laughs*]. It's really some serious, serious language. There's got to be an easier way to earn a living I would imagine.

When I prompted Samir to explain further the reasons for his aversion to police work, he added: 'I feel that I am degrading myself as a human.' To limit the extent to which Samir 'degrades himself', he has adopted another strategy when 'filthy language' is used. To save face, he reports to providers that users 'said the F word' but he does not actually interpret the insult. On reminding Samir of the demand for faithfulness and accuracy set by the Code, he then asked: 'why should I if I can say 'F' and he would know what it means?' It seems that Samir cannot reconcile the fact that although he may not approve the use of swear words as an individual, his professional role entails that he may have to do so. As the following quote further illustrates, Samir does not seem to be prepared to let his professional values get the better of his personal values:

Just assume you're interpreting in a rape case and the police sometimes ask really, really personal questions, as an interpreter you'd be sitting there, embarrassed yourself to sit down in a situation like this where you have to-, why do you have to do that? If you have another way of earning or if I have another way of earning a living, I will pursue it rather than sit there and listen to all this. There's quite a lot of rape cases if you ask other interpreters, but thank God I

have not come across a rape case so far and if I do come across one, I will excuse myself, I will not accept.

Indeed, Samir's strategy for dealing with the clash between his personal and professional ethics has been to stop working as a PSI altogether recently; a detail I was unaware of before the interview. All he could see, he explained, was: 'misery and pain and heartache, it's not easy to live with that day in, day out.' He therefore decided that he could do 'without the pains and heartaches of listening to all these people and their complaints' because 'when you hear problems all the time, I think eventually it will affect you as a person. You may end up having a gloomy view of the world because everything you can see is negative.' Ultimately, Samir concluded that:

[I]f this is the only environment available for an interpreter to work within is at courts and hospitals and police stations then I'll find myself another job.

This section has highlighted instances in which some PSIs fairly consciously breach ethical boundaries to protect service users, acquire background information or save face. But from their perspectives, their actions were not breaching professional ethics. Ambiguous readings of the Code may result from the official denial of their human and active participation in social interactions with other human beings, clashes between personal and professional ethics or the general lack of understanding of the demands of their practice amongst service users and providers. Further evidence from the data indeed suggests that PSIs experience ethical conflicts from multiple directions, and this on a daily basis. It is to illustrations of these that I now turn.

'[I]t's true what we learn but [...] in practice, it might not be that easy'

Chapter 5 focused on different types of boundary disturbances experienced by practitioners in the workplace. In perhaps non-explicit ways, it also presented a myriad of instances in which they reported feeling very torn about the ethical conflicts that they faced on a day-to-day basis. By way of example, Lauryne and Andrew both signalled that in mental health settings, PSIs are expected to build a rapport with patients for the therapy to work, although the Code explicitly proscribes their active involvement in the interactions that they interpret. In his account, Oliver - an experienced PSI and DPSI trainer - talks at great length about the discrepancy between the theoretical and practical aspects of professional ethics. He repeatedly stresses the significance of being competent at his job and being viewed as a professional. Continuing vocational

education is vital for him, even more so since he became a DPSI trainer. As he puts it: 'I can't tell my students something wrong, so I have to spend time researching as well.' Oliver is clearly aware of the demands of the Code and he teaches ethics through role-plays that aim to 'reflect real situations' in order to enable students to 'get a feel about PSI'. But despite his knowledge and experience, maintaining an ethical stance still remains a challenge:

[I]t's true what we learn but, you also have to learn a lot on the job like maybe how to deal with clients, which they tell you the theory on the course, but in practice, it might not be that easy. They tell you for example: 'You don't build a relation with your client', you're always supposed to take a step back, but sometimes in practice, it can be quite difficult to do so, whether because the client may be difficult and wants to talk to you and you don't have any way to escape sometimes, because you're in the room with the client and the solicitor's just writing things up and he wants to talk, so he keeps on talking to you, so what are you supposed to do at that point? You're not gonna say: 'Well, shut up!'

Unlike other PSIs who feel compelled to engage in small talk with service users, Oliver attempts to shore up his ethical boundaries by being aloof. This strategy learnt during training nonetheless makes him feel uncomfortable:

I always try to either pretend I'm looking in my bag or looking for something else or I give very short answers so that they know I'm not really too interested, but it's quite difficult because at the same time the client has to feel comfortable with you, so if you appear rude, there will be a question of trust, can the client trust you as an interpreter? So it can be difficult, it can be a difficult situation.

The above quotes illustrate well Oliver's struggle to refrain from engaging in private conversations with the other parties as prescribed by the Code. However, the conditions in which he works do not always allow him to keep away from service users when he is not interpreting, which makes it difficult to ignore them if they engage a conversation. On one hand, Oliver attempts to remain distant and look busy to discourage them from talking, but on the other hand, he is concerned that if he follows the Code, his aloof attitude may have an impact on the interpreted event. He may appear rude to service users and make them feel uncomfortable. As a result, they may not trust him and may not be willing to communicate.

Oliver similarly experiences ethical tensions with service providers. He confirmed that he really enjoys his job and finds it very interesting, although along with

the experience came the disillusion. Indeed, upon starting his interpreting career he was under the impression that:

[S]olicitors were more used to work with interpreters, [*but*] it's not really the case, sometimes they ask you things and you just think: 'Well I don't know, it's not any of my business really.'

Being asked to do 'things' could be for instance when solicitors require him to call a detained person's friends or relatives independently on his mobile phone or to elicit specific information by having 'a chat on the side with the client and try to get the answer when it shouldn't be the way.' Sounding frustrated he adds:

[T]hey [*service providers*] just want such information, they tell you which information they need, it's up to you to phrase it ... and have a chat with the client until he gives you the information and pass the information round [...]

Therefore, to maintain an ethical stance, Oliver constantly has to remind solicitors that he 'can't ask him [*the service user*]' and he certainly cannot 'make up questions to get that answer', but he can 'phrase' what they have just said. Oliver recalls another instance in which he was considered as an assistant by a solicitor. Instead of interpreting faithfully what the client said, he was requested to only interpret new information:

I remember one case when the person was always telling the same story again and again and we were in prison, it was a prison visit and after the fourth visit, the solicitor said to me: 'Well, if he's starting again talking about the same thing, I don't want to know, just tell me anything new', and I said to her: 'Look, it's something I can't-, I have to tell you what he says, I'm not here to pick up on what you need to know.'

In these examples, ethical tensions mainly arise from service providers' general lack of awareness of how to work with PSIs or from their desire to use them as a tool in order to save time. In other instances, tensions may be due to providers' bad experiences with lay interpreters in the past:

Now, the feeling I have is more and more agencies are trying to cut down rates, etc., and I see more and more interpreters that are not really interpreters simply because, well they've never been trained and they end up doing a job at the hospital, they speak two languages, sometimes their English can be quite poor or their other language for that matter and they are still taken as an interpreter, so I think that's what I see more and more, and it's quite disheartening really, because it gives a bad name to the job. I think when you work with other

solicitors some of them might just be difficult because they think: 'God! I'm gonna have to work with an interpreter and I worked with one last week and he was absolutely abysmal, that could be the case again.'

At the time of the interview, Oliver mainly carried out legal assignments because 'it's better paid jobs and that's the way you can earn a living.' He indicated a preference for court interpreting since interpreters are 'more or less free' whilst waiting and can 'sit in other courtrooms and hear other pre-trial reviews'. Oliver saw this freedom of movement as an additional opportunity to learn. For him, hearing different cases is educational. It 'helps you as well a lot on the job' he claimed, 'because you can still practise your vocabulary.' But one significant aspect of court interpreting that makes Oliver feel uncomfortable is to be asked to interpret for both parties:

Most of the times you're grabbed by the solicitor or the barrister and they ask you to go and interpret for them for a conference with the client who is downstairs in the cell to explain the situation, so now there's always an ethical issue there because you're not supposed to do it, because it should be another interpreter because otherwise you shouldn't have more or less like pre-knowledge of the case before you start interpreting in court [...]

When I asked Oliver how he knew that acquiring knowledge on a case prior to the start of the hearing could represent an ethical issue, he replied:

It's stipulated in the National Agreement, but the way it is phrased in the National Agreement they say that if there's no other interpreter present, the judge has to say that you can do it, so I always say to the people, I say: 'Look, I've got absolutely no issue with doing this, coming with you downstairs and interpret however, the judge has to agree', so they always ask for permission and I have to say they always agree, simply because they are trying to cut costs, they don't want to pay two interpreters and there's not enough time, because usually it's too late in a way 'coz that person will have to-, the case is supposed to be heard in one or two hours [...]

Oliver here signals that the National Agreement on the use of interpreters in court (Lord Justice Auld, 2001) authorises practitioners to act as interpreters for several parties, should no other interpreter be present and the judge grant permission.

It is interesting to note that ordinarily, the Code indicates that putting the interpreter in this position leads to a conflict of interests and taints their neutrality and impartiality. However, somehow the rules of the Code seem to be conveniently bent to save both time and money. Although Oliver may not agree with being used as an object which is 'grabbed' to enable communication between different parties, he goes along

with it. His comment above is interesting because it signals underlying issues of power, identity, and status that interpreters may face according to the settings in which they interpret. It could be argued that settings have an impact on the professional identity and status of PSIs and that these are not static. Solicitors, barristers and judges enjoy more power and a higher professional status than PSIs and Oliver perhaps feels that he has no choice but to do what he is told. Despite his considerable experience as a PSI and DPSI trainer, Oliver's account in particular highlights some ethical conflicts faced by practitioners on a daily basis in the workplace. These conflicts can be influenced by service users, service providers and the settings.

The majority of the PSIs whom I interviewed narrated similar stories about their struggle to maintain professional ethics. Their experiences shared across the last two chapters reveal that maintaining ethics in the workplace may not be as easy and straightforward as the Code prescribes. This chapter ends with the story of Leïla, to epitomise the ethical conflicts that PSIs may face not only during routine assignments, but also during high-stakes cases. Her story illustrates the ways in which dealing with ethics also comes with experience.

The ethical struggle to 'do the job right'

Leïla is a highly qualified PSI with seven years of experience in the legal and medical fields mainly. She is also a DPSI trainer. In her interview, she talks at great length about having to make ethical judgments to build trust with service users, overcome their hostility and help service providers do a good job; something she achieves thanks to a 'mixture of life experience and common sense'. From the outset, her views on ethics are strong. She begins by expressing concerns about the NRPSI's vetting system and quality of some registered interpreters who undermine the reputation of genuine PSIs. As a consequence, she does not hesitate to step out of invisibility to defend her profession and warn service providers of the threat they pose:

I am worried because I've seen interpreters who are Kurds, but Kurds from an Arab country, but Kurds really so their main language is not Arabic and they have managed somehow to work using Arabic even though I've had to point out to the police that they weren't really Arabs so I'm not sure about the vetting, and some of them are registered when I didn't think they were of the right quality.

Remaining neutral on both sides can be challenging for the interpreter as a social human being. Here Leïla enumerates the things that she does not like about her job, because of

the ethical conflicts that they raise. As she explains, although she feels relieved to enable people to communicate and is grateful to receive appreciations, especially from 'the innocent ones', she cannot help but feel awful to have to refuse personal contacts with them:

You can't give your details because you know that they really-, especially for our culture, they really want to say thank you and so on but you can't.

Given her cultural background, Leïla is aware of the importance of 'saying thank you' to someone who has been of some assistance in times of crisis yet, her professional code of conduct prevents her from accepting extended marks of gratitude both inside and outside her role. To brush off feelings of being rude, she takes comfort in the communicative role she plays during interactions between humans. Striving to do a good job, she similarly finds it irritating when users question her ability to interpret and do not hesitate to blame her for communication breakdowns:

The worst bit that I don't like is ... when the client suddenly says: 'I don't understand her' and he is trying to throw the blame on you, pretending you're a bad interpreter. I take it personally, even though I know I shouldn't ... It's really irritating. I don't like someone judging my ability [...]

Leïla recognizes this as a tactic often used by service users when the interview is not going to their liking. Despite this, she takes it personally and feels irritated only because she is human. Enacting professional ethics means that she has to fight back her feelings to enact the neutrality and impartiality demands prescribed by the Code. In the following statement from Leïla, yet another language-related difficulty is revealed:

The second bit I don't like is when they give me a name and it sounds North African and I try to find out: 'Will they understand my dialect or won't they?' and you can't get any more information and then they say to you: 'Go anyway' and I don't like this when you go and then you struggle and it's hard then and then sometimes you've got to say: 'Look, I don't understand them and they don't understand me', 'coz the North Africans don't have very good Arabic, the ones that speak Berber or else. That is the bit I don't like, the uncertainty when I know from the name they're gonna be from that region, I feel uncomfortable.

As mentioned earlier, the Code has put high linguistic demands on PSIs by requiring them to possess a very good command of both languages. Yet, training on idiomatic expressions, dialects or linguistic variations is not provided. Furthermore, service providers are not often aware of the difficulties that language idiosyncrasies can

pose. As argued with Monika's example above, they can mistakenly provide too little information to PSIs before an assignment, not realizing that a lack of basic background information can actually hinder the interpreter's performance and that the translation machine model which does not need any contextual details simply does not exist in reality. This uncertainty about whether she will be able to do her job efficiently or not leaves Leila feeling stressed. When she cannot understand users, she engages in doing professional ethics by stepping out of invisibility to alert providers that she is struggling. In what follows, Leila's struggle to remain a neutral conduit in difficult working conditions is illustrated:

The prison service, I don't like it. They won't even let you take your water in, so it makes it a very uncomfortable working condition. I'm not very comfortable when they do video links ever, I prefer one-to-one and I hate the video links where you can see that there is a lot of delay in the speech and I remember I was looking at somebody and the judge through the video link was saying: 'Madam interpreter can you look in this other direction?' It's such an unnatural situation, I really don't like it, but the rest, I love it.

Due to the nature of their practice, PSIs often work across disciplinary fields. Regardless of their area of expertise, they are expected to demonstrate a fast adaptation to varied topics and contexts and melt in the background quickly. Since PSIs intervene in human interactions, it is important to note that no assignments are the same, they all differ from one another. According to Leila, this is what makes being a PSI exciting because 'there's no boredom factor whatsoever'. However, working in varied settings and with different service users and providers implies that the conditions to do one's job will also differ. Here, we see that the interpreter's performance is firstly hindered by a denial of her human and professional needs in a carceral environment and secondly, by the use of video links in legal proceedings. Whereas video links are increasingly used nowadays in courtrooms as an austerity measure, there has been growing concerns about their impact on the nature of PSI and the dynamics of the interaction. Against her will, Leila is put under the spot light by the judge and treated as an object, a position which she finds uncomfortable.

Throughout her account, Leila comes across as someone with strong credentials. She is a highly qualified and experienced PSI who knows what being a professional entails:

I prefer not to take off my shoes when I enter a house, but you think: 'I'm here for a job, it's not about me', so fortunately I take my shoes off ... If you're gonna be proud and think: 'Why should I take off my shoes?' Even you know you should and some people can be childish that way, I would imagine you're not gonna get much cooperation to be honest. So ultimately, even though I hate doing it, I do do it. It's part of being hopefully good at your job.

This example illustrates well practitioners' ethical compliance with doing something they personally object to, to enact professionalism. Leila hates taking her shoes off during home visits, but she still does it because she considers herself a professional. Being mature, she can set aside her personal values to occupy her role. In her eyes, this role seems to involve more than simply interpret as she is sensitive to the user's request and decides to comply with it, hoping that this will guarantee their cooperation in the interpreted-event and therefore make her work easier.

Pressures to remain quiet: 'I knew from her accent she was lying, but you can't do anything'

In what follows, I am moving on to a new theme, but staying with Leila, since she provides additional significant insight into the pressures that PSIs may face in the workplace due to service users. Indeed, in the extended extract of data that follows, Leila recalls an assignment with a police raid on a house that she found particularly challenging as she felt pressured to engage in practices she deemed unethical:

[T]here was a job where I felt uncomfortable really and worried for my own safety. It was with a special unit and we actually had to-, well the police had to wear armours, armoured jackets, and we [*interpreters*] weren't given any, which was fine, but when we entered the house, there was a lot of shouting, the family had young children, there was a lot of crying, it was very distressing for me, that was bad enough. I had to witness the woman being strip searched basically in front of her young kids because she wouldn't-, yeah that was awful but the worse bit wasn't there. It was when we went to the room because we had to go, we were followed by journalists so we had to drive all around [*the area*], I don't know where we were and we're talking 3 o'clock in the morning we started and when we got to the hotel room, I knew she was lying. She lied about her nationality and I knew from her accent she was lying, but you can't do anything, and she kept telling the boy not to say anything. So again that was distressing for me because I felt like saying something and I couldn't and what was more distressing is watching the kids and then after all of this, she was asking for things like *Pampers* nappies instead of normal nappies and I'd seen the state of her house and I knew there was no way she could afford it, all of these, but because the police were paying for all of these, as well as the hotel room so she was asking for things like ice cream, bananas and so on, she was a bit taking the mick if you like and I felt she was abusing the system. I felt embarrassed to be a

fellow Arab and I felt anger towards her but yet you can't show the anger, but I felt anger towards her when she was lying and I felt she shouldn't be in this country, so it's a bit difficult for you, I think the distressing was watching the young ones, the ones in nappies, that was extremely distressing for me.

Here Leïla interestingly begins her account of the police raid incident by presenting two contradictory narratives. She first remembers feeling worried about her own safety whilst working with a special police unit. The case involved high security risks for which police officers had to wear armoured jackets, but she was not given any. What could be the reasons for this treatment? Could it be that it was felt that she was not in any immediate danger of being shot? Or that the translation machine model prescribed by the Code prevented police officers from considering her as both a visible human being and a professional also in need of protection? Surprisingly, despite her first comment, Leïla then states that she felt fine about not being given any material protection.

Leïla's shift could be interpreted as that of an individual shuttling between the multiplicity of her professional and social roles. Her strong professional ethical stance however helps her to silence her personal fears to fulfil her role regardless of the working conditions or her emotions. Although Leïla continuously portrays herself as someone who knows how to tame their emotions, to enact neutrality and invisibility by displaying physical passivity, she admits that detaching herself emotionally was particularly challenging during this assignment. She found it distressing for several reasons: the case was of a dangerous nature and she lacked protection. She found herself in the middle of a family crisis very late at night. Young children, some in nappies still, were crying, traumatised that their mother was being strip-searched whilst other people were shouting. In brief, the situation was emotionally-charged. Leïla was not aware of where she was either, since the police had not told her, which raises further issues of trust. It could be argued that as in the past, the interpreter is viewed as a tool which inspires mistrust from both sides.

A further illustration of Leïla's struggle to maintain an ethical stance is brought to bear when she mentions tensions between her personal and professional values. She is aware that the mother is lying, but the Code to which she abides obliges her to be neutral and therefore not say anything. It has to be said that keeping a straight face whilst interpreting lies can be difficult, especially if it goes against one's personal values. Leïla's professional ethics then feed to her personal distress. Somehow, she

decides not to interpret the mother's repeated request to her son to keep silent. Despite her constrained agency, she still has the power to decide what to interpret or not. The mother expects Leila to form an invisible allegiance with her and she seems to do so. She arguably adopts an ethical stance that will have a further impact on her professional identity. Moreover, whilst feeling compassionate towards the children, she cannot help but feel anger towards the mother as she considers that she is taking advantage of the situation by demanding special privileges. Leila further struggles with her emotions as she feels embarrassed to be the mother's compatriot whilst at the same time being bound to a duty of neutrality.

When I asked whether she interpreted the mother's request to her son or not, she replied the following:

No, because at that stage the police officers had stopped the interview and we were waiting for lunch to arrive. So we weren't working, but we all had to stay in the same room, so I couldn't-, it was a dilemma, as always, do you or don't you? Especially as there was national insecurity and I didn't know what to do with my first case ever of that calibre and I really didn't know how to handle it, not because we weren't trained, because I think it's common sense in the end, luckily well, that's a difficult one, Fred, 'coz are they innocent? Are they not innocent? There's distrust with the police, did she tell her son not to say anything simply because they don't trust the police or there's something to hide? You don't know, nobody knows, and it's not for me to judge. Luckily I think the police managed to get to the bottom of it, by the end of the case I knew that they had, so obviously that to me meant that I was right not to say anything because eventually they got to the bottom of it.

This additional information makes it quite difficult to work out exactly when private conversation(s) were held between the mother and her son. Was it only during the break or during the strip-search too? As Tate and Turner's study (2002) points out, practitioners have different readings of the Code. Their professional appreciation of ethical conflicts therefore also depends on their own personal values. In her defence, this assignment was Leila's first 'big case'. Despite being trained, she was uncertain about how to handle it, and consequently adopted intuitive strategies to fill the gap between prescribed and practical ethics.

Challenging pressures to engage in unethical practices: 'don't tell the police!'

Leila's strong credentials enable her to firmly assert her professional status in order to resist subordination and educate both service providers and users about her

role. As she experiences pressure from users to side with them and keep inappropriate confidences secret from providers:

They do say things to you and then they say: 'Don't tell the police!' And then I will say: 'I have to remind you like I warned you before, that anything you say to me I will have to interpret, so I have to remind you, you have been warned.'

She resists and insists on doing her job by the book, a stance which makes her look like a traitor, a key issue we encountered in the legends of interpreting in Chapter 1:

I always insist on reminding them [*users*] that I will interpret everything they say, and part of my warning is: 'If there's something you don't want the police to know, do not say it in my presence because if you do, I will repeat it' and that's a warning to them, and I know that's not taken down well.

Her attempt to remain neutral and impartial can be met with hostile behaviour.

Some service users feel betrayed and deliberately make it difficult for her to do her job:

The others who see me as traitor and they're hostile and they start using different dialects deliberately to make it difficult for me [...]

As she comments, engaging with ethics also involves living up to the dual image of the traitor and friend:

Then there are others who I have helped, rape victims and so on who see me as their friend, because at the time you smile at them to show them there's no embarrassment factor.

From Leïla's stance, being neutral seems to further depend on the service user's character. As she explains, if users demonstrate a hostile behaviour, she will look at her pad to appear passive, but if they allege to have been victim of a rape, she will smile at them to indicate that there is no need to feel embarrassed. Thus, she decides when to display emotions or not. Finally, her account reveals that on occasions she will side with service providers and on others, she will not. She further explains that her action is a way of protecting herself against her ethical boundaries being disturbed, as the following illustrates:

I always warn them: I will not give you information more than what I hear [...]

