



# Profiling today's and tomorrow's interpreters: Previous occupational experiences, levels of work and motivations

*Jim Hlavac*  
Monash University, Australia  
[Jim.Hlavac@monash.edu](mailto:Jim.Hlavac@monash.edu)

*Jennifer Commons*  
Monash University, Australia  
[jenncommons@gmail.com](mailto:jenncommons@gmail.com)

DOI: 10.12807/ti.115201.2023.a02

**Abstract:** This paper has people as its focus, namely 80 trainee interpreters and 80 practitioners, with the following questions: *where* they come from occupationally – *what* their current/previous occupations are; *how much* they (wish to) work; and *why* they wish to become/remain an interpreter. Data were collected from Australia-based informants who will or currently work in public service interpreting. Matching the current occupations of trainees and the previous occupations of practitioners according to a classification system of occupations, we see that substantial percentages of trainees currently work in the ‘community and personal workers’ and ‘professionals’ categories, while for practitioners, their previous work belonged to the ‘professionals’ and ‘clerical and administrative workers’ categories. Projected and reported levels of work are often not full-time with only some indication that this is related to the general level of demand for work in their languages. In relation to the feature of motivation, we employ *Self-Determination Theory* as a model to examine informants’ stated motivations and find that amongst trainees, this is extrinsic with a focus on community activism, while practitioners’ motivations are more intrinsic. By linking three key features in a cohesive way, this paper gives a comprehensive description of today and tomorrow’s interpreters.

**Keywords:** Interpreters; trainee interpreters; interpreter identity; self-determination theory

## 1. Introduction

In Interpreting Studies, there are strands of research that look at the profiles and motivations of people who want to become interpreters and of those who already work as interpreters. Examples of studies about the first group come from the area of admission testing (Bontempo & Napier, 2009; Timarová & Salaets, 2011; Rosiers & Eyckmans, 2017), general pedagogy (Kurz et al., 1996; Schweda Nicholson, 2005; Shaw & Hughes, 2006) and specific areas of pedagogical research, such as those looking at learner self-efficacy, i.e. learners’ beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance (Jiménez Ivars et al., 2014). The above-mentioned studies have as their focus trainees’ learning trajectories and how particular attributes co-occur with the achievement of certain ‘milestones’ such as admission, course progression and completion. They offer us insights into the characteristics – personal, attitudinal and educational – that learners may commonly possess

upon commencement of formal training. In relation to the second group, attitudinal characteristics, studies in this area tend to be more specific in their focus with some employing frameworks rooted in psychology (Seal, 2004; Bontempo et al., 2014), while others are more ethnographic with targeted questioning on self-image and role (Morris, 2010; Badalotti, 2011; Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger, 2011). These studies may focus on the presence of particular affective or cognitive attributes, or they may be multi-faceted in their descriptions amongst (future) practitioners. Regardless of the methodological tools they use, they have in common the goal of providing a profile of those belonging to the interpreting profession.

A further group of studies that partly intersect with the personal and attitudinal characteristics of interpreters are (auto-)biographical accounts that often encompass a mixture of text genres: personal biography, ‘inside stories’ of global politics, the ‘intermediary role’ of the interpreter, and descriptions of ‘high-stakes’ interpreted interactions that are in some way newsworthy, e.g., Ivanji (2008), Torikai (2009) and Obst (2010). The most prominent examples of this mixed genre are the autobiographies of Paul Schmidt (1951) and Valentin Berezhev (1994), who were the interpreters of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin respectively. The value of these studies is that they contain narratives that describe how the protagonists became interpreters, the training they had (if any). In retelling occupationally-based encounters, they shed light on how they viewed their work and themselves, and at times, how others viewed them and their work. Together, these studies form part of the body of literature that informs us about those who are potential and those who are practising interpreters.

In general, studies that examine the pre-practice profiles of interpreters seldom contain information on how they came to interpreting. The paucity of research work in this area is in contrast to the substantial body of literature on entrance-level requirements to interpreter training programs and the substantial number of studies that have appeared since the ‘Social Turn’ (Pöchhacker, 2008) in Interpreting Studies, which started in the mid-1990s. Foregrounded by qualitative data from potential and practising interpreters about their job-market experiences and (anticipated) level of interpreting work, this paper focuses on the motivations given for wanting to become and remaining an interpreter. Stated motivation is a key feature of this paper that applies a macro theory of motivation, *Self-Determination Theory*, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) to examine how and why people enter particular professions: The three research questions that this Australia-based paper addresses are:

1. What are the current occupational profiles of trainees and the previous (‘pre-interpreting’) ones of practitioners?
2. What are trainees’ anticipated and practitioners’ reported level of work?
3. Which motivations do trainees state for wanting to become an interpreter and which ones are stated by practitioners for remaining one?

Looking at research questions one and three, in some cases, we posit that one of these can stand alone as the main factor in why a person chooses to become an interpreter; but perhaps more frequently, these features are interconnected. We hypothesise that the occupational experiences of trainees are a co-determining factor in the formation of their motivation to become an interpreter. Similarly, we hypothesise that occupational experiences co-determined the motivations that practitioners had to become interpreters. We do not have a hypothesis about research question two about level of work. Instead, in this paper we seek to see if the level of work seems to be determined by the apparent level of demand for practitioners’ working language(s).

## 2. Background

### 2.1. *The previous occupational experiences and work levels of interpreters*

Not all community or conference interpreters work in the language services sector as their first or only job. In her sample of 65 Australia-based practitioners, Badalotti (2011, p. 103) found that almost all of them had worked regularly in another occupation before becoming an interpreter (or translator): 35% had worked in the education sector (mostly language teaching); 21% worked in administration; 14% in arts and media; 8% in social and community services; 5% in science and technology; marketing, hospitality and healthcare were 4% each. Eleven percent of Badalotti's (2011, p. 104) informants explicitly stated that their main area of work was outside translation and interpreting (T&I), and others indicated that they engage in other occupational activities alongside interpreting. Similar findings on work experiences and levels of work have been recorded in other studies in Australia (Macquarie University Centre for Translation and Interpreting Research, 2010). A study conducted in the United Kingdom by the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIoL) and the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI) of 1,350 interpreters and translators harvested data on level of work and income and recorded the following: only source of income – 21%; main source of income – 20%; approx. half the source of income – 24%; a minor source of income – 35% (CIoL/ITI, 2011, p. 9). More recent data is also in line with these figures (European Commission Representation in the UK/CIoL/ITI, 2017, p. 5).

On the basis of these studies, a profile of both community and conference interpreters emerges that presents them as usually possessing previous experience in other occupational areas, with a high likelihood of working part-time. This brings us to the question of those factors that influence a person when they choose their future field of work.

### 2.2 *Career choice*

Early experiences, whether in childhood, early adulthood or those learnt indirectly through the experiences of family members can be key influences in a person's career aspirations. One of the first studies to look at career aspirations is that of Carpenter and Foster (1977), who posited that these aspirations derive from three dimensions: intrinsic, extrinsic and interpersonal dimensions. The intrinsic dimension is the set of personal interests that a person has towards an occupation and their belief that they will gain personal satisfaction from working in it (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Kunnen, 2013). The extrinsic dimension refers to the desire for social recognition, security and the benefits that may be gained from working in a particular occupation. These benefits can be externally measured, such as prestige, job availability or salary level (Shoffner et al., 2015; Bakar et al., 2014). The interpersonal dimension usually refers to a feeling of need or interest that stems from the influence of family members, peers, teachers or others. Thus, the opinion of a key family member or the advice of an influential peer can be pivotal in the decisions that a person makes, and these may even override what may have been a person's original, intrinsic dimension preferences (Beynon et al., 1998; Guan et al., 2015).

The terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* are adopted by Deci and Ryan (1985) as key concepts in their framework of *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT). SDT describes people's inherent desire for growth and what people see as their innate psychological needs. Deci and Ryan (1985) see people's psychological needs as universal (in an occupational sense) with all people needing autonomy (i.e., to be a 'causal agent in one's life'), competence (i.e., having the 'ability to guide and control outcomes') and relatedness (i.e., having the will to be 'connected with others'). They see motivation as a key factor in the (occupational) activities

that people engage in, and motivation itself as being variable and determined by a number of factors.

