

Institution: University of Salford
Unit of Assessment: D28 Modern Languages and Linguistics
Title of case study: Relationships of trust: Public service interpreting and translation (PSIT) in the community and in statutory and non-statutory welfare services
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>This case study reports on two projects in the field of public service interpreting and translation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Supporting third sector organisations in providing assistance to non-UK nationals through a volunteer trainee community interpreter engagement project, developed in partnership with voluntary and community sector service providers. 2) Improving understanding of the ethical issues confronted in interpreting practice in welfare service delivery settings, through research on professional inter-cultures, obtained between service providers and interpreters in welfare service delivery.
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The key researchers and positions they held at the institution at the time of the research are as follows: Dr Rebecca Tipton, School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences (2003-2012). The research outlined in this document is focused on two thematically related projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A community engagement project launched by the University of Salford Community Action Teams (USCATS) in 2011, generating qualitative research outputs leading to the implementation of service provision improvements; and 2) Research on the use of interpreters in social service organisations (both statutory and non-statutory), carried out by Dr Rebecca Tipton 2009-2011, under the supervision of Professor Myriam Salama-Carr (Centre for Translation and Interpreting Studies) and Dr Abigail Gregory (Job title) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for public service interpreting and translation services in Britain is keenly felt in particular urban areas, including the cities of Manchester and Salford. Despite a drop in the number of asylum seekers and refugees coming into the Greater Manchester region, at the end of 2009 both cities were listed in the top 10 in terms of provision of accommodation and subsistence to asylum seekers. The numbers of non-/limited-English speakers in the region have also increased as a result of EEA nationals coming into the region. • Research carried out with local statutory and non-statutory service providers has shown that changes to criteria for service eligibility (e.g. in adult social care) and difficulties for some EEA nationals in passing the Habitual Residence Test has in some cases led to homelessness and destitution (as reported by Rainbow Haven), leading to increased pressure on third sector organisations to provide welfare assistance, often in the absence of or reduction in funding for interpreting services. The Interpreting Studies literature on public service interpreting and translation services provides a comprehensive source of information on the vagaries of employing friends and family members in formal service contexts and the nature of errors untrained interpreters commonly make when exposed to assignments beyond their competence levels. • Despite drives to professionalise PSIT work through the creation of National Occupational Standards, certification and a national register in the past twenty years, shifting supply and demand for certain languages means that untrained and trained interpreters continue to work side by side in the field. For service providers, the range of interpreter practices encountered can undermine the quality of service delivery and raises issues in relation to how best to manage interpreter-mediated interaction. • To date the main focus of such research has been the legal and healthcare systems. The projects reported on here have allowed attention to be drawn to the under-researched fields of social services at both statutory and non-statutory levels. • The study employed a mixed methods approach to identify the knowledge bases interpreters and service providers bring to interpreter-mediated encounters in the social services context as a means to exploring the nature and strength of the professional interculture obtained between the two in interaction. The research took an interdisciplinary

approach and drew specifically on research traditions in social theory, sociology and social work to frame the analysis in terms of agential and structural factors that shape an individual's response to certain workplace practices.

- Working in partnership with Salford and Manchester City Councils (adult social care and asylum teams) and the Manchester City Council Interpreting and Translation Service (M4 Translations), Express Language Solutions, Revive, North West Translators' Network focus groups, interviews and questionnaires were completed.
- The research provides important insights into expectations about the training and knowledge bases each professional brings to the interpreting encounter, and in particular reveals a lack of understanding about the ethical issues confronted in interpreting practice. It also reveals examples of effective and innovative practice developed by service providers in interpreter-mediated encounters that warrant wider dissemination and discussion.

3. References to the research

Key outputs

1. Tipton R. and Spencer J., 'Below the radar: interpreting services, third sector organisations and social capital' as part of the panel on 'Interpreting and the Social Fabric' at the 4th conference of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies, Queen's University, Belfast 24-27 July 2012.
2. Tipton, R 2012, 'Public Service Interpreting and the Politics of Entitlement for New Entrants into the United Kingdom', *Journal of Language and Politics*, 11(2), pp.185-206. [DOI](#)
3. Tipton, R 2011, "Relationships of Learning between Military Personnel and Interpreters in Situations of Violent Conflict: Dual Pedagogies and Communities of Practice", *Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 5(1), pp.15-40. [URL](#)
4. Tipton, R 2010 'On Trust: Relationships of Trust in Interpreter-mediated Social Work Encounters', in: *Text and Context: Essays on Translation and Interpreting in Honour of Ian Mason*, St Jerome, Manchester, United Kingdom, pp.188-208. [URL](#)
5. Tipton, R 2008, "Reflexivity and the Social Construction of Identity in Interpreter-mediated Asylum Interviews", *The Translator*, Vol 14(1), pp.1-19. [URL](#)
6. Tipton, R 2006, "Making sense of it all: public service interpreters as reflexive practitioners?", *Forum*, Vol 4(2), pp.139-162.