Leïla cannot help but notice that despite this warning, service providers entice her to breach the Code:

They say: 'Here's a pen and paper, will you take the statement and then translate it and would you like a coffee? And you have our number; call us when you're done.' That is so recurrent, it's amazing! ... Sometimes they say they want to leave you and you try to get out quickly and you don't always manage to get out quickly with the police officers so they ask: 'What did they say to you?' ... And then it depends whether the briefing after is bending the rules or not. So for example: 'Do you think she was lying?' 'Do I think she was lying about the whereabouts of her son? What did I think?' It's not my job to think.

As we have seen, interpreters may simultaneously inspire trust or distrust from service users and providers alike. On this occasion, service providers are willing to trust the interpreter to take an official statement from a victim without being officially trained to do so and they are prepared to leave her alone with the victim. Everything happens so quickly that the interpreter does not always have time to react. To serve their own interests, she is then asked to comment on the veracity of the user's statement. The Code does not allow PSIs to remain alone with users, in order to avoid ethical issues such as the ones Leila faces when the police officers ask her what was said by the user when they were alone or whether she thinks that an interviewee was telling the truth or not. Holding on to her professional values, Leila however replies that it is not her job to think about it. As Leila explains, these situations happen many a time and some police officers think that it is normal. It is obvious that for them, Leila is more than an interpreter. She is a convenient tool who will share their workload and help them to obtain information outside the interview as a spy.

Conclusion

Ten years ago, Mikkelsen claimed that ethics was 'a highly explosive subject in the field of interpreting' (2000/2001:49) and there are good reasons to think that it still is. PSI is an occupation which, from the outset, involves an essential element of ethics. It has been rigidly framed by ethical codes to remove interpreters' agency. However, although the construction of the role of PSIs in official texts is rigid, in practice it is far more flexible. Furthermore, despite their DPSI training and teaching of the Code, practitioners did not always feel confident or behave consistently in dealing with ethical conflicts in the heat of the moment. Many felt that they were not provided with a strong educational basis on which they could draw to easily navigate their ways through ethics that were not as straightforward as their training would suggest. As a result, they struggled to maintain a consistent ethical stance, and experienced clashes between

personal and professional ethics. Whilst PSIs inevitably shuttled between ethical positions, they were mainly left alone to deal intuitively with ethical conflicts. As I will discuss in greater detail in Chapter 8, this in turn generates what has been labelled 'ethics work': an unaccounted for, mostly invisible although incessant, form of work undertaken by practitioners in the fulfilment of their occupational role (Colley, 2012; Banks, 2009; Cribb, 2009).

Finally, although the focus of this chapter has been ethics, we can see from the data presented here that it is often impossible to disentangle ethical challenges from deep emotional disturbance at the same time. Leila's account in particular is redolent with instances in which she struggled to detach herself emotionally to perform a neutral and impartial role. In the next chapter, I therefore present a series of critical incidents in which PSIs describe what it entailed to tame their emotions in the context of their work.

Chapter 7: Foregrounding emotion within PSI

There are situations like that when sometimes it's overwhelming and your feelings come to the fore really and that's why it's difficult. You have to manage all that as an interpreter, it's not just translating. You have to manage all the human aspects of it really.

(PSI Lauryne)

Introduction

This chapter seeks to identify how interpreters learn from education and training about handling their emotions in PSI work. It identifies the emotional aspects of interpreting but also the paradoxes that these involve. Its main purpose is to provide empirical evidence on how the control and management of feelings is central to PSIs' accounts of their learning in the workplace and to contribute to a better understanding of the emotional labour undertaken by PSIs whilst at work. How do PSIs learn to tame their emotions to perform a neutral, impartial and invisible role? Are there instances when emotions creep in and take control? How and to what extent is informal and formal learning within PSI intrinsically emotional? And how is learning to do PSI work shaped by emotions?

PSI work: general feelings from interpreters

All the interpreters who took part in my study expressed a real passion for their job except Samir – an exception which I shall discuss further in the next chapter. Numerous yet similar reasons were enthusiastically provided to explain why interpreters 'really like', 'love' or even 'absolutely adore' their job. Since they often work with users from underprivileged backgrounds, PSI has made them more aware of people's miseries and grateful for what they have. They have become more tolerant and understanding towards people who would, for instance, lie during an immigration interview because of the desperate situation that they are in. From the data, it emerged that due to its ad-hoc nature, PSI is 'not a 9 to 5 job' where practitioners are 'chained to a desk'. The 'multifaceted' aspect of the practice in terms of the settings, service users and providers is primarily what makes their occupation 'exciting' and 'interesting'. The majority of interpreters also enjoyed the fact that they mainly interacted between 'people from all walks of life', be it service users from various sociolinguistic and cultural backgrounds and service providers such as health specialists, doctors, nurses, social workers, magistrates, judges, barristers, solicitors, police or immigration officers.

Interpreters also reported that these interactions take place in a variety of settings such as: hospitals, clinics, GP practices, users' domiciles, courts, tribunals and police stations. A commonly shared opinion was that this variety consequently implies 'constant learning', leading to the absence of any 'boredom factor' in PSI work, as Mary's feelings illustrate:

I like the fact that you get to go to so many different places and meet different people, and I find the legal system really fascinating anyway, so I like that side of it as well. The fact that it's always something different and you learn about different cases and how judges deal with different cases and so on, what everyone's role is within the court. Things I don't like so much probably the waiting around, the time spent waiting around. Sometimes you go to the job and then it turns out you're not needed or the defendant hasn't turned up or whatever, so then you feel a bit useless, even though you still get paid, you still think that's a bit of a shame for everyone concerned.

Along with interpreting experience, PSIs acquire knowledge on public service practices and on the rules and conventions that regulate social interactions between users and providers in specific settings. Mary's eagerness to feel useful as professional and her minor frustrations about recurrent waiting-time or late cancellations in PSI work were echoed by her fellow interpreters. However, these minor frustrations appear to be compensated by the overall enjoyment brought by the uniqueness of each assignment. From many accounts, it clearly transpired that although the nature of interpreting assignments may be similar *per se*, for instance birth deliveries, police interviews or pre-trial hearings, in practice 'there isn't a typical assignment, they are all completely different' as Monica firmly asserted. In her opinion, this difference emanates from the fact that assignments 'even the ones that are supposedly the same depend on the individuals'. Therefore their development is subject to a multitude of factors such as 'whether they [*service providers*] are used to work with somebody [*the interpreter*], whether they're friendly or whether they're friendly to the person [*the service user*]'. Monica does not spell it out but it is reasonable to surmise from her assertion that the social nature of the interactions between human beings which practitioners interpret is to a large extent what contributes to their uniqueness and unpredictability.

Emotional reasons for choosing a career in PSI

The interpreters whom I interviewed shared additional common features: they were either born bilingual or became bilingual following prolonged sojourns in the UK

or in countries where their working languages are spoken. The reasons behind these interpreters' bilingualism are therefore linked to their personal life stories. These stories uncover an emotional investment on behalf of practitioners which goes beyond a common drive to facilitate communication. Maureen for instance described her job as her 'type of social work'; one which translates into a 'wonderful experience' especially with people who 'can't speak a word of English because they really need you'. Additional reasons for enjoying PSI work and feeling good about helping people in need were eloquently provided by Andrew:

I do like it [*Public Service Interpreting*], I do love it, I love it, and I do enjoy it. I enjoy it because, it sounds really clichéd, but I like helping people, I do like helping people in that sense, and I think that if I was in a foreign country and I couldn't speak the language that well and I was in that kind of situation for whatever reason, I think I would feel comforted in the fact that I would be able to speak to someone in my own language, I would just feel comforted, I think it would make things a lot easier.

As well as this empathetic view of service users' perceptions, he also recognises what this means in terms of social justice and the PSI's role in supporting this, which gives him pleasure too:

There's also an element of responsibility which I enjoy as well. I think that sometimes I feel that the pressure is sometimes not wanted, but I think that it's nice sometimes to feel that pressure ... it can be a stressful situation, but sometimes you can get a buzz out of what you're doing and essentially what you're doing ... you're decoding information and putting it into another language very quickly, so you can get quite an adrenaline rush from what you're doing because you're working quite quickly, and you do have an important role as well, so I enjoy it for that reason as well.

Andrew's comments encapsulate many interpreters' general feelings about their job. Putting themselves in the users' shoes, many find it 'rewarding' or 'gratifying' to assist them in accessing a whole range of public services. It is considered a matter of fairness and social justice. However, the interpreters' task is also perceived as a challenge for the reasons provided by Andrew: PSI is a complex practice where interactions between users and providers are fast-paced and power imbalances prevalent. Misinterpretations can in some instances have a serious impact on the outcome of the interactions, e.g. prison sentencing, deportation or misdiagnosed illness, as we saw in relation to miscarriages of justice and serious child protection cases in Chapter 2. Consequently, the responsibility befalling PSIs to interpret faithfully,

neutrally and accurately these interactions whilst under pressure can be simultaneously experienced as both 'stimulating' and stressful.

Managing emotions at work: training and discourse

As discussed in the previous sections, the interpreters taking part in my study often had personal and humanitarian motives to emotionally invest in a career as PSI. In striking contrast, DPSI (Diploma in Public Service Interpreting) candidates are strongly discouraged from following their natural instinct to help another human being whilst at work. The tenets of the culture of emotional detachment perpetuated by dominant academic and professional discourses could be summarised as follows: the role of PSIs is not to 'help' users or providers but merely to facilitate communication between them; in order to perform a neutral and impartial role, prospective PSIs are instructed to detach themselves emotionally from the interactions which they interpret by refraining from judging the parties involved, suppressing their emotions and feelings and focusing on the interpreting process instead. These stringent demands for interpreters to perform as mechanical devices void of human feelings are equally omnipresent in official texts. There is little or no mention of the emotional challenge(s) that practitioners may face whilst attempting to perform an emotionless role, particularly in interactions where emotions run high, and their management. For instance, Public Service Interpreters are expected to possess 'an ability to function professionally in all situations' (DPSI handbook, IoLET, 2010: 3). Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 5, they are instructed by the Code 'not to show reaction' whilst at work and by extrapolation, emotions. Interestingly, the examples of exceptions in which practitioners are allowed to interrupt, pause or intervene 'to signal a condition or factor which might impair the interpreting process' provided by the Code also favour technical difficulties, e.g. 'inadequate seating, poor sight-lines or audibility' over human difficulties, e.g. 'inadequate breaks' (NRPSI, 2011: 5). There is no mention of a possible impairment due to emotional challenges.

Whereas the need for interpreters to be formally trained and behave as professionals cannot be refuted, the lack of training on the emotional aspect of the practice and cost involved can be questioned. Several interpreters indeed signalled that despite being trained with real-life materials mainly through role-plays, the safe environment of the classroom did not actually prepare them for dealing with the unexpected hostility encountered in some settings or amongst users and providers. In their opinion, the

emotional aspect of the practice and how to deal with it are progressively learnt on the job. As Maureen, an experienced DPSI trainer admitted:

On the job you learn all the time! Every assignment is like a new experience because for example what you cannot do during training is the emotional situations, the stress.

I shall now present some data that highlight incidents occurring from PSIs' attempts to detach themselves emotionally in the workplace.

Compliance with the demand for emotional detachment

PSI is often considered as one of the least glamorous types of interpreting, compared with conference or business interpreting, and one of the most emotionally challenging (along with interpreting in war zones). All interpreters except Samir stated that they liked their job, but interestingly, stress seems to be an intrinsic aspect of their work too. It makes the job exciting whilst representing an emotional investment and being physically demanding as we have seen with Monica's example in the previous chapter. Upon becoming PSIs, practitioners are soon confronted with its emotional demands. They learn that the majority of their assignments takes place at times of human crises, with for instance mentally or terminally-ill patients, victims or perpetrators of a crime or homeless people. As a result, on one hand users with whom they work are often in a desperate situation and distressed state of the mind and on the other hand, the caring or uncaring attitude of providers is mostly determined by the agenda of the authority which they represent. For PSIs, the mixture of feelings aroused by the interactions between users and providers can also be exacerbated by the settings in which they commonly take place and their degree of formality. Thus, 'emotional arenas' (Fineman, 2008) such as stifling prison cells, gloomy hospital wards or adversarial courtrooms routinely constitute (un)ordinary working environments for PSIs.

Many interpreters concurred in saying that PSI requires maturity and confidence not only to manage one's own emotions and assert oneself as freelance practitioner but also perform in front of an audience. For Mary, who came across as an individual with a shy personality during the interview: 'sometimes it can be quite nerve-racking standing in court, especially the Crown Court.' In such cases, managing her emotions involves 'total panic' inside for missing information out and not wanting to 'interrupt

the court' until becoming 'so involved in the interpreting' that she does not 'really feel anything' anymore. Mary's inner feelings about court interpreting were shared by many interpreters, regardless of their personality traits or experience.

As Mateo's first experiences in court illustrate below, concealing human feelings of panic or stress amid physical and emotional discomfort is part and parcel of becoming professional:

When I was working for the police and the courts, I was very nervous, I remember the first few trials I went to, I was sweating, even though I was really sweating, I didn't want to take my jacket off because I was so sweating (laughs) I thought: 'Shit! If I take it off they'll be able to see my armpits!', really because you're so nervous, you're having to get up in the witness bench to interpret for somebody, and then you have the judge, barristers and all sorts and you're thinking: 'My gosh, I better do a good job here!' because again it's somebody's life that's at risk.

Mateo here evokes several stress factors faced in the courtroom. Despite the invisible role prescribed by the Code, his performance is made public and under the surveillance of a 'learned' audience. At the same time, he also has to deal with the fact that he needs to control his emotions, since the user's fate partly depends on the accuracy of his renditions. This sentence captures the extraordinary paradox of the PSI who is being supposedly an outsider or cipher and yet is there for all to see, struggling with their own emotions. The transition from the relatively private space in an interview or consulting room to the public space with performance in court represents a different category of nervousness for PSIs, such as public exposure or emotion. The experience is different from getting involved in people's lives. Here it is about the public exposure that the PSI as an individual, human agent is being exposed to. To abide by the Code, Mateo ultimately decides to conceal his inner turmoil and its physical manifestations by keeping his jacket on and focusing on the interpreting process. Managing the transition between the private and public spheres and emotions that ensue invisibly is something that interpreters learn on the job. Following austerity measures, video links are now increasingly used in court to interview defendants in custody. However, PSIs are seldom trained to work with this technological advance which challenges their invisibility further as well as their ability to do a good job, as we have already seen Leila observe in the previous chapter:

I hate the video links where you can see that there is a lot of delay in the speech and I remember I was looking at somebody and the judge through the video link

was saying: 'Madam interpreter can you look in this other direction?' It's such an unnatural situation, I really don't like it ...

Concerns about how modern technology is changing the practice of PSI for all parties involved were echoed by Lucy:

Increasingly Public Service Interpreters now are noticing there is a lot more telephone interpreting going on, even in court hearings for example if there are brief administrative-type Public Service Interpreting court hearings, they're doing them on the phone because that means they don't have to pay the travel time, they don't have to pay the mileage, there's a lot less live face-to-face interpreting, and there are a lot more video interpreting sessions going on in courts [...] but if you want quality interpreting, quality rapport with the people you are interpreting for, it doesn't happen on the phone, you can't see each other, you can't assess the body language, it's I think certainly extremely unfair on prisoners [...] I think it's a gross dereliction of their human rights actually, but that's the way it's going.

Other interpreters shared stories about having to make difficult choices between their private and professional lives. A strong sense of duty justified the personal sacrifices which they made. By way of example, Larry talked about receiving unexpected calls from the police and having to leave a family reunion on Christmas day remorseful or cancel social meetings at the last minute with frustration. His strict professional discipline routinely involves sacrificing nights out with friends in case the phone rings otherwise 'it would lessen [*his*] enjoyment of the night knowing [*he*] missed that job'. These sacrifices, he explained, are a real challenge on a personal level and his job 'does wreak havoc ... to making plans for anything'. As a result, friends and family do not feel safe about making plans with him anymore, but due to the precarity of his job, it is hard to refuse assignments for they can be few and far between and bills have to be paid. Larry accepts the situation with resignation, as for him: 'it's really been a case of almost educating my friends and family to the way that my job works without expecting them to always necessarily understand it.'

As far as emotional detachment from the interactions content is concerned, the data suggest that some interpreters find this requirement easier than others. Strategies to deal with upsetting cases include: 'not showing the emotions', 'remaining passive by looking at interpreter's notepad', 'not letting things get to you' and 'snapping out of it by thinking about the next job'. As Mateo indicates, ease generally increases with experience:

When I work for the Home Office, the majority of the persons I interpret for, 99% are from Angola. Angola is a war-stricken country where people are being persecuted for different reasons, for their religion, for their colour, for their [inaudible], and you have to hear some pretty gruesome stories; stories about villages being burnt, children being killed, women raped and people being shot and burnt alive, all sorts of stories, so yeah, it was quite sad sometimes having to hear those stories.

But three or four years down the line, Mateo states that he had 'heard so many different stories that it just didn't affect [him]' anymore. When asked how he had managed it, he replied:

Well, I think it's just practice. The more you do it ... the more your mind is able to deal with it, and after a while you just, I don't know, it becomes part of your daily life. I suppose it's just, yeah practice, the more you do it, the more stories you hear, it gets to a point where you've heard all the stories before so it doesn't affect you.

The nonchalant tone in which Mateo enumerated gruesome examples of human tragedies lived by service users struck me. Interpreting for victims of horrendous crimes had become for him a routine, one which he dealt with by detaching himself emotionally from the interactions until he felt nothing. Whereas my first reaction was to think that Mateo had become a 'good' PSI within a short period of time by successfully performing his role as a mechanical device as set by the Code, I could not help but wonder what was the impact of practitioners' emotional detachment on their lives as individuals and ability to show empathy towards another human being in distress. In a way, it seemed that his emotional experience of being a PSI involved becoming immune to his own emotions rather than learning how to deal with them. Without being prompted, Lucy shared my concerns:

After all these years of experience, I'm much more hardened ... probably because like the judges, like the Home Office officials, I've heard it a million times [laughs], and I think it's quite disturbing a lot of this actually, because sometimes when I'm talking to colleagues ... we're talking in quite a blasé fashion: 'You know that gang rape of asylum seeker women' and whatever, and I'm thinking: 'Oh my God [laughs], are we just talking about this like we've just ordered baked beans on toast or something?', Like it's an everyday occurrence, and it isn't, well certainly not over here it isn't, but things that would have really shocked me and stunned me many years ago, now it's like my daily work diet, and that's quite worrying, isn't it?

Lucy's remark suggests that the more experienced PSIs become, the more hardened they are. They are in a sense becoming dehumanised by learning how to suppress their

emotions to become professional and be perceived as such. Here, Lucy may describe a process through which a 'thick skin' is developed and is becoming normal. It is almost as if PSIs are not really learning to deal with their emotions, they are becoming immune to their own emotions. It is a different category of activity, almost as if they are becoming slightly inhuman in their professional situation, something which professionalism demands. It is a complex and paradoxical process. Similarly to Mateo, Lucy admits that she has become blasé about cases she once found disturbing. The extraordinary has become ordinary in her work life, something which she finds worrying, perhaps because since she began interpreting many years ago, Lucy has always enjoyed the human aspect of the practice. Having to distance herself from users, especially the ones with whom she worked for extended periods of time, felt 'unnatural' at first. It seems that when tragedies become routine, there is a danger for practitioners, e.g. doctors, police officers, solicitors, to shift from a caring to an uncaring attitude and indifference.

Below, Mary recounts an emotionally challenging incident which took place whilst interpreting at a Crown Court.

I remember one in particular that I did at one of the Crown Courts. ... I think this one was working with a false passport, but it was the sentencing, and the judge was quite a harsh judge that day, so I think she ended up getting 18 months for it, and then after the hearing, I went back with the barrister into the cells, and I just remember this one in particular because she was quite distressed ... and she was actually grabbing onto the barrister's legs and wailing, and I was trying to interpret, but I couldn't really interpret in that situation ... she kept saying: 'My daughter, my daughter' and crying, but it was so dramatic because she was just grabbing onto his legs and he was being quite cool about it really, maybe it's happened to him before or I don't know, but the barrister was quite sort of relaxed about it. He just said: 'Look, there's nothing I can do now, the decision's been made so you just need to make sure that you behave well in the prison and then you can leave half way through your sentence', but I just remember it being quite sort of overwhelming 'coz she was so distressed, and then afterwards we went back through and the barrister went up to his colleagues and was laughing about it and joking with them and I thought: 'That's a bit wrong really, this lady's quite distressed and he's sort of saying: 'Oh, you'll never guess what I've just had!'

This assignment was memorable for Mary because she found it traumatising. The user was in a very distressed state for being sentenced to jail and separated from her daughter for a while. Out of desperation, she threw herself at the barrister's feet to implore his mercy whilst crying and wailing. Mary had indicated earlier that it can be difficult to

interpret for upset or anxious users because 'they might be talking over the lawyer or just talking quite fast and it's just quite difficult to tell them to stop when they're in that sort of state of mind, so it's just managing that kind of situation, which you don't really have to do in the DPSI.' In this instance, the user's behaviour prevented Mary from doing her job. As she indicated, she was not trained in dealing with emotional situations on the course, and only learns how to do it on the job. This situation was particularly overwhelming for her and she may have had a hard time at managing and concealing her emotions. On the other hand, the experienced barrister for whom this case was perhaps one amongst many others did not seem to be affected by the user's outburst. His professional reaction was to indicate his role limitation to the woman in a cool and relaxed manner. However, as Mary witnessed, his ability to detach himself emotionally as another type of human service practitioner had turned into something darker: indifference and mockery towards another human being's misfortune.

Practitioners' ability to manage their emotions also seemed subject to personal predispositions towards specific public services. Lauryne for instance holds a DPSI in Local Government but has acquired extensive experience in mental health. Despite the emotional challenges posed by interpreting between a psychiatrist and their mentally-ill patient, this is the service area which she enjoys the most. To acquire additional work experience and make ends meet, Lauryne has carried out a couple of assignments with the police, which she finds 'more daunting' and 'stressful' than NHS or mental health assignments. In her opinion, 'in mental health you have to be quite strong because when you do mental health appointments, you hear really, really difficult things but in the police, you have to be quite strong as well but in a different way really ...'