These factors range from externally imposed ones over which a person has little or no control (*amotivation*) to internal ones that come from a person's notions of what can bring about personal satisfaction. We present here in adapted form a graphic representation of SDT, namely Ryan and Deci's (2000a) *Self-Determination Continuum*. On the continuum, *amotivation* and the *intrinsic dimension* are at opposite ends. At one end of the continuum, amotivation represents an absence of internally generated motivation; at the other end, the intrinsic motivation represents a high level of self-generated motivation. Between these two end points, Ryan and Deci (2000a) propose four fine-grained descriptors of the extrinsic dimension, ranging from more externally imposed ones on the left to more internally centred ones on the right.

<i>Non self-determined</i>		←————→			<i>Self-determined</i>	
Amotivation		Extrinsic Motivation			Intrinsic Motivation	
Regulatory style	Non-regulation	External Regulation	Introjected Regulation	Identified Regulation	Integrated Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation
Source of motivation	Impersonal	External	Somewhat external	Somewhat internal	Internal	Internal
Motivation regulators	Lack of control	Compliance	Approval from others	Endorsement of goals	Synthesis with self	Inherent satisfaction

Figure 1: Self-Determination Continuum, adapted from Cook and Artino (2016, p. 1010)

In a schematic way, Figure 1 shows the degrees to which behaviour may be determined according to motivational factors. Ryan and Deci (2000a) do not employ the category “inter-personal motivation” used by Carpenter and Foster (1977) and subsume the influences or regulations of family members as external ones or as amotivation where these appear imposed.

As a framework, SDT focuses on motivation and not workplaces. SDT can apply to trainees in pre-employment contexts as well as those in paid employment (Kasser & Ryan, 2001; Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003). We employ SDT as a framework to examine and interpret expressed reasons and motivations of trainees (i.e., those in ‘pre-employment’ contexts as ‘potential interpreters’) and those of practitioners in Section 4.3.

### 2.3 Career change

Since the 1990s, and in more affluent countries, the average number of different occupations that a person is likely to work in during their working life has been steadily increasing (Fujita & Nakajima, 2016). In Australia, the likelihood (in percentage terms) that a person will change their job within a twelve-month period is strongly determined by age, with job change rates ranging from 25% for 25-year-olds, to 13% for 35-year-olds, and to 10 % for 45-year-olds (Treasury, Australian Government, 2019, p. 6). Job changes relate not only to relocating to a different employer or to becoming self-employed in the same occupational field, but can also encompass people moving into a completely different occupation, sometimes preceded or accompanied by re-training. While these Australian statistics record changes in place of employment, which need not be changes in occupation, a certain proportion of them are likely to be career changes. Supporting this supposition is the observation that re-training is now a common feature of many people's occupational biographies.

In general, studies that focus on career change are less numerous than those focusing on career choice. Data from Australia suggest that those who

undertake a career change, do so most often based on “exploration concerns, which relate to the identification of interests and capabilities, and how these might fit with different types of careers” (Hess et al., 2012, p. 282). Such a finding suggests that in Australia and in terms of SDT, intrinsic motivations play a strong role in people’s decisions regarding which occupation to shift to.

#### **2.4 Career choice and career suitability in Translation and Interpreting Studies research**

As mentioned in Section 1, within Translation and Interpreting Studies, there is a sizeable body of research literature on determining the potential suitability of candidates in interpreting courses and the skills and types of aptitude assessors are looking for in course applicants (e.g., Moser-Mercer, 1985, Timarová and Ungoed-Thomas, 2008, Rudvin and Tomassini, 2011, and Hlavac et al., 2012). These studies, however, are based on the assumption that trainees in pre-qualification settings or practitioners in post-certification ones have already decided to become an interpreter and the issue of how they made this decision is not usually afforded much attention. Studies that look at why potential trainees choose interpreting or why practising interpreters chose to become an interpreter are less easy to come by. We look at studies from trainees and practitioners who report retrospectively on what brought them to engage with interpreting (training) in the first place. There is, however, a methodological constraint to such an approach. This approach encompasses only those who have embarked on training or formal work as an interpreter and does not encompass those who might have considered interpreting as a possible career choice but who then decided to do something else instead.

One study that tracks learners’ motivations and desires at the commencement of formal interpreter instruction is Yan et al. (2010). They record the following results in relation to 45 Hong Kong-based trainees who nominated the following reasons for choosing to undertake interpreter training: 46.7% of students considered interpreting skills “helpful in finding a job (not necessarily as an interpreter)”, 17.8% had the intention to improve their language skills in both languages, (i.e. English and Mandarin Putonghua), 15.6% intended to become an interpreter, 8.9% wished to improve their English, while 11% gave a range of other reasons (Yan et al., 2010, p. 179, original punctuation). Over a quarter of the responses collected by Yan et al. (2010, p. 179) are phrased in terms of informants wanting “to improve their skills in both English and Putonghua through learning interpreting”. Without further information, it is unclear what this refers to. Little further information is given on those who do wish to become an interpreter and it appears that overall, extrinsic motivations are predominant in the sample. What this also reminds us of is that for some survey respondents, interpreting (and/or interpreter training) may be a stepping-stone to another career path. The responses also suggest that interpreting (and translation) is an attribute that may represent a means to potential future remuneration as a *second* job or as a skill that attracts monetary or other rewards in the performance of *another* occupation. Having other work alongside interpreting is revisited in Section 4.2.

Other studies have focused on motivation in a general sense and have recorded measurements of it, at least in relation to motivation to learn, referring to, for example, the motivation to engage in many hours of deliberate practice to acquire skills. Both Gringiani (1990) and Moser-Mercer (2008) identify high motivation as a key factor in success in training courses. The level of motivation can be variable, not just across groups of learners, but across the educational trajectory of the same learner. Based on targeted questionnaires and reflective essays from 160 interpreting students, Wu (2016, pp. 16, 23) found that trainees’ levels of motivation to study interpreting were in general high, but that trainees were also susceptible to demotivation. Wu (2016) further reports that

students' conceptualisation of their 'future-self' (i.e., the representation of attributes that they wish to possess as future interpreters) is a stronger indicator of motivation than instrumentality (i.e., the perceived utilitarian benefits of interpreter training).

Shifting now to practitioners, a large survey of 751 sign language interpreters was conducted by Williamson (2016). All informants were deaf-parented interpreters (or CoDAs) and native or heritage sign language users. Williamson (2016, p. 13) reports that only 20.2% stated that they intentionally pursued an interpreting career. No further information is given as to this group of informants' motivations, but we posit that personal-based intrinsic work values ('inherent satisfaction') or extrinsic ones with a high level of internal motivation ('valuing an activity', 'congruence') may have been predominant amongst them. The remaining 79.8% were reported to have "fallen into interpreting" (Williamson, 2016, p. 15). Of this latter group, 34.9% reported that their parent(s) had influenced their career choice through encouragement for them to become an interpreter and almost the same percentage, 34.8%, stated that a sibling working (or having worked) as an interpreter was an influence in their motivation. The influences of parents and siblings point strongly to external sources of motivation, i.e., 'external rewards' and 'approval from others', and to somewhat internal ones, i.e., 'endorsement of goals'. Amongst deaf-parented interpreters, the extrinsic dimension of motivations may pattern in ways that are different to those interpreters who are not CoDAs.

There can also be career intentions in which a person, such as a well-educated, recently-arrived migrant, sees interpreting as a "transient career strategy" that is "a preferable way to earn a living given that most of the other jobs available to them are unskilled ones" (Ellis, 2013, p. 152). Using ethnographic research tools, Ellis (2013) traces the work trajectories of 12 tertiary-educated Albanian-speaking migrants to the USA or UK, most of whom had experience working as interpreters and/or translators in their countries of origin. Upon arrival, all of them worked as interpreters although none had the intention to work long-term as an interpreter, that is, "interpretation serves primarily as supplementary income for many [...], but not as the primary job they eventually undertake" (Ellis, 2013, p. 159). Despite informants' initial lack of certainty in seeing interpreting as their future career, three went on to become full-time professional interpreters, going through training and gaining certification and continued working in T&I. While the others subsequently started working in other areas, all still continued engaging in occasional paid work, or unpaid, ad-hoc interpreting, which Ellis (2013, p. 157) terms "volunteer interpreting" to maintain "social bonds".

Amongst a more heterogeneous group of 30 Somali migrants to the UK and Switzerland, Moret (2014) identifies two female informants who worked as interpreters due to circumstances that had hindered them from fulfilling their aspirations to study medicine and social work respectively. For another cohort of foreign nationals, namely 16 Eritrean asylum-seekers in Israel, formal training in interpreting is shown to be an enabling factor for them to gain ongoing work and to take on "normative roles" that have currency for both Israelis and Eritreans (Gez & Schuster, 2018, p. 821).

