The relationship between interpreters and users of the interpreting services at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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Abstract

This study aims at analysing, in the social field of the lecture room, the users' and interpreters' *habitus* in the framework of the interpreting services provided at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. *Habitus* is a concept developed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and is understood to be a set of reflexes and dispositions internalised by a particular individual or agent that serves as a basis for interaction with other individuals within a given social space. The analysis takes the form of a qualitative enquiry through the observation, analysis and interpretation of socio-educational dynamics taking place in the lecture room and which involve the lecturer, the interpreter and the users of the interpreting services. The literature review identifies the scarceness of a sociological approach in the field of interpreting studies and its rationale.

In order to comply with the accepted criteria of qualitative research, data were gathered through interviews with 10 users, 22 interpreters and 6 lecturers between 2006 and 2008, classroom observation, and listening to interpreters' performances. A combination of grounded theory and phenomenological approach was adopted for the study, whereby sensitizing concepts are formulated to give the study a sense of direction, and data are considered as valid while the subjectivity of the information provided – and therefore the limits of its reliability and generalisability - is acknowledged. The data from the interviews were then integrated in an MS Excel spreadsheet in order to facilitate referencing and coding, i.e. the flagging of elements considered important for the study.

The data were conceptualised within the framework of a narration to understand and categorise the various nodes of perceptions provided by the interviewees. Key concepts from Bourdieu such as *habitus*, field, symbolic violence, reproduction and doxa are explained and contextualised in order to provide a basis for theory generation. The subsequent interpretation of the data reveals that interpreters and users alike select a different set of strategies depending on their personality and the situation in which they interpret or use the interpreting services. Users focus their opinions either on the perceived quality of the end-

product while being reluctant to criticise the services, or on the critical analysis of the degree of intervention the interpreters adopt in facilitating the transmission of the message. The interpreters, on the other hand, adopt a *habitus* shaped around either non-interference with the message or selection of information. Those *habitus* indicate, in turn, that beyond the linguistic support provided by the services, the latter do not necessarily contribute to a better social integration of non-Afrikaans speakers on the campus, and that the interpreting services, while linguistically successful to various extents, cannot be envisaged as a sufficient instrument for meaningful transformation.

Keywords: Bourdieu, classroom interpreting, university setting, sociology, *habitus*, grounded theory, phenomenology

UITTREKSEL

Hierdie studie het ten doel om gebruikers en tolke se *habitus* binne die sosiale veld van die lesinglokaal en spesifiek binne die raamwerk van die tolkdienste wat by die Potchefstroomkampus van die Noordwes-Universiteit gebied word, te analiseer. *Habitus* is 'n konsep wat deur die Franse sosioloog Pierre Bourdieu ontwikkel is en dit word verstaan as 'n stel reflekse en neigings wat deur 'n sekere individu of agent geïnternaliseer is en wat as basis dien vir interaksie met ander individue binne 'n gegewe sosiale ruimte. Die analise word uitgevoer in die vorm van 'n kwalitatiewe ondersoek deur middel van die waarneming, analise en interpretasie van sosio-opvoedkundige dinamika wat in die lesinglokaal tussen dosent, tolk en die gebruikers van die tolkdienste plaasvind. Die literatuur oorsig identifiseer die skaarsheid van 'n sosiologiese benadering in die veld van tolkstudie asook die *rationale* van die veld.

Ten einde te voldoen aan die aanvaarde kriteria van kwalitatiewe navorsing, is die data deur middel van onderhoude met 10 gebruikers, 22 tolke en 6 dosente, klaskamer waarneming en die luister na tolke se uitsette, versamel. 'n Kombinasie van gegronde teorie en 'n fenomenologiese benadering is vir die studie gekies. Hierdeur word sensitiserende konsepte geformuleer om rigting aan die studie te verskaf en data word as geldig oorweeg terwyl die subjektiwiteit van die verskafde inligting (en dus die gepaardgaande beperkinge in terme van betroubaarheid en veralgemening) erken word. Die data van die onderhoude is verder in 'n MS Excel dokument geïntegreer om verwysing en kodering te vergemaklik, i.e. die identifikasie van die elemente wat belangrik is vir die studie. Die data is binne 'n beskrywende raamwerk gekonseptualiseer om die verskeie persepsie nodes wat deur die respondente verskaf is te verstaan en te kategoriseer. Sleutelkonsepte van Bourdieu soos *habitus*, veld, simboliese geweld, reproduksie en *doxa* word verduidelik en gekontekstualiseer ten einde 'n basis vir teorie ontwikkeling te verskaf. Die gevolglike interpretasie van die data dui daarop dat beide tolke en gebruikers 'n verskillende stel strategieë kies wat

van hul persoonlikheid en die situasie waarbinne hulle tolk of tolkdienste gebruik, afhang. Gebruikers fokus hul opinies óf op hul waarnemings van die kwaliteit van die eind-produk terwyl hulle huiwer om die dienste te kritiseer, óf op die kritiese analise van die graad van toetreding wat die tolke toepas om die oordrag van die boodskap te vergemaklik. Hierteenoor neem tolke 'n *habitus* aan wat rondom óf nie-inmenging met die boodskap óf die selektering van inligting gevorm is. Daardie *habitus* dui op hul beurt aan dat, buiten taalkundige ondersteuning wat deur die dienste verskaf word, die laasgenoemde nie noodwendig bydra tot beter sosiale integrasie van nie-Afrikaanssprekendes op die kampus nie. Verder, ten spyte van die feit dat die tolkdienste taalkundig suksesvol is tot verskeie mates, kan dit nie gesien word as 'n voldoende instrument vir betekenisvolle transformasie nie.

Sleutelwoorde: Bourdieu, klaskamer tolking, universiteitsomgewing, sosiologie, habitus, gegronde teorie, fenomenologie

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1. Introduction

This study aims at analysing, in the social field of the lecture room, the users' and interpreters' *habitus* in the framework of the interpreting services provided at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. Habitus is a concept developed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and is understood to be a set of reflexes and dispositions internalised by a particular individual or agent that serves as a basis for interaction with other individuals within a given social space. The analysis will take the form of a qualitative enquiry through the observation, analysis and interpretation of socio-educational dynamics that are taking place in the lecture room and which involve the lecturer, the interpreter and the users of the interpreting services.

Research relating to translation as a socially-situated activity (Inghilleri 2003) has been conducted regarding the role that interpreters and translators adopt in specific environments. Inghilleri introduces Bourdieusian concepts directly to the topic of interpreted asylum interviews in the United Kingdom and notes that the formation of translation norms for the interpreters in that particular context relies on culture, the adequacy of intercultural communication and institutional or national loyalty. Inghilleri also raises the question of the generalisability of her findings to other fields of interpreting practices and indicates that Bourdieusian analysis in interpreting needs further investigation to refine possible new models of interpreter *habitus* (2003: 262). Further, Inghilleri acknowledges that the social positioning of the interpreter plays an essential role in his/her decisions and strategies (2003: 261) and that the social angle has become an essential lens for understanding the notion of interpreter *habitus*. It is important to note that Inghilleri hints at two possible *habitus* in the interpreter's activities: invisibility, i.e. the denial of the existence of a cultural other (2003: 260), and advocacy, i.e. a more liberal and client-oriented take on interpreting a message. Needless to say, Inghilleri's research is a cornerstone of this study, although it omits a host of

other key Bourdieusian concepts such as reproduction, symbolic violence, the politics of exchange and the dynamics of power. In other words, Inghilleri's work does not take into account the *direction* or the *intention* of the *habitus* of agents in a given field. In many ways her contextualisation is weak and the study fails to deliver a comprehensive and directional focus to her interpreting norms. For instance, the emergence of these two models should deal with their social rather than linguistic consequences and should describe the impact of the models on the empowerment of the receiver of the services. Also, not much is mentioned in that study about which model the interpreters preferred, and which rationale or cultural/social stance governed their choice. A more in-depth enquiry should aim at describing the genesis and use of such models rather than purely observe and describe them. In addition, the nature of asylum-seeking interviews is legal and not related to the field of education.

This study will adopt as initial key orientations the *habitus* of users and interpreters and be sensitive to the notion of power as a sociological instrument and the identification of possible hierarchical relations between the various agents in the lecture room. The idea that the interpreting services "level the playing field" will be subjected to rigorous analysis. The framework of interactions of the lecture room and how this affects the users' reflexes will be defined along the lines of theories expressed by sociologists Pierre Bourdieu, Basil Bernstein and to a lesser extent Michel Foucault, who all dealt with the topics of cultural reproduction, symbolic violence and power in educational situations and other fields of enquiry. The methodology will be qualitative in nature in the sense that participant observation, interviews and questionnaires will be used with a well-defined group comprising users, interpreters and lecturers.

1.1 Context

In the context of a national university merging process, the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education merged with the University of the North-West to become *North-West University* (NWU) on 1 January 2004.

It was decided during the pre-merger phase that the existing language policies of the forming institutions would stay in place until the new language plan was finally ratified. Owing to this, and bearing in mind the linguistic reality of the Potchefstroom campus and its Afrikaans character, it was decided that Afrikaans should remain the pivotal language for tuition and administrative purposes. However, after a pilot study in 2003 and a feasibility study (Van Rooy 2005), it was determined that classroom interpreting services would be used in strategically important, expensive teaching programmes with limited student access, like Engineering – mainly to enhance access for students whose home language has been "minoritised" (Wallmach 2000: 201).

In the meantime, the language policy has been confirmed: on the Potchefstroom campus of the university (referred to as PUK), Afrikaans is the medium of instruction for day classes and largely remains the undergraduate teaching language of the campus, while interpreting services are available both for classes and for some of the inter-campus staff and management meetings. The Mafikeng campus of the university is mainly Setswana- and English-speaking.

The selected interpreters were and still are students, from a variety of academic backgrounds and trained on a pragmatic basis by the Directorate of Language Affairs at the university. In addition, the project involves specialists from the relevant subjects who also either interpret or help the interpreters for certain subjects. There were 12 interpreters in 2004, 22 in 2006 and 25 in 2007 and in 2008 respectively. Of these 25, five are permanently employed. In 2006 255 lectures were interpreted each week. At the time of writing, this number had risen

to approximately 380 a week, across all faculties. Ongoing training is provided for new and current interpreters, in order to make the continuous improvement of interpreting quality a priority issue.

The Directorate of Language Affairs has conducted numerous evaluations of quality since 2004 (some of them user-oriented – interviews, focus groups and questionnaires) but so far no explicitly sociological evaluation of the interpreting services has been made on the basis of feedback from the beneficiaries of the services themselves. The project has been researched already: Van Rooy (2005) carried out a feasibility study on the project and demonstrated that the interpreting services are a viable option for the purpose stated by the project, but did not tackle the issue of perception in the services provided. In addition, Pienaar (2006) also acknowledges that very little research has been done in South Africa in the field of "educational interpreting".

1.2 Literature review

The literature review below indicates the existing research that will inform and provide a framework for the study. We will determine whether there is a vacuum in the topic of the sociology of interpreting, but the literature review will also include those works that could form a basis for strengthening the topic.

1.2.1 Sociology and translation/interpreting studies

The limited use of sociological theories and frameworks of analysis in interpreting studies was identified as an area worth investigating. Indeed, the literature review below reveals that such frameworks, especially those using Bourdieu's theories to explain interactions between interpreters and their working environment, have so far only been used as a broad theoretical base. Nevertheless, some of the literature review also indicated new "social" perspectives on translation studies, from which a study such as this could benefit. Indeed, the Directorate of

Language Affairs has approached the sociological angle (Verhoef & Blaauw, to appear) and mentions some elements that this study will take into account, one of these being the inequality of positions and agency in the interpreting process.

As a point of departure Blommaert (2005: 14-15) is one of the first to offer a sociolinguistic starting point based on critical discourse analysis (CDA), which fits the perspective of this study by advocating a socially constructed contextualisation of the way discourse and language operate. CDA envisages language as an instrument of power that regulates the reproduction of a dominant culture, a view that Bourdieu directly embraces. For Blommaert (2005: 69), boundaries of power are maintained through indexicality, i.e. a non-random, implicit regulator of how much power a certain type of discourse is endowed with in a given social field (a lecture room, a students' residence hall, etc.). By placing discourse within this power framework Blommaert directly relates to Bourdieu's more abstract theories of power (1977, 1990, 1992) and favours a "will to overcome structuralist determinism" (Blommaert 2005: 27). This signifies that despite the inherent Marxist undertone of considering discourse as an instrument of power, theorists like Blommaert and Bourdieu agree that such an enterprise should aim at rectifying inequalities rather than merely describing them without suggesting a solution. The direct application of CDA to interpreting is fitting, especially in the context of the NWU, but discourse analysis is only a part of the bigger sociological picture. I identified from there on that the study needed to be much more than a discourse analysis activity: the sociology of interpreting, to my mind, also includes other dimensions such as culture, role and social perception. Therefore, I do not limit myself to analysing interpreters' performances or to comparing these with the original lectures being interpreted.

In a decidedly more Bourdieusian perspective, Simeoni (1998) argues for the conceptualisation of the translator's *habitus* in order to understand his/her deviation from so-called translational norms prior to any empirical work, i.e. how the translator adapts to this indexicality and chooses to shed his/her neutrality. It

must be noted that Simeoni is probably the first to use a Bourdieusian concept directly and apply it to translation studies, at least in a consistent manner. In that respect, the analysis of his work is essential to building a solid basis for the present study.

For Simeoni, analysing the translator's (and by extension the interpreter's) *habitus* out of context and without considering external factors is an aberration and what underrmines the suspected *habitus* of the translator is his/her subservience to the author. This has two implications: on one hand, the use of a structuralist stance, i.e. a decontextualised analysis of interpreting as isolated activity, does not make sense. This subservience, if identified, needs to be analysed holistically, in the light of all the relations and exchanges involved in the translation process. On the other hand, the irrelevance of context will certainly contribute to the reproduction of this subservience rather than its resolution, since context would have no value. As such, a structuralist stance would describe and interpret but fail to actually change an inequality in the interpreting process, if there is any. For Simeoni, the translator's *habitus* is adaptive and is "tuned to the practical demands of the (special) field(s) in which it operates" (1998: 14). Finally, Simeoni admits that the notion of *habitus* "was never applied rigorously to the field of interlingual communication" (1998: 16), which validates the use of such a concept to translation studies, and even more so to the field of interpreting: *habitus* is a concept that delves deep into social reflexes rather than discursive strategies. Analysing only the latter would reveal interesting symptoms but would inevitably fail to disclose the deeper causes of such strategies. I therefore surmise that a *habitus*-oriented study would provide both a holistic and in-depth understanding of how the interpreter functions in his/her social space.

In very much the same vein, Sánchez (2007) and Toury (1995: 53) are of the view that the translator, too, plays a socially-located role and that translation goes much beyond the mere conversion of a source text into a target discourse.

On the topic of the translator's social processes, Sela-Sheffy (2005) proposes that the translator suffers from social subservience, a reflex that is crucial to an admittedly social study into interpreting. If Sela-Sheffy's translator experiences a feeling of subservience, it may well be that the interpreter, although only concerned with the oral rather than the written medium, also experiences such submission. The use of Bourdieusian concepts in Sela-Sheffy's case is weakened by the remarkable absence of empirical data in her contributions. Sela-Sheffy (2005) uses data already present in the literature, although she does add to Simeoni's theoretical constructs (e.g. the translator's self-awareness concerning reputation and role). Unfortunately, the theories are not supported by first-hand data and take the form of deductive logic rather than inductive enquiry (i.e. from observation to theorisation). The perceived objective of her contribution is better understood if considered as an introduction of Bourdieusian concepts to the field of translation studies, rather than the establishment of a model for conducting such research.

Inghilleri (2003) also concurs that the notion of social norms has so far been restricted to translation studies. Using Bourdieu's perspective, however, she too theorises but uses already existing data. Her readings of Bourdieu reflect a deep analysis of the latter's various concepts and how they tie in together, but the application to interpreters themselves remains predictably theoretical and is not supported by empirical data either – or at least not empirical data generated for the purpose of the study in particular. Consequently, the methodological framework is very deductive: a model is created and then offered for application. The description of an *ex nihilo* model to be applied to data gathered at a later stage limits the scope of the results and creates a feeling of abstraction from the beginning, which ultimately leads to the absence of concrete recommendations.

All the above contributions are highly theoretical but, to their credit, they do open the way for a sociological approach to translation and interpreting studies. For

that reason they are laudable attempts at introducing a new perspective away from the traditional discourse analysis angle.

Deeper in translation studies (and therefore further from Simeoni's work), Gouanvic (1995) has also consistently applied a Bourdieusian perspective to the field of translation, but his analysis of post-World War Two translation of American novels into French firstly is restricted to translation studies and secondly does not deal with an empirical and qualitative study. Also, the social stakes in that study are considerably inferior to those in the context of the studies mentioned above that focus on interpreting.

Since the concept of *interaction* is at the core of this study, Moeketsi's anthropological angle (2001) and application of Hymes' ethnography to South African courts is very relevant to this study. However, her approach does not depart from discourse studies, an already well-trodden perspective in translation studies. For Moeketsi, the way a message is produced and rendered is the core interest of such a perspective, but this approach falls short of producing a system of actual *interaction* between the agents of communication in the court. As such, her analysis is very useful as it focuses on the extra-discursive factors affecting communication situations, consistent with Hymes' anthropological perspective. Also, Moeketsi adds an essential feature to the field of interpreted discourse and asserts that courtroom discourse is very much like performed drama (2001: 145), which raises the possibility that an interpreted situation could very well work along codified, predetermined rules. The emphasis on this aspect of social interaction definitely resonates with the concept of *habitus* as a set of social codes for interaction. Also, Moeketsi's study has the merit of hinting at the comprehensiveness of the interpreting process (an element that is undoubtedly due to the anthropological angle) rather than privileging the person or discourse of the interpreter alone.

Napier and Barker (2004: 228) indicate that the practice of classroom interpreting for deaf students in Australia is widespread but, in very much the same vein as Moeketsi (2001), the research remains purely focused on *action* (e.g. coping strategies, omissions, interpreting norms, the interpreter's self-perception of his/her own mistakes), rather than *interaction*.