I was quite surprised by Lauryne's reaction towards legal interpreting. It felt as if her ability to be strong in mental health settings was overlooked and considered as 'normal' when this service area is generally deemed very challenging for interpreters. Like Lauryne, I also have experience in health and mental health settings, but I did not particularly enjoy these settings for the gloomy atmosphere of having to deal with patients. Since obtaining my DPSI, I have mainly worked with courts and the police which I find exciting and stimulating. Somehow, I failed to understand Lauryne's reluctance towards police work. After all, if she was strong enough to carry out mental health assignments, then she surely could learn to do the same in the legal field. She tried to justify it by a lack of experience before stating that upon working in health settings, she did not have any experience either. Puzzled, I asked her if she could make

sense of her apprehension when she relived her first assignment at a police station. Her experience was challenging for several reasons: it was quite late at night, she was tired and although she was in a secure environment, she did not feel safe in the presence of drunken people in the custody area and detained people shouting, talking to each other through the cells and banging on doors. Although she had seen police interviews on TV, she did not really know the procedure or what to expect from the case itself and felt anxious. The user for whom she interpreted was suspected of sexual abuse. 'Dealing with the law and with people potentially infringing the law or who are suspected of it' was another reason for her to feel uncomfortable. Feeling that this may have been worsened by the fact that she is female, she however contemplated that regardless of individuals' gender:

You're affected by those type of issues anyway if you hear things in the news, things do affect you as a human being and you know you are neutral, you're still very neutral when you are interpreting, but you can't help as the interview goes on ...and the police officer shows evidence ... I started to feel very uncomfortable with it.

During the assignment, Lauryne had to labour with additional stressful feelings: she was not confident with the accuracy of the unfamiliar terminology that she used whilst being aware of the fact that the tape-recorded interview could be played in court as evidence in front of a critical audience. Feeling responsible, she thus felt pressured to learn how to do her job 'properly' because 'it's important, you're actually dealing with somebody who is suspected of something, they might have done it, they might have not have done it and they need a fair trial so you have to be good at what you're doing, at doing your job.' But as the interview progressed, she had to control her emotions and put her feelings aside to avoid panicking, although:

There are situations like that when sometimes it's overwhelming and your feelings come to the fore really and that's why it's difficult. You have to manage all that as an interpreter, it's not just translating. You have to manage all the human aspects of it really.

With experience, Lauryne has become well aware of the fact that interpreting does not only involve linguistic skills. Her difficult task as PSI includes dealing with the emotional aspects of the practice. But this is something that she learns on the job on her own and she finds it really challenging. She later confessed:

I've got a second interview to do in two-week's time and I'm already, even just talking about it [*laughs*] makes me feel stressed! The anticipation, knowing that I'm gonna find that again, this atmosphere, I don't know.

As many of her colleagues, Lauryne deplored the general lack of de-briefing after police interviews, something which she is used to in mental health settings. De-briefings are for her an opportunity to make sense of how she felt whilst interpreting. On one occasion when she felt unprofessional for breaking down in tears during a mental health assignment because the story of a patient resonated with her own experience, the psychiatrist reassured her that her emotional reaction was a positive aspect towards the patient's recovery because:

As a human being it showed the patient, that some people actually were moved by what she was saying, her experiences were important. It showed her ... that what she went through was quite significant and it affects other people.

In this instance, Lauryne was fortunate enough to find a professional and compassionate ear to interpret her human reaction in a positive manner. However, this is a privilege that she and many of her interviewed colleagues did not enjoy during legal work. Having worked for the police for a number of years without being de-briefed, I could finally make sense of her reluctance towards legal interpreting. It is an emotionally-challenging environment and although PSIs work jointly with providers who generally benefit from emotional support especially during emotionally-challenging cases, interpreters do not benefit from any dedicated counselling structure and are left to their own devices to process vicarious traumas. This lack is often explained by the fact that they work freelance; NRPSI is only an online register and could not possibly provide such service; and since the information PSIs deal with is confidential, they often feel that they cannot discuss difficult cases with anyone. Furthermore, interpreters are eager to act professionally in all circumstances as is expected of them. As a result, asking for emotional support can as Maureen describes be perceived as a sign of professional incompetence:

If you ask for it [*laughs*], it's almost like your card's been marked: 'Oh dear! She needs our services.' So in some respect, I think the expectations are that you can cope because the social worker can cope or the police officer can cope. Sometimes a de-brief afterwards is possible with police officers, but quite honestly, they have to deal with the people, they have to deal then with the paperwork, they don't want to sit and have a chat with the interpreter for the next half hour.

Many interpreters indicated that membership within a regional network for professional translators and interpreters was indeed a 'huge help' in terms of meeting colleagues, finding out about the practices, sharing opinions and experiences or attending workshops, conferences and meetings that would enhance their continuing professional developments as requested by the Code. Several practitioners nonetheless signalled that faced with the isolating nature of PSI work, wider support from above and from professionals across the country would also be beneficial, as pinpointed by Andrew. In his eyes, being able to share experiences without revealing too many details about a case is both 'great' and 'important', but having the opportunity to do it more often would perhaps make it 'much easier to come to some sort of consensus as to what to do in this situation'. He recognises that 'you can't always apply the Code of Conduct', and that the PSI has to assess 'when to intervene and when not to intervene' if they feel that the service user has not understood a question, or the service provider's explanation of an issue or process is too vague for the user to understand. Andrew consequently views the interpreting process as 'a bit of give and take' where practitioners have to employ their own strategies spontaneously to decide on appropriate interventions. For him, this constitutes another reason to think that wider support amongst colleagues coupled with a shadowing programme would be useful to address the gap between training and practice:

An exchange between other interpreters ... would be great because you never know, a colleague of yours may have a brilliant strategy for dealing with x or y that you may not have thought about, so that's why I've mentioned before, this exchange between colleagues, that's why I think it would be great. And another thing I think would be good as well would be perhaps if the Chartered Institute set up some kind of-, or the National Register set up some kind of shadowing programme for example whereby an interpreter in your region could come and shadow you, just to observe or you could go and observe another interpreter working, I think that could only be beneficial. [...] Once you have the diploma [DPSI] and you're interpreting, there's no one there to monitor you, to see how you're doing, to give you feedback, constructive feedback on the work that you, so once you qualify, once you're out there then that's it, you're on your own.

Furthermore, whilst working on an attempted murder case, Oliver confided that, despite his professional experience as DPSI holder and trainer, he found a specific case bizarre and 'quite difficult because a child was stabbed.' The police interviews took place in a remote location and he had to use public transports since he did not own a car at the time. He recalled having to walk from the train station to his house during winter

whilst 'it was quite dark and cold, and I couldn't get the case out of my head.' On his way home, Oliver could not help but feel paranoid about his own safety following such a serious case. Disturbing thoughts came to his mind but he simultaneously had to suppress them to carry on with the assignment:

I was thinking: what would happen now if I was exactly in the same situation where the person was just walking in the street and got stabbed?' And I started looking around and looking at people, which usually I would have never done that, so that case was really playing on my mind for a while, and I started being quite, you know, wary that night going back home on my own and looking at people who looked a bit different and thinking: 'are they gonna take a knife out and stab me like they did?' I think it's because you saw pictures, etc., I think that was quite emotional so that brought me down a bit and that night I went back home and I thought: 'either I carry on with the case, in that case ... that cannot have an impact, I have to make sure that I do like a kind of mental blockage, and when I leave the police station I left that behind and that's it and I do not think about it', and I think it's that night when I managed to do it and I managed to carry on for the next two days, and that's when I thought: 'yeah, I can do the job because whatever I hear, I can still go back home and think: 'ok, no that's it, I'm not thinking about what happened at the police station, don't think about it'.

His spontaneous strategy for dealing with a disturbing case was not to think about it whilst off duty. The fact that he felt paranoid perhaps suggests that this may not have been easy on a private level but to get on with the job professionally, he had no choice but to suppress his feelings without addressing them properly.

In Larry's case, some assignments have been so disturbing that he has found it difficult to let his feelings go and has strangely felt guilty for users' misfortunes:

I'm sorry to say that there's been a couple of cases that just they do leave an impression on you ... I'm to be honest, there's been a couple of cases that have affected me so badly I'm waking up in the middle of the night, but sometimes you feel it's natural ... not that you don't feel bad for somebody, but sometimes you actually almost get a slight guilt because you've gone so close into what you've seen happening to someone and you think: 'why is it happening to them? Why has it happened to them? Why is it not happened to me?' ... it's hard not to kind of say a little prayer for them ...

Larry's enactment of his role goes beyond interpreting skills. He feels sorry and almost guilty for the experience users go through and he cannot but say a prayer for them in his private life. Users, providers and the assignment nature can have a strong emotional impact on PSIs, as I shall now illustrate in detail with Maureen and Lucy.

Dealing with feelings from users and providers

The interpreters' stories from the field shared across the last three chapters have directly or indirectly shed light on service users' and providers' mixed feelings about their physical presence in interpreted events and practice as a whole. Building a rapport with users in particular has been one of practitioners' prerogatives to enable communication regardless of the situations they were in, even if this meant breaking the rules to inspire trust and confidence. With experience, PSIs have however learnt that appearing too close to users or providers may backfire on them. Their professional role and integrity can be challenged by being perceived as friends, allies or as other interpreters like Monica experienced it as pure traitors:

I'm thinking of a particular tribunal which I went to, where I won't go to that location again because: a) it's so far away it's inconvenient, but secondly I've never been treated in such an unfriendly manner in my life and I thought if I as the interpreter, an English-sounding person gets treated that way, how on earth are they treating the people that come to the tribunal? And what happened ... I came in I think it was at lunchtime because it was an afternoon case and ... I think the security guard was there and he said, in nuanced terms, he told me to go and wait in this room where the person was, and so I did as I was told, and then 10 minutes later, the tribunal's clerk almost started shouting at me: 'why are you here? You shouldn't be in here', I said: 'this is where I was told to go by your staff', I immediately followed her out and went to the other room and I just felt that it was unreasonable, if they can't get their staff to tell people where is the right place to go because it is not consistent what happens when you actually go to tribunals, I go to many different ones ... and I basically just adapt to whatever the tribunal clerk and people tell me to do ...

Adapting to the demands and protocols of specific settings as well as service users' and providers' perceptions of their roles require interpreters to think fast to preserve their neutrality and impartiality. This nonetheless requires them to 'don an invisibility cloak' whilst performing emotional labour as Maureen and Lucy spelled out.

Having experience in DPSI training, Maureen is acutely aware of the gap between training and practice in terms of stress and emotion management. As a result, managing emotions in the workplace can be a real challenge, even for an experienced professional like her. Over the years, she has come across different types of users: those who are upset, grateful, aggressive or suspicious and has learnt to deal with emotional challenges on the job, using the Code as a compass. Maureen remembers carrying out a 'very disturbing' assignment in mental health at the beginning of her career for which 'training certainly didn't help':

The assignment was also very traumatic ... everytime I spoke [*language*] this woman started screaming, so some of her trauma had something to do with speaking [*language*] or hearing [*language*] and I had to continue to as they were reading her rights under the Mental Health Act or what was happening to her under the Mental Health Act because it's obviously not rights, she continued to scream and I obviously then stopped and the guy just told me: 'You have to say it all in [*language*], because unless she's heard it all, even if she continues to scream, we haven't done what we are supposed to do', so I proceeded to interpret simultaneously because I thought there's no way I'm doing it consecutively for a good-, well it seemed like an eternity, but it was probably only ten minutes through her screaming basically so, that was very traumatic.

Maureen has not been trained to deal with extreme emotions from users. She described the patient as very upset, 'really bright red' with 'tears streaming down her face'. Since the patient screamed every time her mother tongue was spoken, Maureen found it very difficult to do her job. As she explained, part of the patient's trauma was linked to her mother tongue and by doing her job, Maureen unwillingly provoked an upsetting emotional reaction in the patient. Maureen admits that she found the assignment very traumatic, which indicates that she had to manage her own emotions whilst facing the patient's. Not knowing how to deal with the situation, Maureen decided to stop interpreting but was requested to continue by the medical staff. Her spontaneous strategy to speed the process and in a sense constrain the patient's emotional reaction was to resort to simultaneous interpreting to get the job done as quickly as possible..

In the previous chapter, this interpreter assertively stepped out of invisibility to shore up boundaries with a user desperate to befriend her. Being considered as a friend by users is for her 'the most problematic area really to deal with', because users think that PSIs are there to help and she sometimes has to 'disillusion them.' In contrast to friendly users, Maureen recalled being greeted by an aggressive detainee on arrival at a police station once:

Or it's things like hostile clients that doesn't happen in training. For example I went to a police station in ... and was greeted with a lady who had beaten her child and was in a cell banging against the door and they opened the little window, the police officer said: 'This is your ... interpreter', I said the same in ... and she said: 'So you're finally here you asshole!' in ... [*laughs*] and I just interpreted it, much to the astonishment of the police officer and those kind of things you learn on the job to just deal with it really.

Maureen's spontaneous strategy to deal with the user's aggressivity is simply to ignore it. She manages to conceal her feelings and do what she is there for which is interpret

everything said in her presence. On interpreting the user's insult towards her, Maureen mentioned that the police officer was surprised. This is perhaps due to a lack of awareness of what her job entails or to the user's reaction.

Throughout her account, Maureen stressed the need to convey the right emotions whilst interpreting. Interpreting for her does not only depend on linguistic accuracy, but also on mirroring the speaker's tone and body language; something which she does despite feeling as if she has 'run a marathon' afterwards, risking to sound unprofessional to suspicious providers or having 'a good cry' in the car once the assignment is over to evacuate her emotions. In what follows, Maureen recalled an incident which took place whilst interpreting for a visiting police officer who was giving evidence in a trial:

The problem was that they'd arrested a drug dealer with ... a big bag of I think it was cocaine on him and he got caught basically red-handed, so what he did he shoved it up his sweater and as they made him spread his legs and checked him, it fell out at his feet. So he was claiming that it was planted on him and the funny thing which [*foreign nationals*] don't understand at all is when English police officers give evidence in court, they're very subtle and they're very polite and they're almost like nodding dogs in front of the judge, which isn't the case at all in [*country*], they don't change their attitude in any which way and he obviously hadn't observed this at all because being a witness, he came in later with me and gave evidence in a typical [*foreign nationality*] manner so, when he was being cross-examined [*laughs*] after this claim of: 'It was planted on me', he turned round and said: 'Listen, I'm not blind, he had a big fat belly until he spread his legs and then it was gone. Well, what do you think happened to it, it didn't go down his trousers, it was the cocaine.' So, the judge and the barrister they all just kind of looked at me as if: 'Oh my God! Why is she expressing it like that?' And I just had to point to him to say: 'That's what he said.' And the barrister had the cheek to say: 'I think that got lost in translation.'

This incident highlights some difficulties that PSIs may encounter whilst trying to do a good job when providers and users are not aware of the rules. Unlike the witness, Maureen displays an awareness of the cultural differences between court protocols in England and his country of origin. She knows that his way of addressing the Court is deemed unacceptable within the English legal system but she still mirrors his speech to remain faithful to his renditions and convey his frustration. Her attempt to be perceived as professional is however misinterpreted by the legal team and raises suspicion about her abilities. Full of mistrust, the barrister publicly criticizes her performance through sarcasm, thus lowering her professional status.

The barrister's reaction is not unfamiliar to Maureen. Like her colleagues, she is aware that although some providers are grateful for interpreters' input and treat them with respect, the majority perceives PSIs as 'a pain in the neck' for the following reasons:

The assignment's going to take twice as long because they [*PSIs*] are there, a lot of them are really bad because they've had bad experiences, they don't understand how to work with them, some of them are freaked out by us because they think: 'Oh my God! What do I do with this interpreter now?' Some of them have a very negative attitude to interpreters but they appreciate the good ones all the more, but generally it's like: 'Oh God! We need an interpreter for this assignment'. So I actually think in general, their attitude is negative and we're seen as a problem in the system.

PSIs are often perceived as a necessary evil by providers. Without interpreters providers could not communicate with users with limited proficiency in English, but their presence inevitably slows things down. Although they are trying to do their job, PSIs frequently face animosity from providers. They are blamed for slowing things down or for bad experiences that providers may have had with interpreters in the past, which in turn affects their professional identity. Let us turn to a further example of how PSIs deal with emotion in the workplace.

At the time of the interview, Lucy had worked as a PSI for a decade. She also had experience in interpreter training and legal practice. Her former career, she claims, is an extremely valuable asset to market herself both as a legal and linguist expert in Public Service Interpreting. She enjoys a very active professional life, admitting nonetheless that 'the downside of Public Service Interpreting that I had totally unanticipated is the sheer amount of the paperwork you have to do' in terms of invoicing and membership renewals. Lucy's account offers a rich mixture of strong emotional experiences lived as a PSI, ranging from excitement to trauma. Her strong views on her role as PSI and professionalism often clash with most codes of ethics that define and regulate the profession. In the following example, Lucy finds it hard and stressful to do a good job with physically aggressive or suspicious providers:

Even in certain interviews, for example ... working with Home Office officials in police immigration interviews where I have actually been there when the officials have come very, very close to extremely oppressive behaviour with whoever they're interviewing, I've actually stood up and said: 'I'm not willing to stay here'. Now, according to our Code of Ethics as interpreter you're not supposed to do that, you are supposed to sit there and be the mouthpiece, but if I

felt really uncomfortable about the way interviewing is being conducted, I'd just say: 'I'm sorry I can't stay' or 'I'm tired' and make an excuse 'I need to go', because often when the interviewer can get very aggressive, it's actually very stressful and very oppressive also for the interpreter. I've had officials from the Home Office or whatever banging the desk with their fist in frustration or whatever in front of me. Some of the people actually that you work with, the so-called professionals, I think they forget that we were independent and impartial, and they see us almost as part of a unit with the asylum seeker, and I think some of them really believe that we are in our own language giving the asylum seeker advice and clues about what to say and they lump us together as this kind of package, and try to sort of destroy us in the process.

This incident sheds light on additional difficult conditions in which PSIs may work. Lucy has strong credentials and to reinforce her identity as a professional, she refuses to suffer oppression from providers. She privileges her human feelings over the Code's scriptures and does not hesitate to make an excuse and leave an assignment if it becomes too emotionally challenging to deal with. Lucy evokes another significant aspect of mistrust from providers. Because PSIs speak the user's language, they can be suspected of forming a secret allegiance with them whilst interpreting and can be treated with suspicion. The neutrality and impartiality of PSIs can however be doubted by users for the same reasons. Below is an example of a situation when Lucy did not manage to leave an emotionally-challenging assignment to protect herself, with serious consequences.

As many PSIs have done, Lucy first stepped into the interpreting world by acquiring experience through an agency. In what follows, she gives an account of how she was booked one day to attend a day care surgery appointment in a hospital. As is often the case in PSI work, no additional details on the nature of assignment were provided. Lucy admits that with hindsight, the following incident took place because she was 'naïve and green enough not to ask in advance what was the surgery'. On arrival, she was stunned to discover that it was for a pregnancy termination:

I'm a Catholic for example and it's completely against my faith to be involved in any sort of abortion work and I just was stunned and everything started happening very quickly like: 'come to the ward with the woman, help her to sign all the consent forms and everything', I was reeling, and I just didn't know what to do, and apparently it was quite a late abortion, and I just knew that if I backed out, she wouldn't be able to get it ..., anyway I stayed of course against my faith, ..., and it just traumatised me for months and months on end. I did things like before the woman actually got wheeled into the theatre, I just made the sign of the cross on her forehead to-, I don't know why I did it, to protect her or

something like that, and I just kept thinking: 'I shouldn't be here, I shouldn't be doing this. What would my priest say?'

In this incident, Lucy chooses to blur boundaries because of her own personal ethics. First, Lucy states that she is Catholic. As such, she has to abide by specific moral principles and behaviour set by her religion. As defined by the Oxford English Dictionary, an induced rather than a natural abortion is a deliberate act of pregnancy termination that involves loss of the foetus. For anti-abortionist Catholics, this voluntary loss is nothing less than the killing of an unborn child regardless of the pregnancy stage. This may explain why Lucy strongly believes that her faith forbids her from having any involvement in such act.

The contradiction between her personal and professional ethics also comes from the fact that as PSI, her role is to enable service users to access public services vital for their daily functioning in society by interpreting interactions between them and service providers. As Lucy pointed out during the interview, her withdrawal from the assignment could have resulted in the user being denied access to the service she needed. Many of her colleagues disliked that type of work. Scheduling a new appointment with an interpreter willing to take over could consequently incur time delays. Yet, time is a luxury which the patient did not have. Lucy mentions that her pregnancy was already at an advanced stage, which indicates that the legal abortion period had almost expired. In the end, Lucy's strong sense of professional duty made her stay at the hospital despite her religious beliefs. Other factors which contributed to her decision are: the professional code of conduct that prevents PSIs' agency through its rigidity and the fast-paced interactions between users and providers which characterize the practice. Both factors as she suggests hardly gave her a chance to react as a human being.

Lucy's inner struggle offers an additional insight into the type of invisible emotional labour carried out by PSIs in the workplace. In this example, this work is mainly generated by a clash between ethics and emotions. Faced with an unexpectedly upsetting assignment, Lucy is invisibly reeling and agonising over what to do: be a good Catholic or a good PSI. She is constantly oscillating between her personal and professional ethics whilst dealing with her emotions at the same time. In other words, her boundaries become blurred then leaky. As she opts for being a good PSI, her personal ethics are breached by her professional ethics. She then becomes agentic by spontaneously stepping out of invisibility to make the sign of the cross on the patient's

forehead to protect her during the intervention. Her justification for doing so reveals that she did not think about it. It just happened as if she could not help herself from instinctively wanting to protect another human being in a life-threatening situation. In this case, it is her professional ethics that are breached by her personal ethics.