Two studies that yield more detailed responses on the motivations of practitioners are those of Badalotti (2011) and McCartney (2016). As stated, Badalotti's (2011, p. 164) qualitative study is based on a sample of 65 interpreters (mainly spoken ones with only two sign language ones) and translators in Australia. Her data sample is derived from responses gained from an electronic questionnaire and follow-up interviews. McCartney's (2016) study is of 96 sign language interpreters, both native/heritage and L2 users of sign language in the USA and her data are derived from an electronic questionnaire only. We present here in collated form the motivations identified

in both studies according to SDT categories. Badalotti's (2011) study includes multiple responses from the same informant which results in a percentage total of over 100%.

Table 1: Interpreter informants' responses categorised according to self-determination continuum (adapted from Badalotti, 2011 & McCartney, 2016).

Relevant regulatory processes		Specific attribute	Example responses	Bad. 2011	McC. 2016	
Extrinsic motivation	Amotivation	Impersonal	Imposed	x	0	0
	External regulation	External rewards	Monetary	Financial reasons	12	5
			Capacity enlargement	Add on to first job	0	7
		External condition	Compliance	Avenue to gain permanent residence in Australia	3	0
		External market	Meeting others' needs	Awareness of a lack of practitioners to service T&I sector	5	0
	Introjected regulation	Ego involvement	Not specified/ Novelty?	Seeking an alternative career	17	0
		Approval from others	Feeling of need	Encouragement from Deaf people	0	13
			Family need	Deaf parents/siblings	0	7
		Approval from others/ego involvement	Social networks	Deaf people at church	0	3
	Identified regulation		Endorsement of goals	Social justice	Seeing T&I as a form of social justice/for humanitarian reasons	6
				Want to help Deaf people	0	5
	Integrated regulation	Valuing an activity	Linguistic proficiency	Sense of utilising existing language skills	9	0
				Wanting to maintain one's heritage language	2	0
		Congruence	Time flexibility	Aptitude for languages	8	0
				Flexibility of working hours	0	2
		Synthesis with self	Personal alignment	Saw it as a 'natural progression'	6	0
				Personal and group alignment	Fell in love with language and culture	0
	Intrinsic motivation	Interest	Cognitive stimulation	Fascinated by interpreting	2	0
Interest in T&I work in general				33	2	
Inherent satisfaction		Language as means and goal	Love for languages	17	0	
			For the sake of one's own language development	11	0	
Unclear / non-apparent level of motivation		Unplanned	Pure chance / fell into it	12	7	
		Avoidance	Bad experiences in other jobs	6	0	
		Externally or internally imposed	Challenge	0	3	
		Not-specified/No answer		0	5	
Total (in %)				149	100	

In Table 1, the three left columns contain categorisations according to SDT. The first column has the three main categories: amotivation, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. In the second left column, we list sub-categories or “regulatory styles” for each of the main motivation categories: amotivation – nonregulation; extrinsic motivation – external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, integrated regulation; intrinsic motivation – intrinsic regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 72). In the third left column we list the “relevant regulatory processes” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 72) which relate to more fine-grained attributes of the regulatory styles sub-categories. In the fourth left column ‘specific attribute’ are our own categories that are derived from analysis of Badalotti’s (2011) and McCartney’s (2016) corpora, while the following column contains examples of responses from the corpora themselves.

We can see that no informants reported amotivation as the reason for working in T&I. In Badalotti’s (2011) study, the motivations are overwhelmingly intrinsic, followed by extrinsic motivations with a strong internal source. Few mention external regulation as a source of motivation, although there are 12% who mention financial reasons. Many of these may work part-time and see T&I work chiefly as a way to add to another source of income. Amongst McCartney’s (2016, p. 43) informants, an extrinsic motivation accounts for the largest single response, “fell in love with language and culture”, which signals a close personal association that informants express towards American Sign Language, but also towards the features of Deaf group culture in general. In McCartney’s (2016, p. 39) study, only 21% had Deaf partners or siblings and this appears to be a factor in the lower number who nominated extrinsic motivations (family need) compared to Williamson (2016). A substantial percentage from both Badalotti’s (2011) and McCartney’s (2016, p. 43) studies cite “chance/fell into it”, a very common response reported by Williamson (2016). It is hard to identify whether extrinsic or intrinsic motivations are at play when informants describe their decision as ‘accidental’, without further information.

### 3. Methodology

To gain data on trainee and practitioner interpreters, participants in introductory short courses and in professional development (PD) courses were identified as potential informants. The courses from which potential informants were contacted were ones recruited by the Monash University program from July 2015 to July 2019. In this period, this program conducted 12 iterations of an introductory ‘Entry-level Community Interpreting’ course, a short course of 30 contact hours open to bi- and multi-linguals with proficiency in any language. This interpreter training is ‘language non-specific’ (Hale & Ozolins, 2014). The trainee interpreter cohort of 80 informants was recruited from this larger pool of 313 participants.

Potential informants who are practising interpreters were recruited from the approx. 1,200 participants attending various iterations of the professional development (PD) courses in the following thematic areas: ‘Health Interpreting’, ‘Legal Interpreting’, ‘Court Interpreting’, ‘Mental Health Interpreting’, ‘Educational Interpreting’ and ‘Interpreting in Family Violence Interactions’. PD is now a requirement for interpreters who have certification from the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters to renew their certification (i.e., to ‘recertify’) every three years. Thus, the sample of practitioner informants is likely to encompass those whose attendance in PD short courses is motivated by a variety of reasons: desire to augment their



knowledge and skill sets, engage in further learning as a principle of professional practice, opportunity to exchange work-related experiences.

Potential informants from each of the two cohorts were approached at the end of their last training session by the first author who was not an educator in any of these PD courses<sup>1</sup>. Surveys prepared for both groups were different due to the different profiles of trainees compared to practitioners, but both sets of surveys elicited the same information from both groups. An explanation form was distributed to potential informants who were invited to volunteer to participate in an anonymous survey containing 12 questions. Surveys were distributed in paper form to those potential informants who signalled agreement to participate and to complete the survey after their last session. Others who kept the explanatory statement had the possibility of participating by going to a link to a Qualtrics survey site that contained the same survey in electronic form. The size of the sample consisting of 80 trainee and 80 practising interpreters is modest and we make no claim to representativity of the sample.

The surveys elicited information about several aspects relating to trainees' and practitioners' educational, occupational, attitudinal, motivational features as well as those relating to their notions of desirable skills and attributes to work as an interpreter. We focus here on those samples relating to occupational and motivational features. Trainees and practitioners were given different surveys, but the information elicited in both sets of surveys was congruent, i.e., the same features were elicited with the only difference being that questions for trainees related to their *future* situation, while questions for practitioners related to their *current* situation.

Both groups were asked about their three last forms of work, paid or voluntary in reverse chronological order (i.e., last job listed first). These forms of work could encompass those undertaken in Australia or overseas, but we did not elicit information on whether these were full-time or part-time, and we did not request specific information on skills gained. The occupations or occupational activities listed by informants were categorised according to the eight groups used in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), version 1.3 from 2013. This classification system was chosen as it is the classification system used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in classifying occupations listed by residents in Australia for census collections. The choice of the ANZSCO system enabled comparison of the distribution of occupations reported by informants of this study with those reported by Australian residents in the 2016 census collection. Both 'interpreter' and 'translator' are occupational designations that are encompassed within the ANZSCO. Reflecting the Australian and New Zealand conceptualisation of interpreters (and translators) as professionals working primarily in public service settings, the designations 'interpreter' and 'translator' are classified according to the following hierarchical sub-categories: *major group* – 2 Professionals; *sub-major group* – 27 Legal, Social and Welfare Professionals; *minor group* – 272 Social and Welfare Professionals; *unit group* – Social Professionals – 2724; *occupation* – 272412 Interpreter, 272413 Translator (ABS, 2019).