It is essential to indicate, however, that studies in the field of sign-language interpreting in academic settings abound (Napier & Barker 2004a and 2004b; Marschark et al 2005; Marschark et al (in press), to name a few). These are supported by empirical data but are mainly concerned with discourse studies or very general sociological abstractions. For instance, Napier and Barker (2004a: 369) only deal with "linguistic analysis and interpreters' self-evaluation of performance". Napier and Barker (2004b) is a study on perception, although the data collected is not used to generate a social theory but rather to get an idea of the perception of ease of access for deaf students at university level. Marschark et al (2005) is more of an educational study than a social analysis. The studies above all deal with practical issues but do not propose a model that could predict how interpreters will function based on data collected from users, interpreters and educators.

Closer to the educational sector and problems of bilingualism, Cummins (1979) reinforces the social divide created by linguistic differences in an academic setting and introduces the idea that Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) are factors of inequality in education in multilingual environments. Although not dealing with translation or interpreting, Cummins' study is very relevant to our own and concludes that learners' L2 (second language) is as important as the L1 (first language) used in the educational setting. Beyond this strongly educational study, what is important in Cummins' research is his *systematisation* of results based on strong empirical evidence. In that respect, Cummins' legacy is methodological in the sense that the modelling is supported by appropriate data.

His actual conclusions relate to the use of L1 and L2 at home and in educational institutions for bilingual learners, which are slightly beyond the scope of this study.

The interpreter has been wondering for some time about his role as mediator and having to deal with elements other than language and discourse translation; this awareness is the source of socially-related issues (Hale 2004; Hong 1994) such as neutrality (Rudvin 2007). Moeketsi & Wallmach (2005: 79) makes it clear that in South African court interpreting conflicting loyalties is an unresolved issue. Passivity is impossible and also dangerous for the translator/interpreter: "invisible translators, who seek to efface themselves textually, also tend to get effaced socially" (Chesterman 1997, cited in Moeketsi & Wallmach 2005: 79). In the same vein Schlesinger (1999: 2) indicates that "the difficulty of striking a balance between the conflicting expectations of those whom the interpreter serves" is ever present in the field of interpreting. All of this confirms the view that the interpreter has indeed become a social animal and that factors other than qualifications and experience affect his/her performance.

In the field of sign language interpreting Napier and Barker (2004a: 370) propose that a sociological perspective should be applied to the field of interpreting studies, since the object interpreted is not only discourse but also cultural and community aspects of communication. In this respect Napier and Barker (2004a: 371) acknowledge that the interpreter is but one element in the mesh of interactions at play in the interpreted situation. This means that the interpreter will affect the interactional field as much as the other actors will. That statement is of utmost importance to our study, which considers that the interpreter is, as any other agent in the field, part of the social space of the classroom. The sociocultural and sociolinguistic approaches to interpreting are not new, of course (see above), but they have not been applied comprehensively in previous research. The literature so far indicates that sociology is a promising yet underdeveloped perspective for interpreting studies, in the sense that little

substantial research has been carried out that would aim at observing and interpreting the field of interaction and the reflexes played out by the actors in an interpreted situation.

Part of the justification for this new sociological trend is derived from studies that concentrate on perceptions and the user's perspective. Kurz (1993: 312-314), for instance, indicates that conference interpreting has always insisted on the importance of including the listeners and various circumstances in understanding the interpreting process. Edwards, Temple and Alexander (2005: 2) write that the service-provider perspective has failed to take users' viewpoints on board, resulting in research that occasionally "misses the point". This perspective is reinforced in Garber and Maufette-Leenders (Carr et al 1997: 132) where, in the context of "cultural" interpreting in the UK, no guarantee can be made that interpreting is successful without asking the people for whom interpreting is provided what they think: this would result in an unfair and discriminatory practice. In the field of university and sign language interpreting Napier and Barker (2004b) have conducted a study focusing on the expectations of the students who are to use the interpreting services. As already noted, however, the study only focused on themes relating to discursive practices (quality of interpreting, perception of what qualifications an interpreter should possess) and consequently the scope of this type of research does not reach a sociological systematisation of relationships. In short, it focuses on *action* rather than *interaction*.

If a user-oriented study in interpreting studies is considered a first step in sociological research in this field, it is important to consider the survey conducted by the *Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence* (AIIC) (Moser 1995). The study indicates that a user-oriented approach implies that "the quality of the service performed is measured against the judgements, needs and expectations of users of that service" (Moser 1995: 4). However, the notion of quality is still not linked to the interaction of actors but based solely on the users'

evaluation of the linguistic performance of the interpreters. These benchmarks have to be positioned in the social dynamics models expressed by Bourdieu and Bernstein, as Kurz (2001: 94) argues: "[M]easurements of service quality that do not include user expectations miss the point".

Studies focusing on user needs and perceptions are not sociological in themselves. The sociology of classroom interpreting has to go further than that, and must determine what defines the interpreted lecture as social space and how the dynamics at work can be characterised.

The literature review above indicates that such a sociological approach is embryonic and needs elaboration in order to bring a fresh perspective to the field of interpreting in general and classroom interpreting in particular.

The following research questions are suggested in view of the literature review above:

- How can one characterise the *habitus* of both interpreters and users in the interpreted lecture context?
- How can the interactions between these *habitus* be characterised?
- To what extent do these *habitus* contribute to the reproduction of cultural domination rather than to equalling the playing field?
- What recommendations can be formulated in order to rectify the elements that will have been identified as preventing an appropriate interpreting process that is conducive to social integration?

To answer these questions the following aims are formulated:

- To derive a data-supported model of interaction between interpreters, users and lecturers in the interpreted lecture
- To pursue the exploration of Bourdieusian concepts in the field of interpreting studies

- To verify the validity of the application of such concepts to the data gathered
- To provide concrete recommendations based on the findings and their interpretation

1.2.2 Theoretical framework: Context

Using a Bourdieusian approach to the problem defined in this study has consequences not only for the theoretical findings, but also for methodological guidelines. Before setting the practicalities of methodology for this particular study, therefore, it is fitting to describe how Bourdieu envisages social research methodology.

In terms of approach Bourdieu is not in favour of "theoreticist theory", which is in his own opinion a

> reaction to a proximate intellectual environment that has traditionally rewarded philosophical and theoretical proficiency while nourishing strong resistance to empiricism. (1992: 31)

Indeed, Bourdieu advocates "the *fusion* of theoretical construction and practical research operations" (1992: 34, original emphasis). He is clearly in favour of empirical research rather than of pure theory not supported by data. For him

> [t]he *summum* of the art, in the social sciences, is ... to be capable of engaging very high "theoretical" stakes by means of very precise and often apparently very mundane, if not derisory, empirical objects. (Bourdieu 1992: 220, original emphasis)

Further on:

> We must learn how to *translate highly abstract problems into thoroughly practical scientific operations*. (Bourdieu 1992: 221, original emphasis)

In this sense the use of grounded theory and phenomenology, as we will see below, matches Bourdieu's perspective on social studies: theories cannot be

generated *ex nihilo* and the data have to serve as a basis for a solid theorisation of the problems lying at the core of the study: "purely theoretical compilations are ... entirely foreign to any application" (Bourdieu 1992: 224).

Bourdieu (1992: 35) believes that scientific practices should "continually blend concept and precept, reflection and observation". Admittedly, one of the reasons why I chose Bourdieu for the theory generation part of this study is this flexibility in methodology and theorisation, which to my mind gives a qualitative study its full force and meaning.

In addition to this insistence on practical application, Bourdieu is an advocate of pluralism in methods. For him

> we must try, in every case, to mobilise all the techniques that are relevant and practically usable, given the definition of the object and the practical conditions of data collection. (Bourdieu 1992: 227)

The methodology for the analysis of a particular social space in Bourdieu's terms has been used recently in the field of education by Gale and Densmore (2001) to describe teacher-student relations in three movies dealing with education and some of its issues. However, the methodology the authors use is unclear in that the translation of the data into a theory is not systematised and is instead left to a few guidelines. For instance, it does not describe the data serving as the basis for interpretation in detail, but rather interprets it from scratch. The article also takes the form of a theoretical framework supported by observations relating to the said movies. Nevertheless, in this case Bourdieusian methodology would aim, according to Mills and Gale (2007: 433), at "asking 'whose interests are served and how'". If that particular study is meaningful in any way, this focus on "interest" would introduce the issue of the dynamics of power in a given field.

The methodology advocated by Bourdieu and cited in Gale and Densmore (2001) consists of three phases that are abstract enough to be applied to a variety of educational fields but that should include a strong data component.

Bourdieu suggests, firstly, a definition of the field analysed and possibly its institutional relation with the bigger framework in which it operates; secondly, a description of the various agents operating within the field and the official relationships of power that are played out between them. This secondary phase must enable the identification of authority, subordination and domination, as well as the dynamics of the competition for legitimacy. In a third stage, Bourdieu envisages the study of the *habitus* of the relevant agents in the field and the study of the dispositions that constitute it. These guidelines are oriented towards a "relational" perspective (Bourdieu's word) in line with methodological pluralism.

This template raises several issues. The first step is an obvious necessity, but the second one is vague and we will need to appropriately define it further. Indeed, the standpoint from which these relations of power should be interpreted could very well be guiding concepts that orient the study (what we will later call "sensitising concepts") in the sense that a general angle should be defined in relation to the analysis of the data. Failing that, any kind of interpretation is possible and any study in that situation would not be focused at all. Also, the kind of data (interviews, observations, statistics or questionnaires) to be used within such a methodology is not mentioned. Methodological pluralism and flexibility does not mean "relativistic epistemological laissez-faire" (Bourdieu 1992: 227). Without a proper standpoint, the meaning of the relations that are revealed through the data is absent. Research, especially social research, has to produce meaning if it is tangibly to solve a set of issues identified in the data collected. When meaning becomes a fleeting and baseless notion, the meaning of research itself can be challenged and become abstract sophism. Also, the third step is unlikely to be separated from the second one. The *habitus* of agents in a social space is defined precisely by the presence of the relations, whether these are perceived by the agents or not. There is, as we will see, a causal relation between elements such as subordination and domination and the formation of

the agents' *habitus*. Since the *habitus* is a system of reflexes or dispositions, these will transpire and be revealed in the data.

Having said this, Bourdieu's views on what Mills and Gale term *methodological polytheism* correspond very much with the methodology I adopt and describe in the section below. Indeed, Mills and Gale (2007: 438) indicate that the analyst should deploy "whatever data production technique is best suited to the question at hand in his own research".

The same authors indicate that Bourdieu prefers to focus on why a particular method is used, and for what aim. Mills and Gale (2007: 439) do insist, though, on a problematic aspect of a study of this scope and depth, namely the reliability and limits of participants' subjective testimonies and interviews.

This is the cornerstone of the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism. At the same time, I argue that meaning is subjective in any situation, whatever the context. This study, of course, deals with the perception of users, interpreters and to a lesser extent lecturers, and not with the problem of the validity of perception. We will assume for the purposes of the study that the perceptions appearing in the data are real, in line with the phenomenological approach adopted in the methodology. Of course, such an approach focuses on the value of human individual experience – as well as its validity. When perceptions are repeated and appear to create a pattern of behaviour or opinion in the data, these will be used for the generation of a theoretical affirmation.

To go further into the framework used in this study, and to understand its orientation, a review of the ideas of Bourdieu, Bernstein and to a lesser extent Foucault is useful. All three have dealt with discourse and education in varying degrees. The cornerstone of our sociological perspective is exemplified by Bernstein (1990: 22, 23), for whom

> basic to the mode of production and modality of education are categories and practices that are regulated by the principles of a social division of labour and its internal social relations.

This has consequences for any study involving the analysis of specific events occurring in an educational context. For Bernstein – and for Bourdieu and Foucault – social interaction and the discourse production in the classroom are largely determined by the domination of a given culture.

Social relations are an essential feature of any type of pedagogic discourse (Bernstein 1990: 63). In this regard these social relations are never arbitrary: Bourdieu and Passeron (1990: 5) emphasise the idea of the reproduction of social hierarchy in education through the concept of *pedagogic action*:

> [a] symbolic violence ... insofar as the power relations between the groups or classes making up a social formation are the basis of the arbitrary power which is the precondition for the establishment of a relation of pedagogic communication, i.e. for the imposition and inculcation of a cultural arbitrary [norm] by an arbitrary mode of imposition and inculcation (education).

Bernstein (1990: 169) adds the potential criticism that "these theories of cultural reproduction are morally repugnant because they are so deterministic" but, to concur with Bernstein, the scope of the present study will not include the assessment of the said criticisms, partly because Bernstein's theories must be used in context, in practice and with sufficient flexibility – elements that are brought to the fore by Bourdieu's more lenient, or strategic, approach. Moreover, this study does not intend to predetermine results and conclusions. I chose not to assume a priori that cultural reproduction elements were at work, but to consider this point as a potential aspect to identify in the data.

In addition to this, Bourdieu and to some extent Bernstein, albeit differently, define education as the reproduction of cultural norms heralded by the dominant classes (Bourdieu 1990: 7; Bernstein 1990: 13). Bernstein (1990: 165) admits that

> the discourses of education are analysed for their power to reproduce dominant/dominated relations external to the discourse but which penetrate the social relations, media of transmission, and evaluation of pedagogic discourse.

However, this traditional educational situation – or linguistic "market" as defined by Bourdieu (1977) – is modified with the presence of the interpreter. In the new triangular situation the lecturer is made to "share the power" of communication and of socio-educational domination with the interpreter, whose *habitus* is shaped directly around this triangular relationship. Indeed, in the light of Bourdieu and Bernstein's theories, the educational configuration is generally a situation defined as an unequal yet accepted distribution of power among the actors (lecturer-student). The origin of institutional, cultural and epistemological power in such a social space is the lecturer. This geometry is further complicated in the case of the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University by the introduction of linguistic differences. There are indeed Afrikaans-speaking students but there are also non-Afrikaans-speaking students. The hierarchy, therefore, includes two vertical lines of power: one central, or direct (Afrikaans-speaking lecturer to Afrikaans-speaking student), and the other lateral, or indirect (Afrikaans-speaking lecturer to interpreter, to non-Afrikaans-speaking student). Hypothetically, therefore, the interpreter channels part of the power back to the "minority" in the classroom, thereby (re-)establishing equilibrium between the agents of the interpreted lecture. The issue at hand is to know whether this rebalancing of inequalities is a reality or if it remains theoretical, a question that we will solve partly through data collection and analysis. Also, a problem appears as to the positioning of the interpreters in this process and their awareness of their role. In this context, this perceived position could be a determining factor in the way interpreters see their job and act in the interpreted lecture.

Another element mentioned by Bernstein (1990: 18) is that each "agent" in this socio-educational order has a different perception of the "coding orientations", which are essentially the perception of one's place in this artificial order. That

means, in our case, that the perception of quality is necessarily influenced by the location of the users in the social hierarchy created by the lecture.

In this respect these coding orientations are disturbed since the interpreter represents the visible part of the exclusion of the dominated class; Bourdieu (1990: 41) supplements this by asserting that

> a dominant pedagogic action ... inculcate[s] the fait accompli of the legitimacy of the dominant culture ... by inducing those excluded from the ranks of the legitimate addressees ... to internalise the legitimacy of their exclusion; by making those it relegates to second-order teaching recognize the inferiority of this teaching and its audience ....

Using Bourdieu's terms, we can argue that the interpreter carries out the physical translation (and transfer) of legitimacy to the minoritised students, making them equally legitimate addressees of the dominant discourse. That is only the objective function of the interpreter, however: it could be that in carrying out their tasks, interpreters do more, or less, in reality.

To reach a more practical stage in this methodological framework it is necessary in the first instance to define and formalise the concepts mentioned above and to connect them with the context in which the data was collected. This will help "set the stage" and provide these concepts with a local definition and application. Secondly, the defined concepts will serve as the architecture for the explanation of the data.

The section below indicates how, in practical terms, the methodology was defined, from the methodological perspective to data collection and interpretation, and applied.

1.3 Methodological framework

A qualitative framework was deemed appropriate for the objective of this study, since it allows for the in-depth study of the perceptions and opinions of the stakeholders in the interpreting process – users, interpreters and lecturers. This depth of analysis was necessary for a comprehensive and causal analysis of perceptions. The goal of defining the social space of the interpreted lecture along the lines of its relational pathways and dynamics could not be achieved through statistical means; not in terms of relevance of data, but in the sense that a purely quantitative analysis would have required the formulation of a precise set of research questions and, therefore, a strict selection of the type of data to be collected. Quantitative studies are traditionally deductive in nature and use existing theoretical elements as a point of departure. There is not enough research of a sociological nature in the field of classroom interpreting that supports the use of existing theories. Such an absence obviously prevents the formation of hypotheses or predictions and therefore implies that a reverse, inductive process be followed.

In addition to this, the aim of the study was to avoid producing what Hammersley (1992: 92) refers to as "statistical methods which can produce only probability statements". Creswell's (2003: 11) attitude confirms the appropriateness of this "people-oriented" perspective by indicating that qualitative studies are "collaborative" and are "completed 'with' others rather than 'on' or 'to' others". In addition, he argues that such a perspective focuses on "helping individuals free themselves from constraints found in ... language ... and in the relationships of power in educational settings" (2003: 11).

A qualitative strategy of enquiry is adopted, blending grounded theory and a phenomenological approach in order to delve deep into the perceptions and opinions of two of the main stakeholders in the interpreting process – users and interpreters – and to a lesser extent lecturers.

Data collection was carried out in several phases: the first phase involved questionnaires to determine the linguistic profile of the users, the second phase involved classroom observation and the third phase included interviews with 22 interpreters, 10 users and 6 lecturers. The data thus collected was analysed (Chapter 3) and interpreted (Chapter 4).

On the basis of the empirical observation and the interpretation of the data collected, recommendations will be made as to the kind of reflexes, at least on the interpreters' side, that should be rectified in order to ensure, if necessary, greater quality of interpreting through a better understanding of the dynamics at work in the interpreted lecture.