It is worth noting that three things are happening. First, Lucy has become sufficiently professional that she can perform the role. There is an element there to allocate to professionalism, her professional duty overcame her emotional revulsion but that professional duty was also located in a very exigent situation. If she did not act, that woman would have been left without an interpreter. Second, therefore it was not just the procedure and logic of her professional duty. It was also the context specific nature of the judgment she had to make under very difficult circumstances. And third, involuntarily, out of habit and faith Lucy has to never the less make that sign. It is irrational and yet it has to be done. It is an embodied belief that she cannot overcome. She seeks absolution both immediately and afterwards. During the interview, Lucy added that she confessed her 'sin' to her priest to obtain absolution. However, she views the experience as: 'one of the worst things I ever did ... this is several years ago and it still haunts me now...'. Through this traumatic experience, she has learnt that whether she agrees with it or not, PSIs are needed for this kind of job.

Summary

In this chapter I have provided a variety of examples of how interpreters learn to do emotional labour in the workplace. Emotions are omnipresent in Public Service Interpreting, yet there is limited guidance on how interpreters can deal with emotional challenges faced due to settings, users or providers. Practitioners therefore learn to cope by spontaneously developing strategies, but sometimes have to pay a high cost for the emotionally-challenging nature of their work. In the last example, labouring with emotions has left Lucy feeling traumatised due to a clash between her personal and professional ethics and struggling to remain invisible. As we have seen in the last three chapters, practitioners experience boundary disturbances in the workplace which are exacerbated by ethical and emotional conflicts. Issues related to their invisibility, neutrality and impartiality are therefore intertwined and inextricably linked, but how can these phenomena be theoretically explained? This will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 8: Theorising boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour

Introduction

In this chapter, I present an initial theoretical analysis of the subject of this thesis, *Learning to be a Public Service Interpreter in England: boundaries, ethics and emotion in a marginal profession*. This analysis is based on the three main themes that I have foregrounded from PSIs' narratives in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the choice of which I discussed in Chapter 4

The first is that of boundary work. Chapter 5 has highlighted the ways in which macro-level contextual issues combine with micro-level competition around status and (non)reciprocal understanding involving service providers to generate incursions on and across the boundaries of the PSIs' role. At the same time, the needs and desires of service users also impinge upon PSIs' professional boundaries.

The second theme is that of ethics work. In Chapter 1, I explored some of the complexities surrounding PSI by tracing its origin in history. I discussed historical narratives of early interpreting work which illustrate that PSI is to be understood as a set of social practices embedded in a multiplicity of other parallel social practices. I argued that some early interpreters acted as tools for the authorities, go-betweens or peacemakers, which in turn raised issues of trust, power and status. These issues have led to the professionalization of interpreting in public service settings in England and other countries with the establishment of professional bodies, codes of ethics, training and accreditation. I discussed concerns about the Code's role definition of interpreters as mere conduits or translation machines for neutrality, impartiality and invisibility sake and appeals for studying PSI as a triadic rather than a dyadic social interaction between human beings. Critical studies have focused on this significant aspect to grasp a more holistic understanding of this phenomenon. In Chapter 2, I offered my own historical analysis of the emergence of PSI in the UK in an era of globalization. Taking into account the institutional and socio-historical contexts that have driven the rise of PSI, I contended that the practice has been over-rigidly framed by government policies and official texts, and that this can easily create difficult tensions between PSIs' personal and professional ethics.

The third key theme is that of emotional labour. Chapter 7 has demonstrated how the nature of the interpreted interactions themselves can be highly emotionally

charged, given the situations in which immigrants may find themselves, and given that some of these interactions require them to give detailed accounts of deeply traumatic events. We have also seen how the ethical pressures discussed in Chapter 6 can themselves give rise to considerable emotional turmoil.

This chapter therefore consists of three broad parts. Each part first fleshes out the theoretical framing of one these key concepts, primarily drawing on the literature on workplace learning; and then goes on to offer a more explicit interpretation of the data, revealing the additional layers of work for PSIs (over and above the activity of interpreting itself) that are demanded by the need to manage these complex aspects of the interactions in which they are involved. This explicit and detailed analysis of different types of hidden labour will then be synthesised in Chapter 9.

Moving beyond the concept of the PSI's 'invisibility' towards 'boundary work'

Chapter 5 began by presenting examples of PSIs' initial views on the official demand for their invisibility in the workplace. These examples indicate that on a relatively superficial level, participants believed that they adhered to it. Following training, they viewed their invisibility at work as a way to reinforce the neutrality and impartiality of their role, be perceived as professional (as opposed to lay interpreters), and be trusted by both parties. Mateo, Andrew and Larry, for instance, asserted that suppressing body language to appear neutral was paramount, since PSIs could end up sending the wrong signal by not controlling their reactions: they are expected to merely interpret interactions between parties without having any impact on them.

It is worth noting that on the surface, the performance of this 'invisible' role was considered not only crucial, but also unproblematic. Indeed, several PSIs shared a variety of techniques acquired with time and experience to enact invisibility. By way of example, Mary and Monika believed that their work required qualities such as patience, focus and physical restraint since assignments can be lengthy, tiresome or challenging, and since they have to keep a straight face whilst interpreting blatant lies or unrealistic explanations from some service users. In parallel, Lucy indicated that maintaining a blank face when users are lying, or relaxing her facial muscles to refrain from mirroring service providers' reactions, also helped her to remain invisible. But in Andrew's case, interpreting nonsense further involved saving face by making it explicit to service providers that the service user was the one not making sense rather than him. According to the data, he therefore felt a pressing need to step out of invisibility in order

to affirm himself as a professional. Finally, Lucy and Larry provided us with enlightening examples of how PSIs learn to adapt their attire according to service users in order to avoid offending them, or the settings in which they work to melt in the background.

Interestingly, most of the PSIs interviewed reported that their practice was physically demanding and impacted on their bodies in unforeseen ways. At the most basic level, the data generated in this study revealed that PSIs' invisibility is linked to their physical presence and that their physical presence has needs. However, these needs are mostly overlooked both by practitioners themselves and by others because of the expectation of their invisibility in the workplace. Due to the nature of their role, PSIs are often needed in times of human crisis. As a result, it can be difficult for them to predict when and where they will work or for how long. This reality also hints at the precarious conditions in which they work. Oliver's strategy to deal with these has been to have his 'interpreter's bag' ready, just in case. As for Monika, she recounted several incidents that took place whilst attempting to fit several assignments in a day, perhaps in an attempt to make ends meet, such as being at the mercy of service providers' hectic organisation, running up and down a big court for multiple hearings, 'pigging' herself on unhealthy biscuits in lieu of having lunch, and feeling stressed or being late as a result when, as she points out, a golden rule for practitioners is to always be on time.

On the ground, Monika also learnt that some settings can be more physically demanding than others. With experience, she came to prefer assignments in courts rather than home visits with social workers as she felt more valued. But she discovered that even in the 'privileged' environment of the courtroom, her role was somewhat misunderstood and undervalued by some of the providers with whom she worked. By way of example, she described instances in which she was required to interpret in 'abysmal' conditions such as behind high glass barriers or with the judge and barristers with their backs to her, which made it difficult for her to hear, let alone interpret. Mary similarly evoked unexpected challenges in the courtroom, such as failing to alert providers on the difficulty posed by having to interpret 'through the gap in the glass'. This request, she explained, both made her job difficult and her role unnecessarily visible. Having to perform in front of an audience in such circumstances also made her feel uncomfortable as a human being. Intriguingly, Mary further pointed out that the interpreter's invisibility could be a double-edged sword. On one hand, she felt that although the status of PSIs in court settings should be equal to that of any officers of the

court, this was rarely the case. The PSI practice was for her both an isolated and isolating one: she did not see colleagues at work, and the service users and providers with whom she interacted did not seem to know what her role entailed. On the other hand, being too invisible at work is what prevented Mary from being seen by service users and providers and led her to miss appointments despite being present. In contrast, Larry provided an example of how being too visible as a PSI by chasing up payments with service providers ultimately cost him further paid work with them.

These findings on PSIs' initial views on the official demand for their invisibility may be interesting, yet for the most part they are anything but new. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 3, Wadensjö's (1998a) seminal work on interpreted asylum and medical interviews has shed significant light on the visible and active role of PSIs in interpreted events. Drawing on sociolinguistic and social psychology theories, her interdisciplinary study deconstructs the myth of the invisible interpreter by exploring PSIs' experiences at work in a manner that is still useful and much acclaimed today. It demonstrates that contrary to long-held misconceptions, talk is a set of complex social activities. Therefore, interpreting *does not* and *cannot* take place in a 'social vacuum'. It is a triadic rather than a dyadic exchange, a 'pas de trois' (Wadensjö's, 1998a). A small but growing number of critical studies have continued to explore the PSI practice through the lenses of social and sociological theories, and have refuted the feasibility of the interpreter's invisibility in interpreted-events (see for instance, Inghilleri, 2012, 2005, 2003; Pöchhacker, 2006; Angelelli, 2004a and b, 2001; Pym *et al.*, 2003). As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3, Angelelli's (2004b) cross-cultural/linguistic longitudinal study of the interpreter's interpersonal role in 'interpreted communicative events' (ICE) builds on Wadensjö (1998a) to explore interpreters' perceptions of their roles in particular the demand for their invisibility, in conference, court and medical settings. Empirical data suggest that factors such as social backgrounds and workplace settings influenced their perceptions of invisibility, just as in my study. Although participants mediated culture, societal beliefs, power and politics besides language, they did not perceive their input as active participation in the interaction *per se*. Indeed, many believed that their practice could be dehumanized and that it took place in a social vacuum. Recourse to the sociology of Bourdieu (1997) further enabled Angelelli (2004 a and b) to highlight two significant aspects of PSI that are particularly relevant to my study. First, PSI is a situated practice embedded in a set of other social practices; and second, it is constrained by the settings in which it takes place. In complementary

ways, the above-mentioned studies demonstrate the impossibility of the interpreter's 'invisibility' in the workplace whilst others usefully investigate factors that render the PSI profession invisible or apply the concept of 'boundary work' to analyse its processes of professionalisation (Grbić, 2010; Sela-Sheffy and Schlesinger, 2008).

However, there is a need to extend these analyses to consider the management of professional boundaries by practitioners themselves in the face of contestation over them. Indeed, boundaries within PSI work are supposedly rigid, but they are constantly subject to disturbances, since in a triadic exchange, it is impossible for PSIs not to participate. PSIs may be obliged or willing to breach these boundaries, or they may resist boundary disturbances on the ground, so it is more problematic than it appears. Questions pertaining to the instability of practitioners' invisibility still remain, such as: how are the boundaries of the PSI profession negotiated? How does the invisibility of practitioners break down? What are the dynamics and interactions within PSI work? What are the social practices within those interactions that actually reveal the falseness of the discourse of the interpreter's invisibility?

The work of Seddon *et al.* (2010) assists us in reflecting upon such disturbances in the workplace with their key concept of professional boundary work. In a transnational research project, the authors explore how human service work such as teaching, nursing and social work is being disturbed by global economic, political and social changes; and how practitioners' agency is both constrained and enabled by these disturbances. In so doing, they shed theoretical and empirical light on the effects of globalisation manifested in the reorganization of work, roles, skills and practices in increasingly economy-driven societies. They identify two key characteristics to professional boundaries. Indeed, disturbances to occupations may be read as being caused both from within or outside, leading to the notion of 'disturbing work'. The key concern informing Seddon *et al.*'s (2010) project is to uncover the strategies adopted by individual practitioners to deal with these disturbances in their occupation, within a competitive capitalist era. Their findings illuminate the often-invisible learning that takes place in non-formal educational contexts at a micro-level. Besides providing evidence of workplace learning, the authors illustrate how the boundary work undertaken by individual practitioners translates into varying degrees of personal agency. Ultimately, their analytical exploration of 'boundary work' opens a wide spectrum that ranges from practitioners' compliance with officially prescribed occupational roles to resistance.

PSI is a specific type of under-researched human service work with particular aspects that illustrate well the key concept of professional boundary work put forward by Seddon and her colleagues (2010). As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, it is a newly bounded profession which derives from an ancient unbounded practice and which has significantly been shaped by policy-making. It has been framed by various official texts, national and supranational policies that, through rigid boundaries, have obscured the human nature of the practice and prescribed practitioners to act as invisible conduit pipes. This dehumanising demand for their invisibility is not only for a visual, but also a personal and social invisibility, when interpreters work in very intense human situations. Furthermore, although PSIs interact with service users and providers from multiple backgrounds and in intimate situations, they are expected to remain outside of the interactions that they interpret.

However, while PSI is characterised as an apparently tightly bounded profession, in practice we see that often it is not. Indeed, as we have seen in Chapter 5, PSIs' professional boundaries are extremely frail for several reasons: they mainly work freelance in precarious conditions, but the future of their practice is threatened by the increase of agencies that encourage cheap labour and no minimum qualifications. They work in situations that are challenging in terms of managing invisibility, ethics and emotions, yet there is no structure in place to support them. In addition, since PSIs work in multi-professional contexts, they are faced with a multiplicity of boundaries whilst interacting with service users and providers. Practitioners' professional boundaries are disturbed by conflicting perceptions and expectations of their role by the other parties and their own. The common lack of understanding of PSIs' role further leads to practitioners' low professional status and they undertake boundary work to both remain 'invisible' in the workplace and attain visible professional recognition. Despite this, they are rarely perceived as professionals. Within Seddon *et al.*'s (2010) project, a study on paraprofessional developments in Health and Social Care in the UK reveals that practitioners' visibility contributes toward the recognition of professional competence (Kubiak, 2010). Without it, they feel deskilled and undervalued. Similarly, I contend that the demand for the interpreter's invisibility does important work in concealing the issues that PSIs face whilst attempting to follow ethical rules 'by the book', and this is detrimental to their professional identity as human practitioners. Carrying out invisible tasks does not provide an accurate picture of what the practice entails. The unrealistic expectations of the Code put PSIs in a difficult situation and

they actually resist invisibility because they are human. They therefore exercise 'agency in resisting invisibilisation or promoting visibility' (Kubiak, 2010: 272).

In light of these inconsistencies, let us interpret participant PSIs' contestations of and responses to disturbances to their professional boundaries presented in Chapter 5, by using Seddon *et al.*'s (2010) language to make sense of what is happening in this new and therefore very unstable profession. My choice here is to primarily focus on the level at which these boundaries are enacted in micro-level interpreted interactions from PSIs' perspectives to address this gap in the literature. Indeed, much has been written on what PSIs' ought to do in the workplace in various corners of the globe, yet research on what they actually do and experience in practice is scarce. In this study, I therefore aim to fill that gap from an English perspective. I shall first focus on the boundaries managed by PSIs, following the understanding that these are delimited by multiple factors such as time, space, patriarchal societies, political, professional and personal discourses (Seddon *et al.*, 2010). In other words, professional boundaries are multi-layered and interact with each other. Second, their nature fluctuates between dichotomies such as rigidity/flexibility, clarity/blurring and stability/instability. This implies that practitioners may be involved in either shoring up or resisting disturbances to their professional boundaries at different levels, through the negotiation of power. From my data, there are four major boundary disturbances that can be identified in PSIs' experiences of invisibility in the workplace. In the sections that follow, I shall discuss these four different types of boundary work that I discerned in my research data. I am by no means suggesting that these types of boundary work are the only ones possible. Within the remit of this study, I have chosen them because each example illustrates a different power dynamic in the interaction, with different sources of agency either disturbing or reinforcing the boundaries. Sometimes agency of the PSI is willing, sometimes the agency is driven by another person and compliance with their agency may be willing or unwilling on the part of the PSI. It may also be resisted by them.

First, boundaries may be breached by service providers and PSIs to control or care for service users. The second type of disturbance is that these boundaries may be non-existent for users, leaving PSIs to shore them up. Third, service providers may disturb boundaries to reinforce their professional status. And finally, boundaries may become blurred for PSIs according to the settings in which they work. I shall now present these different types of boundaries, disturbances and combinations of agency. Looking at the data, I shall try to answer the following questions: what is the nature of

the boundary? And in relation to that boundary, what is the nature of the disturbance? Is the agency of the PSI voluntary or imposed? Or do they resist?

Breaching the boundary of PSI to control or care for users

As discussed in Chapter 2, PSIs' code of professional conduct stipulates that 'Practitioners shall not enter into discussion, give advice or express opinions or reactions to any of the parties that exceed their duties as interpreters' (NRPSI, 2011: 5.9). Yet during the interviews, participant PSIs recounted numerous instances in which service providers requested them to 'enter into discussion', 'give advice', 'express opinions', or perform tasks outside their role. Let us recall three significant examples from Chapter 5. First, Larry was asked in immigration hearings to confirm where service users came from according to their accent. Since officers could not understand their language, they struggled to assert if users were telling the truth about their country of origin and requested Larry's opinion. Second, Lucy also recalled being treated as an instrument by providers to assist them in their work. Requests went from making cups of hot beverages to helping users complete administration forms on her own. Under time pressure, solicitors were prepared to relegate administrative tasks to her, although she has not officially been trained. Finally, Monika was unexpectedly pulled out of invisibility when medical staff requested her to act as birth partner for a pregnant woman, since this role proved too much for the father. Monika was trusted by both the staff and the mother to act as medical auxiliary, although this was outside the remit of her PSI role. She recalled sitting right by the side of the mother and even holding the baby before her as the mother was still shaking from the drugs. In considering how PSIs' boundaries are being disturbed by providers, we see that agency comes from both the service provider and PSI, and the PSI has to choose whether they are going to do what is requested of them or not. The service provider wants them to breach the boundary to control or provide care for the service user.

There are also different types of demand for breaching boundaries, but as we have seen, PSIs can react in different ways. For instance, Larry and Lucy refused to comply with providers' requests, even if their refusal could be perceived as a lack of cooperation. Instead, they shored up boundaries, and educated providers about what their role entailed. As for Monika, she chose to comply with providers' request to act as *impromptu* birth partner. Despite being asked to breach boundaries, the experience was for her a memorable one. The examples above illustrate different ways in which PSIs

engage in boundary work following providers' requests to breach boundaries. But as the data presented in Chapter 5 in particular highlight, these examples are not isolated cases. Indeed, they reveal that PSIs engage in boundary work on a daily basis. Yet this form of work is mostly unaccounted for within the field of PSI. In the following section, I offer an interpretation of what happens when PSI boundaries are inexistent for service users.

Non-existent boundaries for users: shoring up boundaries by the PSI

In Chapter 1, illustrations of early interpreting work indicate that issues of trust surrounded the role of lay interpreters. These interpreters often acted as mediators between parties who expected them to represent their respective interests. To prevent the formation of allegiances between the PSI and user and guarantee the trustworthiness of their interpretations, the NRPSI's Code of professional conduct analysed in Chapter 2 prescribes that practitioners must remain neutral and impartial. To that end, they must immediately disclose if they know or are related to the user or their immediate family and they must not accept any form of 'inducement' or 'reward' for their work other than payment from service providers (NRPSI, 2011: 6.1.1 - 6.1.4). However, in their narratives, PSIs frequently commented on service users' conflicting perceptions and expectations of their role. As in Alexander *et al.*'s (2004) study discussed in Chapter 3, participants narrated that they were often perceived as a friend or an ally by grateful users. Many of them wished to exchange details with PSIs in order to keep in contact. Mateo, for instance, gave an example of how he would shore up boundaries and refuse without appearing rude. As Samir pointed out, some users need advice on how the system works. They perceive the PSI as an advisor, someone who is knowledgeable and who should share that knowledge. Samir's view was echoed by Mary who recalled being asked by service users in the middle of assignments: 'What do you think I should say now?' As she and Larry explained, despite their experience and knowledge, PSIs must resist the urge to give advice or voice an opinion for they would not be neutral anymore and could be completely wrong.

Maureen also provided countless examples of shoring up boundaries with users. For her, boundaries seemed rigid and easy to manage at first. She nonetheless recounted an incident in which her professional boundaries were disturbed by a mental health patient who became emotionally attached to her. As the data presented in Chapters 6 and 7 further illustrate, PSIs' boundaries become permeable when there are

disturbed by ethical conflicts and emotions. In this incident, Maureen explained that her role was only to interpret the patient's therapy, but the patient wanted to befriend her since she believed that Maureen rather than the therapist was helping her to recover. To pre-empt ethical conflicts, Maureen eventually decided to withdraw from the assignment altogether, despite being pressured by the provider to continue to 'care' for the user.

These examples illustrate the agency of the service user and the PSI in terms of the human side of the interaction, as well as the permeability of the dehumanized boundary. Service users' conflicting perceptions and expectations of the PSI role disturb the boundaries set by the profession, but for users, these boundaries do not exist. Even if PSIs explain the boundaries to service users, they do not really make sense to them and are therefore non-existent. We must also remember that service users are people who are often in desperate situations and they want to have contact with a human being rather than a machine. The PSIs in the examples above are resisting service users' agency by shoring up professional boundaries to comply with the official demand for their neutrality and impartiality in the workplace. Let us now turn to a third example of PSI boundaries being disturbed, this time due to service providers' attempts to reinforce hierarchical boundaries.

Service providers reinforcing hierarchical boundaries

Across the data chapters and particularly in Chapter 5, the PSIs interviewed complained about the general lack of awareness of what their practice entailed amongst service providers also, which made their job difficult. Although most of them were highly qualified and strongly committed to doing a good job, they often felt that their work was undervalued and that providers' attitudes towards them were ignorant, arrogant or demeaning even. They therefore struggled to make providers aware of the exigencies of their role and for them to be respected. Monika provided powerful illustrations of these struggles. On one occasion, she felt confident enough to stop a judge to verify the meaning of what he said before being told: 'It doesn't matter, just translate'. But as this judge was perhaps not aware, the PSI needs to understand what is said in order to interpret it, as Monika tactfully informed him.