Both trainees and practitioners were asked about their (expected) level of work. Trainees were provided with the question "Do you expect to work full-time, part-time or casually as an interpreter in the future? Please give details". The practitioners responded to the following question. "Do you work full-time, part-time or casually?" Further, trainees were provided with the following open-ended question, "Why do you want to work as an interpreter?" Practitioners

---

<sup>1</sup> Approval to gain data from human informants was provided by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee: Project no. 5755 – Educational and occupational profiles of trainee and practising translators and interpreters in Victoria (02 Dec 2014 - 13 Oct 2019).

were provided with the question, “Why do you work as an interpreter?”. This question was phrased to practitioners in the present tense. The reason for this was that we believed that use of present tense would yield responses that encompass practitioners’ current *and* past motivations, or at least those past motivations that the informant believes have currency for why they still remain working as an interpreter. We used thematic analysis as an approach to code and collate informants’ responses. Thematic analysis is a methodological approach commonly used in research in the health sciences in relation to qualitative data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). We collated the codes into potential themes and reviewed the themes to see if single responses from informants could be used to demonstrate a single theme unambiguously. In most instances, this was possible; amongst a small number of trainees, two or more motivations were listed. The coded themes were then aligned and categorised according to the Self-Determination Theory types of motivation, the motivation regulators and specific attributes shown above in Table 1.

Lastly, we draw the reader’s attention to informants’ responses to questions on their ‘stated motivations’ for wanting to become an interpreter. These may not be the actual ‘reasons’ for becoming an interpreter. There exists the possibility that informants may overstate their own agency in the circumstances that are leading to or have led to them becoming an interpreter. We are reminded that the responses are based on information that the informants report about themselves rather than on data gathered by another via systematic observation or a mixed methods sample with data triangulated.

#### **4. Results and discussion**

This section presents results from both groups of informants sequentially in a way that mirrors the presentation of themes in Section 2. We commence with data on their current and previous work profiles outside interpreting in 4.1. Section 4.2 presents responses on informants’ expected and reported level of work, while Section 4.3 discusses motivation.

##### ***4.1 Current and previous occupational profiles outside interpreting***

We come now to current and previous occupations. The survey elicited trainees’ current and previous two areas of work, and the last three areas of work listed by practitioners. The areas of work that informants reported were grouped according to the eight main occupational groups that are used in the collation of responses to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census collections. Where informants reported jobs belonging to different groups, the most predominant area of work (i.e., that of two of their three previous jobs) or their most recent job determined which occupational group they were allocated to. Table 2 sets out responses for both groups. These data are presented together with data from a sample of 3,268 Australia-based interpreters and translators in Australia, of whom, 2,821 reported that they had had another occupation before becoming an interpreter (or translator) (Tobias et al., 2020). The right-hand column in Table 2 contains percentages that relate to the overall Australian population from the 2016 census collection. We do not have data on the full- or part-time level of work of any of the groups presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Predominant/current or previous occupational classifications of trainees, practitioners, and those of a larger sample of practitioners together with the distribution of occupational classifications across the Australian working population.

		Train.	Pract.	Pract. (Tobias et al. 2020)	Aust. nat. ave.
Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO)	Managers	11	17	10.9	12.9
	Professionals	24	32	20.7	22.2
	Technicians & Trades Workers	4	6	2.4	13.5
	Community & Personal Workers	27	21	25.0	10.8
	Clerical & Administrative Workers	13	9	16.7	13.6
	Sales Workers	8	4	6.3	9.4
	Machinery Operators & Drivers	0	0	0.7	6.3
	Labourers	0	0	2.3	9.5
	Other				
	Never worked	6	not appl.	not appl.	not appl.
	Always worked as interpreter	not appl.	11	13.6	not appl.
	No response / Not categorised	7	0	1.4	1.8
	Total	100	100	100	100

Table 2 shows that there are both similarities and differences in the (current) occupational profiles of trainees compared to the (former) occupational profiles of practitioners. For trainees, the top four occupational groupings are (with examples provided that relate to informants' current jobs given in brackets and italics): professionals (*teacher, nurse, company secretary, ICT sales representative, psychologist*); community and personal workers (*personal care assistant, security officer, child care worker, waiter*); clerical and administrative workers (*call centre operator, receptionist, accounting clerk*) and managers (*restaurant manager, facilities manager, travel agency manager*). Few work or have worked as sales workers, or as technicians and trades workers. None are recorded from the classifications of machinery operators and drivers, or labourers. Seven percent gave no response and six percent have never worked – most of these informants were still engaging in formal study.

Amongst the practitioners, the most highly represented occupational groups that they were previously engaged in are: professionals (*teacher, university lecturer, special education teacher, accountant, company secretary, transport engineer*), community and personal workers (*dental assistant, hospitality worker, integration aide*), managers (*IC project manager, supply and distribution manager, importer/exporter*) and clerical and administrative workers (*bookkeeper, insurance consultant, taxation inspector*).

Comparing both groups to the Australian national averages, a slight over-representation in the occupational group 'professionals' is recorded amongst trainees compared to the national average, while amongst the practitioners, there was considerable over-representation in this group compared to the national average. Both groups also select the 'professionals' category as their current or former job more than those T&I colleagues from Tobias et al.'s (2020) larger sample of 3,268 informants. This suggests in general that those becoming interpreters, as well as those attending PD, have a 'professional-

experience' background to a greater degree than a cross-section of practitioners overall.

We observe that the potential trainees have a more heterogeneous occupational profile than practitioners. In this sample, this suggests that potential candidates for entry into the interpreting profession come with a broader range of career experiences and perhaps with a lower level of direct engagement with the language services sector than that of their practitioner colleagues. This may suggest that some of them may be less likely to become interpreters later on. At the same time, in Australia, there has been a policy trend to discourage and, later on, prohibit the engagement of interpreters without training or a formal credential. In light of this, a low level of direct engagement with the language services sector may simply be a consequence of protocols that do not allow the engagement of untrained bilinguals in the first place. These and other factors can shape trainees' expectations on the level of work that they anticipate having which is the topic that we explore in the next section.

#### **4.2 Anticipated and reported level of work**

Both cohorts of informants were asked about their anticipated or current levels of work as interpreters as an open-ended question. This yielded responses such as "full-time" ( $\geq 30$  hours per week); "part-time" (typically a level of regular work that is between 10 and 30 hours per week); "casual", which is ambiguous as it refers to the nature of employment relations rather than a quantification of hours, but it has come to refer to a level of work that is between 5 and 20 hours per week, and is grouped together with 'part-time' responses; "occasionally" or "sometimes" often with mention of other work being undertaken; "not sure" referring to future plans being unclear. The percentage of informants, in both the trainee and practitioner cohorts, who mentioned other work that they expect to undertake or are currently undertaking is represented in brackets in Table 3.

Table 3: Trainees' expected and practitioners' reported level of work (in percentages).

Level of work / Informants	Trainees	Practitioners
Full-time	31	45
Sometimes full-time, sometimes part-time (depends on other job)	1	11 (2)
Part-time / casually (alongside other job)	23 (13)	37 (17)
Just occasionally (alongside other job)	16 (9)	6 (5)
Not sure (depends on other job)	6 (3)	-
No answer	23	1
Total	100	100

Table 3 shows that less than a third of trainees expect to work full-time and less than half of the practitioners report working full-time. Substantial percentages from both groups report planning to work or actually working part-time, with some mentioning that their work as an interpreter would be or is occasional. The role of other work is mentioned by 29% of trainees and 24% of practitioners. Whether this other form of work will be or is their primary source of income, or a source secondary to interpreting is something that was not usually clearly stated.

We cross-tabulated responses on expected level of work with the nominated working languages of the trainees to see if there was a relationship between the two. Alongside English, 12 of the 80 trainee informants nominated one working language, 68 trainees nominated two or more languages with 34 nominating three or more languages in which they hope to work. Comparing the anticipated work levels and working languages, we see that of the 31% (n. = 24) of trainees who aim to work full-time, 20 list languages that are well

represented amongst recently settled migrants, refugees or asylum seekers in Australia (e.g. Dari, Hazaragi, Persian or Tamil). Conversely, of the 39% (n. = 31) of those who believe that they will work part-time or only occasionally, 20 have 'high demand' languages in their repertoires (See Appendix 1). The allocation of a language as a 'high demand' one is based on the following criteria: total number of residents who report this language as their home language; self-reported proficiency level in English that is 'not well' or 'not at all'; comparative 'recency' of arrival of speakers (for non-indigenous languages) (profile.id n.d.(a), profile.id n.d.(b)).

The relationship between working language and the volume of expected available work in it as a factor for nominating a full-time level of work is present, but only tenuous.