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

Although modern social research involves a dichotomy based on the quantitative-positivist/qualitative-interpretative axis, this division is now considered by many to be restrictive and artificial (Onwuegbuzie 2005; Payne 2004; Kelle 2006). In spite of this new trend, the qualitative approach was selected, but a quantitative-type questionnaire was used to obtain general profiles of the users of the interpreting services. In this perspective the methodology for this study uses what Creswell (2003) terms "mixed methods", although the qualitative aspect prevails, since a "concept [that] needs to be understood because little research has been done on it ... merits a qualitative approach" (Creswell 2003: 22). As the literature review has shown in the previous chapter, research into the sociology of interpreting has not yet been given the kind of attention it deserves.

The rationale behind the selection of a qualitative framework was to delve deep into the perceptions and opinions of three of the main stakeholders in the interpreting process – users, interpreters and lecturers. This depth of analysis was necessary for a comprehensive analysis of perceptions. Furthermore, the goal of defining the social space of the interpreted lecture along the lines of its relational pathways and dynamics could not be achieved through statistical means, not in terms of relevance of data but in the sense that a purely quantitative analysis would have required the formulation of a precise set of research questions and, therefore, a strict selection of the type of data to be collected. Quantitative studies are traditionally deductive in nature and use existing theoretical elements as a point of departure. I deliberately wanted to do the contrary and generate a theory out of the data gathered. The aim was to let meaning emerge from data gathered as openly as possible.

The next section examines the philosophy behind the methodological framework selected for this study and indicates what directions derive from this choice. Data collection strategies will then be described, along with methods of narrating the data and interpreting it.

2.2 Grounded theory and the phenomenological approach – possibilities and limitations

The methodologies used in the field of qualitative research vary widely and it seemed a rigid approach to have to select one particular method over another. Two methods in particular, grounded theory and phenomenological methodology, were appealing for diverse reasons and I chose to blend the most suitable elements of these two methods in order to fulfil the objectives of my particular study, aligning myself with the spirit of the new methodological pluralism in social sciences mentioned in the previous section.

It appeared from the start that in the perspective of generating a local theory out of the observations made, our study would take some elements common to grounded theory, a method originally described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and quoted in Marvasti (2004: 84) as a concept through which

> qualitative analysis could systematically generate concepts and theories based on observational data. This is what is known as an inductive or grounds-up approach to data analysis.

Charmaz (2006: 6) further defines grounded theory as a method that both explains and describes, and proves that qualitative studies, too, can produce theories. According to Marvasti (2004: 84), the concept of grounded theory has undergone changes since its discovery, but retains the following common elements:

> (a) Simultaneous data collection and analysis, (b) pursuit of emergent themes through early data analysis, (c) discovery of basic social processes within the data, (d) inductive construction of abstract categories that explain and synthesize these processes,

> (e) sampling to refine the categories through comparative processes, and (f) integration of categories into a theoretical framework that specifies causes, conditions, and consequences of the studied process. (Charmaz 2002, cited in Marvasti 2004: 85)

For the purposes of this study the data were not collected and analysed simultaneously as this was not deemed appropriate. In my opinion, if data is analysed from the beginning, which thereby helps the researcher choose particular directions whenever a new element appears, and consequently adapt modes of data collection accordingly, then the focus of the study is necessarily marred by permanent adaptation and could lead to a never-ending work in progress. This type of perspective could work very well for deeper analyses such as ethnographies. To a certain extent I did start analysing the data from the beginning informally, but I did not use it to shape the whole study in a perpetually evolving manner. When the first interviews were carried out, I listened to the data in order to have a basic orientation of the very general directions in which the testimonies were going. However, I waited for all the data to be transcribed in order to clarify and amend those orientations where necessary. Therefore, the simultaneity of data collection and analysis was limited to what I would call a reasonably superficial analysis that would help me determine the general course of the study. Early analysis helped give a general rather than particular idea of the topics that assumingly would resurface and helped me formulate sensitising concepts more precisely (see section 2.4).

Besides, if theory is generated as the data is collected and adapted accordingly, it follows that induction becomes deductive (theories necessarily emerge as the data is constantly analysed). I argue that owing to the perspective of this study a substantial amount of data must be collected before the concepts emerging from its analysis may influence the data collection process. This issue of simultaneity is also contested by Greckhamer and Koro-Ljungberg (2005: 738), whose critique of grounded theory indicates that researchers eventually may control the data rather than let it produce meaning.

In spite of the famed flexibility of grounded theory, it seemed appropriate to bring a buffering element to it in order to rectify what is perceived as the weaknesses of this methodology. Such flexibility is supported by the proponents of this method. For Charmaz (2006: 14), for instance, "mechanistic applications of methods yield mundane data and routine reports", a view also backed by Strauss (1987), cited in Wimpenny (2000: 1486), for whom grounded theory is more of a "*style* of doing qualitative analysis" (emphasis added).

Within grounded theory a distinction can be drawn between "objectivist" and "constructionist" (also called "constructivist") approaches. The objectivist perspective implies that the data in itself reveals facts and truth about reality; this data needs to be gathered through rigidly adhering to predetermined methods. In objectivist theories, researcher objectivity is paramount to both the validity and reliability of the data (Marvasti 2004: 85). In this light the objectivist perspective is reminiscent of the structuralist method of analysis in the sense that data is analysed in itself rather than in context. Reducing the importance of context in this study is a risky enterprise, since the data is explained partially by external factors (institutional environment, social climate, etc.). New literature highlights this positivist stance and its weaknesses (Seaman 2008) and argues for a constructivist approach.

The use of the more interpretive and context-based method of constructivist grounded theory, therefore, was preferred for this study. This perspective was described by Mills et al (2006: 6) as "ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist". Meaning does not already exist in the data collected, but is rather interpreted in one particular way by the researcher (and this interpretation is supported by sensitising concepts). Also, constructivist grounded theory allows for more leeway regarding the steps in conducting grounded theory research, owing to the elements of subjectivity and contextuality. The researcher thus reveals the social mechanisms at work within the data and treats the issue of

generalisation (see below) as a separate dilemma. In particular, I concur with Charmaz's view (2006: 132) that "those who take a constructivist approach aim to show the complexities of particular worlds, views and actions".

Such an approach, however, does not warrant the excessive use of subjective analysis. To that effect, the method needs to incorporate means to guard against such dangers. These safeguards were implemented, on the one hand, in the data-gathering stage (by enlisting the help of another researcher in the interviews and classroom observations and discussing with this person what was identified, interviewing several subjects at once to encourage conflicting views, coding interviews) and, on the other hand, by holding regular discussions with my supervisor as to the findings of the study.

Charmaz (2006: 132) also argues that the data as well as its analysis, are a social construction and are sensitive to how contextual factors influence the research process. It also allows for "subjective interpretations by the researchers and the respondents to be part of the analysis" (Marvasti 2004: 86). A constructivist use of grounded theory also allows for the use of sensitising concepts (see section 2.4). The constructivist perspective is also preferred by Denzin and Lincoln (2003: 270), for whom such a method allows the researcher to locate the methods of grounded theory in an interpreting, meaning-oriented framework without imposing too much rigidity on the interpretation of facts. To this effect Charmaz (2006: 130) indicates that "constructivists study *how* – and sometimes *why* – participants construct meanings and actions in specific situations" (original emphasis). In addition to this, constructivism emphasises the consideration of the context in which the study takes place.

However, it is necessary to highlight the fact that procedures in grounded theory may tend to "force data and analysis into preconceived categories" (Charmaz 2006: 8); the method also runs the risk of becoming more deductive than inductive owing to the lack of separation between data collection and analysis, as

was explained above. Thus, grounded theory also runs the risk of being deterministic if theories are made to emerge before the end of the data collection process, although its initial aim is precisely to avoid this sort of direction. It must be said at this stage that grounded theory is not entirely devoid of contradictions: I therefore agree with Charmaz (2006: 9), for whom it is possible to use basic grounded theory guidelines with modern methodological assumptions and approaches. Indeed, according to the same author (2006: 9), grounded theory should be seen as "a set of principles and practices, not as prescriptions and packages".

Nevertheless, grounded theory falls short of providing a comprehensive and appropriate method in many aspects: its main merit as "an approach" is really to use the data as the most important source of describing and explaining a certain reality; the constructivist sub-distinction adds to the value of this by considering the context of the data as important as the data itself. As a consequence of grounded theory being more an approach than a formal method, it may sometimes appear quite relativistic. As was seen above, simultaneous collection and analysis could result in a level of complexity that would prevent any consistent interpretation of the data. New directions and new facts would necessarily surface continuously, thereby making the study a perpetual work in progress with no central point of focus. Some aspects of the method (the use of data, for instance) also serve as guidelines rather than a solid framework for the analysis of data. No precise guideline is ever given for coding the data, i.e. how the researcher can label categories and to what extent pieces of data might belong to one particular group rather than another.

Because the present study will also aim at describing, in Creswell's words (2003: 15), the "essence of human experiences concerning a phenomenon, as described by participants in a study", a perspective termed *phenomenological research* will supplement my overall approach to overcome the shortcomings of grounded research methodology, or will at the very least add more precision to

the way meaning is to emerge from the data and how it is to be interpreted. Phenomenological methods do not require hypotheses (Jurema 2006: 1) and are, therefore, an ideal supplement for a framework such as grounded theory, which offers hardly any assumption prior to data collection.

The context being taken on board by the constructivist mode of grounded theory, phenomenological research aims at analysing the internal structures of the data and extracting meaning from them rather than proving a point (Jurema 2006: 1). For the same author, phenomenological research takes as a point of departure experience and the unique reality of individual perception; in this light "scientific truth" is reflected by the manifestation of variety but also the concurrence of viewpoints from interviewed subjects (Jurema 2006: 1).

For Groenewald (2004: 11) the data must be handled with extreme caution. Meaning must be allowed to emerge almost on its own, and for that purpose the narration of data (see Chapter 3) is an indispensable step towards interpretation.

The phenomenological approach has mostly been used in nursing and health research (Dahlberg 2006; Lopez 2004; Sadala 2002) because it focuses on individuals who are partially defined contextually as actors and products of a unique context. Human perception, therefore, is tantamount to the success of the phenomenological angle (Sadala 2002: 282). This perspective reinforced my stance against the potentially deterministic outcomes of a study of this nature. Indeed, in phenomenology truth is relative (Sadala 2002: 282) owing to its subjective nature. This relativity, however, should not be seen as paradoxical or negative in relation to establishing scientific truth, but it does demand a more liberal approach to it in the sense that quantity of similar viewpoints is important in a phenomenological perspective, but it is not a corollary to validity.

On a purely philosophical plane Husserl, the father of modern phenomenology, can be opposed by way of explanation to Descartes' strong focus on the "object"

and rejection of subjective experience. Husserl, on the other hand, professes that the point of departure of all science is precisely the subject, i.e. personal experience and perception. As a method in social research, phenomenology uses the process of reduction, i.e. the categorisation, description and interpretation of the object studied. This approach is used in the next chapter, where the phenomena studied – users' and interpreters' perceptions of self and other – are *organised* in order to reduce the mass of observable phenomena to a constructed description of the object studied. This reduction, for the purposes of this study, takes the form of a narrative. Reduction implies the arrangement of data into themes, the identification of significant topics in the data (units of significance) and then their interpretation (Sadala 2002: 289-290).

The phenomenological aspect of the method of enquiry gives credit to the perception offered by the interviewees and provides a good counterpart to grounded theory by validating the subjectivity of the testimony. The process of reduction further enables the researcher to "make sense" of the data and in itself represents a first step towards meaningful interpretation, since reduction categorises the phenomena into a workable construction. In many ways, reduction paves the way for interpretation by providing a framework of analysis out of the mass of data collected. This reduction, therefore, gives structure to the data, a construction which grounded theory generally overlooks in terms of precision. However, in its own way, the phenomenological approach also falls short in terms of ambition, since it prefers description to interpretation (Martins 1992, cited in Sadala 2002: 289). The rationale behind the description of a mere collection of testimonies, however deep this description is, should go further and conceptualise the phenomenon rather than describe it. In this study, therefore, it was decided to go beyond the description of the data (see Chapter 3) and to offer a systematisation and an interpretation of it. In this respect grounded theory gives direction by implying that all data should be described *and* interpreted, giving birth to a theory.

This particular methodological "cocktail" has been used recently in social research (Annells 2006; Wirripenny and Gass 2000) but has also been criticised by Baker (1992) as potentially incompatible. Baker (1992: 1355) points out that the two methodologies do share common elements, such as the complexity of human experience, the subject's frame of reference as point of departure and the use of flexibility in the way data is collected. However, she points out that

> [p]henomenology ... is designed to describe psychological realities by uncovering the essential meaning of lived experience; in contrast, grounded theory explains social psychological realities by identifying processes at work in the situation being investigated. (Baker 1992: 1357)

On the one hand, phenomenology aims at revealing psychological constructs based on the individual and collective experience of reality. Grounded theory, however, focuses more on the social constructs and how the interviewees see themselves within a social space. The two approaches combined for the description and interpretation of data complement each other to a large extent. Phenomenology can help us understand how – as will be illustrated in the chapter dealing with the interpretation of the data – and along what lines of thinking and perception social constructs are projected and used. In many ways the phenomenological angle determines how the perception of a social position will be constructed.

I argue that the psychological realities thus described will contribute to the construction of a "social reality"; I also argue that both grounded theory as a social inquiry method and phenomenology as a strategy of interpretation are not contradictory but complementary.

Grounded theory, therefore, is used as a set of guidelines for the methodology, relying on the collection of data to generate more precise sensitising concepts that will help give the study a direction. It will also justify the generation of theories anchored in the particular context of the study and out of the data. The phenomenological approach complements grounded theory in terms of angle of

approach: what is interpreted in the data, eventually, is the perception of reality according to the interviewees and also the understanding that the testimonies are complex and need to be analysed carefully to reveal the dynamics at work.

2.3 Generalisation and localisation

> In the case of most ethnographic studies, however, there is no widespread intrinsic interest in the particular case(s) studied. Yet ethnographers publish their work in national and international journals.... In doing so, they are claiming that their work has general relevance beyond the local circumstances in which it was produced. The question is, though, on what basis can this claim to general relevance be justified. (Hammersley 1992: 86)

This quote illustrates that the validity of the generalisation of the findings in any qualitative study is a prominent consideration.

Indeed, Hammersley adds that "in general, ethnographers are not very effective in establishing the typicality of what they report". The main issue with the qualitative perspective is that, in spite – or because – of its inherent depth of analysis (given the fact that we deal with a limited environment – the university – and social group – the users of interpreting services), we face the difficulty of not being able to scale out the findings and the potential theories that may derive from them. To that effect Flowerdew's (2002: 239) opinion is that ethnographers cannot claim their findings can be applied indiscriminately to other contexts and that "it is very important that as much detail about the situation as possible is provided in the ethnographic account so that others have a basis for comparison with other situations". However, it is important to note that Flowerdew (2002: 251) mentions the idea of "the boundaries of reasonable generalization" (McGrath & Brinberg 1983, cited in Miles & Huberman 1994: 279). The difficulty of generalisation when conducting qualitative research is also highlighted by Churton (2000: 200), for whom qualitative data is valid (locally) but not extremely reliable (i.e. not generalisable). According to the same author, we cannot assume

that interviews will be highly representative, and caution should be exercised when attempting to generalise the findings.

To concur with that statement, Goldblatt (2000: 53) states that such a view contrasts with objectivist or positivist claims that data must be used to establish general laws. Indeed, social research can aim at revealing connections, but it should also recognise the "multiplicity of perception at different times and in different places".

The question of generalisability in our case needs to be addressed on two levels: generalisation of individual perceptions within the campus, and generalisation of the study's findings within other environments where interpreting is used (i.e. other higher education institutions using interpreting services).

In terms of the generalisation of individual perceptions, a qualitative study does not need a critical quantity of testimonies, since the aim of such a study is not to prove a point but to allow meaning to come from a pool of data, as was explained in the previous section. Instead of generalisation, however, the concept of data saturation is preferred (see 2.7). The identification of data saturation allows us to see that a perception is shared rather than generalised. A shared perception does not mean it is everybody's perception in a given group of people, but it certainly indicates that there is something to it worth exploring. As such, this study's objective is to serve as a future point of departure for testing the validity of the theory it will generate.

As to the generalisability of the study outside the walls of this campus, the problem is more complex. This study is strongly grounded in a particular context and takes this context into account for both observation and interpretation. It is quite predictable that the models devised in the last chapter of this study will be applied with substantial modifications to other, socially different environments. As was highlighted in the previous section, the reason an objectivist methodology

was not selected is precisely because it would not be fair to the findings: the lack of generalisability, then, should rather be seen as high localisation.

2.4 Sensitising concepts

It would be dishonest to suggest that data collection is the first basic step in the generation of a theory, at least in this study. For the purposes of giving a direction to the study, I use sensitising concepts (Blumer 1954: 259; Bowen 2006: 3) as background ideas that help bracket a research issue. For Marvasti (2004: 86) these concepts are instruments that help in the analysis of data. Bowen (2006: 3) further adds that sensitising concepts "offer ways of seeing, organising and understanding experience"; they also provide points of departure for analysis.

Sensitising concepts must be seen as what Charmaz (2006: 16) terms a "research interest" before research questions are even formulated. They provide guidelines for research, within which "social phenomena are investigated with minimal a priori expectations to develop explanations of these phenomena" (Bowen 2006: 3). Sensitising concepts, however, are neither hypotheses nor preconceived ideas in the sense that they only help bracket an area of focus. They do not produce hypotheses nor propose a statement to be confirmed or invalidated. They can rather be understood as a compass to the study, in the sense that they indicate a general direction without establishing what will be found on the way.

In this regard I had the topic of power and social relations in classroom interpreting in mind from the beginning, as an empirical and theory-generating study supported by concepts and theories devised by Foucault (1980, 1988, 1990), Bourdieu (1977, 1982, 1990, 1992) and Bernstein (1990). From the start I was interested in revealing and identifying the implicit social relations between user and interpreter and the perceptions the two parties have of their relations.