The data also suggest that the more invisible PSIs are, the more they are valued, which indicates a strange contradiction within their professional identities (cf. Kubiak, 2010). To illustrate this, Monika recalled another incident in court when the staff was

in a rush and therefore speaking fast, with no consideration whatsoever for her needs as PSI. On one hand she felt that they did not wish her to interrupt due to time pressure and on the other, she concluded that the presence of the interpreter during court proceedings merely seemed to pay lip service to EU regulations which stipulate that anyone arrested should be tried in a language that they understand. What mattered the most, it seemed, was the PSI's 'invisible' presence rather than their faithful and accurate renditions of what was said in the courtroom. In an extended comment, Monika further highlighted the agency of the service provider to reinforce the boundaries between their professional hierarchy and the low status of the PSI, just as the judge in the example above had done. On requesting a lawyer who was talking at a 'lightening pace' to slow down, her request was met with indignation and ridicule. This comment captures several interesting issues that concern this thesis such as: the complexities of the job, the professional conduct, agency and status of PSIs or the surveillance and evaluation of how the job is done. It is interesting to see that Monika chose to tell me this story when she did not have to. After all, we were colleagues and like her, I knew the rules. In other words, she risked being judged for transgressing professional boundaries in a manner deemed inappropriate by the Code. As a result, Monika was very careful to signal her awareness of and habitual compliance with the correct procedure to interrupt; something which in this instance she could not do due to the pressures of the job.

Monika's accounts reveal that she is keen to assert herself as a professional through the display of power and agency. For instance, she uses the phrase: 'I'm afraid I didn't use the correct procedure' when her confidence and assertiveness indicate that she is not afraid at all, she just wants to be taken seriously as a professional. Monika uses it twice when recounting the incidents with the judge and lawyer, two authority figures in the courtroom. She may have felt more powerful than them when she interrupted them because of her awareness of the demands of her job and their lack of it. In the second incident, her interruption is not welcome, but she explained that had she not done it, she would not have been able to raise awareness of her professional needs. Whereas Monika knows that this was not the 'right' thing to do in terms of the Code, she evoked the realities of the job to justify her actions. Those realities are very tough and she has learnt to accept the fact that one of the idiosyncrasies of PSI is that you cannot always do it right. When describing the reaction of the lawyer, she used an indignant tone of voice to describe the lawyer's reaction when uttering the words: 'Slow down?!' Monika suggests that she is considered as a junior - someone who is

impertinent enough to challenge his authority and power - rather than a professional on an equal level despite her high professional standards. In this example, we may interpret the agency of the provider as demeaning towards the PSI, making it difficult for PSIs to do their work by speaking too fast. The lawyer clearly contests her status, he does not want her to become visible. His behaviour and reaction which are characterised by speaking fast and being surprised at her request perhaps also indicate a lack of awareness of what PSI entails. Assertive, Monika refers to the judge, the court arbitrator, to assess her boundary crossing. Since he did not intervene during the incident, which may be interpreted as a silent approval, Monika concludes that her behaviour was still adequate. As the data presented in Chapter 5 indicate, PSIs engage in boundary work on a day-to-day basis. Let us consider a fourth example in which practitioners themselves decide to blur their own professional boundaries.

PSIs blurring their own professional boundaries

The data generated in this study reveal that PSI's views on the 'invisibility' of their role were full of contradictory narratives. By way of example, Lauryne deemed it important to say the PSI's introduction at the beginning of assignments in order to reinforce the neutrality and impartiality of her role. In mental health settings, she viewed sitting arrangements as problematic due to her proximity to patients, yet she freely talked to them in waiting-rooms as a 'bit of a friend' before assignments started. Lauryne's ambiguous reading of the Code may be interpreted as a strategy to respond to the various exigencies of the settings in which she works. After all, as she and Larry explained, PSIs are expected to build a rapport with patients for the therapy to work in mental health settings. They therefore viewed their input as a three-way relationship in which the PSI plays an active role and must earn trust from both parties. It is nonetheless interesting to note that both PSIs provided further examples of how PSIs' boundaries become permeable when being disturbed by ethical conflicts and emotions.

By way of illustration, Andrew provided enlightening examples of how he would blur boundaries to comfort distressed users in Chapter 5. During the interview, it soon became clear that Andrew loved his job and helping people, despite the Code's prescription not to help people in his role as PSI, but to merely facilitate communication between parties. Andrew nonetheless admitted that he could not help but put himself in users' shoes. This enabled him not only to feel more empathetic towards 'people in difficult situations', but also to change as a person. Considering the social aspect of

PSI, he viewed his role as a 'go-between', a 'halfway house between the police officers and the client'. From his perspective, there are many things that a PSI learn on the job rather than during training such as the fact that the introduction may be problematic. In his eyes, it may inspire mistrust from either side as parties may think that he is having small talk with them. Furthermore, he often feels under time pressure and asserts that he has no time to say the interpreter's introduction by the book. As illustrated, Andrew's radical strategy to deal with the PSI's introduction has been to omit it with experience, although he mentioned that without it, it was then difficult to alert parties on the neutrality and impartiality of his role. To counter this limitation, he resorted to forcing parties 'to speak directly to each other' when service users or providers addressed him directly. This strategy was not taught on the course, but Andrew learnt to develop it with experience. He clearly learnt to invisibly repair speech to avoid confusion in the other parties and to make them believe that they addressed each other directly all along.

From his account, Andrew's professional boundaries however become blurred when he approaches the PSI practice from a humanistic perspective. As he recalled, he found it challenging not to answer users' comments and necessary to humour them when they were 'two human beings being left together'. In the learning ground, Andrew has also learnt that boundaries are not that rigid after all. PSIs enjoy a certain degree of agency in deciding to transgress boundaries or not.

In conclusion, as illustrated above, Larry and Lucy shored up boundaries by categorically refusing to give users advice, but there are many illustrations in the data of PSIs choosing to do the opposite, on the basis that practitioners simply consider users as a human being in need, just as Andrew did. As he ultimately explained, it is not easy to ignore users' private comments, since this would hinder his objective of maintaining communication between both parties. It goes without saying that my attempt here is not flag up PSIs' reactions as right or wrong with regard to the official demand for their invisibility at work, but rather to offer different readings of and responses to the Code from their perspectives. According to the data, PSIs' struggled to comply with the official demand for their invisibility in the workplace and this demand seemed to be intertwined with ethical conflicts. In the section that follows, I therefore offer a theoretical explanation of PSIs' challenges to reconcile personal and professional ethics in an attempt to perform a neutral and impartial role.

Shuttling between personal, professional and economic values: 'ethics work'

Professional ethics has traditionally been scrutinised through the lens of philosophy (Higgins, 2010). Its investigation has broadly drawn on abstract ethical theories that relate to consequentialism, how moral an action is or not based on its consequences; deontology, which focuses on duty and moral obligations; and virtue, on personal moral qualities and principles (OED, 2013). In recent years, a growing number of critical studies in education, health and social care settings have nonetheless called for the sociological investigation of professional ethics as a socially embedded practice (see for instance, Hammersley-Fletcher, 2013; Colley, 2012; Tronto, 2010; Banks, 2009; Cribb, 2009; Hamilton, 2009; Wainwright *et al.*, 2006). Indeed, Bank's (2009) work on human service professionals has problematized the traditional philosophical approach to teaching and studying professional ethics dominant in the literature. Such an approach involves the study of official codes of ethics, conduct or practice, followed by group discussions of ethically-challenging cases to condition practitioners' decision-making process. However, rather than stimulating practitioners' active engagement in 'doing ethics' in the workplace, this approach promotes an uncritical adherence to the rules based on simplistic decision-making models that do not reflect the reality or ethical demands of their practice. The conception of ethics that it provides is therefore artificial, narrow and decontextualized since crucial factors such as time, space, context, practitioners' characters, motives or perceptions are neglected.

To highlight the centrality of space to professional ethics, Cribb (2009) argues that 'different roles occupy different positions in ethical space and that in this and other senses ethics is, and ought to be, role-relative' (Cribb, 2009: 35). We thus expect practitioners to conduct themselves a certain way, in accordance to how their roles are defined by the ethical code(s) regulating their practice. This I argue is particularly true for practices that are well-established and visible. Cribb further suggests that professional ethics is shaped by both role construction and role occupancy. It is a dynamic social construct whose responsibility lies in 'those *involved in role construction* and not just those *acting within roles*' (Cribb, 2009: 31, original emphasis). This conception implies that policy-makers, institutions, practitioners, other professionals and lay people with whom they interact, as well as socio-cultural, economic and political factors, all have an influence on the construction of occupational roles. The enactment of these roles also requires practitioners' adaptation to a specific work culture, an awareness and understanding of the ethical rules that frame their

practice. In addition, role definition determines the degree of independent ethical agency granted to practitioners to enact their roles. The preconstruction of different roles comes with varying degrees of ethical responsibility, a phenomenon described as the 'division of ethical labour' (Cribb, 2009).

However free or constrained practitioners' agency may be, they engage in the often invisible labour of making ethical decisions about 'doing one's job' and 'doing the right thing'. Tensions between the two inevitably arise when doing one's job involves doing something one objects to morally and may result in 'role distancing' to manage ethical conflicts. Putting a distance between one's ethical and institutional obligations can be seen as a way to avoid having qualms about doing things one considers morally wrong, although the extent to which role distancing can be successfully achieved is questionable. As Cribb observes:

For any individual, the claims of their professional roles generate countless dilemmas and balancing acts which they have to find ways, hopefully with the help of colleagues, of managing.

(2009: 40)

Cribbs' work is particularly useful in furthering our understanding of ethics as situated in actual social practice. Nonetheless, it does not elaborate on specific instances in which practitioners engage in 'ethical labour' (as he terms it) to reconcile personal and professional values, nor does it present a critical analysis of the strategies used to bridge the gap between the two.

The works of Banks (2009) and Colley (2012) explicitly address that gap in knowledge. Both authors argue that practitioners' maintenance of ethical practice does not happen on an ad-hoc basis as philosophical accounts may suggest, but that it is an integral part of their daily work. As such, it constitutes what they term 'ethics work', a form of work in itself, which has been mostly unaccounted for and taken for granted. It can be defined as: 'the day-to-day, even hour-by-hour, work of maintaining an ethical stance and confronting ethical dilemmas or conflicts in professional practice' (Colley, 2012: 322). Ethics work is a ground-breaking concept that is still under-theorised and empirical illustration of its manifestations limited. There is a need to investigate further its epistemological and ontological underpinnings from a sociological perspective to deepen our understanding of what it actually means and entails. For instance, in the current austerity climate dominated by managerialist policies emphasising accountability and performativity, we can see that ethics work has been intensified as

occupational roles evolve (Colley, 2012; Hamilton, 2009; Cribb and Gewirtz, 2006). Public service means and human labour cost are being reduced to the detriment of service users' and practitioners' needs, thus creating a shift from 'care to control' or from *professional and moral* values to *economic* value. This consequently raises serious ethical issues for practitioners who are pressured to re-adjust their ethical compass to occupy roles that depart from their originally caring and human nature and may result in them 'unbecoming' professionals (Tronto, 2010; Colley *et al.*, 2007). Now that I have offered a theoretical framework for the innovative concept of ethics work, let us turn to interpret the research data presented in Chapter 6.

Managing ethical conflicts according to the Code: perceptions from PSIs

In Chapter 2, I have demonstrated how the practice of PSI in England has been rigidly framed by various codes of ethics and official texts that place stringent demands for practitioners' neutrality and impartiality in the workplace. During training, DPSI candidates indeed learn that a *sine qua non* condition to entering the practice as professionals is to observe the tenets of the NRPSI's Code of Conduct. In Chapter 6, Maureen, a DPSI trainer, explained how in her opinion, teaching ethics is both clear and straightforward by using contextual examples for prospect PSIs to learn how to resolve ethical conflicts in a professional manner. She nonetheless admitted that impartiality was perhaps the most difficult aspect of the practice to teach. Thus, Maureen constantly reminds DPSI candidates that their role is nothing more than to interpret *everything* said in their presence by *both* parties *without* distortions or omissions, just as she did when she interpreted a detainee's insults towards her or a police officer's offensive comments about a suspect's body odours. In order to perform a neutral and impartial role *vis-à-vis* service users and providers, personal judgement must not hinder the quality of their performance, she claimed. The job that they do for a paedophile or their victim, for instance, must be equally good since before the English law since any accused person is innocent until proven guilty. In using such crude examples, Maureen's aim is clearly to inculcate professional values set by above. To some extent, these examples also hint at the ethically challenging that constitute routine work within PSI. But how does the rigid definition of PSIs as neutral conduits impact on practitioners' role occupancy in practice?

The interpreters who participated in the present study were all professionally trained. As a result, they perceived the official framing of their PSI practice as a way to

distinguish between lay and professional interpreters. From their perspective, the Code was established to protect them as professionals and pre-empt potential ethical conflicts that they may face in the workplace. They thus claimed a strong adherence to its tenets in term of ethics and seemed to concur with the rigid definition of their roles as invisible conduit pipes. In addition, they acknowledged the significance of adhering to the Code across settings in order to 'do a good job'. This was mainly based on the view that service users' fate and the success of the interpreted events highly depended on the quality of their performances. Larry, for example, explained that daily practices in PSI work consisted in being suddenly plunged into the most intimate worlds of service users whilst maintaining a high level of concentration, total independence and an open mind in order to convey messages neutrally and faithfully. Furthermore, being impartial did not seem problematic for Monika since she considered that it simply resulted from 'doing one's job properly' and 'acting as a professional'. These PSIs' comments were in line with the theoretical learning of the practice. Yet in practice, the data revealed that both interpreters and many others identified several issues with the Code and struggled to occupy their roles in a way that coincided with its ethical tenets, thus leading to ethics work.

In that respect, it is worth noting that the preconstruction of the role of PSI by the Code may be *rigid*, but it is not *strong* precisely because of its denial of PSIs as human beings and of their active role in social interactions. The empirical evidence generated in this study illustrates how this denial gave rise to practitioners' ambiguous readings of the Code as they encountered to constant clashes between personal and professional ethics. Let us recall two examples: first, Mateo narrated how in his case, learning to maintain an ethical stance involved developing an almost 'cold attitude'. To appear neutral, he did not hesitate to interrupt assignments to inform either party that he was suspected to be on their side or asked to give advice. But when he deemed that service providers did not take into consideration 'the feelings or the mood' of users, he requested breaks on his behalf to 'save face' on users. Secondly, Samir explained that he would talk to patients to familiarise himself with their medical backgrounds prior to the start of appointments, although as discussed in Chapter 2, the Code explicitly forbids PSIs to enter into discussion with any of the parties. Additionally, Samir mentioned that he refused to interpret swear words and toned down language of a sexual nature in order to save *his* face – and this despite the official demand for PSIs' accurate and faithful renditions. His account provided illuminating examples of a practitioner

whose personal ethics ultimately weighed more than professional ethics. For him, failure to reconcile the two - to reconcile the preconstruction of his role with his own personal construction of occupying the role - eventually led to an extreme decision: that of leaving the practice in order to find a 'better' job. In the next two sections, I shall elaborate on further aspects of ethics work that emerged from the data, namely: pressures to engage in unethical practices and practitioners' resistance to such pressures.

Pressures to engage in unethical practices

In Chapters 5 to 7, PSIs signalled that in addition to becoming familiar with the ethical tenets of the Code, they were trained to introduce themselves professionally to service users and providers at the beginning of each assignment, in a manner that signals the neutrality and impartiality of their role. Most of them followed this well-rehearsed rule, but they still experienced pressures from service users or providers to engage in unethical practices. These pressures were widely expressed as a lack of awareness of what their practice entails, conflicting role expectations influenced by factors such as settings, the people they worked with, the media or politics at large, which undermined the quality of their work. Throughout their narratives, most practitioners illustrated how they engaged in ethics work to bridge the gap between role definition and role occupancy. The ethical conflicts that they faced included how to circumvent friendly service users, oppressive service providers or feelings of suspicion from either side. By way of example, although PSIs were instructed not to remain alone with service users or engage in private conversations with them, the majority signalled that this frequently happened for a variety of reasons such as: missing the opportunity to leave the room with service providers due to the fast pace of events, being requested by providers to wait in the same room as service users, sometimes without the possibility to refuse, or being perceived by service users as a friend or an ally who is expected to give advice, provide comfort or personal details even to build a relationship. Pressures to engage in unethical practices from service providers included being requested to assist service users in completing legal forms, interview defendants and take witness statements on their own, or assess the veracity on their version of the events. In such instances, several PSIs felt that they were tacitly perceived as a tool for the authorities, and since service providers paid their fees, they experienced further pressure to collaborate in return.

In Chapter 6, Oliver –a DPSI trainer – spoke at great length about the ethical conflicts that he faced whilst attempting to observe the Code, despite his experience. To preserve the neutral and impartial aspect of his role, he behaved in an aloof manner towards talkative service users, unlike other PSIs, or reminded service providers of the limitations of his role. This nonetheless made him feel uncomfortable for neither party seems to understand what his job entailed. Whereas Mateo’s and Samir’s narratives summarised above offer alternative illustrations of practitioners’ struggles to comply with ethical rules that competed with personal ethics, Oliver’s account particularly highlights instances in which practitioners do something that they personally object to in order to be a ‘good’ professional, despite feelings of unease and discomfort (Cribb, 2009). Service users often expected him to engage in small talk to comfort or advise them and he recalled ‘being grabbed’ by providers to interpret for both parties – in contradiction with the PSI Code - to save time and money.

Leila’s account detailed in Chapter 6 provides a trichotomous example of a PSI put under ethical pressure by service users, providers and their own personal values. In her first police raid, the female user for whom she interpreted repeatedly asked her children not to say anything, but Leila chose not to convey her plea to providers. She also felt that the user was lying about her origins based on her accent, but she kept her suspicion to herself. She also recalled instances in which she was asked to take service users’ statements on her own in police settings. According to the Code, this should not happen, but it did on one occasion too many. Practitioners’ engagement in ethics work in order to adjust the balance between personal and ethical conflicts therefore begs the following questions: how did PSIs challenge pressures to bend ethical rules and how can their reactions be theoretically explained?

Challenging pressures to engage in unethical practices

As we have seen in Chapters 2 and 6, the preconstructed role of PSIs reduced practitioners’ agency, but they still had enjoyed some leeway to make spontaneous decisions about how to do their job and doing what they felt was right for the job. Despite their prescribed constrained roles, they made tactical moves in order to make their job manageable and resisted institutional reductions of what such roles entailed. As Mateo pointed out, this involved assessing when either party perceived him as being on the opposite side and publicly alerting them of the issue; although on other occasions, he silently sided with service users. In his and several PSIs’ accounts,

challenging unethical pressures can be interpreted as managing a clash between personal and professional boundaries (Wainwright *et al.*, 2006). Maureen and Leila seemed to find it straightforward to keep an ethical stance by reminding both service users and providers of their duty to interpret everything said in their presence. But pressures to engage in unethical practices ranged from dealing with instructions from service users such as: 'Don't tell the police' and mimicking service users and providers' reactions, although ways of dealing with such demands did not always match the expectations of service providers. On occasions, PSIs had to signal their neutrality and impartiality to both parties and to step out of invisibility to reinforce their position. On others, they engaged in boundary and ethics works to take service users' human needs into consideration. PSIs' accounts of daily practices indicate that boundary work and ethics work remain officially unaccounted for and under-theorised. In the section that follows, I seek to interpret how both types of work also involved emotional labour as illustrated with Lucy's story at the abortion clinic. What were practitioners' struggles to reconcile the clash between them? And what were the strategies they deployed?

Suppressing emotion within PSI work: 'emotional labour'

The management of emotions in the workplace has been much discussed, particularly in the last two decades, and conceptualised in very different ways. In interpreting studies however, it has attracted little critical attention (notable exceptions include: Tipton, 2010; Valero-Garcés and Abkari, 2010; Edwards *et al.*, 2006; Edwards *et al.*, 2005; Valero-Garcés, 2005). Goleman's psychological conceptualization of 'emotional intelligence' as a resource potentially more powerful than IQ that can guarantee 'on-the-job success' (Goleman, 1996: xiii) has strongly influenced the ways in which employers seek to shape how the labour force both manage and deploy emotions in the workplace and the development of the predominant managerial discourse. In his bestseller 'Emotional intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ' (Goleman, 1996), the author argues that emotionally intelligent individuals can use a wealth of *valuable* and *marketable* inner skills, such as self-awareness or self-management, to become more successful not only in their private lives but also in their professional lives. The skilful management of emotions within specific work contexts is now amongst the basic skills required in the workplace:

The rules for work are changing. We're being judged by a new yardstick: not just how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and others. This yardstick is increasingly applied in choosing who will be hired and who will not, who will be let go and who retained, who passed over and who promoted.

(Goleman, 1998: 3, cited in Hughes, 2005: 603-4)

Such a reading of emotion management at work reifies it as a commodity. 'Emotional intelligence' has become part of the essential skills that the labour force is expected to master to obtain a job, keep it or obtain a promotion in an increasing number of work contexts. However, this view does not offer an explanation of the work entailed in managing one's emotion to comply with specific institutional demands. It also cannot explain how PSIs learn to work on and with their emotions to perform what is supposed to be a neutral and impartial role.

In contrast to Goleman's 'emotional intelligence' and almost a decade before its success, Hochschild had labelled the management of emotions in the workplace as 'emotional labour', a concept which she defined as:

[T]he management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has *exchange value*. I use the synonymous terms *emotion work* or *emotion management* to refer to these same acts done in a private context where they have *use value*... This labor requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others

(Hochschild, 1983: 7, original emphasis)

Her seminal study, *The Managed Heart* (1983), explored how practitioners learnt to manage their emotions in the workplace and how they actually did this in practice. It draws on and adapts Marx's theory of labour under capitalism, particularly with reference to the categories of use value and exchange value. Hochschild's present study focused on cabin crew members and debt collectors as two occupations primarily situated at opposite ends of the emotional labour spectrum. For the former, organisations expect their employees to express warmth and empathy towards customers and for the latter, coldness and apathy. Hochschild's findings led her to identify a form of labour - emotional labour - that was routinely carried out in human service role occupations alongside the long-acknowledged categories of physical and mental labour, and that represented a largely invisible and hitherto unaccounted-for type of work. Originally undertaken in the private sphere of relationships with friends and family, emotion management has become part of the current service performed by

practitioners in exchange for remuneration, thus provoking a shift from *use value* to *exchange value*. In sum, in our private and personal lives, we engage in *emotion work* on a daily basis by referring to socially-constructed feeling rules to manage our emotion and that of others. Emotion work thus generates use-value: we offer feelings to and expect to receive them from social beings with whom we interact as a way of living in society. Its costs are compensated by the benefits that emanate from these interactions. However, the shift from *emotion work* to *emotional labour* takes place when we trade emotion management for a wage to organizations which seek to control and prescribe its content as part of the service sold to customers.