4. Details of the impact

Beneficiaries of the research:

- EEA nationals accessing voluntary and community sector support via an innovative, research led approach focused on their needs through the provision of non-statutory interpreting services
- Third sector organisations that have seen demand for their services by non-/limited English speakers rise in the past two years (e.g. Booth Street Homeless Centre, Rainbow Haven, George House Trust, Revive)
- Statutory / non-statutory welfare services staff who have had limited experience and training on working with interpreters (e.g. adult social services offices in Salford (Harpurhey and Broughton offices), St Mary's children's oncology social work team, Asylum team, Moss Side)
- Community groups: including established communities in Salford (e.g. The Islington Estate Tenants and Residents Association)
- Home and international students of the University of Salford in the context of volunteering in the local community and student leadership (e.g. mentoring)

The project has realised the following impact:

- Participatory research with social workers in Manchester and Salford has given service providers a voice in describing their experiences in delivering services through interpreter mediation, identifying gaps in training; barriers to quality service delivery through interpreter mediation; insights into the impact of recent cuts to funding on the organisation of interpreter mediation (particularly in non-statutory services).

- Qualitative analysis of the outcomes of the volunteer interpreter project has allowed adjustments to be made to training, scope and organisation of the project, to ensure a better fit with the beneficiary organisations and demonstrate a positive impact of the project on perceptions of service users from the indigenous population of migrants from other countries, especially EEA nationals.
- The presence of EEA nationals as interpreters in the homeless centre has helped to improve perceptions of the indigenous population, some of whom view EEA nationals as a drain on resources. Seeing educated and professionally-minded students from EEA countries in particular working in the centre has helped to give a more balanced view of the reasons people come to the UK.
- The presence of the interpreters has also encouraged minority speakers to engage with the wider programme of social activities offered by the centre from which they previously felt excluded because of the language barrier. Measuring the longer-term impact on service users of the project is currently in the planning stages.
- The volunteer interpreter project has been able to establish a mediating role in terms of educating service providers on the need to use professional interpreters for critical interventions (to safeguard the service users and the volunteers), and highlighting ways in which a trainee interpreter can add value while developing skills and knowledge in the field. It has also identified areas for expansion and potential for sustainability through a social enterprise model.
- The research work undertaken by Tipton in conjunction with the USCATs project has allowed the shifting socio-political realities to be explored in social services, and for low-level interventions in language mediation to be employed and evaluated. The USCATs volunteer project has provided information relating to the difficulties currently being experienced on the ground by migrants with different socio-legal status.
- **Service provider views:** *“There are great benefits to our service users, as they are able to receive support and information in their own language and learn about UK systems in order to better understand how to access them. Many of our service users are very isolated and have no one to talk to in their own language, so the interpreters also help to break down some of that isolation. This in turn helps promote integration.”* Rachel Foakes, Rainbow Haven
- *“There are 10 countries in Eastern Europe who all have people in the UK that are using our services, but it isn’t possible to employ a person with language skills to talk to all of them as the languages are very different and there is very little cross over. I don’t know of any other centre which has access to such an important resource, we are very lucky.”* Amanda Croome, Booth Centre Manager
- **Service user view:** *“We have had experience of working with [D], from the University, she helped us with various aspects of our life, including our housing situation, Job Centre appointments, benefits, looking for a job, translation of letters and also with phone calls and appointments.”* Pawel S, Booth Centre
- **Project volunteer view:** *“It is crucial to the community to diminish this gap between the speakers of no or little knowledge of English and the authorities. Integration plays a significant role here: this unique project is part of enhancing the social life not only for the non-native English speakers but also for the locals and thus improving everyday life.”* Claudia Flanner – USCATs Volunteer University of Salford Translation and Interpreting (graduated July 2012)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- a) Videolink about the project: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOWDQIHHCcs>
- b) Report to Manchester and Salford City Councils (Tipton, 2012) on background, key findings and recommendations for further research.