I follow Bowen's (2006: 3) advice that one "might use sensitising concepts simply to lay the foundations for the analysis of research data". I argue that a sociological study naturally uses sensitising concepts, since such a study deals with social relationships within a given environment. This view is corroborated by Gilgun (2002), cited in Bowen (2006: 3): "Research usually begins with such concepts, whether researchers state this or not and whether they are aware of them or not." Nevertheless, the use of sensitising concepts is not synonymous with an a priori objective (which would be the basis for a quantitative study, where the data aims at answering very precise questions) but provides a perspective that, in my view, allows for the study to be more focused and transparent about the researcher's intentions. In more ways than one, sensitising concepts help resolve the paradox of grounded theory – simultaneous collection of data and interpretation – by "bracketing" what is expected to be present in the data.

2.5 Data collection: Description

Access to data, particularly in qualitative studies, has been a concern and an inevitable issue (Morrill 1999; Marvasti 2004; Hesse-Biber 2006) in social research. In our case, for instance, it was necessary to inform the Directorate of Language Affairs (DLA) of this research, and to take into account the fact that they also have in their possession data from their own research that could be essential to this study. At the very beginning, the DLA did not allow easy access to the data described in the next chapter and it was necessary to inform them at length about my research agenda, which I considered a legitimate request. At that time the interpreting services were then still in the testing phase and, naturally, the interested parties did not want to jeopardise what was – and what still is – a successful endeavour.

I was requested, however, to interview only those students who had not been interviewed already by the DLA as part of the continuous evaluation of the programme, as it was feared that some students had been "over-surveyed". Indeed, the DLA conducts very frequent focus groups and small-scale studies in order to test the quality of the interpreting services provided, as well as the students' satisfaction with it. I was also helped by an "insider" at the DLA (with the knowledge and consent of the latter) to conduct the study. This person acted as "gatekeeper" or "informant" for the collection of data.

The selection of interviewees only applied to the users, so all the interpreters working at the time of data collection – 22 in total – were interviewed. The DLA suggested the names of three users and I complemented this group with four other users who attended my own classes and three more whom I contacted through other colleagues. Although my lectures are not interpreted, since I already use English as the medium of instruction, I approached my students and asked them whether they used the interpreting services and whether they would agree to give an interview about it. I indicated to them that the research would focus mainly on what they thought about the service. I told the interpreters that I was interested in how they envisaged their jobs and what problems they sometimes encountered.

Later, however, it was suggested that I also interview a group of lecturers as a means of triangulating the data already obtained, or at the very least to get a fresh perspective on the problems that had already been identified. To this effect I interviewed six lecturers in a broad range of faculties (Engineering, Nursing, Theology, Law, Humanities).

2.6 Data saturation, reliability and validity

In the light of the reliability issue discussed in section 2.4, it was necessary to devise a means of ensuring that the perceptions identified have at least some

degree of multiple manifestations in the data. Data saturation was used, therefore, in order to verify that perceptions were not intrinsically unique but were held by at least one or two other individuals.

Data saturation is a complex notion in this qualitative study, since I chose to focus on individual experience rather than collective or campus-wide attitudes. In this case data saturation occurred when the coding revealed there were no more new themes in the data. An example is the interpreters' attitudes, which are bound to either the proxy or mediator model (see Chapter 4), or the users, who are either very positive (passive model) or very critical (active model) (also see Chapter 4). Where necessary, I indicated in the relevant sections how the data was saturated for each category of attitude and opinion that was identified. When categories or phenomena were not supported by enough data – i.e. at least one other person confirming the phenomenon in question, the data was left out (e.g. only one user complained about the quality of English of the interpreters or their accents).

2.7 Field work design

2.7.1 Overview

In compliance with the accepted norms of qualitative studies, most of the data collection was carried out through interviews and classroom observation.

The first phase of the study was unobtrusive; it involved pre-study questionnaires that were distributed among the users of the service in order to define a general profile of the users (language, experience of interpreting services, etc.). It also involved listening to recordings of the interpreters' performances. This enabled me to focus on the linguistic aspect of the performances in order to identify potentially typical mistakes and inappropriate interpreting habits and to get a feel of the interpreters' overall performances. These recordings were made available

on a restricted drive on the university network and were carried out by the DLA as part of their continuous assessment of the interpreters' performances. But beyond the simple analysis this was an opportunity to gauge the actual difficulty of the task for the interpreters themselves. In many of the recordings it can safely be affirmed that the interpreters really are performing well in terms of rendition of the source speech, voice quality and lag. The equipment does not make it easy for them either: instead of a soundproof booth and a stereo headset with a microphone, the interpreters use a hand-held microphone with no headset; they are sitting in the lecture room itself. The equipment (i.e. the microphone and twenty headsets) is portable and is carried from site to site by the assistant interpreters. Most lecturers do use a microphone but some do not, which makes it very difficult for the interpreter to hear the source speech. The acoustics of the lecture room may also play an important role in the degree of comfort of the interpreting situation.

The third part of the unobtrusive phase involved classroom observation, which enabled me to see the interpreted lecture set-up and allowed me to visualise the situations. I attended about ten lectures with the Directorate of Language Affairs' research assistant, who is also an experienced interpreter. This was very useful in the sense that we were able to compare our views and analyses of what we were studying. As she works at the DLA itself, the research assistant was also able to provide me with valuable information as to how the service actually worked and how the DLA evaluated the interpreters' performances and the users' satisfaction. The DLA's assistant also attended some of the interviews.

The obtrusive phase involved interviewing the users, the interpreters and the lecturers. All interviewees were duly informed of the purpose of the study and signed forms indicating that their opinions would be quoted under another name and that they would be entitled to review the dissertation and request their testimony to be withdrawn if deemed inappropriate.

For these interviews I deliberately chose to adopt a free-flowing, open-ended type of conversation. Owing to the qualitative nature of the study, it was preferable to have the interviewees speaking as freely as possible. All these interviews were recorded in my office or in a small classroom with clusters of individuals (two to eight people), except for the lecturers, who were interviewed individually in their own offices. To create an environment conducive to openness, I explained at the beginning of all interviews that I did not work at the university's Directorate of Language Affairs and in that sense that my research was to a large extent "independent". I also explained that I am an interpreter myself, albeit in another context.

To ensure a valid translation of the data to interpretation the interviews were transcribed with the *Praat* software; the transcriptions were converted to Microsoft Word documents to add punctuation and make the transcriptions more presentable and readable, and they were then copied onto Microsoft Excel worksheets (one worksheet per interview) in order to facilitate referencing at a later stage. The transcriptions were subsequently analysed and categories were formulated in order to organise the data and start the process of description and, later, interpretation. In all, there were 75 pages of transcriptions (27 000 words) of users' and interpreters' interviews. The interviews with three of the users were not transcribed and neither were the interviews with the lecturers.

Triangulation and the validation of data are fleeting notions in qualitative studies. The transcribed interviews provided meaning that was difficult to verify, since there was no benchmark to verify it against. Indeed, in an in-depth qualitative study, when does a recurrent theme become "valid"? My strategy was that unless a particular attitude was highly exceptional everything the interviewees said was considered as part of the bundle of opinions and ideas relevant to the topic of the study. Wherever necessary, however, it is mentioned whether a particular attitude was exceptional or more widely held.

2.7.2 Pre-study questionnaire

Pre-study questionnaires were distributed to the users in order to determine their profile (see questionnaire on the next page). The profile contained information such as home language and previous experience of interpreting, as well as suggestions on improving the service. This questionnaire was largely inspired by Moser's (1995) questionnaire devised for conference delegates and their perception of the quality of interpreting; however, it had to be adapted to the current situation. Moser's (1995) study focused on users who were used to interpreting services in international settings. In our situation it was important to know what the users' home language was (in order to determine whether the linguistic profile of the user was uniform). I also wanted to test what they considered the most important aspects of quality in interpreting.

Dear student,

An interpreter is going to translate the lecture for you, for this module, for the rest of the year.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to learn about your expectations regarding the interpreting services you will be provided with this year. Your answers are strictly confidential and anonymous. Please fill this form at the end of your first lecture. Thank you!

1. Module Code (i.e. CHEM 111, WISK 211, etc.): _____

2. What is your home language? _____

3. Apart from today, have you ever listened to an interpreter before? If yes, what was the occasion? _____

4. What is, in your opinion, the 4 most important aspects in the quality of interpreting? Rate your answers from 1 (the most important) to 4 (the least important):

   1:_____

   2:_____

   3:_____

   4:_____

5. What do you think is the most difficult for an interpreter?

2.7.3 Listening to recordings without attending lectures

Twenty-two interpreters were recorded in the first semester of 2006 in a range of lectures. These recordings were made available in MP3 format and all last from a few minutes to 45 minutes (a full lecture). The recording includes the voices of both the lecturer and the interpreter on separate channels. I deliberately chose to listen to the recordings without attending the lectures in order to focus on the quality of interpreting (language, accent, accuracy, lagging, backtracking, etc.). The purpose of this was to determine whether the message delivered by the lecturer was transmitted adequately to the users, without examining the physical layout of the room and the way the users and the other students chose to sit in the lecture room. In my opinion, an inappropriately or insufficiently transmitted message can lead to frustration on the part of the users, on the one hand, and failure to succeed in the attended courses, on the other. The latter being an important factor, especially since education is very much perceived in South Africa – and anywhere else – as the most obvious route to upward social and professional mobility.

2.7.4 Classroom observation

The lectures were observed for several reasons. It is undeniable that there is a meaningful spatial dimension to the university lecture and I wanted to see whether there were physical patterns that could either validate or invalidate the thesis that the social space of the lecture is coherent.

The DLA's research assistant and I decided to sit at the back of the lecture room to have a vantage point of the patterns in sitting, as well as of the eye contact between the lecturers and the students and users. We chose to wear headphones so that we could also listen to the interpreting performances, as the

classes we were observing were scheduled for interpreter recording for later assessment by the DLA.

The video-recording of the users was suggested, but this would have been extremely difficult for institutional reasons – very few lecturers would have agreed to it. In addition to this, I chose to be consistent with the qualitative perspective of the study and Darbyshire's statement (1990: 757) that any type of method for which "participant observation is no more than research-based spying, designed to 'catch people out' and hold their shortcomings and deficiencies up for all the world to see" was not appropriate in our case. The intrusiveness of the process would have affected the observation process adversely or unduly; the idea was to minimise our presence and to be as inconspicuous as possible.

2.7.5 Interviews with the interpreters

Twenty-two interpreters were interviewed. Using Churton's (2000: 200-201) taxonomy of interview techniques it seemed appropriate to choose a semi-structured format, as this is less formal and favours a more conversation-like interview. Also, as reliability is an issue in qualitative research, semi-structured interviews "tend to produce more valid data ... as there is scope for reflection, probing and clarification of ambiguity". For this type of interview, in compliance with Churton's (2000: 200-201) recommendations, I made a list of keywords I anticipated would be instrumental in giving proper direction to the interviews. These keywords were: role, responsibility to the users and to the institution, relationships with the lecturers and the users, professional quality of interpreting, difficult situations, self-perception and loyalty. Those keywords were cued in the form of questions during the interviews whenever I felt the conversation about the previous topic was waning or when I wanted to revive the dialogue after a topic seemingly had been exhausted (questions such as "How do you perceive your role as an interpreter?", "To whom do feel the most loyal?", "What do you think defines a 'good' interpreter?", to mention a few). In line with the methodological

approach described earlier I only gave necessary direction to the interviews, without influencing their outcome.

Several recorded interviews were conducted with all the interpreters. The interviews were semi-structured in that the observer and I facilitated the conversation rather than asking detailed questions and waiting for answers from the interpreters. The interviews were driven towards topics such as interpreter loyalty, problematic situations, role perception and perception of the users.

2.7.6 Interviews with the users

Ten users were interviewed between 2006 and 2008. The interviews were all conducted in my office, which is relatively small, and no more than three users were interviewed at a time in order to facilitate an atmosphere conducive to obtaining the maximum feedback from them. The users and I sat at a round table. The questions were purposely open-ended and much of the conversation was free flowing so that the users could feel comfortable expressing themselves fully. In order to optimise feedback I also started the interview by indicating that my research was independent from the Directorate of Language Affairs. In accordance with Churton's rules regarding semi-structured interviews, a list of points was formulated for discussion and included the following for integration in the interviews:

- Your experience
- The positive aspects of interpreting
- Any experience of frustration or irritation
- Feelings of inclusion/exclusion
- The importance of feeling part of the lecture
- Feeling more equal
- Possible improvements
- Do you feel close to interpreters/lecturers/Afrikaans-speaking students/fellow users?

The DLA felt that the users had been "over-surveyed" and had shown reluctance to additional research being conducted on their perception of the interpreting services. It was likely, for instance, that users would perceive the interviews as yet another attempt to use their input to improve the quality of interpreting. For this reason it was decided later to interview only those users who have not participated in a focus group yet, although it must be noted that the so-called over-surveyed users have only been interviewed by the DLA and not by an independent researcher. This situation made it very difficult to interview large numbers of students because, technically, they were all "research subjects" already. The DLA legitimately indicated to me that "over-surveying" the students could lead to a general feeling of annoyance and therefore mar the research process. All users interviewed were consequently relatively new to the surveying process.

2.8 Coding

Coding is the process through which information in the transcription is assigned keywords that can help mesh a structure of meaning throughout the web of data. It is very much a part of the reduction process advocated by the phenomenological approach: it is about "making sense" of the sea of data and about extracting categories of meaning that will later be organised into a proper narrative, which will in turn be interpreted. The practical aim of coding is to organise, synthesise and describe the data in order to grasp the general tendencies and directions of what is said (Rossman & Rallis 1998, cited in Creswell 2003: 191; Myrick 2006: 549, 557).

Possible codes are indicated in the literature review (Bogdan & Biklen 1992, cited in Creswell 2003): setting and context, perspectives held by subjects, subjects' ways of thinking about people and objects, process codes, activity codes, strategy codes, relationship and social structure codes, pre-assigned coding

schemes. However, by nature the coding in a constructivist grounded theory and phenomenological study will be highly contextual and unique.

As such, data coding is inherently linked to qualitative, grounded theory and objectivist studies (Corbin & Strauss 1990; Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg 2005) and serves to reveal dimensions of subjective reality and to connect and integrate elements of meaning together (Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg 2005: 742). These authors identify three sorts of coding that may be used: open coding ("to identify concepts and discover their dimensions"), axial coding ("to relate categories to their sub-categories") and selective coding ("to integrate and refine those discovered categories' selective coding").

All three forms of coding are used inherently in this study, since they do not form separate methodologies but rather steps in data description. In open coding, elements are compared to identify similarities and repetition (Corbin & Strauss 1990: 12). They are also given conceptual labels. In this way, "conceptually similar events/actions/interactions are grouped together to form categories and sub-categories". Charmaz (cited in Marvasti 2004: 87) uses another classification and states that coding is selective, or focused, when "the researcher adopts frequently reappearing initial codes in sorting and synthesizing large amounts of data. Focused codes are more abstract, general and, simultaneously, more incisive than the initial codes". Charmaz is more flexible than the discoverers of grounded theory themselves and indicates, also in Marvasti (2004: 87), that coding must remain "empirically sensitive and flexible".

Table 2 – Example of coding

so do we have a study guide or whatever? And at
551 the
552 beginning she said no, you know, and then she gave
553 me like photostats from her computer, which is very
kind of her. She did give me a study guide thingy
554 and
555 then she leaves things for them again at Xerox with
556 extra explanations what could be in the exams, warra
557 warra. Then she forces us to come to class but the

Discrimination, fact-

558 whole class and the transparencies, everything's in based
559 Afrikaans. So I'm sitting there listening to this lady
560 who's speaking three times as fast and I have to
561 keep up with what she's saying, and I can't do that.
They get to copy it down so she'll speak, speak,
562 speak, Us vs Them
keep quiet, allow them to copy it down. Now while
563 she's
564 speaking the interpreter is speaking, so when she
starts the interpreter starts. I've only written down
565 two Lag, difference in speed
566 sentences; they get to write down the whole slide!
567
568

<Grace> And then... and that's their study notes,
569 that's
570 it. That's all they study for the exams.
571 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
572 <Grace> Me, I have to go and sit down for like ten
573 hours and go study what was said in class.
574 **<Olivier> Okay.**
<Grace> That's a big disadvantage. They get spoon-
575 fed
576 everything in the school actually. Very subjective critique
577 <unintel> They really get spoon-fed.
578 **<Olivier> Yes.**
<Grace> And then all the time now it... it's going to
579 be
a stereotypical thing that English students are just
580 not
as intelligent, but that's not even! It's so even
581 obvious
that why they're not passing that well and, like with
582 my
583 Economics class, we were experiments: they were

changing the curriculum, which apparently they do
584 every
I don't know how many years. Now they did it with
585 us... They
586 didn't give us study guides, one, and they kept
making us... like what the honour students are
587 doing
588 this year, we did it in our first year.

2.8.1 Coding method

As can be seen above, coding is carried through the attribution of a "flag" for elements of meaning that are identified. All coding "flags" are kept to a minimum in order not to interpret what is being said too much, since the aim at this stage is only to draw the outline of a framework for the narrative of the data.

2.8.2 Explanation of the flags

2.8.2.1 Discrimination, fact-based

The first flag in this instance is based on the whole statement rather than just a few words. The student is describing a situation where she feels that she is being discriminated against in terms of resources on the one hand and teaching on the other. This flag is therefore attributed based on as objective an impression as possible.

2.8.2.2 Us vs Them

This flag was a common recurrence in the transcripts for reasons that are not all subjective. The barrier between the users of the services and the Afrikaans-speaking students is not only linguistic, it is also cultural and social in many ways. It must be mentioned, however, that I did steer the conversation towards this comparison in order to have an idea of how the users perceived their own positions in relation to the other students.

2.8.3.3 Lag, difference in speed

A common flag was also that of the time difference and lag time, i.e. the time difference between the source speech and its interpretation. This particular flag is certainly interesting: listening to the interpreters' performance recordings revealed that they were all doing very well in the sense that the lag time was highly comparable to what is experienced in more traditional forms of interpreting such as simultaneous interpreting. What is interesting here is that what is a normal and quite inevitable feature of interpreting is perceived as a negative and discriminatory practice.