Amongst the 36 practitioners working full-time (45% of sample), 34 are working in 'high demand' languages (e.g., Mandarin, Persian, Arabic, Cantonese, Vietnamese). Amongst the 43 practitioners working part-time occasionally or sometimes (54% of sample), 34 report working in 'high demand' languages (See Appendix 2). Amongst the practitioners, the relationship between demand for one's working language(s) and level of employment is more pronounced. Below are sample comments from both cohorts:

Trainees:

*I plan to work as a full-time interpreter in a regional health and community centre.*

*Part-time, and after retirement, full-time.*

*It will be good to work casually because of the children that I have.*

*Occasionally to begin with, but big goals some time later.*

Practitioners:

*Full time. It is what I studied for and I love it.*

*I work full-time as an interpreter. I couldn't find a teaching job so I studied interpreting to change career.*

*I prefer working FT, but casual is okay.*

*I like working as a freelancer because as it allows flexibility which suits me.*

*I have a full-time day job and work as a telephone interpreter after hours.*

The proportions of informants from both cohorts who report hoping to work or actually working full- or part-time are congruent to other Australia-based studies (e.g., Macquarie University Centre for Translation and Interpreting Research, 2010 and Badalotti, 2011). They are also congruent to those conducted elsewhere (e.g., Katan, 2009; FIT Europe, 2010; CIOI/ITI, 2011; and the European Commission Representation in the UK/CIOI/ITI, 2017) that record variable levels of full-time work from 80% to less than 50%, with 'other outside employment' a common feature in the profiles of many practitioners.

The Australian language services sector is serviced overwhelmingly by freelance interpreters (and translators) contracted for assignments often only a few days or even hours in advance, or even 'on the spot' in the case of most telephone interpreting assignments. These circumstances do not prohibit an interpreter from working full-time if demand for work in their language combination is high, but the variability of work has a measurable effect on both cohorts' career planning. The lack of foreseeability of work is a major determiner in some (potential) interpreters' decisions to engage in other work alongside interpreting. A factor mentioned by one of the informants above

relates to obligations towards family members (e.g., young children or aged parents) as a reason for working part-time or casually.

The number of interpreters who work in-house (usually at hospitals) on a permanent or long-term contractual basis is small, and amongst this group as well, a significant proportion have part-time work fractions. The three factors of variability in the volume of work, current or proposed interest in other areas of work, and time-restricting obligations (e.g., care of children, ageing parents) are likely to account for why over half of interpreters (and translators) in Australia work part-time or casually. In a recent survey of 3,268 Australia-based interpreters (and translators), 61.9% reported working 20 or fewer hours per week, i.e., 1-10 hours (39.5%); 11-20 hours (22.4%) (Tobias et al., 2020).

A possible further factor that accounts for a lower level of work in interpreting is that some do not see it as the professional field they wish to work in for the rest of their working life. There are socio-demographic trends that can lead to a steady decrease of work in some languages, where residents once reliant on interpreters to communicate with others gain proficiency in the societally dominant language and therefore use interpreting services less frequently. For example, Hlavac (2011) recorded reduced reliance on interpreters amongst those Iraqi-origin migrants who over time acquired higher proficiency in English. We lack data on other language groups, but this pattern may probably be shared by speakers of other language groups as well. In addition to this, there are industry-based ones such as the lack of reliability or availability of work, variability in volume of work and remuneration. We recall Ellis's (2013) account of recently arrived migrants who initially saw interpreting as a "transient career strategy". The fluidity of the engagement of Ellis's (2013) informants with interpreting may be characteristic of the situation of some of the trainees surveyed in this sample.

Returning to Table 2 in Section 4.1, we see that a quarter of the trainees list "other employment" as a consideration in their future plans, while 21% give no answer. This suggests a level of uncertainty amongst many. But this indecision, in fact, perhaps should not be so unexpected if we recall Williamson's (2016, p. 13) finding that nearly 80% of her sample of 752 sign language interpreters said that they had "fallen into it", and Badalotti (2011) and McCartney (2016) also record congruent responses, albeit from much smaller numbers of practitioners. This perhaps reminds us that stated motivations – the focus of the following sub-section – are important, but they are not the only factor that offers explanatory power in accounting for people's occupational biographies.

### **4.3 Motivations**

We now move to the motivations expressed by trainees and practitioners. As stated in Section 3, both trainees and practitioners were asked open-ended questions on why they (wish to) work as an interpreter, and these questions yielded a wide variety of responses. These were classified according to the same SDT categories employed in Table 1 that are shown in the three left columns. In the fourth column we present the specific attribute that encompasses clusters of responses, while the fifth column contains example quotes from informants.

We are aware of the different focus of motivation that trainee informants have when it is aspirational, i.e., when this is expressed by trainees who are 'future' practitioners, compared to when it is expressed by those who already practise in the profession. Reasons for wanting to work in a particular field change as a person moves from being 'outside' it to then being 'inside' it. The reasons given by practitioners may have changed, in hindsight, from what they were originally. This factor cannot be discounted. Nonetheless, we present the responses of the trainees and practitioners together to show in an illustrative way what the similarities and differences are between the two cohorts. Some

trainee informants listed multiple reasons, all of which were collated and included meaning that the percentage totals for the trainee cohort is over 100%. Amongst the responses provided by the practitioners, in all cases, no more than one reason was given. It is possible that the position of this question at the end of the survey (c.f. the ‘survey fatigue’ factor) may be a reason for this. We remind the reader that the allocation of responses to a particular SDT sub-category was made by us based on our interpretation of informants’ circumstances. In some instances, allocation of the same response could have been made to another, usually nearby category, and we acknowledge that there is a certain element of arbitrariness in the allocations we made.

Table 4: Trainees’ and practitioners’ motivations ordered according to SDT categories

Relevant regulatory processes		Specific attribute	Example quote responses	T	P		
Extrinsic dimension	Amotivation	Lack of control –	Choice of work	I am restricted from working in other areas	2	1	
	External regulation	External rewards	Monetary	Extra income	1	3	
			Not-specified	Beneficial to current job	3	0	
			Ready source of work	There is a need for interpreters	5	1	
	Introjected regulation	Approval from others / Ego involvement	Approval from others	Recognition of skill set	Previous experience in mediating for others	6	3
			Ego-involvement	Not-specified	Career change	1	3
			People-centredness	I like working with people	8	10	
	Identified regulation	Valuing an activity	Community activism	I want to help my community. I want to ‘give back’ to my community	17	14	
			Altruism	I want to help other people.	10	3	
		Endorsement of goals	Social justice	Interpreting is a form of social justice	5	5	
			Ideological	Was once reliant on interpreters, want to empower others	1	0	
	Integrated regulation	Congruence	Not specified	Easy kind of employment	3	2	
			Linguistic proficiency	Wish to improve my English skills (and/or my LOTE skills)	12	3	
		Synthesis with self	Demographic features	Suitable for young parents, students, no age limits	2	1	
			Time availability	Flexibility of work hours, have retired from other job	4	4	
Intrinsic dimension	Interest, enjoyment	Language as means and goal	Wish to work with languages	9	8		
	Inherent satisfaction	Cognitive stimulation	Stimulating, pleasurable job	12	29		
	Enjoyment	Not-specified	My dream job	5	10		
Total				106	100		

Table 4 shows the following in relation to trainees. Most trainees’ motivations are extrinsic. The single most common form of regulatory style of motivation is ‘identified regulation’, i.e., trainees share group beliefs that consider service to the community as laudable, and interpreting as a group-serving activity. Interpreting then aligns with the individual’s own goals of community activism or altruism. Around a quarter of trainees have intrinsic motivations that relate to a sense of inherent satisfaction that they believe they will experience when interpreting because many see it as a stimulating and enjoyable occupational activity. A substantial percentage also sees interpreting

as a means to improving their proficiency in English or in their language other than English (LOTE). This motivation derives from social beliefs that hold that a high-level proficiency in one's non-native (or B-) language is desirable. This then coincides with their desire to achieve (or further) this level of proficiency for themselves. A selection of trainees' comments from the most frequently occurring motivation dimensions is given below:

Extrinsic dimension - Identified regulation – Valuing an activity – Community activism:

*To assist elderly Dutch migrants if they experience losing their English due to illness.*

*Because there is a huge need for Nepali interpreters in our community.*

Extrinsic dimension - Identified regulation – Valuing an activity – Altruism:

*I need to help the community.*

*I have been a case manager support worker and we need interpreters for society.*

Extrinsic dimension - Integrated regulation – Congruence – Linguistic proficiency

*I love English and want to use it further in English-Chinese interpreting.*

*To help keep my languages updated.*

Intrinsic dimension – Intrinsic regulation - Inherent satisfaction – Cognitive stimulation:

*Because it's rewarding and I would like to utilize my skills and knowledge and learn more.*

*I love working with languages. I think I have skill in interpreting, so I can combine these two together.*