Further attention has been drawn to the fact that labouring with feeling bears an emotional cost; one which is 'seldom recognized, rarely honoured, and almost never taken into account by employers as a source of on-the-job stress' (Hochschild, 1983: 153). Hochschild further argues that in order to face the stringent emotional rules framing their practice, respondents resorted to emotional detachment to avoid stress and burnout, which eventually led to emotional numbness or refusal to act altogether and joining forces to create spaces for relief. We must nonetheless note that although a 'healthy' estrangement 'from an aspect of self – either the body or the margins of the soul – that is *used* to do the work' (Hochschild, 1983: 6) can be considered salutary in the short term, such detachment can, in the long term, lead to alienation from or alteration of the self.

Hochschild's pioneering work offers an interpretive understanding of emotion as a social construct 'fashioned by social learning and societal/cultural structures' (Fineman, 2005: 5). Within this paradigm, emotion is perceived as being shaped from both within and outside individuals and influenced by factors such as identity, culture, society, power and organisations. This perspective consequently departs from essentialist conceptualizations of emotion as solely constructed from within (Fineman, 2005). Indeed, since *The Managed Heart*, 'emotional labour ... has become hot, exploitable capital' (Fineman, 2005: 5). And a growing body of literature has contributed to deepening our critical understanding of labouring with feeling within a wider range of occupations such as professional carers, police officers, paralegals or service agents (for a recent review see, for example, Benozzo and Colley, 2012).

Critiques of emotional labour

Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour has significantly contributed to our critical understanding of labouring with feeling in the workplace. It has nevertheless been met with two main responses: 1) negative criticisms which seek to counter the author's work for its focus on the exploitative and alienating aspects of emotional labour (Bolton, 2009; Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Price, 2001), and 2) constructive criticism which extends and supports Hochschild in refuting negative criticisms (Brook, 2009; Colley, 2006; Fineman, 2003). In classroom observations, for instance, Price (2001) argues that emotional labour is simply a banal human capacity to emotionally relate to one another in the workplace. Teachers, she asserts, own and control their emotions. They therefore enjoy labouring with feeling, for it is what makes their job gratifying. A similar perspective has been supported by Bolton and Boyd (2003). UK cabin crew members were described in their survey as 'skilled emotion managers' able to successfully engage in emotional labour thanks to humour, camaraderie, empathy or compassion. Furthermore, no evidence of transmutation of the self was gathered. This reading of the data therefore leads both researchers to call for a bold move from Hochschild's conceptualisation of emotion labour - despite its enduring legacy in the development of emotion management theories for the last thirty years - and to suggest an alternative typology based on: 'presentational', 'philanthropic', 'prescriptive' and 'pecuniary' emotion management (see also Bolton, 2009). For Bolton and Boyd, *The Managed Heart* is nothing else than 'an illustration of emotionally crippled actors':

Hochschild offers a view of organizations as flat, lifeless landscapes. Where is any sense of the satisfaction, enjoyment and reward that can be gained from various forms of emotion work? Where is the innuendo, humour and imperfect customer service? Where *are* the cabin crews in her study?

(Bolton and Boyd, 2003: 304, original emphasis)

Such comments overlook numerous vivid employee narratives reported by Hochschild, narratives that indicate both the costs of emotional labour *and* collective resistance to the organisational management of emotions, as well as the creation of unmanaged spaces for relief. These lively narratives indeed illustrate several ways in which employees learn to labour with feeling in the workplace - this through agency and resistance often in the form of solidarity or mischief (Hochschild, 1983). These critical incidents perfectly illustrate how employees resist the organizational management of their emotion and join efforts (in the case of flight attendants) to provide the 'imperfect

customer service' which Bolton and Boyd (2003) failed to notice. They also highlight the mostly unaccounted for and hidden costs of labouring with feeling for practitioners and as such challenge Goleman's (1996) concept of Emotional Intelligence. Although Hochschild's work has been deemed 'absolutist', her primary aim was to highlight the commodification of emotion in the workplace and the mostly invisible and unaccounted for type of work that it generates. In this respect, it is unsurprising that she focused on incidents arising from labouring with feeling rather than on emotions contributing to job satisfaction. Moreover, there have been thorough refutations of the arguments put forward by Price and Bolton and Boyd, as well as of the more popular work by Goleman.

Hughes' (2005) critical analysis of Goleman's work warns that the recent increase in managerial discourse based on that conceptualization of emotional intelligence indicates radical long-term changes in the workplace such as: in the strategies deployed by organizations to seek control over employees' emotions, the nature of work, the demands placed upon employees and the demands that they themselves place upon their workplaces (Hughes, 2005: 605).

On being invited to bring their emotions to work, employees might thus become more vulnerable, potentially more normatively incorporated, more open to emotional surveillance, but also potentially more able to exercise agency through subscribing to the very same managerial rationality to which they are subject.
(Hughes, 2005: 617)

Bringing emotions to work is therefore not, as Price (2001) and Bolton and Boyd (2003) assert, a costless and virtuous act for employees that comes from within. Brook, for instance, takes on a detailed debate with Bolton (Bolton, 2009; Brook, 2009) in which he brings a very different perspective to bear on her criticisms of Hochschild. He defends Hochschild's fundamental position, whilst arguing that this can be *strengthened* in its critical analysis of emotional labour by taking account more fully the elements of resistance that her data revealed:

Hochschild's account of resistance demonstrates she understands that workers are reflexive and possess the agency to begin to challenge their exploitation and subordination by utilising unmanaged spaces.
(Brook, 2009: 543)

Brook's defence of Hochschild also consists of an extension of her Marxist-feminist analysis, since it rests on his insight that she does not carry through the 'double-edged' potential of alienation to its full extent:

While Hochschild's portrayal of the emotional labour workplace is one where consent, indifference and resistance by workers are ever-present, it is underdeveloped and lacks a dialectical understanding of the dynamic contradictions that mark both workers' consciousness and the service labour process.

(Brook, 2009: 544)

It is clear from this that Hochschild only looked at the negative side of alienation, which makes her comments sound rather pessimistic, when the other half of the story still needs to be told. When people suffer alienation, there is indeed potential to resist. Alienation is always a 'double-edged sword' because it can turn itself around to make people conscious of their exploitation in a way that can then provoke stronger and collective resistance in the contested terrains of service organisations (Brook, 2009). In what follows, I offer a critical analysis of labouring with feeling within PSI.

Emotional labour within the work of PSIs

Thirty years after its first publication, the legacy of *The Managed Heart* still endures. Various studies have recently applied Hochschild's analysis of emotional labour in a wide variety of occupational contexts (Gray, 2009; Harris, 2002; Sharma and Black, 2001). These studies have indeed been useful in illustrating Hochschild's conceptualization of emotional labour in the workplace, although most have remained descriptive. Indeed, emotional labour has been largely presented as a 'straightforward' type of work undertaken in a two-way interaction between workers and customers or clients, and PSIs arguably share some of these most fundamental features. Most studies, however, do not tend to address the key aspects of emotional labour which have been highlighted by the data. There are, for instance, three particular types of experience in the data that can be interpreted as emotional labour, and which help to illuminate different forms that emotional labour may take. The escalating examples that follow illustrate these three categories, moving from commonplace to more and more complex encounters.

First, PSI work entails the control and management of emotion. As stipulated by the Code, practitioners 'shall not enter into discussion, give advice or express opinions or *reactions* to any of the parties' (NRPSI, 2011: 5.4, my emphasis). Paradoxically,

their role is not only to silence their own emotion, but also to faithfully convey the emotion of service users and providers. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the stringent emotional demands befalling upon practitioners reduce their role to neutral and impartial conduits, void of feelings. Yet as we have seen in the previous chapter, the very nature of PSI work generates a mixture of feelings, from exhilaration to trauma. It is an extremely complex practice which requires the mastery of highly cognitive, socio-linguistic and socio-cultural skills to convey accurate meaning in fast-paced triadic interactions that are emotionally-charged, with a further demand to display an ability to perform well under pressure. As discussed in Chapter 4, all interpreters expressed a real passion towards their job albeit finding it stressful, except Samir. PSIs such as Mary, Mateo or Lucy illustrated how they learnt to control their body to refrain from expressing opinions or reactions during interpreted-events. Maureen, a practising PSI and experienced DPSI trainer viewed that what no training course can do is to reproduce the emotional situations and the stress that characterize the job. However, this comment obscures the fact that the Code and the training treat the emotional as best as peripheral and *deny* both the emotions and the emotional labour within PSI. Indeed, legal, medical and social welfare settings all have specific characteristics and varying emotional demands. These settings were thus used by practitioners as learning grounds in which PSIs resorted to spontaneous strategies to labour with feeling. Furthermore, several incidents highlighted how the human nature of PSIs superseded the demand for their neutrality and impartiality. Indeed, the great majority could not help but feel compassionate towards service users' in particular and a genuine desire to assist them in obtaining a fair access to a variety of public services. By way of example, Maureen compared her role to that of a social worker. Andrew found his role in helping people to communicate in a foreign land rewarding. As for Larry, the predicaments of some service users occasionally kept him awake at night, prompting him to say a little prayer for them; whereas Leila and Samir felt embarrassment and shame towards service users whom they suspected of lying.

Second, due to the nature of their practice, PSIs commonly work in very intimate and therefore intense situations that can be particularly difficult to manage. As previously discussed, interpreting at times of human emergencies or crises is part of their daily routine: one which can be exhilarating, as Monica experienced whilst interpreting during a birth delivery in which she was required to hold a new-born baby even before the mother; but one which can also lead to stress and vicarious trauma, as

we have seen when Lucy had to interpret for an abortion patient, Oliver for a suspected murderer or Maureen for a bereaved employee. As the latter described, managing one's emotion whilst conveying the right emotion, and this over the telephone, felt like being on a rollercoaster or running a marathon, by the end of which she felt emotionally drained. Unlike for the other professionals (service providers) with whom they work, there is no specific counselling structure in place for PSIs. Yet, requesting emotional support from service providers can, as Maureen put it, be perceived as a sign of weakness and unprofessionalism. This is particularly the case in legal settings, where interpreters are perceived as a neutral tool for the authorities and opportunities to debrief on emotional experiences afterwards hardly exist. In contrast, in mental health settings in particular, where the interpreter is increasingly perceived as an active participant in the successful recovery of patients, briefing and debriefing opportunities tend to exist. Lauryne's account offers a good illustration of this dichotomy. Interpreting on a rape case in the hostile and noisy environment of a police station made her feel uncomfortable. Feelings of unease increased as the case developed and she identified with the victim, another female like her. At the end of the police interview, no debriefing took place, and Lauryne was left to make sense of this traumatic experience on her own; something which she had not yet managed to do at the time of the interview. As she asserted, being a PSI also involves dealing with all the 'human aspects' of the practice, but unlike in the mental health context, she felt that these aspects have been overlooked in legal settings. To illustrate this, Lauryne recalled how identifying with a mental health patient spontaneously led her to break down in tears once. Although she felt unprofessional for doing so, the therapist with whom she worked encouraged her to express reactions to the patient's story to support its significance as another human being and to actively participate in their recovery process.

Third, the complexity of the social interactions between PSIs, service users and service providers must not be overlooked. Examples from both lay and professional PSI work discussed in Chapters 1 and 6 have shed light on the extremely intense tensions between conflicting perceptions and expectations of PSIs' role amongst service users, providers and PSIs themselves, and the actual intensity of emotional labour to varying extents. These three players were obviously managing different and possibly competing demands for various evocations and suppressions of feeling. This complexity was intensified by the power dynamics between all three players, the

institutional context and the global/historical context which created PSI. Issues emanating from the need for professional interpreters in public services ultimately relate back to practitioners being used as 'neutral' conduits for the authorities. Similarly to Hochschild's (1983) findings, the data in this study illustrated that PSIs not only had to manage their own emotion, but the emotion of service users and service providers as well.

Several examples of how interpreting for distressed, grateful, aggressive or suspicious service users and providers leading to further emotional labour were presented in Chapter 7. For instance, Oliver and Lauryne, as many other interpreters, expressed concerns about how being perceived as a friend by service users challenged the neutrality and impartiality of their role. In contrast, Monica's unpleasant experience in court as she was reprimanded by a court official for waiting in the same room as the service user, as she was told, further illuminates the issue of trust amongst service providers faced by PSIs. Maureen also offers a double account of being met with contempt by a detainee at the police station, and of being publicly humiliated by a barrister and having her professional competence questioned for mirroring the frustrated tone of a 'foreign' expert witness, against acceptable address in legal settings in the UK. As pointed out, service providers need to be trained on what PSI work entails for they are often perceived as the 'necessary evil' whose presence is inevitably going to slow procedures down. There is also a need to challenge negative attitudes inherited by service providers from previous experiences dealing with lay interpreters. In another incident, Lucy described how she was unwillingly associated with service users by speaking their mother tongue and directly experienced oppressive behaviours from some service providers. By interpreting in immigration tribunals settings, she was simultaneously perceived as a tool for the authorities by asylum associations, and by interpreting for the latter, as a traitor by people she called racist. As she, Mateo and Oliver further explained, the role of PSIs has recently been damaged by the media and powerful policy players. Although their indispensable role prompted the emergence of PSI in England, they are often presented publicly as a hindrance in legal proceedings, and one which is supposed to cost taxpayers unaffordable money. This too can sometimes create hostility to PSIs among service providers swayed by such perceptions, which interpreters then have to manage.

In light of PSIs' conflicting roles and perceptions discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, this study aims to contribute further to the existing literature and to go beyond the

simple addition of new empirical context in which emotional labour is simply identified and described. PSIs' daily dilemmas in the workplace require a critical analysis of emotional labour which pinpoints the complexity of social interactions, power relations and the very global/historical context that has brought the practice of PSI into being: international migration across borders, European humanitarian rights or enduring globalized power, as discussed in Chapter 2. As has become clear, PSI is another, albeit not common, type of human service occupation in which practitioners are expected to show professionalism by managing their own and third parties' emotions and often performing in emotionally-charged situations. They are required to display neutral and impartial feelings towards human service users and service providers, which places their occupation at point zero on Hochschild's emotional labour spectrum or halfway between flight attendants and debt collectors. Her conceptualization of emotional labour consequently seems better suited to critically interpret PSIs' experiences of labouring with feeling in the workplace.

In fact, the damaging recent definition of their role has, as Brook (2009) surmised, led practitioners to both act and resist. Lucy's story at the abortion clinic highlighted the boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour that practitioners may engage in in an attempt to fulfill their duties. Leila's challenging interpreting assignment during a police raid may offer an additional illustration of such tensions. In her first case of that kind, Leila worked alongside police officers and fellow compatriots late at night and at their domicile - a location kept secret to her until and after arrival. On one hand, police officers who 'paid' her services expected unlimited loyalty from her, but on the other hand, so did the suspected female service user with children for whom she interpreted. Across the data chapters, these examples and several more reveal that PSIs do struggle to comply with the stringent demand for their neutrality, impartiality and invisibility in the workplace.

Summary

As we have seen, PSI is a *newly* bounded profession, but its boundaries are therefore also 'thin', and as such, it offers particularly clear examples of Seddon *et al.*'s (2010) notion of boundary work. Breaching of boundaries can be mutual, or it can be imposed on PSIs. There is a strange expectation of a situation where one of the parties (that is to say the interpreter) is not going to interact socially as a human being; but all of the

empirical evidence actually shows that this expectation is an impossible fiction. Such a boundary is not hermetic, but impossibly permeable, frail and contentious.

Furthermore, managing boundaries, ethics and emotion within PSI are forms of work which are not acknowledged in official texts and training. Boundary work represents practices of the self and of being, whereas ethics work and emotional labour are practices of doing. In this chapter, we have seen how empirically in practice these are inseparable. But how can we offer a theoretical synthesis of what appear here to be three separately theorised processes? From the theoretical interpretation of the data, one question remains: how can we synthesise PSIs' experiences of boundary work, ethics work and emotion labour in a holistic manner? In the next chapter, I turn to Bourdieu to provide a theoretical synthesis of the data gathered in the present study.

Chapter 9: Synthesising PSIs' experiences: putting Bourdieu to work

Introduction

The data presented in Chapters 5 to 7 provide evidence of PSIs' struggles to comply with the official demand for their invisibility, neutrality and impartiality in the workplace. In Chapter 8, I have strongly argued that their attempts to comply with this unrealistic demand often leads to hidden forms of work, namely: boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour. These forms of work are, of course, not the only three key aspects of public service interpreting, but they represent the aspects that have been more salient in the data and that appear to be neglected in official accounts of and educational documentation for this professional practice.

The theoretical frameworks for understanding these forms of work suggest that the practice of PSI is far more complex than has been acknowledged in the literature so far. On one hand, PSIs are trained to perform in a way that observes the demands of their professional Code; but on the other hand, conflicting expectations and perceptions of their role from service users, providers, and practitioners themselves create tensions between what they are expected to do and what they actually do in practice. Whilst such theorisings have been helpful, in disparate ways, in developing an analysis and interpretation of PSIs' experiences, there remains a need to consider the contexts in which PSI takes place at meso- and macro-levels in order to understand the micro-interactions between practitioners, service users and providers in a more holistic manner. The sociology of Bourdieu, and in particular his inter-related concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *hexis* and *illusio*, seem to offer a relevant and more integrated way of synthesising the themes of the present study, through attention to structure, positioning of practitioners and others, agency and resistance within PSI. These Bourdieusian concepts can – indeed, must - be seen as intertwined, but for heuristic purposes, I apply them separately to the data in the sections that follow before linking them back together. To conclude, I offer a summary of what it may mean to look at PSI from the perspective of Bourdieu.

Field

For Bourdieu, *field* designates the infinite variety of social spaces governed by their own 'rules, regularities and forms of authority' (Wacquant, 2006: 7), such as

science, philosophy, religion or politics, in which individuals are originally positioned by dominant players and pursue strategies to position themselves more advantageously according to the possibilities and constraints of the field. Bourdieu often uses the analogy of a 'game' when describing the nature and implications of a field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Social beings enter a practice just as novice players enter a playing field with their own *habitus*: identity, sense of self, gender, class, cultural background, personal histories, past experiences, beliefs, values, attitudes and so on. They have more or less of a feel for the game and knowledge of its rules. The value and relevance of the resources that they bring have currency according to the economic, social, cultural and thus symbolic *capital* they represent; and which resources count as capital in that field is a matter established by the practices of dominant groups. Within a field, positions are strategically occupied according to players' varying degrees of interest and capital, and are vied for through relations of power. As a result, some players occupy a dominant position and others a subordinate position. In turn, the power relations between them reproduce and reinforce the structure of the game:

Position in the field inclines agents toward particular patterns of thought and conduct: those who occupy the dominant positions in a field tend to pursue strategies of conservation (of the existing distribution of capital) while those relegated to subordinate locations are more liable to deploy strategies of subversion. Established members have a vested interest in preserving the existing order and criteria of judgment, new entrants an interest in challenging them.

(Wacquant, 2006: 8)

The playing field consequently becomes an 'arena of struggle', a 'battlefield' where issues of identity, hierarchy and power can be challenged by newcomers. Its autonomy is endlessly threatened by players' conflicting interests in the uneven distribution of capital and the preeminent 'field of power', the source of hierarchical power relations constituted of dominant groupings, which ultimately determines the structure and fate of all other fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Jenkins, 1992).

From a Bourdieusian perspective, a field therefore experiences tensions both from *within* and *outside*, since it is subject to ongoing influx and external competing forces. A key defining aspect of a field then is not simply its capital but its *relative autonomy* in relation to the field of power and other dominant fields. Following Bourdieu, it has been argued that interference between multiple interrelated fields results in 'cross-field effects' (Rawolle, 2005). Rawolle's analysis of the impact of

recently mediatised Australian knowledge economy policies on education, science or research provides an insightful illustration of the strong influence that policy interventions and media coverage bring to bear on the evolution of dominated fields. As he observes, fields are characterised by internal struggles between agents, external pressures on their practice and for some, ongoing struggles for their autonomy with the field of power.

Bourdieu's own study (1998) of the relationship of the fields of journalism on other fields revealed that the very existence of some social fields is determined by the intimate relationship between the government and the media which publicly assess the symbolic value or capital of social fields against their *raison d'être*. A critical analysis of a specific field consequently implies an understanding of the impact that interference from both the 'political field' and the field of 'print journalism' have on other subordinate fields:

The term cross-field effects nominates particular practices that result from these relationships and provides sub-categories useful in grouping trends evident in the progression of these practices.

(Rawolle, 2005: 706)

So how can we apply Bourdieu's key concept of field and others' readings of it to explain and synthesise the data in the present study? According to Bourdieu, the analysis of any context must begin with investigating how the field is positioned in relation to the 'field of power', which represents dominant global interests (Colley, 2003; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Jenkins, 1992). Chapter 1 highlighted the crucial role that interpreters played during eras of conquest and colonialization on a global scale for millennia. The analysis of the historical illustrations of interpreting therein raised several major issues about power relations and the 'subordinate' role and positioning of lay interpreters. Dominant parties needed interpreters to extend their powers, but they also needed to suppress the powerful role that they played in order to retain control over mediated interactions. As illustrated in Chapter 2, attempts to remove lay interpreters' agency, visibility or in-group loyalty in formal settings by providers led to the emergence of PSI in different parts of the globe to varying extents. These attempts were seconded by political and ethical concerns for legal and human rights.

According to Bourdieu, fields are bounded social spaces, but some boundaries are stronger than others. What is at stake here is therefore the hierarchical relationship -

or relationship of domination - between one field and another. On one hand, the state still needs PSIs and there is a crucial but ambivalent relationship between the two. On the other hand, PSI is a new profession, a complex practice that only exists in interaction with other more established and institutionalised professions. Over the years, the forces within PSI may have shifted from an unbounded to a rigidly bounded practice, but as in the past, it still raises major issues related to social justice, the increase control of immigration by the state, dominant players' extension of their powers within and across borders, the reduction of the role of PSIs to mere translation machines, their expected subordination and so on. Although PSI has been newly-framed, it still occupies a highly disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the field of power. This echoes Fournier's (1999) point, noted in Chapter 3, that professions are never permanently established, they are always subject to contestation; here we can remark that this is particularly the case for one that has only recently been formed, and is therefore somewhat fragile.