2.8.3.4 Very subjective critique

This flag is an example of how the researcher must take care and distinguish between a clearly emotional statement and a relatively rational affirmation. In this instance boundaries are imposed upon the phenomenological approach: perceptions identified must be taken into consideration, but it is essential to indicate when statements are emotional and when they are rational. Consequently, if this particular flag is included and built into the narrative of the next chapter, careful indication must be made regarding its subjectivity.

2.9 Conclusion

As a starting point for this chapter we saw that adopting a single methodological stance would be too rigid for what I would consider a socially sensitive study. Grounded theory was selected as a methodological basis, to be complemented by a phenomenological direction. This blend allows the researcher to adopt clear guidelines regarding data collection, narrative and interpretation. Grounded theory caters for the definition of a set of sensitising concepts, which are filters through which the data can be read. Instead of being research questions or hypotheses, those concepts act as direction and reading strategy rather than strict perspective. The sensitising concepts for this study were mainly sociological in nature and their intentionality was to make social perceptions and relations emerge from the data. One of the main elements of grounded theory,

simultaneous collection and analysis, was argued against, however, since it is perceived that such a method could potentially lead to an infinite field of enquiry and conclusions. Rather, the data was collected first and continuity in the methods of data collection was kept.

The phenomenological approach orients the study towards perception and its reality, with the principle that everything that is said should somehow be taken into consideration and should be considered valid, if not reliable. Of course, not everything that is said should be considered true objectively, but it must be remembered that such an angle of analysis is not meant to establish universal truth; the aim is rather to use those perceptions to weave a story or narrative that could serve as a basis for interpretation. The issue of generalisability was discussed on two levels. The first one is the generalisability of the findings at the level of the campus. In other words, if several users seem to judge the interpreting services along the same line of analysis, does this mean that these perceptions are true for a proportional number of other users on the campus? The conclusion is that what is true for some users can be considered true on a larger scale. What is identified in this study among a small number of users, interpreters and lecturers must surely be used as a basis for a wider enquiry; what is proposed in the conclusion will hopefully be subjected to testing in the future. The second level of the issue of generalisability is that of other environments. Can the method, narrative, interpretation and conclusion to this study be applied to other contexts outside this campus? I propose that this study is highly contextualised and that the environment concerned is sensitive and unique, not only within South Africa but also in the rest of the world. As such, attempts to export the study should be considered with caution and should certainly include modifications to adapt its elements to other situations.

The data collection was split into two distinct phases: unobtrusive (pre-study questionnaire, classroom observation, listening to recordings of interpreters' performances) and obtrusive (interviews with 22 interpreters, 10 users and 6

lecturers). In this process, an assistant working at the Directorate of Language Affairs attended the classroom observation sessions as well as several interviews with the users and the interpreters. We discussed the results of our observations regularly as a healthy checks-and-balances mechanism for the interpretation to come.

As a first step towards writing the narrative of these data, coding was carried out on the transcriptions by flagging passages and giving them conceptual labels that would serve as the nodes and framework behind the narrative. The next chapter is the product of all these elements. When referencing the interviews in the next chapter, the name of the person or group interviewed is given and then the line reference corresponding to the Microsoft Excel worksheet in which the interviews were transcribed (this document is appended to the thesis). In the citations, the questions asked by the interviewer are in bold. The interviews with the lecturers, 3 of the users' interviews and 10 of the interpreters' were not transcribed, so these are referenced using the lecturer's or the user's modified name and the time point in the recording. The names of all the interviewees have been changed for the sake of anonymity.

3. Narrative

3.1 Introduction: From coding to narrative

After the coding of the transcriptions was carried out, the corpus of transcriptions appeared as a compendium of elements that were at the very least abstract. There were numerous pages with various lines flagged with very different concepts and ideas. The first impression when studying the final document of transcriptions was one of diversity and imbalances: it was clear that the first task would be to organise the coded data. Individual testimonies were sometimes contradictory and even within the same group tended towards very different directions. It was necessary, using a seemingly unorganised list of items identified in the data, not only to synthesise but also to *make sense* of everything. A relatively classic method was adopted in order to do this: it consists of weaving, almost literally, a narrative out of these elements. This "narrative" is not merely a description of what was flagged in the data: it is more of a story with developments and unexpected twists: in many ways, it constitutes the beginning of the data interpretation process. The categorisation of data was carried out in terms of what arose from and what was coded in the data, but it was also an important first step in providing the backbone for a sea of elements.

In the first phase of the weaving of this story elements were grouped together to identify nodes in the narrative. These nodes, in turn, were contrasted against other nodes in the same group. For instance, as we will see below, some of the users believed that the interpreting services were inappropriate on a social level, whereas others thought that they had produced positive results in their studies. These different categories of perceptions and ideas were contrasted in order to identify possible relations and causes that could explain the disparities. Each categorisation and its description developed into the narrative below; this narrative, in turn, had to be interpreted in order to generate a theory.

3.2 Narrative

Thus, the following narrative is based on the coding of the data gathered through the interviews with interpreters, lecturers and users, the classroom observations and the recordings of the interpreters' performances. The most prevalent topics are identified and categorised in terms of the types of perceptions and opinions identified from the data using phenomenological reduction, as explained in the previous chapter. These categories will be analysed and will contribute to the development of explanations in the next chapter.

The objective of the present chapter is to "reduce" and define the categories of perceptions, feelings and impressions that emerged from the coding of the transcriptions. This process will facilitate the interpretation of the content of the transcriptions at a later stage. However, part of the aim of this chapter is also to organise the data within meaningful categories. The definition of the categories does not constitute interpretation of the data but allows for the structuring of subsequent analysis and theorisation. Because the categories are defined on the basis of the data itself the transcriptions of the interviews will be quoted extensively. The interviews with the lecturers were used to support, triangulate or shed more light on the processes already identified in the interviews with the interpreters and the users.

The data gathered for a qualitative study is not processed for statistical purposes and, apart from the first section discussing the data obtained through the pre-study questionnaire, the discussion of the data takes the form of a narrative describing the ideas and elements that manifested themselves through the interviewees' discourse.

Regarding the method of organisation for the presentation of the data obtained, a dialectical model has been chosen, in terms of which categories are deconstructed into conflictual elements rather than linear notions. In tensions and

the contrasting of concepts, the data in this particular study yields the most interesting results and facts. This type of conceptualisation method also makes it easy to raise issues that may not appear using a linear approach.

The next section summarises the results yielded from the pre-study questionnaire regarding the users' profiles, in order to provide a background that could help understand their perceptions and opinions better. The narrative of the data relating to the two most important groups, users and interpreters, is then presented. The interviews with the lecturers were used more as a buffering and moderating element to contrast the perceptions identified in the interpreters and users. In light of the tensions identified in the data the narrative was organised in a way that would highlight these tensions, to the point where this dialectic would be the backbone of the interpretation to come.

3.2 Profile of the users

The pre-study questionnaire began by determining whether the user had used interpreting services previously. The survey by the AIIC on user expectations (Moser 1995) showed that expectations were slightly different among "interpretation old-timers" and "newcomers". Results were also different according to gender. The results indicated that for an overwhelming majority of users English is neither a first nor even a second language.

The users were then asked to name four aspects of interpreting that are important in their opinion. After careful consideration with the head of the interpreting services and the supervisor of this study, it was decided that the users themselves should be allowed to define the four most important aspects of interpreting. The four original criteria indicated in the AIIC survey (content, synchronicity, rhetorical skills and voice) were thought to be too technical for our users (in comparison with the more educated average conference participant common to AIIC clientele).

The interpreters' assistants were requested to distribute a total of 400 questionnaires to the students who collected headphones at the beginning of lectures between 13 and 20 February 2006.

Of the 400 questionnaires, 67 were returned. Although this is a poor rate of return (16 per cent), it should be noted that the number of users in all classes was unknown when the questionnaires were distributed. Therefore, it could be suggested that the number of completed questionnaires received might very well reflect the majority of users. The low rate of return could also be explained by the fact that the questionnaires were distributed within the first two weeks of the academic year by the interpreters or their assistants, who were also very busy organising headsets and explaining how the system works to the users. The questionnaire was not, quite legitimately, their first priority.

Table 1: Home language of users

Home language	Number of students	% of total*
Setswana	38	56,7
Sesotho	8	12
IsiZulu	6	9
IsiXhosa	5	7,4
Sesotho sa Lebowa	4	6
English	3	4,4
Tshivenda	2	3
Afrikaans	1	1,5
Total	67	100

* Percentages are rounded off to the nearest decimal

Table 2: Proportion of students having already benefited from interpreting services

	Number of students	**% of total**
Used interpreting services previously*	52	77
Never used interpreting services before	15	23

*The students' experience of interpreting is limited to the NWU's interpreting services. All 52 students had already been exposed to interpreting in the course of their studies the previous year or the year before that. None of the students mentioned that they had been exposed to interpreting services in other contexts (e.g. church, etc.). In addition, the 15 students who said they had never used interpreting services before were first-year students at the university, which confirms that the NWU's service has been the first contact that all the students have had with interpreting services.

The reactions regarding what the users expect from the interpreters almost unanimously pointed towards accuracy and keeping with the pace of the lecturer's speech. This was confirmed in the data narrated in 3.4 below.

This initial questionnaire was not designed so much to reveal what was expected to appear as to have an idea about the linguistic context of the study, which proved to be rather diverse. A crucial observation is that, while the majority of the users said their native language is Setswana or Sesotho, there are other "minority" linguistic groups in the study.

The initial conclusion is that about 75 per cent of the users belong to the same language group, which is also prevalent in the North West province. Also, a very negligible percentage of those interviewed have English as their native language.

Thus, it can be stated that the linguistic representation of the users of the interpreting services is largely homogeneous.

Based on the answers to the questionnaires, nearly all the individuals who responded are concerned with the final product of the services rather than their process, i.e. "*what* they provide" versus "*how* they are provided". A few students (about 10 per cent) misunderstood Question 3 ("Apart from today, have you ever listened to an interpreter before? If yes, what was the occasion?"), giving an indication of the quality of the interpreting rather than describing any other opportunity where they used such services. This reinforced the above-mentioned focus on the finished product provided by the interpreting services.

3.3 Parallel polarisations and isolation of categories

The next two sections present two different, albeit geographically close (since they manifest themselves within the same social space), discourses: the users' and the interpreters'. Although this parallel social space seems to suggest that the analysis of the two discourses should be combined from the start, and the same themes arose in interviews with both users and interpreters, it will become clear that the two are not anchored in the same plane and they have different focuses. Also, the discourses can be regarded as being polarised around opposite notions, differing from one category of agent (user) to the other (interpreter). These polarisations are explained, therefore, and will then be drawn together using the one area of common interest between interpreters and users: the quality of interpreting (a factor already mentioned as being a central concern for the users of the services, based on the pre-study questionnaires).

3.4 Process versus results, inclusion versus exclusion: Users

When analysing what the users reported in the interviews, the first element that became evident was the difficulty about half of them have in actively criticising

the interpreting services. Even when it seems they do have something to say, they shy away from the point or divert awkwardly from what they are thinking:

> **And how would you say is the English of the interpreters? Is it understandable, or how is it?** Okay. First things first, what I believe in, these people certainly they are trying, they are putting an effort, in helping someone to understand something, even though some of them, they might not be perfect. But they do play an important role for someone who doesn't really have a clue on a certain language. (Bruce 137-153)

> **If you had anything that you would say needs to be improved in the interpreting services, what would you say it would be – is there anything that needs to be improved at all?** No, I think they're just perfect, just because my marks are high; they have improved a lot. (Caroline 169-177)

Some users go as far as giving the impression that they feel criticism will not improve the services:

> My aim is not to look at the negative part of things: Look at what they have given to me. (Bruce 175-177)

Of course, this lack of criticism can be explained by the general feeling on the part of the users that the services are a success, at least in respect of the improvement of their marks, and that it may be considered irrelevant to criticise anything at all in a system that has worked so obviously for many of them. Also, the pre-study questionnaires indicate that very few users have been exposed to interpreting before; even those who have are second- or third-year students whose first experience of interpreting was at this university in any case. The same pre-study questionnaires show this manifest lack of criticism: the comments about how things could be improved are fairly generic or non-existent. One should also bear in mind that the interviewees might feel inhibited and be unable to speak freely and openly.

At the other end of the spectrum, however, some users were particularly vocal and critical about the services and how they promote exclusion rather than integration, albeit on a limited scale. A common element among the very vocal

users becomes apparent in the following comment, where the criticism is not only directed at the interpreting services, but relates to the wider context of language and discrimination:

> She [the lecturer] doesn't understand why the interpretation services are there, because she keeps... when we have a group, we went on the first lecture to her, she called the English group forward ... to the class, to give their input or to say something about it, and she... we told her that the [PowerPoint] slides are not translated, can she put them in English for us? And so she said she was going to tell the interpreter to interpret the slides, but then that takes more time now in the lecture, and ... the Afrikaans people have to wait for us. (Mary 85-96)

One of the users spontaneously indicates that there is no culture of criticism on the campus among the users of the interpreting services:

> **Other people have said that they have benefited enormously from the interpreting services. How do you think they cope?** They benefit from it, because now at least they're not just thrown in the deep end, see. Anything ... is better than nothing, and that's why they think they're benefiting, they used to get nothing, you know – everything was in Afrikaans, so at least now they're getting some sort of an option. And that's why they feel they're benefiting. But it's not what they deserve. (Grace 352-365)

The very critical users are more sensitive to the manner in which the services are provided and will focus on the quality of the interpreting process (quality of delivery, etc.). They acknowledge the positive results (none of them indicate that the services have not improved their academic results) but these are put aside in order to focus not on service output but on the quality of service delivery:

> She [the lecturer] doesn't understand why the interpretation services are there (Mary 85-87) and she just says to us, "It's an Afrikaans university." (99-100)

This type of critique is quickly dismissed by the lecturers:

> If it was second-rate interpreting services, why would companies from the outside hire them? I don't think they [the students who complain] know about that, and people will always find something to complain of, and it gives them the chance to come to a campus like this. (Jenny Smith, 9:20)

While acknowledging the end benefits of the services on the surface, critical, process-oriented users consistently focus on the negative processes at work; processes that they have identified in one or two lecturers in particular, but which according to them cast a general shadow on the services. Indeed, these negative perspectives unfortunately seem to be linked to one particular set of lectures given within the same department. In what could be termed "episodes" some users have identified points in the process where the interpreting process stops working smoothly: in most cases the interpreter is not at fault, but exceptions are mentioned.

> Yes, and sometimes the interpreters go like, when they're too tired, you're busy talking, the lecturer's busy talking, and then they [yawning noise]. **What's that? Really?** Sometimes when they're tired, they do that. **Do you feel insulted?** I do, because like I said I pay the same tuition fees as they pay. (Tandi 11:07-11:39)

At the time when the first users were interviewed in 2006 one particular incident had provoked outrage among them. One of the users complained about the fact that the PowerPoint slides shown in the lecture were not being interpreted, and that this was contributing to them not being well informed about everything they needed to know for the lecture. In the next lecture the lecturer was alleged to have referred to the incident ironically, as something that the "English students had brought up". In another related event the same lecturer failed to inform the users who were not in class, owing to the absence of the interpreter, of a forthcoming test (Grace 185-210). In this type of event it must be recognised that the interpreter is not responsible for a breakdown in the process: the lecturer, who in many ways is supposed to contribute positively to the services by ensuring that an adequate climate is implemented for both Afrikaans and non-Afrikaans speaking students, is at fault in the derailment of the process.

Students who are very positive about the services, however, focus on the positive academic results they have yielded. Only the final result counts for them, whichever way the services were provided:

> I think [the interpreting services] are perfect. They're good because, first thing, they improve my marks, and my marks have improved, and I understand what is going on in classes, since the interpreters are there. They make work easy. (Caroline 9-14)

This focus on results is widely shared by the lecturers too:

> The change it brought about in my students is amazing. And students that would previously be regarded as failing students and students who cannot cope in time are now doing very well. I had a few students I would consider failing and are now coming close to a distinction. And it's all because of the language factor. (Elizabeth Richards 00:22-01:02)

The interviews with the users seem, therefore, to be polarised on the basis of this process-versus-result dichotomy: users are either very negative or very positive and rarely have a more nuanced approach to the services. But the positive and negative conclusions are reached by differing means (result-based or process-based).

This polarisation is even clearer when some of the non-critical, positive users actually seem to change the topic of conversation when asked about things the interpreters could improve in their performance:

> Everything comes from the inside: How much do you want to do for yourself, and how much do you want for yourself in life. The second thing is the positivity, and concentrating on the chance that you are given. Because I personally ... come a long way in life ... Lecturers do say, "Work hard, make sure that you keep up and then you will get good marks." (Bruce 317-332)

Reading between the lines, however, it appears the comment above is double-sided. As much as it could indeed be interpreted as being a deflection for a question relating to criticism, Bruce implies that beyond what works and what does not work in the interpreting process the student himself must acquire ownership of the educational process and take responsibility for his success in the overall system.

Non-critical users do not seem to be as dependent on the services as their most critical fellow users, since flaws in processes and interpreting quality are shrugged off to focus rather on the results.

One of the key social issues in the implementation of the interpreting services would be whether they do facilitate (if that is their role, too) the inclusion of non-Afrikaans speakers within the social space of the campus. In this category users – as well as interpreters – vary greatly in their opinions.