In relation to practitioners, almost half list motivations that are intrinsic, with nearly 30% citing that they consider interpreting a cognitive activity that provides them with a sense of personal satisfaction. A further 10% list it as their 'dream job'. Frequently listed extrinsic motivations are community activism and the people-centredness of interpreting work where positive social values attached to group-based service and social interaction skills are aligned with what practitioners see themselves as doing. Only two percent of trainees and one percent of practitioners list an inability to work in other areas as the reason for potentially or currently working as an interpreter. These are low frequencies, and it may be that lack of agency was more frequent than these statistics show where informants may not wish to report that they had few or no other options other than becoming an interpreter. This, however, remains conjecture. A selection of practitioners' comments from the most frequently occurring motivation dimensions is given below:

Intrinsic dimension – Intrinsic regulation - Inherent satisfaction – Cognitive stimulation:

*I love this field and I love interacting with people.*

*I like working in hospitals especially – I learn new things all the time.*

Extrinsic dimension – Identification regulation – Valuing an activity – Community activism:

*I can help Vietnamese people to access services. I communicate with my community all the time.*

Extrinsic dimension – Introjected regulation – Ego involvement / Approval from others – People centredness:

*I used interpreters to communicate with CALD [culturally and linguistically diverse] clients in my previous position. I consider myself*



*fluent in both Tamil and English and wanted to test the waters. This job gives me satisfaction in helping people who struggle with language difficulties.*

As stated, the top motivation for trainees is extrinsic motivation - identified regulation with the specific attributes of 'community activism' and 'altruism'. This result is very much in line with Tipton's observation that agency and activism have something of a tradition in public-service interpreting with its "roots in the voluntary and charity sector" (2016, p. 465). There is also a parallel between these expressed motivations and those expressed by trainees in other, congruent professions. For example, a study of 163 social work students across four universities records that the top motivation for doing the course, expressed by 84% of respondents, was altruism, e.g. "I want to help people" (Hackett et al., 2003, p. 170). The high number of motivations that indicate an intrinsic dimension amongst practitioners is congruent to the dimension of motivations identified by Badalotti (2011) in her study of 65 practitioners. Our sample shows that extrinsic/identified regulation is the second most common group of motivation, an outcome which is situated between Badalotti's (2011) second most common group – extrinsic/integrated regulation – and McCartney's (2016) second most common group – extrinsic/introjected regulation. Service to a group as a personal goal is an influential motivation with some currency with this group.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper addressed three research questions. The first relates to occupational profiles of trainees and the former ones of practitioners. The top three classifications of work that trainees' current occupations encompass are community and personal workers, professionals and clerical and administrative workers. Before the practitioners became interpreters, the three classification areas within which they most frequently worked were professionals, community and personal workers and managers. Both groups are or were disproportionately highly represented in these respective three classification areas in comparison to the Australian national average. The clusters of occupational activities within the two highest represented areas – professionals and community and personal workers – are congruent to the work of interpreters (and translators), and both these occupational titles are formally classified within the occupational group of 'professionals' by the relevant statistical authority.

The second research question related to trainees' anticipated and practitioners' reported level of work. While a level of uncertainty amongst potential interpreters about their future volume of work is to be expected, a response of only 31% for 'full-time' work appears conspicuously low. Nearly half expect it to be part-time or a limited number of hours, and amongst the 23% who did not respond, most likely foresee only an occasional volume of work or little or no work at all if their interests lie elsewhere. That (future) practitioners' interests can lie elsewhere but also *alongside* interpreting is not unusual, as confirmed by the responses of the practitioners amongst whom 45% work full-time, while 24% work in other areas next to their part-time work as interpreters. These observations are consistent with findings from other studies on interpreters working in Australia, Europe or North America that also record comparatively low levels of full-time work and comparatively high levels of part-time or occasional work. The factor of availability of work does not appear to have a great influence on this: there is only a slightly higher reporting of (future) full-time level of work amongst (potential) interpreters for high-demand languages for which there is a higher volume of work. Higher work availability does not strongly influence (forecast) levels of work, nor does

alignment with a low-demand language appear to be an obstacle to finding work. To this we add, though, that those trainees with Bosnian, Dzhongha and Malay who said that they expect to work full-time, and those current practitioners working full-time with French and Nuer respectively, all had further languages alongside these ones that record higher levels of demand.

It may be that many (potential) interpreters feel that they cannot reliably depend on interpreting as a source of full-time work even if their language is a high-demand one, due to the likelihood that such a high-demand language also attracts other practitioners, and due to the uncertainty that although *need* for interpreting services may remain high, the provision of paid interpreting may be variable for various reasons, e.g. social policy changes, funding cutbacks. What could be a consequence of this, but which may just as likely be an accompanying feature, is (potential) interpreters' choice to engage with interpreting work on a part-time or variable, 'on-demand' basis only. This may be a consequence of personal circumstances where availability to work is limited and less than 35 hours per week. In their comprehensive analysis of interpreters' (and translators') work practices, Pym et al. (2013, pp. 80-81) discuss this, drawing inferences from the high proportion of females working in the T&I field. But more frequently, it is the performance of other paid work alongside interpreting (or translation) that Katan (2009), Kelly et al. (2010) and Pym et al. (2013, p. 87) record, with the latter finding that practitioners also "work as teachers, trainers, secretaires, foreign-language correspondents, not only in language-related fields, but also in other activities like engineering, software development, economics, law and authoring". It is probable that the majority of the trainees, inasmuch as they seek to work a *total* number of 35 or more hours per week, may either continue in their current areas of employment (with or without reduced hours) or seek other, part-time work as a source of income that is additional to future interpreting work.

In relation to the third research question, we see that personal alignment to the area of work is a strong motivator for trainees and interpreters. In the case of trainees, many have motivations that are positively sanctioned as serving the interests of groups (society in general and/or ethno-linguistic populations), and the notion of 'service' to others is put forward as the single most common motivating reason. Interpreting is therefore seen as an area of work that can enable this, perhaps in ways that other occupations that they may have engaged in cannot. Personal goals such as the desire to augment one's linguistic skills are nominated alongside the cognitive stimulation that trainees believe interpreting provides. For practitioners, the reasons for their continuing work in the area are very often stimulation – whether intellectual, interactional or interpersonal. While stimulation is the single most common motivation, it is followed by a sense of need to contribute positively to group or societal needs.

Self-determination theory has been used as a methodological framework to enable a systematic description of trainees' and practitioners' motivations. Categorisation of informants' responses according to this framework reveals an alignment of individuals' motivations with those extrinsic dimensions that allow high levels of connection or relatedness (community activism / altruism > valuing an activity > identified regulation), competence (linguistic proficiency > congruence > integrated regulation) and the intrinsic dimension itself that encompasses competence and autonomy (cognitive stimulation > inherent satisfaction). These motivational dimensions and the capacity of interpreting to fulfil these account for its attractiveness. For two cohorts made up mostly of migrants who are highly educated, this attractiveness appears not to be diminished by the relative lack of certainty of regular, ongoing work. Further, the 'combinability' of interpreting with other areas of work may be an unremarkable characteristic of work practices in the twenty-first century in general.

