

Public service translation and interpreting: A way to accessibility and inclusion

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In the European context, the issue of PSIT has undergone a major evolution over the last decades, both in practice and in scientific research. This is evidenced by the conferences and events devoted to research in this area, as well as the methodological and didactic anchoring in the education of future interpreters (Valero-Garcés 2020). However, while in some European countries (e.g. Spain, Italy, Germany) the issue of PSIT has been alive for several decades, in others (e.g. Slovakia or the Baltic States) a significant need to ensure effective communication between migrants and representatives of state and public administration, health professionals or police officers has only been brought by the war in Ukraine. This unprecedented increase in the need for PSIT has been followed by the need to scientifically investigate its various aspects.

The aim of this issue of *Bridge: Trends and Traditions in Translation and Interpreting Studies* is therefore to create an imaginary bridge. One that will connect the experiences, examples of good practice, and new challenges and perspectives in the field of PSIT from Spain – since it has a long tradition in the practical implementation, research and didactics of PSIT (Valero-Garcés 2019) – with the current acute need to define the specifics of mediated communication with migrants and its barriers, as well as the effort to anchor institutional education in this area in Slovakia.

In the first article, Carmen Valero-Garcés presents *Healthcare staff perceptions about interpreters during the Covid-19 pandemic*. In her paper, the author analyses the tools and means necessary to overcome language barriers in communication between patients and healthcare staff. She examines the level of knowledge of the professionals in the healthcare field about the work of translators and interpreters and their opinions about collaborating with them when communicating with patients, with particular focus on the impact that the (un)availability of interpreters during the Covid-19 pandemic might have had.

In the second article, Claudia Sanchez Tafur discusses the topic of *Training of public service providers and professionals in the work with translators, interpreters, and languages of lesser diffusion*. Her paper aims at providing an overview of the structure of some guides on working with interpreters and translators intended for public service providers and professionals, as well as at evaluating their contents to identify the used approaches, with focus on the guides' comprehensiveness regarding the interpreting and translation process and references to languages of lesser diffusion.

Slovak context is presented by the article *War in Ukraine and Public Service Interpreting in Slovakia: Initial Impressions and Implications* by

Markéta Štefková and Pavol Šveda. The authors describe the chronology of the migration from Ukraine to Slovakia and outline a crash course designed for interpreters catering to the needs of a growing community of Ukrainian citizens in Slovakia. In addition to that, they analyse a survey among the ad-hoc interpreters for whom the training was to be designed.

Although interpreters are currently being intensively deployed within the context of the refugee crisis in Slovakia, there is an obvious lack of research findings reflecting the latest experience with PSIT in the country. Therefore, the last paper by Soňa Hodáková and Jana Ukušová titled *Mental Health in Public Service Interpreting* aims to present a theoretical overview of the main studies concerned with mental health of public service interpreters and to map the main categories of psychological states resulting from the interpreters' direct contact with the stories of misfortune, violence, family separation or death, as well as the possibilities of intervention in the care of the interpreters' mental health.

Since the need for public service interpreters in various settings in Slovakia is growing, in her review Mária Koscelníková briefly introduces the Slovak publication on *Specifics of Interpreting in Asylum Proceedings*.

In the second review, Eva Verebová describes the proceedings of the 3rd International Conference *Translation from/into Languages of Limited Diffusion* which took place in Bratislava. The included papers focus on analysing of the then current state of communication, emphasising the necessity of communication in "minor" languages as well as of preserving the cultural values of the societies using them.

References:

Valero-Garcés, Carmen. 2019. Public Service Interpreting and Translation: Some Convergences and Trends at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century. Eugenia Dal Fovo and Paola Gentile (eds.). *Translation and Interpreting. Convergence, Contact and Interaction*. Berlin: Peter Lang. pp. 21-44.

Valero-Garcés, Carmen. 2020. Introduction. Broadening and Further Developing of Research Methods in PSIT. In: *FITISPos-International Journal*. 7(1): pp. 1-7.