One particularly critical user puts the services in the greater social picture and hints at the political correctness of the situation:

> Yes, it's just a camouflage. It's almost like this whole – what do you call it, this system that the government created where you have to have a black person working for company? It's the same thing, you know. It's a camouflage that's just ... "we're providing for you African[s]...". (Grace 323-328)

Later, the same user blames the services for providing a false impression of inclusion:

> I know it's a cultural thing, which is fine. Then don't accept us in the university – that's my point. Don't say we can come here and then give us false hope, and then we catch you and ... that's what I hate about the university, it's nothing else. It's got nothing to do if you want to keep your culture; I'm all for that! Hey, keep your culture, keep your language: it's all good! But don't allow me to come into your boundaries, just for you to treat me like I'm worth nothing. (Grace 439-450)

On the other hand, the non-critical users have a diametrically opposite view of the extent to which the services grant them some sort of equality:

> **Do you feel that now with the interpreting services at this university, you're more equal to the Afrikaans students?** Yes, yes, yes, because at first we felt like they're isolating us or something – because every time we're in class we don't understand what's going on; sometimes you write a test, and you don't even know that there was a test. Then you would be writing that test that day – sometimes we write surprise tests – like after teaching they would just say, "Okay now, test!" And then you don't

> even know what was happening in the class. So now even if they say "Right, test! Take out your papers," you'd understand because the interpreters have told us about the test. (Caroline 67-85)

However, the success of inclusion and integration is not recognised fully by one of the lecturers:

> **Do you think the non-Afrikaans-speaking students are better integrated, generally speaking, on the campus thanks to the interpreting services?** No, I wouldn't go as far as that, no. I still think they still [form separate groups], especially black English students... but that has to do with other issues than the translation services on campus. My perception is that most of them, yes, appreciate it and they find it useful, but once again it's not an ideal situation... And don't ask me what an ideal situation is, except from having English as a medium of instruction... And I would prefer duplicating, even, my classes – one Afrikaans, one English. (Paul Jones 15:02-16:10)

When asked about whether the interpreting services make the users feel more included in the classroom, some answer that in fact the services make them more secluded from the rest of the class. They feel it reinforces the prevailing position granted to Afrikaans:

> You know, it's like ... she [one of their lecturers] pinpoints a person, and normally it's an Afrikaans person, and asks a question and pinpoints that person ... with the assumption that it's only them in the class. So she just completely... how can I put it – we're not in the class, we're invisible. (Grace 84-91)

> **Do you feel that you're still excluded in retrospect because you are English-speaking?** Yes. I experience it because this other time, like black students told her [the same lecturer] that we feel excluded in the class, she should ask questions in English and all, and then she made fun about it in front of the class: "Who's that lady who said she is excluded in class? I want to ask her a question," and all of that. (Mary 157-169)

So far, the feeling about better access to lecture content through the interpreting services is undeniably positive. However, the line is blurred between this element and the element of integration, for which the interpreters are not directly responsible. The same proportion of lecturers and users (about 50 per cent in

each group) insist that integration has not happened and believe that in the bigger picture the interpreting services fail to transform the social landscape of the campus in terms of student integration.

Evidently, the line between perception and reality is difficult to define. Such a perception cannot originate *ex nihilo*, however, and for that reason statements implying an idea of exclusion need to be addressed and analysed. This also highlights a greater issue concerning the integration of students who are not culturally dominant on the campus and the way in which this integration occurs. The interpreting services cannot guarantee, so it appears in the data, complete integration on their own, and need to be complemented by what could be defined as "local cultural re-engineering" of the campus's cultural paradigm.

As to the issue of "feeling part" of the classroom, the interpreting services sometimes play a conflicting role:

> Let's just say like that: I don't feel like we have the same lecturer because sometimes you don't feel part of the class. I mean, like you're the only one, you're like the weird one and stuff, and then everybody's listening [without a headset] there, so it's... I don't know, I don't necessarily feel like we have the same lecturer. Afrikaans people, they are more advantaged. (Steven 23-29)

Even though the criticism may only hint at processes rather than results (see above), such processes may inevitably lead to negative results:

> I think she [another lecturer] helps them [the Afrikaans students] more as well, because we had a test yesterday that the English students didn't know about, because the interpreter wasn't there on Friday. So she... there was only one guy who went, and she told him to just go, because there was no point in him staying if he can't understand. But she didn't tell him there was a test, so none of us knew. (Mary 204-216)

It can easily be argued that results can only be supported, in their success, by adequate processes. In this perspective, the end certainly does not justify the means. The criticism by the process-oriented students does reveal a certain lack

of compromising culture among some staff members of the university: clearly, it seems essential also to inform the lecturing staff about how to work in an environment where an interpreter is present.

This highlights the lack of institutional arrangement. Although this may seem like a problem outside the circle of influence of the interpreting services, such situations contribute to a negative perception of the service.

A few conclusions can be drawn at this stage from this dichotomy between result and process in users and lecturers. Firstly, the results produced by the interpreting services can be considered positive, according to the stakeholders in the process. Indeed, users and lecturers alike acknowledge that within the space of the lecture the services have changed the output of non-Afrikaans speaking students in a way that is unquantified yet positive. Secondly, however, the processes that lead towards any output in this system are not always successful in that they do not provide better social inclusion or integration. Also, from the incidental episodes mentioned by some of the users some lecturers clearly are not contributing in their own way – as a complement to the interpreting services – to this integration, which forms part of a bigger picture. It is difficult to determine the extent to which this lack of an adequate climate of accommodation exists, but episodes of the nature of those described in this section are symptomatic of what one can readily call a flaw in some of the aspects in the process.

3.5 Social role versus professionalism, loyalty to the user versus loyalty to the "message": Interpreters

While the interviews with the users are mainly dominated by the dichotomy between process and result, the interviews with the interpreters are largely polarised on an axis where social role and professionalism, or loyalty to the user versus loyalty to the message, are contrasted and create a paradox in the way the interpreters see themselves as agents. This section will show how this

paradox is illustrated in the interviews and will highlight the consequences of both approaches, which also appear in the interviews.

Social empathy transpires in every pore of the interpreters' interviews, and traces of a paternalist attitude are found in their position in respect of their users:

> Well, I think interpreting on the campus really opened up a door for something that no one has done before, and I know from experience, from speaking to students and for the things they tell me and the gratitude that they express after an exam or something like that, when they come to me and tell me that I helped them in class. It's a very fulfilling job to be an interpreter. (Corné 10-17)

And

> When I don't know a word I always feel bad for the students. I'm not thinking of [the manager of the interpreting services] or anybody like that, I'm always thinking about the students when I do something bad. (Esti 33-36)

However, all unquestionably take their role very seriously – maybe too seriously:

> I'm going to use a line from Spiderman: "With great power comes great responsibility." And that's exactly what it is. (Ted 155-157)

The concepts of "power" and "responsibility" are crucial to the interpreters' self-perception. They have all assimilated the extent to which their job is important in this particular context.

That being said, and perhaps as a consequence, not many of the interpreters objectify their task to the extent that they can decide what to do in difficult situations, such as interpreting jokes or derogatory remarks made by the lecturer (see below). In this sense they mostly feel more loyal to the users than to the message itself.

Because they tend to see themselves as an essential medium between lecturer and user, some interpreters do admit in fact that they feel "loyal" to the users and consequently identify with their situation, to the point where natural contradictions

soon appear – for instance, between the overall feeling that the Afrikaans character of the campus should be kept and the sensitivity that one must show towards non-Afrikaans speakers:

> I really do like interpreting, and I think it's a really handy tool to keep our campus and our campus identity – and that's something that a lot of people on the PUK campus feel very strongly about, so I really I think it's a great thing. (Corné 20-25)

> So, okay, but then he [one of the lecturers] started stating that they [the users] should start learning Afrikaans; they're at an Afrikaans university. And I felt very uncomfortable. Because I mean, it is not their responsibility to start learning Afrikaans: that's where my role comes in. (Johan 291-296)

> Should Afrikaans and English sit together in one class and both receive the same level of education from the same lecturer, then the programme is a success and Afrikaans needs not be done away with as the instruction medium on campus, as both language groups are being serviced equally. (Tim 50-53)

The interpreters demonstrate a complex approach towards the interpreting process. As a starting point, the services are seen firstly as a means of accommodating the identity of the campus in the new educational landscape, where Afrikaans is threatened and in some instances considered a language of exclusion. In this respect the services ideally satisfy all stakeholders in the process without sacrificing the historical and linguistic heritage of the campus. At the same time – and that is where the paradox appears – the interpreters as agents of change feel more loyal to the users in many ways, to the point where in cases of having to make a difficult choice about either interpreting or not interpreting jokes or comments, the empathy felt towards the users is very strong.

In contrast, the lecturers interviewed consider the Afrikaans cultural issue a secondary one, unlike the lecturer mentioned in the incident in the previous section. The most important thing for the lecturers is for the students to be able to follow the classes; some of them feel strongly that English should be the main medium of instruction:

> It's not a perfect system, really. It's probably the best at this moment available, unless we decide to go over to English as a medium of instruction – but I don't see that happening in the future. On a personal level, and I know I would be crucified for this, I would prefer to present my classes in English. (Paul Jones 07:54)

> It's not only the black students that need translation, it's also the white students, even Afrikaans students who need translation ... The other thing is that our textbooks are in English ... and then the lecture is in Afrikaans, although I throw in a bit of English ... It would be easier to just pick English and to finish it that way. (Elizabeth Richards 10:32)

In their loyalty to the users the interpreters feel that the former are sometimes excluded and clearly show empathy in this respect:

> Then I had this situation once where the lecturer... it wasn't a racist... he didn't make racist remarks but he ... started speaking about language affairs of the university ... he wanted to provide Afrikaans notes but he hadn't finished the English notes yet, but it was just a week before the exam and then there was this huge thing in the classroom where the English students didn't want him to provide the notes [to the Afrikaans-speaking students] because they didn't have the English notes yet ... But then he started stating that they should start learning Afrikaans; they're at an Afrikaans university. And I felt very uncomfortable. Because, I mean, it is not their responsibility to start learning Afrikaans: that's where my role comes in. (Johan 278-296)

Interestingly enough, although lecturers from "problem faculties" were interviewed in the process of this study, none of them showed a strong feeling toward the Afrikaans identity of the campus. Of course, it could be argued that a substantial number of lecturers should be interviewed in order to come across one who feels strongly about the campus identity. However, a better explanation might be that it is only a perception that lecturers feel this way. As indicated previously, the incidents where a lecturer allegedly derailed the process, resulting in the complete exclusion of the users regarding a test or course content, were episodic in nature, yet they have highlighted a possible way in which the process can indeed go wrong.

Exclusion also affects the interpreters in relation to the lecturer. All interpreters indicated that they had at one point felt ignored or looked down upon by some of the lecturers:

> In this campus the lecturer still treats you [the interpreter] as a student. **Do you think so?** I think so, because most of us are students – all of us are students, *were* students, when we started with the project. So they tend to treat you as a student, because you *look* like a student. And they see thousands of faces every day on campus, you understand, so they don't really make that distinction. (Ted 53-59)

This apparent lack of discrimination between students and interpreters is mirrored in the lack of distinction between Afrikaans and non-Afrikaans students. To that effect, Corné (63-64) adds that "[t]he lecturers tend to forget that there are English students in the class".

The feeling expressed by interpreters at the NWU, that they are not always valued by the lecturers, is linked perhaps to the fact that the interpreters sometimes feel they are surrogates for the lecturers in that they have to correct, add to or explain further what the lecturer may be saying. However, this uneven relationship with lecturers is temporary, it seems, as interpreters indicate that most lecturers warm up to the system and start working along a cooperation model with them after a while. Some lecturers even express delight about how their relationship with the interpreters has grown and produced what seems to be, at least from their viewpoint, a very positive relationship:

> I love them, I love them to bits. The changes it brought about in my students is amazing. (Elizabeth Richards 00:23-00:30)

> Once you are used to this [the services], it's quite easy. (Robert Johnson 00:43-00:48)

The interviews with the interpreters naturally veer towards the social role and purpose of the interpreter. On the issue of "empowerment", two interpreters in particular discuss the purpose of interpreting:

> <Esti> Yes, but it makes... I mean it makes you feel that you want them [the users] to pass [their subjects] and, yes, you care for them. Yes, exactly.
> <Johan> Yes. Actually, that's your ultimate goal for them: to pass the course. (Group I 428-432)

Nevertheless, it was clear already from the recordings of the interpreting performances that not all information is translated, especially in situations when the lecturer has asked questions and other students are speaking in the lecture room. This fact is confirmed through the interviews with the interpreters, with some of them admitting that they do not always translate what is being said. Beyond the extraordinary cases mentioned above (a lecturer swearing or making derogatory comments, for instance), this selection of content by the interpreters is perceived negatively by users:

> Some of them summarise the work for you so you're not getting the proper content of the work. I even asked one the one day – I said to him, I'm really tired and I need to understand what's happening, but I'm not understanding you so I'm going to leave now. He said, "The next work is very important," but I'm like, "We don't understand what you're saying ... [and he said] "No, but I try to only tell you what's important". And I said to him, "But it's not for you to tell me what's important, that's what I should try and figure out myself." (Grace 24-37)

In this particular quote, interpreters are seen to be performing selection or adjustment in terms of the information received. For this user, both selection and adjustment are unacceptable, as they do not truly empower the end-user of the services. Reading between the lines one can see the emergence of the "lecturing interpreter", possibly as a consequence of the confusion relating to neutrality and boundaries (see next section).

In addition to this, the influence of moral values and an active decision-making attitude in the interpreting brings about the issue of authority in the interpreted discourse. By choosing what is acceptable as interpreted material and what is not, the interpreters grant themselves a part of the authority that only the lecturer is endowed with traditionally. Also, morality intervenes in a different way for

various situations (not all lecturers make racist remarks, of course), which makes the implicit code of interpreting a very organic and dynamic notion indeed. This adaptation further leads to identification with the lecturer in more than one way:

> Well, I think I'm not sure what they expect of us as a classroom interpreter, but I see myself as a representative of the lecturer. I mean, just an English version, yes. I see that. (Johan 187-190)

> Because we're the voice of the lecturer, we're their connection to the actual subject, to the information that they're supposed to be learning and going to be writing exams about, and hopefully apply in the future, and it's our job, basically. (Willy 36-42)

> I think sometimes they [the lecturers] feel as if you're taking over their job, and you have to first show them that you're not. (Corné 129-131)

Selection, adjustment and censorship become more insidious in the cases where the interpreter has first-hand knowledge of the subject he or she is interpreting (this situation occurs frequently, especially in Law and Engineering). Some of the interpreters have studied those subjects and feel confident about the lecture content to the extent that they actually compete with the lecturer. In these cases there is not so much summarisation as there is recreation of the lecturer's discourse or, at least, a desire to do so:

> So I'm mainly interpreting mathematical subjects. So in those situations what makes it easier for me is I understand the work – it is first- and second-year work – so sometimes it is difficult for me when the lecturer explains something but I know another way to explain it better to them, or just to say one more sentence for example. If something is very important, and I know it is very important, then I would say "okay, remember this, it is very important." And then sometimes, I'm in conflict, I don't know whether that's correct. (Esti 107-117)

Most interpreters admit that there is more to the job than interpreting what is being said. In yet another possibly delicate situation:

> Okay, but sometimes you're in a situation, for example, when I interpret an engineering subject which I don't have a clue of and then I wouldn't know that he [the lecturer] is making a mistake, so...

> and then you would just interpret the mistake. Well, it's just because you have a background of the course, then sometimes you can identify, okay, there's a mistake. But then, like I said, I would correct it. (Johan 166-176)

> And then sometimes you get lecturers who make a mistake, write something incorrect on the board and then you wonder, "Should I say the right thing, or should I say what he is saying, just a wrong number?" (Esti 118-123)

This selection can find an uneasy echo in the viewpoints of the users, who cannot always be aware that what the interpreter says differs from what the lecturer says:

> **And do you feel that sometimes they're simplifying the contents of the lecture for you? Do they make the words of the lecturer a bit more simple, maybe in the English used?** Yeah, I think yeah, yeah, yeah, 'cause everything they say is understandable, and you can even remember the things that they said. (Caroline 26-41)

It is unclear in this particular example whether the interpreter is just adapting the register in English or actually simplifying the content of the discourse to be interpreted. One can read between the lines and assume that the discourse to be interpreted and the interpreted discourse are not altogether similar in essence; this discrepancy could lead to a serious obstacle in the credibility of the services, if the user is aware of it. This being said, however, considering this issue within a community-based theory of translation, such a strategy from the interpreter is at the very least commendable, even if it is risky. Indeed, such decisions truly go in the direction of empowerment of the user of the service and the interpreter actually bridges the gap of not only language but also understanding. It is risky, however, since a clear strategy (on how to translate particular concepts, for instance) has not been defined so that the interpreters act uniformly and respond similarly to situations.

Note that a distinction must be drawn here between register adjustment and content adjustment. Whether both strategies may be motivated by the same

attitude remains to be determined in the next chapter. That the interpreter corrects the style of the lecturer while keeping the same content or that she or he keeps the same style but summarises what the lecturer says are indeed two separate issues.

In terms of the adjustment of content, the other consequence of the departure from the pure translation of a message as an object is that interpreters show varying degrees of judgment or information filtering, for instance – from thick filters to no filter at all:

> Honestly, if a lecturer made a racist remark or something that goes against my core values, I will rather not interpret it. (Corné 317-319)

> I think I would translate it [the racist joke] so that the students can go and complain and do something against the lecturer, because it's not... I mean they should hear. It's bad for them, maybe they feel bad about it, but then they have the chance to do something against it, so I would. I think I would. (Esti 241-246)

These two radically different strategies both illustrate, in their respective ways, the interpreters' loyalty to the users. Although the two attitudes are different, they both have the same aim in mind: to ensure that the user is respected in the interpreting process. These attitudes are reflected in a variety of ways in the other interviews with the interpreters:

> We have another interpreter and she says she's interpreting for a lecturer who's constantly making racist remarks, and she leaves it out, because she feels she needs to protect the students. So she is also "on the side of the students", but she feels they shouldn't hear it, it's going to hurt them. Then you're taking more responsibility on yourself, because they have the right to know what is being said in the class. So we also advised her to interpret, but she said really she can't, she's a soft person, she doesn't want to say those words – sometimes he swears – and she doesn't want to swear, she doesn't want them to hear it. So these situations do become complex as we go along. (Nicolene, research assistant, 318-331)

Of all the interviewed interpreters, only one, Tim, states clearly that for him the most important professional aspect of the job is the clear definition of boundaries for all participants in the interpreted lecture, i.e. a "stick-to-the-message" approach that acts as protection against any hesitation in resolving difficult situations. When asked about how he would react in a situation where he would have to make a choice as to whether what is being said is acceptable for the users to hear, he categorically indicates that he is just "the extension" of the lecturer (Tim 103), and that consequently it is not his responsibility to judge or to make decisions about content. Needless to say, Tim believes that loyalty to the message is paramount to the success of the services.