The second step in any analysis must be to outline the objective structure of positions and relationships between players in the field and the relative autonomy of a field itself (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). What type of resources count as capital in PSI? What degree of autonomy does this field benefit from in relation to other fields? In Chapter 2, I provided details that characterise PSI in England. Combined with PSIs' narratives in Chapters 5 to 7, these characteristics pointed to the different positions objectively occupied by various individuals, groups, organisations and institutions within the field. They have also highlighted specific objective relationships between these players. In the 1990s and following EU initiatives, British government policies and national guidelines promoting multiculturalism, multilingualism and social justice contributed to an increased provision of interpreting and translation services within health, legal and social welfare settings across the country. Vocational training and accreditation were implemented to guarantee quality in public service interpreting and raise occupational status and standards. The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) was established to grant providers access to vetted professional interpreters bound by a code of ethics, via a paid subscription. To eradicate issues of trust, loyalty or agency that characterised lay interpreting, as illustrated in Chapter 1, the Code rigidly frames the practice by defining the role of interpreters as conduit pipes or translation machines. It also sets unrealistic demands for their impartiality, neutrality and invisibility in the workplace. Yet there is no provision of professional support for

PSIs such as counselling. As discussed in Chapter 3, the mechanical role definition of human practitioners has been the source of numerous struggles: it obscures the complexity of PSI and reduces interpreters to a subordinate position vis-à-vis service providers. It fails to acknowledge that rather than taking place in a vacuum, PSI is a socially situated practice embedded in a set of other social practices which is therefore influenced by a variety of players and settings (Angelelli, 2004). It also overshadows the active role that interpreters play in what has been described so far as triadic rather than dyadic exchanges (Mason, 2001; Wadensjö, 1998a).

From the research data, it emerged that PSI could be seen as a weak and incipient field whose existence and survival are strongly influenced by cross-field effects. Indeed, although international and national policies did bring PSI to birth as a formal profession, these also hold that profession's fate in their hands and can as swiftly demolish it. Its practitioners have to practice within fields established by others, such as the legal, medical and social welfare fields, and abide by their rules and protocols. They take their resources, which count as capital in the field of PSI, into *other* fields where these resources do *not* count as capital, and where they are therefore positioned very subordinately. They are, as it were, always working in somebody else's field and struggle to maintain and enhance positions. In this sense, and given its dependence on the whims of policy for its very existence, PSI could be seen not so much as field, but as a *quasi-field* having very little autonomy indeed *except that which practitioners themselves exercise on an individual level*. Despite being on others' territory and having to play by others' rules, like the interpreters of ancient times they still have some power - to withhold information, to refuse to judge clients, to intervene into brutal questionings and so on.

In his analysis of the 'juridical field', Bourdieu claims that lawyers are hierarchically positioned in accordance with the positions occupied by their clients in the social hierarchy. As a result, 'those who occupy inferior positions in the field (as for example in social welfare law) tend to work with a clientele of social inferiors' (Bourdieu, 1977: 850). The same can be observed for PSIs who inherit a status lower than their business or conference counterparts by commonly working with people in a position of need such as asylum seekers, sick patients or homeless people. Within the fields of service providers in which both service users and PSIs are marginal 'intruders', the inheritance of the interpreter's low status can also be explained by the fact that practitioners often belong to the same linguistic and cultural communities as service

users and are therefore assimilated to them. A lack of social awareness of what PSI entails and public recognition persists, leading to conflicting perceptions of and expectations from the role of practitioners. Indeed, the interpreters who took part in my study often struggled to be treated as professionals and assert their needs and identities as such. They reported several critical incidents which illustrate these struggles. Many of these took place in court settings where symbolic power is mediated through language. Yet the legal field is paradoxically where the pressing demand for trained interpreters mostly led to the emergence of PSI in England. It is an arena where interpreters reported being caught in power struggles between adversarial parties whilst attempting to give disadvantaged users a voice. Official texts define PSIs as guarantors of users' basic human rights and grant them the status of officers of the court, but they still occupy a subordinate position vis-à-vis service providers. Participants often described their presence in this hostile environment as tokenistic since little or no allowance was made overall to enable them to do a good job. Even experienced interpreters who occupied dominant positions in PSI were relegated to subordinate positions in the legal field. Monika's request for a barrister to slow down, for instance, was publicly met with contempt, and Maureen's professional competence doubted when she mirrored the indignant tone of voice of a witness giving evidence.

Overwhelming evidence from the data suggests that this list is far from being exhaustive. Indeed, PSIs' comments in Chapters 5 to 7 provided a wealth of additional examples of how individuals relatively positioned themselves vis-à-vis each other, their and a variety of other practices, institutions and settings. Bourdieu's analogy between fields and economic markets that are regulated by supply and demand is useful here in offering a further example of relative positioning at the institutional level. In Chapter 2, I provided specific examples of how the fields of both national and international politics and the field of the media influenced the evolution of PSI in England over the years. These examples amongst many others can be read as further illustrations of cross-field effects. Popular EU and government policies which promoted social justice and integration for linguistically and culturally diverse communities sparked the need for PSIs in England at the dawn of the new millennium. This enthusiasm was nonetheless short lived with the adoption of austerity measures - which considerably reduced the interpreting and translation provision allocated to Local Authorities and increased outsourcing to agencies mostly recruiting untrained bilinguals and paying 'pocket money rates' - in addition to national anti-immigration policies.

These events shifted both the focus of PSI and the forces therein. On one hand, the language barrier came to be seen as a hindrance that prevented service users from finding employment and participating in society. To that effect, residing immigrants were strongly encouraged to learn English, although the availability of affordable language courses was severely limited, and newcomers were warned of the necessity to master the language before their arrival on British soil. On the other hand, PSIs were blamed for perpetuating the language barrier and for assisting foreigners, especially ‘criminals’ at the expense of taxpayers. This shift not only undermined the professional status and identity of freelance practitioners, but also the crucial role that they play in guarantying users a fair access to public services. By way of example, Oliver, who initially believed that his practice would be coupled with prestige, expressed dismay at the lack of awareness amongst users and providers of what his role entailed, and shock about the media coverage of the British National Party in the 2010 General Election that shamed the ‘dependence’ of foreigners and PSIs on the government’s expenditures. Following an article read in the Guardian on the alleged staggering cost of PSI on taxpayers, Mateo came to question the *raison d’être* of his practice and to feel guilt for contributing to tax payers’ hardship - including himself - in times of economic crisis. As I shall discuss in greater detail in the last section of this chapter, it can be argued that cross-field effects have had a lasting negative impact on PSIs’ trajectories within the field and on the survival of PSI as a whole. More fundamentally, these cross-field effects bring into question the status of PSI as an autonomous field. Since, as we have so clearly seen, PSIs have no independent space in which to practice, but must inevitably always practice in spaces already dominated by other professions, it may be more appropriate to view PSI as a *quasi-field* - and therefore inherently a precarious one - rather than as a field in its own right, in spite of PSIs’ strong sense of professional identity and commitment. This leads us to the third focus of analysis according to Bourdieu: the *habitus* of individuals positioned in the field.

Habitus

In Bourdieusian terms, *habitus* refers to a system of durable and transposable dispositions which, ‘integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a *matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions* and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks’ (Bourdieu, 1977: 83, original emphasis). It is noteworthy that the word ‘disposition’ here means at once the ‘*result of an organizing action [...] a*

way of being, a habitual state (especially of the body) and, in particular, a *predisposition, tendency, propensity, or inclination*' (Bourdieu, 1977: 214, original emphasis). Personal dispositions or ways of 'perceiving', 'judging' and 'acting' in the world are unconsciously 'acquired through lasting exposure to particular social conditions and conditionings, via the internalization of external constraints and possibilities', especially during childhood (Wacquant, 2006: 6). These dispositions embody taken-for-granted assumptions about the 'correct' or 'appropriate' ways of thinking, behaving and doing things that are unconsciously instilled through a whole set of socially accepted beliefs and customs or *doxa*. They are therefore collectively shared, although to varying degrees, by individuals living through broadly similar experiences. A critical understanding of the concept of *habitus* thus implies that it is both a collective and subjective social construct, which generates practices. Indeed:

It is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world is itself the product of internalization of the division into social classes.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 170)

Habitus is a raw and malleable material, but it is also both transposable and durable. Although a transformation of *habitus* is possible, its realisation in practice is subject to limitations since it is dictated by *habitus* itself:

[Dispositions] inscribe into the body the evolving influence of the social milieu, but within the limits set by primary (or earlier) experiences, since it is *habitus* itself which at every moment filters such influence.

(Wacquant, 2006: 7)

However, the durable nature of *habitus* is nonetheless ephemeral, since it is:

A principle of *both social continuity and discontinuity*: continuity because it stores social forces into the individual organism and transports them across time and space; discontinuity because it can be modified through the acquisition of new dispositions and because it can trigger innovation whenever it encounters a social setting discrepant with the setting from which it issues.

(Wacquant, 2006: 7)

Habitus can therefore be transformed to some extent through agency and the enhancement of capital, since it is in essence an '*open system of dispositions*' (Wacquant, 2013; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Through teaching and experience (practice), it can be moulded to match the exigencies imposed by a specific field, but it

can also act to change the field. It implies that players are as much transformed by the game as they transform it. The relationship between agency and structure is therefore expressed by both *habitus* and field. As Wacquant puts it:

Just as *habitus* informs practice from within, a field structures action and representation from without: it offers the individual a gamut of possible stances and moves that she can adopt, each with its associated profits, costs, and subsequent potentialities.

(Wacquant, 2006: 8)

If we utilise Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, how does it enable us to explain both aspects of PSIs' individual and collective dispositions, and their trajectory - not only within their own quasi-field, but also in relation to the other more powerful fields within which they must practice? On narrating the stories of the interpreters who took part in my study, I included comments on their motivations for entering the field. These PSIs were either raised bilingual or became so through living abroad. All shared a passion for languages and felt that enabling people from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds to communicate was rewarding, although job satisfaction was often influenced by the settings in which they worked. However, whilst most entered the field of PSI by serendipity, others like Maureen were drawn into it by vocation. Choosing to specialize in legal, health or local government matters was mainly dictated by affinity, course availability or necessity. Besides a vast knowledge of cultures, languages and the functioning of public services, many believed that PSI required a multiplicity of skills such as confidence, assertiveness, flexibility or adaptability. In Mary's opinion, predispositions such as a calm personality and indefatigable patience also helped to be a good PSI. Adhering to the professional discourse, all PSIs perceived the demand for their neutrality, impartiality and invisibility in the workplace as paramount; something which they maintained could be achieved through focus, personal detachment and experience. Nonetheless, it emerged from the data that although dispositions towards invisibility, impartiality and neutrality were commonly viewed as valuable assets, factors such as personal beliefs, culture or religion made it difficult to embody them at times and often led practitioners to resist the transformation of their *habitus*. For instance, Andrew objected to ignoring users who addressed him directly, asserting that every human being had feelings and was worthy of a response regardless of what they have done. As for Samir, his aversion to lies and insulting language pushed him to distort original renditions and eventually stop working in the

legal field amongst 'criminals' and 'biased' police officers despite his specialisation in Law. These examples and many more provide insights into how *habitus* influences the field.

My transformation of the data illustrated how learning to become a PSI ensued from participation in several communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in *other* fields. Their participation was *always* peripheral to these fields, but not as legitimate as a newcomer located permanently in them, and with no possibility of fuller participation over time. PSIs are ever marginal participants in other professional fields. At the same time, the data reveal that PSIs mainly learnt on the job, and they highlighted the social, cultural and emotional aspects of that process. The narratives showed how interpreters acquired a specific vocational *habitus* through training and work-based learning (cf. Colley *et al.*, 2003). As many signalled, the DPSI course was just a theoretical course with make-believe interpreting simulations. It was just a 'springboard', which could not realistically prepare candidates for all the conflicts later faced as practitioners in real-life situations (although evidence suggests that many conflicts were in fact raised by the Code's rigid definition of PSIs' roles). Not only did the service users and the providers with whom practitioners worked differ, but so did the work settings and circumstances, thus offering a myriad of opportunities to learn. Furthermore, developing a 'feel' for PSI and a practical sense of good and bad practice clearly involved a substantial amount of boundary work, ethics work and emotional labour. It required interpreters to shuttle constantly between visibility/invisibility, personal/professional ethics and a human/dehumanised role; and to develop strategies to deal with the discrepancy between these dichotomies. Learning to become a PSI was, as the data illustrated, intrinsically emotional, with a further impact on individuals' identities. PSIs not only had to manage their own emotions, but also the emotions of service users and providers. With experience, they learnt to emotionally detach themselves to perform their roles or resisted doing so. Working with people from different walks of life, albeit often in very difficult emotional situations, was generally deemed interesting or fascinating even. It enabled interpreters to develop a broader awareness of the world and empathy towards service users' predicaments. As Samir put it, doing PSI work was 'an education in itself', for interpreters continuously acquire sociocultural as well as linguistic knowledge. This education required them to change other aspects of their personal identities to become 'professionals' through a process of unbecoming human. Identity transformation consequently came with experience, but to varying degrees. Indeed,

many incidents reported in the data illustrated the interpreters' struggles to perform an invisible, neutral and dehumanised role as their human feelings and personal beliefs naturally interfered. The attempt to explain participants' bodily struggles to embody their practice leads me to consider a third concept explored by Bourdieu and others that is particularly relevant to my study, that of embodied *habitus* or *hexis*.

Hexis

In the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, it is interesting to note the pivotal role played by the *body*. Drawing on Goffman, the sociologist holds that bodies are apprehended as mnemonic living resources that absorb and adopt 'the seemingly most insignificant details of *dress, bearing, physical and verbal manners*' to embody *habitus* and espouse practice (Bourdieu, 1977: 94, original emphasis). *Habitus* can be understood as a 'socialized biological body' since 'the body is in the social world but the social world is in the body' (Bourdieu, 2000: 152). This concept is embodied in three ways. First, it is mental, 'inside the heads' of individuals. Second, it is embodied in their practices, their relationship with one another and with social spaces. Third, it is preeminent in the 'practical taxonomies' and oppositions, such as 'up/down' or 'masculine/feminine' that guide our perceptions and practices (Jenkins, 1992; Bourdieu, 1990). It ensues that the interplay of 'histories incarnate in bodies' (*habitus*) and 'history objectified in things' (fields) is intimate and at the heart of generating social practice(s) (Wacquant, 2006: 8). Within this theoretical framework, the body is unconsciously used both to store dispositions and to act as a living rather than passive memory which '*enacts* the past, bringing it back to life' (Bourdieu, 1990: 73, original emphasis). It is a vehicle between the subjective and collective worlds shared by social agents:

Bodily *hexis* [*habitus*] is political mythology realized, *em-bodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of *feeling* and *thinking* ... The principles em-bodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness ...

(Bourdieu, 1977: 93-94, original emphasis)

Furthermore, it is worthy to note that '*the active side of embodiment [is]* not just as socially construct-*ed*, but as socially construct-*ing*' (Wacquant, 2013: 195, original emphasis). The investigation of Bourdieu's concept of embodied *habitus* has been extended to a variety of cultural worlds and practices (Wacquant, 2007; Wainwright and

Turner, 2003; Holland *et al.*, 2001; Wacquant, 1995). Focusing on the embodiment of working class or boxing and ballet, some studies have described the body as *physical* capital, a commodity sold for a wage to enact practice(s) (Wacquant, 2007; Wainwright and Turner, 2003; Wacquant, 1995). In his latest work, Wacquant (2013) usefully revisits Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus*, *hexis* and *illusio* in particular. As he explains, individuals may acquire primary, secondary and multiple subsequent *habitus* through specific learning:

The primary *habitus* is the set of dispositions one acquires in early childhood [...] through familial osmosis and familial immersion [...]. The secondary *habitus* is any system of transposable schemata that becomes grafted subsequently, through specialized pedagogical labour ...

(Wacquant, 2013: 193)

Primary *habitus* acquired within the family's nest therefore constitutes a 'springboard' to the acquisition of secondary and multiple subsequent *habitus*. The potential knowledge acquired through carrying out specific practices represents cultural capital that individuals can accumulate and trade. *Habitus(es)* thus become inscribed into individuals' bodies like permanent tattoos. It is therefore crucial to bear in mind that in Bourdieu's theory of practice, the body plays a central role since as he puts it, 'we learn bodily' through emotions and suffering (Bourdieu, 2000: 141).

Across the data chapters, participant PSIs often referred to the body whilst describing their professional experiences. Chapter 5 in particular provided a wealth of illustrations of PSIs' initial willingness to mould their bodies in order to perform a neutral and invisible role as prescribed by the Code. For instance, they learnt during training that controlling body language was crucial to appear neutral and inspire trust amongst parties and went along with it. In their accounts, they indicated that the embodiment of the PSI practice required specific dispositions or primary *habitus* (although their understandings of such embodiment varied). Turning *hexis* into capital (subsequent *habitus*) seemed to represent a sine qua non condition for doing a good job, being good at one's job and in theory being perceived as professionals. One example from the data will suffice to illustrate practitioners' willingness to mould their bodies to embody their practice: before becoming a PSI, Lucy naturally conveyed her emotions through bodily reactions and progressively learnt to transform inner and outer aspects of her *habitus* to embody PSI. She, like others, learnt to control her body language, distance herself and adapt her dress code in accordance with the types of users and

settings in which she worked. This illustration offers a relatively benign example of a PSI's active yet *intuitive* embodiment of practice. Indeed, the data highlighted a lingering paradox as to the ways in which the PSI practice could possibly be embodied: PSIs are expected to remain invisible at work despite being physically present as human practitioners and playing a very visible role in mediating interactions. They often work in situations that are emotionally and ethically challenging and in which their professional boundaries are relentlessly disturbed by service users, providers or by practitioners themselves. Given the nature of their practice, they constantly work in other people's fields and with users from various walks of life. As a result, they have to embody various structures of practice simultaneously and often struggle to do so. Finally, the Code does not help with the unrealistic demand for PSIs' invisibility, impartiality and neutrality at work and practitioners are mostly left alone to deal with it intuitively.

From the data, it emerged that following training, participants seemed to accept the fact that their practice was mentally challenging but also that it could be dehumanised or dis-embodied in intriguing ways. However, what seemed to represent most of a challenge were its unexpected physical demands relentlessly faced on the learning ground. For instance, although Lucy seemed to effortlessly comply with the embodying demands of her practice, she recalled a distressing assignment that took place in an abortion clinic many years ago. From it, she remembered feeling very torn between her personal and professional ethics and struggling to remain invisible. This experience was emotionally intense for Lucy. It undoubtedly left indelible traces on her body and soul since she still feels traumatised by it. The data in the present study suggest that her case is far from being isolated. Emotions often run high within PSI work and practitioners use their bodies as mnemonic devices to learn from the past and present and embody practice. Professional experiences become part of their bodies, as much as their practice becomes embodied by them (cf. Wacquant, 1995). In the data chapters, many practitioners further described how they moulded their bodies to the stringent demands of PSI. In Larry's and Monika's cases for instance, this involved making sacrifices such as not requesting a break despite feeling tired, neglecting one's private life and dietary needs despite the negative impact on their bodies and souls. But as Mary commented, embodying invisibility at work obscures what the PSI practice entails and practitioners' needs. Furthermore, despite these efforts and bodily sacrifices that participants made, they often felt that they were perceived as friends, traitors or

tools even by service users and providers, rather than as professionals. But what may have driven participant PSIs to initially adhere to the stringent demands of their practice and agree to play the game in the first place? To try and explain such phenomenon, I finally turn to Bourdieu's under-explored concept of *illusio*.

Illusio

As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, an important aspect to note about Bourdieu's sociology is that his theoretical concepts form a holistic framework. They are relational and cannot be separated or fragmented, although I have been obliged to do so in this chapter for heuristic purposes. Indeed, 'the central notions of field, *habitus*, *capital* and *illusio* are intrinsically woven together, such that none can be defined without recourse to the others' (Gouanvic, 2005: 148, original emphasis). They are 'internally linked to one another as each achieves its full analytical potency only in tandem with the others' (Wacquant, 2006: 9). Whilst some have seen the relationship between the overlapping concepts of field and practice as 'obscure' and 'unproductively, held apart' in Bourdieu's work (Warde, 2004: 26), it is appropriate here to remember the crucial role of *illusio* as a point of articulation between *habitus*, practice and field, although this concept remains underexplored or misused (Costey, 2005). As Bourdieu explains, in a field:

We have *stakes (enjeux)* which are for the most part the product of the competition between players. We have an *investment in the game, illusio* (from *ludus*, the game): players are taken in by the game, they oppose one another, sometimes with ferocity, only to the extent that they concur in their belief (*doxa*) in the game and its stakes; they grant these a recognition that escapes questioning. Players agree, by the mere fact of playing, and not by way of a 'contract,' that the game is worth playing, that it is 'worth the candle,' and this *collusion* is the very basis of their competition.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 98, original emphasis)

Illusio therefore means being 'invested, taken in and by the game' and believing that 'what happens in it matters, that its stakes are important and worth pursuing' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 116). It represents the more conscious counterpart of the pervasive *doxa* in the field. Personal belief that the game is 'worth the candle' and acceptance of its rules, possibilities and limitations are what drive players to invest in it and deploy strategies to position themselves. *Illusio* is therefore 'closely linked to the dynamics of a field, existing only in the action of agents equipped with the *habitus* and

symbolic capital acquired in that field' (Gouanvic, 2005: 164, original emphasis). Let us recall here that, on one hand, *illusio* is a mental state, a conscious belief that what is at stake in a field matters and is worth fighting for. On the other hand, it is 'an illusion or 'diversion' only for someone who perceives the game from the outside, from the scholastic standpoint of an 'impartial spectator'' (Bourdieu, 2000: 151). The opposite of *illusio* is what Bourdieu calls *indifference*:

To be indifferent is to be unmoved by the game: like Buridan's donkey, this game makes no difference to me. Indifference is an axiological state, an ethical state of nonpreference as well as a state of knowledge in which I am not capable of differentiating the stakes proposed.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 116)

As he observes further:

The homology between the space of positions and the space of dispositions is never perfect and there are always some agents 'out on a limb', displaced, out of place and ill at ease.