## References

- ABS [Australian Bureau of Statistics]. (2019). *1220.0 - ANZSCO - Australian and New Zealand standard classification of occupations, 2013, Version 1.3*. <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/A7DA8709238A859ACA2584A8000E798E?opendocument>
- Badalotti, F. (2011). *Multilingual professionals: Translators, interpreters and cultural identities*. [Doctoral dissertation, Monash University. [https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/thesis/Multilingual\\_professionals\\_translators\\_interpreters\\_and\\_cultural\\_identities/4597687](https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/thesis/Multilingual_professionals_translators_interpreters_and_cultural_identities/4597687)]
- Bakar, A., Mohamed, S., Suhid, A., & Hamzah, R. (2014). So you want to be a teacher: what are your reasons? *International Education Studies*, 7, 155–161. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v7n11p155>
- Berezhkov, V. (1994). *At Stalin's side: his interpreter's memoirs from the October Revolution to the fall of the dictator's empire* [trans. by Sergei Mikheyev] Carol Publishing Group.
- Beynon, J., Toohey, K., & Kishor, N. (1998). Do visible minority students of Chinese and South Asian ancestry want teaching as a career? Perceptions of some secondary school students in Vancouver, B. C. *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal*, 30(2), 50–75.
- Bontempo, K. & Napier, J. (2009). Getting it right from the start: Program admission testing of signed language interpreters. In C. V. Angelelli & H. E. Jacobson (Eds.) *Testing and assessment in translation and interpreting studies: A call for dialogue between research and practice*. (pp. 7-26). John Benjamins.
- Bontempo, K., & Napier, J., Hayes, L., & Brashear, V. (2014). Does personality matter? An international study of sign language interpreter disposition. *Translation & Interpreting*, 6(1), 23-46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12807/ti.106201.2014.a02>
- Carpenter, P., & Foster, B. (1977). The career decisions of student teachers. *Education Research Papers*, 4, 23–33.
- CioL/ITI. [Chartered Institute of Linguists/Institute of Translation and Interpreting]. (2011). *2011 Rates and salaries survey for translators and interpreters*. London: Chartered Institute of Linguists/Institute of Translation and Interpreting.
- Cook, D. & Artino, A. (2016). Motivation to learn: an overview of contemporary theories. *Medical Education*, 50(10), 997-1014. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fmedu.13074>
- Deci, E. & Ryan, R. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. Plenum.
- Ellis, B. A. (2013). Freelancing eagles: interpretation as a transient career strategy for skilled migrants. *Journal of Management Development*, 32(2), 152-165.
- European Commission Representation in the UK/CioL/ITI. (2017). *UK translator survey. final report May 2017*. <http://www.ciol.org.uk/sites/default/files/UKTS2016-Final-Report-Web.pdf>
- FIT Europe (Fédération Internationales des Traducteurs). (2010). *Enquête européenne sur les conditions d'exercice des traducteurs*. [http://www.fiteurope.org/vault/FIT\\_Europe\\_Rates\\_report\\_fr.pdf](http://www.fiteurope.org/vault/FIT_Europe_Rates_report_fr.pdf)
- Fujita, S., & Nakajima, M. (2016). Worker flows and job flows: A quantitative investigation. *Review of Economic Dynamics*, 22, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.red.2016.06.001>
- Gez, Y., & Schuster, M. (2018). Borders and boundaries: Eritrean graduates reflect on their medical interpreting training. *The European Legacy*, 23(7–8), 821–836. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10848770.2018.1492810>
- Graneheim, U., & Lundman, B. (2014). Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: concepts, procedures and measures to achieve trustworthiness. *Nursing Education Today*, 24(2), 105-112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2003.10.001>
- Gringiani, A. (1990). Reliability of aptitude testing: a preliminary study. In L. Gran & C. Taylor (Eds.), *Aspects of applied and experimental research on conference interpretation*. (pp. 42–53). Campanotto Editore,
- Guan, Y., Chen, S. X., Levin, N., Bond, M. H., Luo, N., & Xu, J. (2015). Differences in career decision-making profiles between American and Chinese university students: the relative strength of mediating mechanisms across cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 46(6), 856–872. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022115585874>

- Hackett, S., Kuronen, M., Matthies, A., & Kresal, B. (2003). The motivation, professional development and identity of social work students in four European countries. *European Journal of Social Work*, 6(2), 163-178.
- Hale, S. & Ozolins, U. (2014). Monolingual short courses for language-specific accreditation: can they work? A Sydney experience. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 8(2), 217-239. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369145032000144421>
- Hess, N., Jepsen, D. & Dries, N. (2012). Career and employer change in the age of the 'boundaryless' career. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 81(2), 280-288. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.10.009>
- Hlavac, J. (2011). Sociolinguistic profiles of users and providers of lay and professional interpreting services: The experiences of a recently arrived Iraqi language community in Melbourne *Translation & Interpreting*, 3(2), 1-32.
- Hlavac, J., Orlando, M. & Tobias, S. (2012). Intake tests for a short interpreter-training course: design, implementation, feedback. *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, 4(1), 21-45.
- Ivanji, I. (2008). *Titos Dolmetscher. Als Literat am Pulsschlag der Politik*. Promedia.
- Jiménez Ivars, A., Pinazo Catalayud, D., & Ruiz i Forés, M. (2014) Self-efficacy and language proficiency in interpreter trainees, *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 8(2), 167-182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2014.908552>
- Kasser, T. & Ryan, R. M. (2001). Be careful what you wish for: Optimal functioning and the relative attainment of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. In P. Schmuck & K. M. Sheldon (Eds.), *Life goals and well-being: Towards a positive psychology of human striving*. (pp. 116–131). Hogrefe & Huber.
- Katan, D. (2009). Translation theory and professional practice: a global survey of the great divide. *Hermes*, 42, 111-154. <https://doi.org/10.7146/hjlc.v22i42.96849>
- Kelly, N., Stewart, R. G., & Vijayalaxmi H. (2010). *The Interpreting Marketplace. A Study of Interpreting in North America*. Common Sense Advisory / Interpret America. <http://www.interpretamerica.net/publications>
- Kunnen, E. S. (2013). The effects of career choice guidance on identity development. *Education Research International*, 2013, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2013/901718>
- Kurz, I., Basel, E., Chiba, D., Patels, W. & Woljframm, J. (1996). Scribe or actor? A survey paper on personality profiles of translators and interpreters. *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, 7, 3-18.
- Macquarie University Centre for Translation and Interpreting Research (2010). T&I labour market in Australia. Retrieved from [http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/translation/lmtip\\_australia.htm](http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/translation/lmtip_australia.htm)
- McCartney, J. (2016). Is grit the 'X-factor' for interpreters leaving the profession?" *Translation & Interpreting*, 8(1), 30-52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12807/ti.108201.2016.a03>
- Moret, J. (2016). Cross-border mobility, transnationality and ethnicity as resources: European Somalis' post-migration mobility practices. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42(9), 1455–72. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1123089>
- Morris, R. (2010). Images of the court interpreter: Professional identity, role definition and self-image. *Translation and Interpreting Studies*, 5(1), 20-40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/tis.5.1.02mor>
- Moser-Mercer, B. (1985). Screening potential interpreters. *Meta*, 30(1), 97-100. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7202/003631ar>
- Moser-Mercer, B. (2008). Skill acquisition in interpreting. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 2(1), 1–28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2008.10798764>
- Obst, H. (2010). *White House interpreter. The art of interpretation*. Author House.
- Pöchhacker, F. (2008). The turns of Interpreting Studies. In G. Hansen, A. Chesterman, & H. Gerzymisch-Arbogast (Eds.) *Efforts and Models in Interpreting and Translation Research*. (pp. 25-46). John Benjamins.
- profile.id (n.d.(a)) *Language spoken at home*. Retrieved from <https://profile.id.com.au/australia/language>
- profile.id (n.d.(b)) *Proficiency in English*. Retrieved from <https://profile.id.com.au/australia/speaks-english>

- Pym, A., Grin, F., Sfreddo, C. & Chan, A. (2013) *The status of the translation profession in the European Union*. Retrieved from <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4e126174-ea20-4338-a349-ea4a73e0d850>
- Rosiers, A., & Eyckmans, J. (2017). Birds of a feather? A comparison of the personality profiles of aspiring interpreters and other language experts. *Across Languages and Cultures*, 18(1), 29-51. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1556/084.2017.18.1.2>
- Rudvin, M. & Tomassini, E. (2011). *Interpreting in the Community and Workplace: A Practical Teaching Guide*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2000a). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 54–67.
- Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2000b). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 67-78.
- Schmidt, P. (1951). *Hitler's interpreter*. Macmillan.
- Schweda Nicholson, N. (2005). Personality characteristics of interpreter trainees: The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, 13, 109-142.
- Seal, B. C. (2004). Psychological testing of sign language interpreters. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 9(1), 39-52.
- Sela-Sheffy, R., & Shlesinger, M. (Eds). (2011). *Identity and status in the translational professions*. John Benjamins.
- Shaw, S., & Hughes, G. (2006). Essential characteristics of sign language interpreting students: Perspectives of students and faculty. *Interpreting*, 8(2), 195-221. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/intp.8.2.05sha>
- Shoffner, M., Newsome, D., Barrio Minton, C. A., & Wachter Morris, C. A. (2015). A Qualitative exploration of the STEM career-related outcome expectations of young adolescents. *Journal of Career Development*, 42, 102–116. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0894845314544033>
- Timarová, Š. & Ungoed-Thomas, H. (2008). Admission testing for interpreting courses. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 2(1), 29–46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2008.10798765>
- Timarová, Š. & Salaets H. (2011). Learning styles, motivation and cognitive flexibility in interpreter training self-selection and aptitude. *Interpreting*, 13(1), 31-52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/intp.13.1.03tim>
- Tipton, R. (2016). Perceptions of the ‘occupational other’: Interpreters, social workers and intercultural. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 46(2), 463-479. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcu136>
- Tobias, S., Hlavac, J., Sundin, L. & Avella, A. (2020). *Identifying gaps in professional development opportunities for translators and interpreters in Australia*. Retrieved from [https://www.monash.edu/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/2210227/Identifying-Gaps-in-PD-Opportunities-1.pdf](https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/2210227/Identifying-Gaps-in-PD-Opportunities-1.pdf)
- Torikai, K. (2009). *Voices of the invisible presence. Diplomatic interpreters in post-World War II Japan*. John Benjamins.
- Treasury, Australian Government. (2019). *Job-to-job transitions and the wages of Australian workers. Treasury Working Paper*. <https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/c2019-37418.pdf>
- Van Boven, L., & Gilovich, T. (2003). To do or to have? That is the question. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 85(6), 1193. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.6.1193>
- Williamson, A. (2016). Lost in the shuffle: Deaf-parented interpreters and their paths to interpreting careers. *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, 8(1), 4-22.
- Wu, Z. (2016). Towards understanding interpreter trainees’ (de)motivation: An exploratory Study. *Translation & Interpreting*, 8(2), 13-25. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12807/ti.108202.2016.a02>
- Yan, X., Pan J., & Wang, H. (2010). Learner factors, self-perceived language ability and interpreting learning an investigation of Hong Kong tertiary interpreting classes. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 4(2), 173-196.