Tim says that the other important aspect is to set strong and impenetrable boundaries for the interpreter's role, so that the users never consider him a lecturer, a point contradicted in several instances by some of his colleagues, especially those who have prior training in the subject they are interpreting (see above)

Another important piece of evidence for the category of loyalty towards the users is the fact that interpreters sometimes add meta-content to the interpreting by giving indications or explanations of what is going on, as an additional help to the users. This was apparent during the classroom observations, in the performance recordings and during the interviews:

> The lecturer will be writing something on the board, on the blackboard. And he's not necessarily saying it in Afrikaans, but he's silent and, without noticing it, you'll say "three plus four is seven" instead of just keeping silent. When the lecturer is silent, that does happen and you have to stop yourself immediately. (Corné 272-277)

This phenomenon is also part and parcel of the loyalties the interpreters demonstrate. It is directly linked to the role of the interpreting services according to the interpreters themselves: to "equal the playing field" and ensure that, through the interpreter, the non-Afrikaans speakers succeed.

Nevertheless, two other interpreters along with Tim choose to objectify the job and to negate this empathy and social role by asserting that the "message" is the interpreter's point of focus:

> You're interpreting for both parties, your loyalties should lie with the message rather than either of the parties, in a certain sense, because you're trying to convey the message irrespective of other factors that might ... interfere. (Jan 92-96)

Those "other factors" prove to be instrumental, however, for most other interpreters in determining how they tackle their job. Some of the interpreters who have interpreted the same courses over the last two years indicate that they have indeed developed some kind of informal friendship with their users and readily say that they associate naturally with them:

> I mean, it is the same group in every class, so... And then I had the situation the other day when some of them [the users] came to me and they asked what am I doing exactly, what am I studying... And then I explained to them what I am doing and, well, I gave them a bit... well, I told them what I felt about the courses and they should really work hard at this and that, so... I mean it's... yes, you really build a relationship with them. (Johan 411-419)

For one of the interpreters the services, in the greater context, are clearly provided with a social- or at least empowerment-based agenda:

> I think part of the objectives of the interpreting project is to equal the playing field for Afrikaans- and for English-speaking students, and you have to keep that in mind. (Willy 197-201)

This sum of elements brings about a tendency to "feel" for the users, which is further encouraged by the indifference by the interpreters from some lecturers:

> In this campus (i.e. NWU) the lecturer still treats you as a student. (Ted 50-51)

And:

> I had issues where the lecturer (a temp for the semester) would speed read a lecture and finish in 10 minutes. This is frustrating. (Tim 10-12)

One of the interpreters even mentions a clash she had with a lecturer:

> The other day I had a student who asked me for some notes because the lecturer sends me the notes beforehand, and I gave her the notes and later that evening the lecturer called me, and he said no, I shouldn't do that, that's a problem and so on. (Esti 87-91)

The lecturers admit, on their side, that at the beginning the presence of the interpreter was disrupting and irritating, mostly because of the humming noise (the interpreters have to whisper):

> I think the biggest nuisance was at the beginning... was some voice going on somewhere in the background speaking while you were speaking and telling the students stuff, but once you're used to it, it's quite easy. (Robert Johnson 00:34-00:46)

As similar interpreting services have begun to be implemented at the local Agricultural College (AC), the same interpreters who are now also interpreting there feel that the lecturers at the AC are friendlier, whereas the students there are more distant:

> But now at the Agricultural College where I've started interpreting it's completely the opposite. They [the lecturers] see you as an authority figure – it's quite a strange concept for me, but I think that could be because the lecturer on that side treat you as they would any other lecturer: they don't treat you still as a student, I think. (Ted 44-50)

In the case of the AC the polarisation seems to be warped owing to the new deal of relationship between users, interpreters and lecturers. Somehow, the polarisation defined in this section may very well depend on the interpreters' perception of the relationship between them and the users and lecturers, and also on the informal, institutional culture in which they work.

On a side note, however, some interpreters have excellent relations with the lecturers and such positive relationships tend to contribute to the fulfilment some of them feel:

> I really have a relationship with the lecturers [in one of the departments]. Every year, I try to sort out my schedule so that I can interpret those classes and the lecturers know me – they remember my name, they call me if their classes are cancelled, and tell me on my cell phone that they won't be having classes, or where they are in their module. (Corné 136-144)

In conclusion, the dual polarisations of perceptions in interpreters and users seem to run parallel to each other without ever meeting. Indeed, different expectations have emerged, as well as different points of focus based on each party's sense of position. The data indicates that the interpreters will tend to consider their task as the centre to which several angles are attached (loyalty, professionalism). For the users, of course, the centre is educational success as a satellite of the interpreting services and the latter's potential shortcomings.

The issue of loyalty never really manifests itself among the users, possibly because their point of focus is the output of the services and how this benefits them (or not). For them, as a general trend, the interpreters are either doing a good job or not, but to the question as to whether they feel "closer" to the interpreter or to the lecturer (a question induced to determine what the users think about the topic of "loyalty"), they do not show any particular loyalty towards either. However, this can be considered an individual choice rather than a general trend. The fact that none of the users expressed any feelings of friendship or social interaction for the interpreters does not mean they do not respect them either: this "reverse empathy" should not be construed as a feeling of indifference or resentment in relation to the interpreter. What can be said is that the ten users interviewed do not communicate much with the interpreters:

> **Do you talk to the interpreters sometimes, before the class or after the class?** No, no, no. (Caroline 114-118)

> **Do you often speak to the interpreters after the class, or before or...?** No, not really. (Steven 96-98)

This double agent-based polarisation creates different expectations as well as different discourses in terms of self-perception.

In this section the data has revealed crucial elements that mainly help understand how the interpreters deal with their work. Firstly, as expected from the literature review presented in the first chapter of this dissertation, the interpreters are indeed polarised between message transmission, an objective perspective of the task and intervention in the process of the message transmission, which we can label the subjective perspective of the same task. What is also revealed is that, beyond the notions of appropriateness or lack thereof in terms of interpreting norms and accepted attitudes, the interpreters feel strongly about their task, one way or the other. However, they see professionalism in the two strategies (objective or subjective). In the "subjective" perspective the interpreters are quite aware of their social role in the sense that they feel their job is to repackage the message into what is judged acceptable (whether in terms of content or style) for the users; for the "objective" interpreters, however, the task is merely to pass on the message as is.

In the next sections, we will discuss how the notion of quality can be described in the interpreting process and what the various groups interviewed think of the concept.

3.6 Quality of interpreting

Since the aim of this study is not to assess the linguistic quality of the interpreting services but rather to understand the practical conditions of the services, I chose to listen to the recordings that were made available with the intention of generating an impression rather than analysing and quantifying possible flaws. In this respect the recorded performances are not always faultless and demonstrate standard flaws of various depths common, one would imagine, to many interpreters, especially in a setting different from conference interpreting: there is

lagging and sometimes hesitation. However, it must be reiterated that the equipment used for classroom interpreting, as was indicated in Chapter 2, does not allow for the best interpreting conditions possible. Also, conference interpreting deals with speeches or interventions that, generally, are at least prepared and structured; lecturing, on the other hand, leaves room for the lecturers to demonstrate their personalities and individual styles. As such, it may be affirmed that classroom interpreting is in many ways a rather more complex task. The purpose of this study is to analyse not the various bad habits interpreters have but rather the perception of quality among users – and also among interpreters, who were asked during the interviews to be critical of themselves.

With the notion of quality comes that of the causality between the interpreting services and the academic success of the users of the services. Van Rooy (2005) has already determined that the interpreting services help on their own. However, the interpreting services alone cannot be responsible for the success of the whole academic process among non-Afrikaans-speaking students. As was seen from some of the reactions of the lecturers in section 3.5, the programme certainly seems to benefit the students.

On the one hand, the services are not the only factor of success, even for the non-Afrikaans-speaking students. Most textbooks for the modules offered on the campus are published in English anyway. A large proportion of the study guides is compiled in Afrikaans and translated into English.

The effect of the interpreter's lagging is echoed in some of the interviews with the users and is perceived as being a cause of frustration among them:

> Yes, and sometimes they [the interpreters] are slow when they speak. (Mary 37-38)

> I think it's fine if you are used to it, but generally it's not fine in general, because it's not interactive, and part of the university

> experience to be in like on courses you do... For me, communication is about communicating. How am I going to communicate with you when I'm getting the information two minutes after everybody else? (Grace 9-17)

This frustration is sometimes considered by the users to be a lack of sensitivity, since they perceive education as an important tool towards empowerment. This insensitivity, interestingly enough, is mostly due to an environment that does not take interpreting into consideration at all:

> **Okay. Have you experienced anything that you thought was particularly frustrating or irritating when using the interpreting services? Was there a time when you thought, "This is not going well; I'm not getting as much as I would like to"?** Yes, especially the problem, I must say, is like the network thing. Like when students don't switch off their cell phones in class, and then like maybe they put it on silent and then there's like "tin tin tin" on my ears. I get really, really irritated and sometimes ... the interpreters, they just ... speak too loudly in your ears, even if you try like to switch the headset. Sometimes, I have to say, it's very irritating. (Steven 56-66)

This lack of awareness of the interpreting services is stressed by another one of the users:

> I don't think they [the Afrikaans-speaking students] don't have any consideration. I don't think they understand how it [the interpreting services] works, that they know that it [cell phone interference] bothers us. I don't think they're told that. (Mary 54-56)

The problem illustrated in the two quotations is two-fold. The use of electronic devices such as cellular telephones has a bearing on the sound output in the headphones and, even though these devices may be on silent mode, all incoming and outgoing messages and calls will provoke unpleasant parasitic sounds in the headphones; these sounds can sometimes be very loud. For a student not using the services, these sounds cannot be heard. This lack of awareness should not be construed as ill intention, although it is interpreted by the two students above as being disrespectful. This element, although potentially harmless, contributes to the feeling of an "Us vs Them" perspective.

Accent is sometimes mentioned as a negative point to indicate further frustration with the quality of the English:

> I mean, I speak better English than half of those guys, so half the time, anyway, I feel like trying to correct them. (Grace 501-503)

Accent and fluency in English, however, seem to be purely anecdotal points and the general impression is that the English used by the interpreters is perceived appropriate by most users.

The points expressed in section 3.5 about the interpreters' neutrality or lack thereof seems to have a consequence on the *kind of interpreting* they deliver. In other words, the subjective or objective perspective adopted by the interpreters (see end of section 3.5) is echoed in how the students perceive the quality of the services provided. When asked whether they understood the interpreters' English, some responses among the students raised a number of issues:

> **Okay, and is their English appropriate? Do you understand their English well?** Yes, I understand the English well. They don't speak "bombastic" or something, they understand that some of us don't know English properly, yeah. (Caroline 16-24)

> **Do you feel that sometimes [the interpreters] are simplifying the contents of the lecture for you?** Yeah, I think yeah, yeah, yeah, 'cause everything they say is understandable, and you can even remember the things that they said. (Caroline 26-42)

This statement by Caroline is problematic. Unbeknownst to the user, the interpreter is perceived as simplifying the lecture for the users. If such a practice was categorically identified by a user there could be serious consequences in the social perceptions in the classroom. Grace goes even further in identifying this:

> **Has there been several occurrences where you have felt that the interpreter was doing more than translating? For example, simplifying?** That's what they do. They do, they do. And I mean it irritates me, because ... he's listening and trying to assess what [the lecturers] are saying ... So whatever he's saying, it doesn't make sense because it's what came out like, you know, second

> hand. I'm sure like when we were younger we used to do that leadership thing, where you start the message here and you pass it over to ten people. It's the same thing: information is lost ... It's not working. (Grace 467-487)

On the one hand, according to the users, some interpreters tend to simplify or to use a language that is not as "bombastic" as it supposedly should be in an academic setting. For those users who do not understand Afrikaans at all, it may be difficult, of course, to know whether an interpreter is simplifying what the lecturer says or not. The second user quoted above realises that in the process the interpreter simplifies or selects what needs to be said and she perceives this very negatively. Selection and simplification could very well be a direct product of the interpreters' loyalty to the user (see previous section).

Generally, however, the users feel that the quality of interpreting is good. It is useful to bear in mind that none of the users and very few of the interpreters are native English speakers, which probably affects the perception of the quality of English spoken.

When asked about their own performances the interpreters identified a number of flaws: voice, lagging, hesitations. This level of self-criticism is explained by the fact that the interpreters are regularly recorded by the Directorate of Language Affairs and receive frequent feedback on their own performances. In comparing this self-criticism with the users' perceptions, it appears that there are differences in amplitude rather than correspondence: problems are the same, but explained and perceived differently. On the one hand, interpreters are better positioned to understand their own problems thanks to their knowledge of the craft, although they may lack subjectivity; the users, on the other hand, comment meaningfully on the quality of interpreting based on a very limited understanding of the processes of interpreting.

Both users and interpreters, therefore, concur on the level of quality of interpreting but the angles of approach are different for each. Interpreters, to their credit, are very self-critical about the "backstage work" that interpreting implies, i.e. correcting bad interpreting habits, avoiding hesitations, working on the quality of the intonation. This reflects and confirms their polarised views on interpreting (see 2.1). In very much the same manner, the users are consistent with their own polarised views (see 2.2) and question the quality of the interpreting whenever it prevents them from reaching their educational goal within the university.

3.7 Conclusion

Through the narrative of the data collected, a few conclusions can be reached.

First, a rift clearly exists as to the perception of the services. The various perceptions are not contradictory in content but tend to focus on different essential points. From socially aware interpreters to result-oriented users, there are also disruptions in the general trend. There are critical users, as there are neutral interpreters. General trends are validated but exceptions also contribute to the fact that the data is complex and rich. Whatever theories might be drawn in the next chapter must take this factor into account in order not to fall in the trap of oversimplification and determinism.

Secondly, all elements in the data relate to personal experience. As indicated in Chapter 2 (Methodology), questions were aimed at personal experience through the phenomenological angle: this is why all the data used in this chapter reflects personal opinions rather than pseudo-objective statements. As this study is qualitative in nature, the purpose is not to determine what the objective truth is but rather to dissect the in-depth perceptions expressed.

Thirdly, this web of perceptions and categories constitutes the necessary basis for drawing up a theory of the social space thus described: how relations

between stakeholders in the classroom are born, how they are played out, the effect they end up having, and how they design the architecture of the social space that is the interpreted lecture. This architecture is described and explained in the next chapter.

The challenge at this point is to use this narrative in order not only to produce a framework of understanding, i.e. a "key" to the reasons why the people interviewed think and react the way they do, but also to generate a set of theoretical affirmations that can help predict how the system will function on the basis of what has been narrated. For this purpose, in the next chapter we will need abstract concepts to help "bracket" the data into a structure of reflexes and attitudes.

4. Theory

4.1 Introduction

The main outcome of this chapter is to crystallise the observations formulated in the previous chapter into, broadly speaking, a local theory of the *habitus* of interpreters and users and of the dynamics of the social space in which they interact. Such an enterprise in our case would aim at achieving the paradox of drawing a "system" out of the data, in order to interpret and predict the agents' reflexes within their field (Charmaz 2006). As we have seen in the previous chapter, the choice of a qualitative, phenomenological/grounded theory method poses limitations not to the interpretation and analysis of the data, but to its scope outside the case studied. It may be, however, that the study of the interpreters' and users' *habitus* could yield new directions and new mechanisms that will have to be tested and validated in other contexts involving similar agents. Therefore, theoretical models devised within this chapter could be improved upon, refined or refuted in other contexts.

Within this perspective the theories expressed in this chapter attempt to capture the complexity of the participants' views and ideas and as such the scope mentioned above is conservatively kept to the local boundaries. Contradictions may appear but will allow for complexity rather than simplistic explanations. As explained in Chapter 2, I had decided from the beginning to use concepts and notions defined by Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1982, 1990, 1992) and to a lesser extent by Basil Bernstein (1990) and Michel Foucault (1980, 1988, 1990). Bourdieu's concepts in particular lend themselves well to a flexible yet precise analysis of the relationships between agents in a given social environment. His focus on relations rather than positions – positions being the isolated definition of a function or a role in the social space studied, i.e. interpreter, user, etc. – allows for a dynamic rather than static assessment of the interaction between individuals and the way they interact in the social field. Foucault's theories, especially

regarding the concept of power, can add a useful perspective, albeit on a less practical level, on the motivation behind some of the agents' reflexes and perceptions. Bernstein shares many outlooks with Bourdieu but has focused consistently and specifically on the field of education and its "reproductive" aspect.

One of the possible shortcomings of using Bourdieu's concepts is the possibility of applying them incorrectly. Indeed, the concepts could be arranged and adapted at will to the point where their original meaning is betrayed in order to "fit" the data; I chose, therefore, to be as accurate as possible in terms of the description of the concepts Bourdieu proposes, as well as in their application to the data. As we are going to see, Bourdieusian concepts are generic enough to accommodate most social environments, provided these are delimited carefully. At the same time, this choice could lead, hopefully, to adding new elements to the existing concepts; to enriching them, even.

This chapter will first define key Bourdieusian concepts such as field, *habitus*, power and capital, doxa and symbolic violence. Then, the data observed in the previous chapter will be examined in order to generate conceptualisations and interpretations; the aim being to understand the dynamics of an interpreted lecture and particularly to define the *habitus* of interpreters and users. Understanding this dynamic may help define how the interpreting services eventually can accommodate the insights revealed in this dissertation. The study of a field does not lead to new "rights" and new "wrongs", but may indicate the elements that need to be addressed in order to achieve a more equitable field, where exchanges between agents are not carried out along downstream or upstream currents, but multilaterally.

Before explaining the key concepts, it is fitting to indicate that theorists like Bernstein, Bourdieu and Foucault have generated a fair amount of critique in terms of the philosophy of their concepts and methods. As will become apparent,

most of it relates either to a lack of support for theories (theories being devised without empirical data) or to too much rigidity in these theories, giving way to deterministic or even Marxist interpretations of social reality. Therefore, it is fitting to begin with a critical examination of these concepts, in order to ensure moderation in their use.