(Bourdieu, 2000: 157)

The data in Chapters 5 to 7 and the discussion above have illustrated several ways in which PSIs initially aspired to enter and maintain strategic positions within the game because they were moved by it and deemed that it was worth fighting for. Participants made significant investments in the game that go beyond factors such as time and money. By way of example, they obtained one if not two DPSIs, established themselves as freelancers despite the precarious working conditions that this often implies, and provided a certain amount of PSI work in order to register with the NRPSI. They agreed to observe the stringent prescriptions of the Code and shared common beliefs about the stakes of the field which they mostly learnt on the ground. Many believed that their role was crucial in enabling service users to access public services which resonates with the aims of the EU and NRPSI. In that respect, they found their contribution towards social justice gratifying. The data nonetheless suggest that by always 'playing' in someone else's field, PSIs appeared more like Buridan's donkey, subordinated by their marginal position in another field but less taken in by the *illusio* of that other field (immigration services, police forces, legal advice, and many more).

A significant amount of data illustrated how PSIs did not view the customs and values of the service provider as 'worth the candle', such as when Larry refused to assist immigration officers in determining where an asylum seeker came from, Leila to give

her opinion on the veracity of a detainee's words to the police or Lucy to fulfil a clerk's role in court. From the data, it seemed that participants were more able in some limited respects to exercise agency in resistance to the doxa of that other field (notwithstanding the symbolic violence they also had to endure). Their lack of *illusio* is apparently what allowed them to find interstices in the field in which to exercise agency and shore up boundaries, as we have seen in Chapter 5. Similarly, the concept of *illusio within* the field of PSI is interesting to focus on, since the official doxa of the field itself is so weak that practitioners draw very much on their own personal values and beliefs to address the realities that the prescriptions of the Code do not help with. PSIs often commented on how they resorted to spur-of-the-moment strategies to deal with the challenging realities or emergencies of their practice. Due to the isolating nature of their practice and the dearth of professional support structures in place, it emerged from the data that PSIs were mostly left alone to deal with these realities intuitively.

Within the weak and incipient quasi-field of PSI dominated by competing forces, practitioners experienced boundary disturbances, strong tensions from other fields, conflicts between personal and professional ethics, intense emotions, traumas and disillusionments. As discussed in Chapter 2 and above, the interests of the field of power therein shifted from embracing multilingualism and enabling social cohesion to restricting immigration tighter and reducing the public purse. However, as the latest government policies and coverage from the media revealed, these (new and financial) interests from the field of power have been masked by bogus concerns about alleviating the burden of the 'spiralling' cost of interpreting and translation on taxpayers when in fact they contribute to the reproduction of social inequalities. The cross-field effects of new austerity measures on PSI orchestrated by the government and vilification of the PSI profession by the media have led participants to feel further isolated and alienated in an economic context that is already very challenging. As their workload and popularity sharply decreased, many were left feeling stressed, robbed of the credit they deserved or worried about the future of their practice. Despite all good-wills, they became disillusioned or *indifferent* about what the future may hold. In Mateo and Samir's cases, a shattered *illusio* ultimately meant withdrawal from the game all together despite previously enjoying the challenge. Even strong players such as Monika or Larry who firmly believed in the significant value of their roles and vehemently defended the cause of PSIs ultimately had their *illusio* shattered by the series of offensives launched by the dominant field of power. Referring to Marx, Wacquant

argues that: 'The incarnate and social agent is a *suffering and desiring animal*' (Wacquant, 2013: 194). But once the shattering of the *illusio* takes place and there is no desire left, investing one's energy into what may then appear as an 'illusion' or 'diversion' - in Bourdieusian terms - does not seem worth the candle anymore. As their practices are increasingly threatened by austerity measures and the field of power, even the most well-intended, dedicated and caring human service practitioners can feel as they are left with no choice but to call it a game, sometimes with tragic consequences (Colley, 2012).

But what if a mostly unaccounted for but fourth player within the quasi-field of PSI held its existence and survival in its hands?

In the penultimate chapter of this thesis, I have offered a broader interpretation of PSIs' experiences from a Bourdieusian perspective. For this purpose, I have drawn on Bourdieu's sociology, and in particular his concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *hexis* and *illusio* as a theoretical framework for a more holistic analytical interpretation of the data presented in Chapters 5 to 7. The illustrations of how *habitus* articulates with the field have been crucial in understanding how they both express structure and agency, the individual and collective, and generate practice. In parallel, I have offered several illustrations and explanations of the pivotal role of *illusio* in grasping the articulation between *field*, *habitus*, and *hexis* and the stringent demands for invisibility, ethics and emotion befalling upon PSIs and their trajectories within the field(s), in accordance with Bourdieu's logic of practice. The hidden invisible work, ethical work and emotional labour that practitioners faced in the workplace have revealed much about their roles, practices and identities. Despite the crucial role that they played in enabling users to fairly access public services and service providers to comply with laws and regulations on human rights, PSIs still occupied an awkward but agentic position that rendered their role anything but invisible, neutral and impartial. Their interventions within cross-fields often remain invaluable and crucial as the recent Victoria Climbé's case discussed in Chapter 2 highlighted. As latest changes within the quasi-field of PSI illustrated, there is indeed a danger posed by new austerity measures on the practice: that of substituting professionally trained interpreters by so-called bilinguals in matters that often boil down to life or death for service users.

In theory, the official *doxa* within PSI is that the practice constitutes a dyadic relationship between users and providers and that practitioners should play an invisible

social role in the interactions that they mediate, as mere conduit pipes. But as the data illustrated, users were frequently positioned as the subordinate group, since it is difficult for them to position themselves, but one of the things that interpreters are doing is to mediate the role of providers in positioning users. Therefore, we are faced with an incredibly complex combination for PSIs of self-positioning and being positioned by others, because they are also subordinate in that hierarchy. This takes us back to the history of PSI and the almost mercurial role that 'bilinguals' played - one which could flip between absolute subordination and exercising quite high levels of control depending on the context. The critical interpretations of PSI tell us, as we have seen in Chapter 3, that there is a triadic relationship between practitioners, service users and providers. Nonetheless, my study illuminates this situation in at least two original ways. First: it provides additional insights into this 'triadic' relationship and what that involves for PSIs. And second, beyond this, it illustrates the fact that forces within the quasi-field of PSI represent not a triadic but a quadratic relationship that also includes national and international policy-makers. To demonstrate this newly accounted for four-way relationship, I have built on and taken further the work of ground-breaking authors such as Angelelli (2004), Mason (2001) and Wadensjö (1998a), and how they made it possible for us to make sense of what is happening within PSI. In so doing, I have sought to demonstrate how a dyadic relationship is in fact triadic or quadratic even - which can have lasting but also damaging impact on a field - due to the 'absent' fourth player (politics) in the field (cf. Colley *et al.*, 2014).

To conclude, the sociology of Bourdieu has helped me to identify, in a holistic fashion, how anomalies within PSI work are balanced or imbalanced and how those aspects are distributed across a nexus of parties connected by unequal power relations. With his help, I have put the triad at the heart of my analysis and interpretation and rethought it as a set of struggles in which the outcomes are always different, very different. In the brief concluding chapter of this thesis, I offer some conclusions and recommendations for future policy, practice and research in relation to public service interpreting.

Chapter 10 – Conclusions, recommendations and prospects

There is little point in researching Community Interpreting if researchers do not make their research practical, applicable and accessible and if the results will not be read and implemented by practitioners and educators.

(Ozolins and Hale, 2009: 3)

Introduction

This thesis has explored how PSIs learn to do their job in the learning ground of the workplace by focusing on three aspects: boundary, ethics and emotion. Its aims were to identify how PSIs enact their role in daily practice, deepen our understanding of less visible aspects of PSIs' work, contribute to critical theorisations of PSI and inform policy and practice about practitioners' experiences in England. In particular, this thesis has provided further insights into how labouring with boundaries, ethics and emotions represent three forms of work within PSI which have been largely overlooked so far in the literature. Indeed, no analysis yet has offered an integrated view of these multiple layers of work in relation to PSI, other than the one that is presented here. In this concluding chapter, I provide a succinct summary of my findings to demonstrate how my research questions at the end of Chapter 3 have been answered. As Ozolins and Hale's (2009) above quote reminds us, there is a need for a stronger link between research and practice (see also Angelelli, 2008; Valero-Garcés, 2008; Verrept, 2008). I therefore make some recommendations for policy and practice and suggest further research agendas that could broaden our understanding of PSI further. In the conclusion to this thesis, I further reflect on my doctoral journey.

Addressing the research questions

My research questions were:

1. How do PSIs narrate their experiences in the workplace?
2. How do they perceive their interactions with public service users and providers?
3. What challenges do they recount in performing their role?
4. What practices do they engage in to meet these challenges?
5. To what extent does labouring with invisibility, ethics and emotion arise in PSIs' practice, and how?
6. How can we best theorise the complex nature of PSIs' work in a more holistic way?

In this thesis, I have argued that these can only be answered by locating PSIs' own micro-level narratives within a much broader macro-level context that includes cultural, political, economic and social factors. I began by showing that interpreting is an ancient practice which is suffused with ambiguities relating to trust, power and agency. Drawing on both official accounts of the newly formed profession of PSI, and the emergent critical literature thereon, I have argued that existing critiques can be deepened and extended through attention to PSIs' own narratives, and through the application of Bourdieu's sociology in a more holistic way. This theoretical analysis has enabled us to see the multi-layered complexities they themselves perceive in their interactions with public service users and providers. Across the data, we have seen that they recount constant challenges in performing their role, not only in relation to managing the boundaries of that role within complex and often highly intimate social interactions, but also in relation to frequent ethical dilemmas and pressures, which in turn are intertwined with profoundly affecting emotional challenges. Their responses to these challenges are highly varied and not always consistent: for example, in boundary work, they may choose to try and shore up their professional role boundaries, they may themselves breach them, or they may (more or less successfully) try to resist their breaching by others. Finally, I have argued that we need a deeper understanding of the particular challenges they face, drawing on theories of workplace learning; at the same, this deeper understanding cannot be fully achieved without also synthesising this tripartite analysis via Bourdieu's holistic framework.

These conclusions lead us to consider how they might inform policy and practice. Given the complexity of influences on the quasi-field of PSI, it is useful to think of parallel recommendations for different players in and in relation to PSI.

Recommendations for policy and practice

There is a need for national and transnational governments to:

- reassert the ethical and human rights principles which demand professional PSI
- revisit the protocols regarding PSI to take into account evidence about the realities of its practice both for PSI themselves, and for other professionals
- raise awareness, visibility, status and esteem of PSI
- resist from treating PSIs as scapegoats for policies restricting immigration

These steps might include:

- acknowledgement of the more social role that interpreters play
- supporting better training for other public service providers and professionals in those services about PSI
- supporting the NRPSI to become an over-arching professional association with the resources to provide more extensive professional support (see below)

The NRPSI should continue to lobby national and transnational governments to:

- reassert ethical and human rights principles which demand professional PSI
- raise awareness, visibility, status and esteem of PSIs
- respond to political treatment of PSIs as scapegoats
- acknowledge more in official texts and training the social role that interpreters actually play
- work jointly with IoLET, the professional body in charge of DPSI training and examinations, to improve training for PSIs to focus on evidence from critical research on PSI – not just in initial training, but also in continuing professional development (CPD) - which can feed back research findings to practitioners
- develop an understanding of PSI as a social rather than purely technical practice
- develop initial training on ethics to equip PSIs better to deal with real-life situations they will encounter
- take responsibility and seek resources for more extensive support for PSIs, particularly provision of counselling similar to the clinical supervision received by other public service professionals working with the same customer groups

Public service providers and providers of initial training and CPD for their professional staff (universities, colleges, training providers and professional associations) all should lobby national and transnational governments to:

- reassert ethical and human rights principles which demand professional PSI in the interests of social justice for their customers
- raise awareness, visibility, status and esteem of PSIs
- respond to political treatment of PSIs as scapegoats

- acknowledge more in official texts and training the social role that interpreters actually play
- improve training for their professionals to focus on evidence from critical research on PSI – not just initial training but also CPD - which can feed back research findings to practitioners.
- develop an understanding of PSI as a social rather than purely technical practice
- develop initial training on the ethical issues which arise in interpreted interactions to equip their professionals better to deal with real-life situations they will encounter alongside PSIs

Further research agendas

There is a fast-moving policy context and also fast-moving changes within the PSI practice due to: political trends regarding immigration on the one hand, and on the other, budget reductions for all public services due to austerity. Therefore, there is a need to trace further developments for PSI, both at macro- and micro-levels. This thesis also suggests a further research agenda in relation to:

- gendered differences between male and female PSIs
- how PSIs cope with the emotional demands of the job, and their support needs in this regard (counselling, clinical supervision, etc.)

Original contributions of this thesis to knowledge

This thesis has made several original and significant contributions to knowledge:

- it has presented a fine-grained account of PSIs' work from their own perspectives, which until now have remained underexplored
- it has focused on three mostly hidden aspects of their work: boundary work, ethics work, and emotional labour
- it has demonstrated that these aspects not only constitute forms of work in themselves for PSIs, but also that they are thoroughly integrated, both together and with the more overt practices of public service interpreting
- it has located these clearly, through a critical interpretation, in wider sets of social power relations, revealing that national and international policy-makers represent a fourth party in interpreted public service encounters

- it has built on and added to existing knowledge of this topic through an innovative interdisciplinary approach bringing together critical interpreting studies with sociological understandings of professions and of workplace learning
- it has offered a holistic synthesis of these perspectives, integrating them through the lens of Bourdieu's theoretical framework.

As I embarked upon my doctoral journey, I was unaware of the many twists and turns that it would take before I catch a glimpse of the light at the end of the tunnel. I found the experience particularly difficult and long, but very rewarding at the same time. This journey pushed me to go beyond my own physical as well as intellectual boundaries, and to explore what was for a novice researcher like me uncharted territory beyond extremes. Not only do I realise now how little I knew about research and the whole world before starting my project, but how much more there is still to learn. As I conclude this thesis, I am aware of its limitations – discussed in Chapter 4 – and the reader may identify additional ones. Therefore, I believe that far from being an end, this constitutes the beginning of my academic journey in which there will no doubt be many other twists and turns. To conclude, I do hope that my persistent academic attempts to shed more and new light on the practice of PSI have been successful, remembering that:

A research presentation is in every respect the very opposite of an exhibition, of a *show* in which you seek to show off and to impress others. It is a discourse in which you *expose yourself*, you take risks ... The more you expose yourself, the greater your chances of benefiting from the discussion and the more constructive and good-willed, I am sure, the criticisms and advice you will receive. The most efficient way of wiping out errors, as well as the terrors that are oftentimes at their root, is to be able to laugh about them together, which, as you will soon discover, will happen quite often...

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 219, original emphasis)

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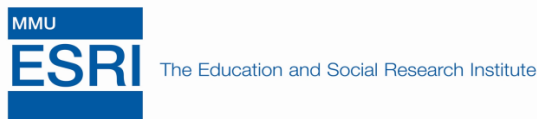
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APPENDIX 1: Information sheet for research participants



Information Sheet for participants

Study title:

Public Service Interpreters: an investigation of their roles, practices and experiences in multi-professional contexts.

Research interest:

Public Service Interpreting (PSI) is a profession still in its infancy. However, little is known about what this work entails from a practitioner's perspective. There is a need for more in-depth understanding of Public Service Interpreters' (PSIs') roles, identities and practices, and of the ways in which they interact with other public service professionals and with service users. The project is funded by Manchester Metropolitan University through a full-time research student bursary.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to investigate the nature of PSI work, and how it is defined and understood by practitioners and other stakeholders. It is concerned with daily practices in PSI encounters, and PSIs' relationships with other public service professionals and service users. It also aims to understand the norms and values that inform the profession, and how these have been shaped. The findings should contribute to a greater understanding of the profession, and inform policy, practice and professional development in this field.

Why have I been asked to take part?

Given your professional status as PSI, your perspective and experiences will be a valuable input to create a better understanding of PSIs' roles, identities and practices, and the profession's place within multi-agency contexts (legal, medical, and local authority provision).

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary and there is no obligation to do so. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form, but please note that you will still be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What will I have to do?

If you agree to take part in the study, you will be invited to participate in a face-to-face interview with Frédérique Guéry, the researcher. This will last between 60-90 minutes, depending on your availability, to be negotiated at your convenience. During the interview you will be encouraged to share your perceptions on the above topics.

Will taking part have any disadvantages for me?

The researcher does not foresee any disadvantages for those taking part. Your views will be contributing to an understanding of the PSI profession, as outlined above. It is possible that discussion of former interpreting experiences may elicit strong or even distressing feelings for some respondents, and if this is the case, you may wish to seek support from colleagues, friends or a professional counselling service.

Will my name appear in any written reports of this study?

All information that you offer the researcher during the course of the study will be kept strictly confidential. You will be anonymised in any transcripts and notes of interviews. When the results of the research are published, direct quotes from the interviews may be used, and these too will be anonymised. Thus no-one will ever be identified either by name, place or organisation.

What will happen to the data generated?

The data generated during the study will be analysed to develop a more informed understanding of the PSI profession. All paper documents will be anonymised and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's office, computer records will be password protected.

If you would like to take part in the research please read and complete the enclosed consent form.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Yours sincerely

Frédérique Guéry
Doctoral Research Student
07984 63 66 98
frederique.guery@student.mmu.ac.uk

APPENDIX 2: Consent form for research participants



Consent Form

Title of project: Public Service Interpreters: an investigation of their roles, practices and experiences in multi-professional contexts.

Researcher: Frédérique Guéry, Doctoral Research Student, Education and Social Research Institute, Manchester Metropolitan University.

I have read the information sheet and I am aware of the purpose of this research study. I am willing to be part of this study and have been given the researcher's contact details in case I need any further information. My signature certifies that I have decided to participate, having read and understood the information given and had an opportunity to ask questions.

Igive my permission for my data to be used as part of this study as indicated in the information sheet, and understand that I can withdraw at any time and my data will be destroyed.

Signature.....Date.....

I have explained the nature of the study to the subject and in my opinion the subject is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent to participate.

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

APPENDIX 3: Interview schedule

1. Tell me how you became a PSI.
2. What qualifications did you take? Which ones do you think were essential? If several diplomas in PSI are held, ask why.
3. What others things did you learn on the job, and how?
4. Is PSI your main occupation?
5. Are you a member of any professional organisations?
6. What are the benefits in being a member of organisation X? What are the problems, if any?
7. Who do you mainly work with in terms of service users and service providers?
8. Do you like your job? Are there service areas of the work that you like and others that you don 't?
9. Are there aspects of the work that you like and others that you don 't?
10. How do you prepare for your assignments?
11. Tell me about a typical assignment from beginning to end.
12. Are there any assignments that particularly stand out for you?
13. Can you think of examples when you have been asked to bend the rules of the Code, where you were not just a conduit anymore?
14. How do you figure out that service users and providers want you to break the rules?
15. Where does that idea come from? Service officers? Personal feelings? Textbooks? Talking to colleagues?
16. How do you learn how to handle it?
17. Has the role changed at all since you started? Why?
18. What do you think professional from other agencies think of PSIs?
19. How do you think service users perceive PSIs?
20. Have you ever interpreted for the same people for an extensive period of time? What does it feel like when the case is over?
21. Do you feel that working as a PSI has changed you as a person in any way?
22. What happens if you meet a service user or provider outside of your PSI role?

APPENDIX 4: Details of interviewed Public Service Interpreters at the time of the study.

Names	Number of DPSI qualification(s)	Other interpreting qualification(s)	NRPSI registration	Years of PSI experience	Experience of DPSI training
Andrew	1	Yes	Yes	2	No
Larry	2	No	Yes	12	No
Lauryne	1	Yes	Yes	4	No
Leila	2	Yes	Yes	7	Yes
Lucy	1	No	Yes	10	Yes
Oliver	2	Yes	Yes	4	Yes
Mary	1	Yes	Yes	3	Yes
Mateo	1	No	Yes	5	Yes
Maureen	2	Yes	Yes	16	Yes
Monika	1	Yes	Yes	2 ½	No
Samir	1	Yes	No	2	No

APPENDIX 5: Annotated data, PSI Monika

This single piece of data encapsulates many themes that I am extracting from my data and that I am concerned about: complexities of the job, professional conduct, power, surveillance and asserting agency.

It is interesting that Monika chooses to share this incident, but she is also very careful to tell me that she did not use the correct procedure. Monika knows, but she did not have to tell me this story.

<p>I think what happens is that people delude themselves that because the interpreter is whispering something, they're covering everything and it's not their [<i>the service providers</i>] responsibility, so they're not bothered [1]. I mean some lawyers are very good and they pause and they give you a chance and it makes it more doable, but I did actually interrupt this lawyer, and I'm afraid I didn't use the correct procedure in this case [2], because I realise I should have asked the judge to ask him to slow down, and that is what I normally do, normally I manage that, but the realities are that it's very tough, he was going so fast that I couldn't have got a word in edgeways and I would have lost five sentences by the time [3], so I did actually just looked round the corner and asked him to slow down, and as I say he was quite gobsmacked and said: [<i>in an incredulous and indignant tone</i>] "Slow down?" [4]. He didn't expect me to have the impertinence [5] to ask this, and as I say I didn't quite do it in the right way, because I should have asked the judge, and that's the pressures of the job [3], that although I'd like to think that I have high standards [6], and normally I know that and I have asked through the judge in the past and so on, on this particular occasion the pressure was so great that I didn't manage to [3], but you have to accept that, that you're not perfect, you do your best to do your job and I think as long as you're polite and you try and do your best [6], had I been completely out of order, the judge [7] would have commented on it, which he did not, so that indicates to me although I didn't do it the way I would have liked to do it if I'd been given a fraction of a second longer to think, I might have managed to do, but it was still adequate for the circumstances.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What PSI looks like, service providers' lack of interest 2. Power, assertion of her agency as a professional, interesting use of language 3. Metacommentary on the action that she did. She knows it was not the right thing to do, but the reality of PSI is that you cannot always do it right. If she had not done it, she would not have been able to stop him and do a proper job, PSI's professional agency 4. Service provider's reaction 5. Word usually used when somebody is junior 6. PSI's personal and professional values 7. Surveillance and evaluation of how the job is done
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