**Appendix 1:** Trainees' expected level of work (as a percentage) and their working languages (as a number)

Level of work	Trainees (%)	Languages and no. of times nominated by trainees*
Full-time	31	<u>Tamil</u> (10), <u>Hazaragi</u> (6), <u>Persian</u> (6), <u>Dari</u> (4), <u>Sinhalese</u> (3), <u>Arabic</u> (3), <u>Hindi</u> (3), Macedonian (3), Bosnian (2), Croatian (2), Dzongkha (2), <u>Nepali</u> (2), <u>Pashtu</u> (2), Swahili (2), Urdu (2), <u>Vietnamese</u> (2), <u>Italian</u> (1), Malay (1), Punjabi (1), Serbian (1), Spanish (1)
Sometimes F-T / P-T	1	<u>Hindi</u> (1), Punjabi (1)
Part-time with/without other job	23	<u>Dari</u> (5), <u>Hazaragi</u> (5), Swahili (5), <u>Tamil</u> (5), <u>Persian</u> (3), <u>Mandarin</u> (3), <u>Italian</u> (3), <u>Nepali</u> (3), <u>Arabic</u> (2), Dzongkha (2), French (2), <u>Hindi</u> (2), Japanese (2), Urdu (2), Amharic (1), Dinka (1), Dutch (1), Karenni (1), Kifuliro (1), Lingala (1), Pashtu (1), Portuguese (1), Russian (1), <u>Somali</u> (1), <u>Tigrinya</u> (1)
Occasionally with/without other job	16	<u>Italian</u> (4), <u>Nepali</u> (3), Bosnian (2), <u>Hindi</u> (2), Punjabi (2), Serbian (2), Croatian (1), Dzongkha (1), French (1), German (1), Urdu (1),
Not sure	6	<u>Persian</u> (4), <u>Mandarin</u> (3), <u>Arabic</u> (2), Bosnian (1), Croatian (1), <u>Dari</u> (1), <u>Hazaragi</u> (1), Serbian (1)
No answer	23	<u>Persian</u> (5), <u>Hazaragi</u> (4), <u>Dari</u> (4), Japanese (2), <u>Pashtu</u> (2), <u>Nepali</u> (2), <u>Cantonese</u> (1), <u>Italian</u> (1), Karenni (1), Macedonian (1), <u>Mandarin</u> (1), Spanish (1), Thai (1) <u>Vietnamese</u> (1),
Total	100	Languages and number of informants who report working in them (in brackets)  <u>Persian</u> (18), <u>Hazaragi</u> (16), <u>Tamil</u> (15), <u>Dari</u> (14), <u>Nepali</u> (10), <u>Italian</u> (9), <u>Arabic</u> (7), <u>Mandarin</u> (7), <u>Swahili</u> (7), <u>Hindi</u> (6), Bosnian (5), Dzongkha (5), <u>Pashtu</u> (5), Urdu (5), Croatian (4), Japanese (4), Macedonian (4), French (3), Sinhalese (3), <u>Vietnamese</u> (3), Karenni (2), Nepali (2), Punjabi (2), Serbian (2), Spanish (2), Amharic (1), <u>Cantonese</u> (1), Dinka (1), Dutch (1), German (1), Kifuliro (1), Lingala (1), Malay (1), Portuguese (1), Russian (1), <u>Somali</u> (1), Thai (1) <u>Tigrinya</u> (1)  38 languages 173 different 130 individual proficiencies amongst 80 informants

\* The numbers presented in the right-hand column in round brackets after each language represent not each single informant, but the number of times that this language is nominated as the working language of any of the trainees.

**Appendix 2:** Practitioners' reported level of work (as a percentage) and their working languages (as a number).

Level of work	Practitioners (%)	Languages and no. of times nominated by trainees*
Full-time	45	<u>Mandarin</u> (7), <u>Persian</u> (7), <u>Arabic</u> (5), <u>Cambodian</u> (5), <u>Cantonese</u> (5), <u>Dari</u> (4), <u>Hazaragi</u> (4), <u>Italian</u> (4), <u>Pashto</u> (4), <u>Greek</u> (3), <u>Hindi</u> (3), <u>Auslan</u> (2), <u>Nepali</u> (2), <u>Urdu</u> (2), <u>Tamil</u> (2), <u>Vietnamese</u> (2), <u>Dinka</u> (1), <u>French</u> (1), <u>Nuer</u> (1), <u>Sinhalese</u> (1)
Sometimes F-T, sometimes P-T	11	<u>Spanish</u> (2), <u>Arabic</u> (1), <u>Assyrian</u> (1), <u>Azeri</u> (1), <u>Bosnian</u> (1), <u>Hazaragi</u> (1), <u>Mandarin</u> (1), <u>Portuguese</u> (1), <u>Turkish</u> (1)
Part-time / casually (with other job)	37	<u>Hindi</u> (6), <u>Mandarin</u> (6), <u>Hazaragi</u> (5), <u>Persian</u> (4), <u>Arabic</u> (3), <u>Dari</u> (3), <u>Japanese</u> (3), <u>Spanish</u> (3), <u>Urdu</u> (3), <u>Greek</u> (2), <u>Macedonian</u> (2), <u>Tamil</u> (2), <u>Amharic</u> (1), <u>Azeri</u> (1), <u>Hokkien</u> (1), <u>Oromo</u> (1), <u>Punjabi</u> (1), <u>Somali</u> (1)
Occasionally (with other job)	6	<u>Dari</u> (2), <u>Italian</u> (2), <u>Persian</u> (2), <u>Croatian</u> (1), <u>French</u> (1), <u>Hazaragi</u> (1), <u>Serbian</u> (1)
No answer	1	<u>Punjabi</u> (1)
Total	100	<u>Mandarin</u> (14), <u>Persian</u> (13), <u>Hazaragi</u> (11), <u>Arabic</u> (9), <u>Dari</u> (9), <u>Hindi</u> (9), <u>Italian</u> (6), <u>Cambodian</u> (5), <u>Cantonese</u> (5), <u>Greek</u> (5), <u>Spanish</u> (5), <u>Urdu</u> (5), <u>Pashtu</u> (4), <u>Tamil</u> (4), <u>Japanese</u> (3), <u>Auslan</u> (2), <u>Azeri</u> (2), <u>French</u> (2), <u>Macedonian</u> (2), <u>Nepali</u> (2), <u>Punjabi</u> (2), <u>Vietnamese</u> (2), <u>Amharic</u> (1), <u>Assyrian</u> (1), <u>Bosnian</u> (1), <u>Croatian</u> (1), <u>Dinka</u> (1), <u>Hokkien</u> (1), <u>Oromo</u> (1), <u>Nuer</u> (1), <u>Portuguese</u> (1), <u>Serbian</u> (1), <u>Sinhalese</u> (1), <u>Somali</u> (1), <u>Turkish</u> (1)  35 different languages, 130 individual proficiencies amongst 80 informants

\* The numbers presented in the right-hand column in round brackets after each language represent not each single informant, but the number of times that this language is nominated as the working language of any of the practitioners.