4.2 What Bernstein and Bourdieu's socio-educational concepts can do and what they cannot do: A preliminary critique

At first glance, Bernstein's theories seem quite rigid; indeed, critics have pointed to his almost structuralist stance, in the sense that he does not use any context-specific reality to formulate some of his theories. For him discourse is both an isolated object and a notion determined by social hierarchy. Bourdieu himself has indicated (cited in Harker & May 1993: 174) that

> to focus on the rules as constructed by the analyst (Bernstein's 'rules of hierarchy', 'rules of criteria', for instance) is to fall into one of the most disastrous fallacies in the human sciences, which consists in taking, according to the old saying of Marx, 'the things of logic for the logic of things'.

Harker and May (1993: 170) also mention that Bourdieu has himself been criticised for a stance that could very well be interpreted as too deterministic. Seen from this perspective Bourdieu sometimes does tread on Marxism and its focus on the inherent nature of economic relationships. Harker and May (1993: 170) quote yet another critic of Bourdieu who theorises that Marxism does not propose an alternative strategy or perspective in order for the "subordinate" classes to "reinvent and reconstruct the conditions under which they live, work and learn".

This is contradicted by Bourdieu's general flexibility, which can be observed in most of his works (1982, 1990, 1992). Bourdieu notoriously coined the expression "a feel for the game" (1992: 128), at the core of which lies a certain degree of individual self-determination rather than Marxist imposition. Bourdieu's

famous expression relates both to the individual's compliance with unsaid rules in a given social space and to the margin of individual initiative and self-realisation. In this regard Bourdieu explains in the same piece of work (1992: 8) that he broke from the structuralist tradition at a very early stage – a perspective that, through isolation rather than contextualisation of concepts, would have given his perspective a rigid direction. This tendency to lean towards deeper and maybe more practical explanations is also confirmed in Bourdieu (1982): "*Il faut se garder des alternatives ordinaires*" ("We need to keep away from common possibilities", my translation). Phipps (2006), in an unrelated study, manages very well to explain this flexibility in clear terms, whereby the notion of *habitus*, for instance, is deliberately open to various degrees of self-consciousness. This by no means equates with thinking of space as an entirely relative entity, but it means that for similar explanations of the mechanics of relationships in a space the latter's direction and drive may well be entirely different. In other terms, Bourdieu's concepts allow for a partial explanation of the dynamics of a field, but do not assume that the content of a field is similar in all instances.

It is important to note that Bernstein mainly deals with the field of education, whereas Bourdieu has extended, very much like Barthes, his theories (or "strategies", a term considered by Bourdieu to be a less mechanistic and more flexible way of conceptualisation) to other fields of social practice. Harker and May's (1993: 175) pro-Bourdieu perspective emphasises the latter's flexibility of outlook by indicating that the "feel for the game" is what generates a multitude of reflexes in a multitude of situations that are wholly unpredictable; in real terms, the Bourdieusian perspective will not envisage that actions are driven by uncompromising social laws.

The critique of both Bernstein's and Bourdieu's theoretical models of the sociology of education is crucial, since both are constantly in danger of generalising instead of contextualising, of generating theories not based on data or, worse, of twisting data so that it can fit into existing theoretical frameworks.

The generalisability of these concepts is advantageous, but may also be synonymous with lack of flexibility, simplification and, eventually, theories carved in stone, which in turn are forced to ignore the particular contexts in order to be applied appropriately.

It is in the interest of all groups participating in this study to learn of its conclusions in order to change whatever imbalance has been observed and to understand why these imbalances, be they flaws in the communication processes or lack of cultural adjustment, exist. Whatever the degree of rigidity or flexibility theoretical concepts have been accused of, they must serve as a means to an end, as instruments of analysis, rather than be used to see whether they "work" or not.

It is essential, therefore, that this study use these models as critically and as contextually as possible in order to avoid the rigidity and over-structuralisation so often denounced in Bernstein and to a lesser extent in Bourdieu's work. This may lead potentially to an equally exaggerated mechanisation of the processes at work; processes whose complexity we cannot ignore. It would also turn what is a fundamentally human problem into a mathematical equation. I do not believe that such algebraic perspectives can solve human issues.

Another criticism aimed at both Bourdieu and to a greater extent Bernstein is the potential pitfall of abstraction. Cookson (1997: 1498) even goes as far as saying that

> Bernstein's work [may] simply [be] so idiosyncratic that it floats above the field like a colourful air balloon among the clouds of Durkheimian abstraction.

Cookson (1997: 1499) mentions the "Hegelian heaven" that some similar sociological methods and models produce, thereby referring to the utmost abstraction (and therefore inadequacy of application to any particular situation) of these theories. However influential Bernstein's work is in the field of education,

we need, in the perspective of this study, to anchor it in practice rather than let it linger in abstraction.

This potential perspective is also mentioned in Saville-Troike (2003), who seems to acknowledge this lack of flexibility: it would be appropriate to say that any sociological methodology will need to take these approaches together rather than use one in particular. Data can be considered the source of potentially new elements to enrich existing concepts, leading to new concepts altogether. The conclusion remains the same: theories that cannot be validated or supported by data remain Cookson's proverbial colourful air balloons (1997: 1498).

On the topic of the discrepancy between abstract theories and empirical studies that are content with mere descriptions, Surridge's outlook (2002: 42) is more realistic: she advocates an in-between position or, as she puts it, a more applicable theoretical attitude. If, indeed, "social theory has become too far divorced from empirical social research", she suggests that one of the solutions is to follow the line of Bourdieu, which for Surridge (2002: 47) is about going beyond the gap between theory and method by adopting a rational flexibility in the research.

Surridge (2002: 48) also concurs with Bourdieu in acknowledging a "methodological polytheism" rather than a unilateral method of investigation and formulation. Such relativity may not be an enemy, after all: a theory is only valid insofar as it can be observed in action and in practice and it must account for and explain facts.

One of the identifiable dangers of the social theory concepts used in this study, as stated above, is their potential determinism. The notion of field, for instance, envisages artificial boundaries in order to make the social space to be studied more workable; human relationships are in reality not restricted to geography and go beyond the physical space of a lecture room, in this case. The notion of field,

therefore, is very much like a methodological instrument that helps delineate the environment to be studied.

Other notions coined by Bourdieu do not escape criticism. Bourdieu himself, quoted in Frère (2004: 86, 88), indicates that *habitus* (i.e. this "set of durable dispositions to act in particular ways") is not "this monolithic principle through which the past determines future actions".

This healthy relativity is further emphasised in Frère, who adds that

> absolute detestation or outright rejection are pointless. But sterile shows of support of praise are not much healthier than sterile questioning ... True scientific respect towards a work ... is expressed in rigorous discussion and evaluation and not in the endless repetition of concepts. (2004: 86)

What is obvious from the outset is that we should acknowledge that such a *habitus* might only be common to that environment and to no other.

What Lahire terms "the plurality of the individual" (Frère 2004: 90) needs to be acknowledged, i.e. not only the social reflexes identified in the course of the study can apply to the context studied, as previously stated, but we cannot attempt to generate algebraic formulas. Indeed, the *habitus* of an individual defines the latter's social reflexes and self-perception but does not effectively say *who* this individual is. The notion helps define how such an individual externalises his or her strategies out there in the world, but it is not as ambitious as to stake a claim in the definition of identity of persons. If that were the case, the agents in Bourdieu's field would run the risk of being considered faceless individuals and we would necessarily come back to an over-deterministic set of explanations.

The essential point of this critical outlook is, in my opinion, the creation of an adequate bridge between theory and observed data. For that purpose, in the next section I will describe what a Bourdieusian methodology is.

4.3 Bourdieusian concepts

4.3.1 Introduction

Bourdieu (1982) envisages sociological space (field, *habitus*, power, etc.) as a network of relations, at the heart of which lies power. The kind of power Bourdieu imagines varies from context to context; I argue that extent of power, in our case, is linked to the agent's position in the field and its proximity to institutional authority and credibility. In an educational setting that is codified extensively, such as the academic setting, the location of power hardly changes. In practical terms, in the interpreted lecture the lecturer represents the seat of power and, at the bottom of the hierarchy, although such a statement should not be construed as negative, we find the students.

What endows an agent with a particular amount of power is the measure of the capital he or she possesses from his or her initial position in the environment. This capital would be, in our case, knowledge of a given subject and the institutional authority inherent to certain professions on the campus (namely the lecturing staff members). In this situation the amount of capital is linearly linked to the amount of institutional power. This perspective of power could be considered feudal, which is in fact the case: positions and their agents come with power privileges owing to the very nature of their position.

Capital moves from top to bottom, from agent to agent – agents being the various positions occupied in the field we are studying (lecturer, interpreter, Afrikaans-speaking student, user of the interpreting services). Power and capital are at the core of exchanges within the space studied.

Bourdieu focuses on *how* (discourse, lecture set-up) and *where* this capital is distributed and used as a means of reproducing and maintaining a certain cultural or social hegemony. However Marxist this may sound, Bourdieu does not

focus on describing deterministic social structures of knowledge transfer for the perpetuation of a "ruling" culture, but is more interested in ways of rectifying hegemonic reflexes that some environments may have. Bourdieusian work traditionally avoids determining the origin of power at the advantage of studying its relational dynamics.

In this perspective it is useful to acknowledge that the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University is keen on preserving the Afrikaans character and language on the campus, in a national situation where the government tends to reduce the place of Afrikaans in the public sphere. Within this context, the interpreting services were implemented as a go-between solution between bilingualism, English as medium of instruction and the preservation of the campus's cultural and linguistic identity. The interpreting services are available not only for lectures but also for administrative meetings involving both the Potchefstroom and Mafikeng campuses, the latter being primarily non-Afrikaans-speaking (Coetzee-van Rooy 2006).

Bourdieu chooses to emphasise relations (exchanges and perception) rather than positions (role, identity) and dynamic processes rather than rigid structures. This dynamic perspective thrives on open-endedness and manages to avoid any fatalistic or deterministic outlook on the situation studied (which would have given this study a strong and possibly outdated or even irrelevant Marxist undertone).

This is due to two factors: firstly, instead on focusing on the "nodes" of a field (its social actors as they are positioned in the field), the analyst takes as a point of departure the paths that link these nodes together and that regulate their rapport. However, where structuralism would study a phenomenon in isolation from its context, I argue in favour of a contextual and relational analysis. Secondly – and this is where Bourdieu dissociates himself from Marxism – where Marxist theory is based on the assumption that power struggle is by nature deterministic and can only end in a revolution, Bourdieu (1982) believes that the sociological

analyses of fields should conclude with solutions and recommendations to level possible inequalities and "distribute power" more evenly. This viewpoint is consistent with his emphasis on empiricism (i.e. concrete situations rather than theoretical forecast).

This typical Bourdieusian flexibility is in line with the rationale behind the use of grounded theory, a mode of analysis that also provides room for change and complexity rather than rigidity and determinism (i.e. the belief that the so-called established social order cannot be altered). As Bourdieu himself explains (1977), the sociologist must avoid "*transformer des lois ou des régularités historiques en lois éternelles*" ("transforming historical laws or regular occurrences into eternal laws", my translation).

4.3.2 Power

Power, the concept at the root of relational exchanges in the field, is defined by Foucault (1980: 183) as follows:

> An essentially judicial mechanism, as that which lays down the law, which prohibits, which refuses, and which has a whole range of negative effects: exclusion, rejection, denial, obstruction, occultation

In this definition, power is both authority and the source of authority. This axiom produces circularity in that it is reproductive, as we are going to see. It is a fairly Marxist perspective of the concept since it only envisages negative effects of the way power operates. Foucault later develops this definition by stating that

> [b]etween every point of a social body, between a man and a woman, between the members of a family, between a master and his pupil, between everyone who knows and everyone who does not, there exist relations of power which are not purely and simply a projection of the sovereign's great power over the individual; they are rather the concrete, changing soil in which the sovereign's power is grounded, the conditions which make it possible for it to function ... For the state to function in the way that it does, there must be ... quite specific relations of domination

> which have their own configuration and relative autonomy. (1980: 187)

For Foucault, power is not restricted to a class of individuals imposing their norms so that these can be reproduced, as Bourdieu and Bernstein both contend, but is rather a force that must be envisaged as something that

> circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. (1980: 98)

There are a few implications to these statements. First, power is normative (it is judicial and it lays down the law): all relations have got to be defined in relation to it, in relation to the amount of power an agent in the field is being given, culturally (Afrikaans-speaking or not) or institutionally (student, interpreter, lecturer). It represents the mould for all relations to be developed and the backbone on which all reflexes will be played out and negotiated with other agents. In that respect, all other elements are satellites to it.

Secondly, power sets boundaries that can help to define a field (these boundaries end when agents are disbanded and when the effect of their relationships ends as a consequence, i.e. beyond the walls of the classroom). What power does is define a framework of exchanges regulated culturally (Afrikaans-speaking, non-Afrikaans-speaking) and institutionally (depending on the hierarchical position of the agent: student, interpreter, lecturer) within which relationships are pre-established, on the basis of dominant culture and subordination to it. This is quite true for the academic setting, where positions are necessarily predetermined without any negative undertones.

Foucault's second definition is not so much about the source and essential nature of power but rather about power as a process and normative "language" of

a field. Both norms and boundaries, in my opinion, manage to give a field its capacity to exist and function – and also to maintain the relationships of domination and the subordination that are inherent to it.

Foucault and Bourdieu argue that the meaning of power is understood through its capacity and intention to reproduce relationships of domination. Discourse is used, in this perspective, to perpetuate a more or less implicit order of things. In this case the reproductive aspect of this order becomes difficult to assess with the presence of the interpreter because, in addition to interpreting, he or she also transmits dominant values and education to agents who are not in possession of what Bourdieu calls an "admission fee" to the mainstream group (bearing in mind that the presence of the interpreter does not guarantee this "admission fee").

As was said above, power circulates in the studied environment, which Bourdieu terms "field".

4.3.3 Field

Central to sociological relations and positions is the space within which those occur – what Bourdieu calls "field" – using the metaphor of a magnetic field to describe the power generated and distributed by the agents present in the said field.

The term "field" is to be understood as a complex canvas on which relationships are being "played out" and which in our case is delimited in time (a lecture) and space (a lecture room), but which exists within a greater institutional framework that must be taken into account, because the field studied – the interpreted lecture – is a product of this greater framework. In many ways this "macrofield" already imposes relationships in the field from the outside. Four agents are interacting within the field we study: lecturer, interpreter, user of the interpreting services and Afrikaans-speaking students.

A field, in Bourdieu's words (1992: 16)

> consists of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital).

By objective relations, Bourdieu means "imposed from the outside". In turn,

> it is the relations of force between players that define the structure of the field. (1992: 99)

Within a given space individuals interact and build "local" identities (*habitus*) common to this space. It is in this space that relations of domination and subordination are constructed or pre-established – even more so in an academic context, where hierarchy is self-evident (lecturer, student).

The relations within the field studied are, firstly, institutional in nature. The university determines the language (and thus discourse) and appoints the lecturers and the students register for degrees and attend classes. All the agents accept their own role and functions (teaching, learning, interpreting); the existence of a lecture room with a lecturer and students is the living proof of this complex agreement. Bourdieu (1982) calls this acceptance a "*rapport de complicité subie*" (a relationship of imposed complicity).

In this field agents cannot logically challenge their own positions or those of another agent. Positions are defined on the basis of two criteria: language, since the field is divided between Afrikaans and English (L2, L3, etc.), and power, because a typical lecture setting is polarised between students and lecturers and power as it is defined above typically centres on the distribution of knowledge through a particular language and discourse, which necessarily contains traces of the dominant culture.

In this context the distribution of power becomes more complex with the presence of an interpreter, as we will see below.

In order to describe the interweaving relations between all agents in the field – and their directions, their dynamics and rules – the analyst selects

> the forces that are active in the field ... because they produce the most relevant differences. (Bourdieu 1992: 101)

Since these positions are self-evident (agents – students, lecturer, etc. – are defined by the name of their positions), it is sterile to focus on them in order to define or redefine their role: the analysis of a particular agent or position in the field would result in a rigid and fixed definition focusing on positions rather than relations. It would be closer to some kind of "job description" that would not shed any light on the relationship between the positions defined.

Indeed, Bourdieu repeatedly affirms that the study of a particular social space is about the "primacy of relations" in a given context rather than the study of isolated "positions". Bourdieu's key concepts of field and capital (i.e. power) are, in his own words, "bundles of relations" (1992: 16) and as a consequence cannot be subjected to a "monist" method of analysis (1992: 15). This means that such relations cannot be studied under the lens of a set approach, since relations are dynamic by nature. Accordingly, the interviews I conducted dealt mostly with relations rather than positions, with perceptions rather than so-called objective facts.

However, the relationships between agents are not arbitrary. Bourdieu (1992: 101) explains that a field is not so much a space of consensus as it is a space of struggle between the attempt to reproduce existing relations and the configuration in place. This point illustrates the reproductive effect of fields in general and education in particular. Like Bernstein, Bourdieu, quoted in Mills and Gale (2007: 434), indicates that the educational system as a field not only reproduces but also legitimises practices "through the hidden linkages between scholastic aptitude and cultural heritage".

Crossley (2003: 44) states that fields are characterised by an unbalanced distribution of "forms of capital pertinent to them". The struggles inherent to the field aim at possessing the "objects of the aforementioned struggles".

This leads us to the definition of the local "doxa". There is a particular cultural heritage occupying the seat of power on the Potchefstroom campus (as opposed to universities using English as the official, "compromising", language). This heritage is endowed with legitimacy through hegemony, rendering all other "heritages", be they local or not, marginal.

Thus, a local doxa is formed, splitting practices between orthodoxy – the ability to speak and understand Afrikaans – and heterodoxy. Bourdieu (1992: 107) adds that

> there is something like an 'admission fee' that each field imposes and which defines eligibility for participation, thereby selecting agents over others. People are at once founded and legitimised to enter the field by their possessing a definite configuration of properties.

This admission fee, which easily could be identified with proficiency in Afrikaans, is waived thanks to the presence of an interpreter. Indeed, the one condition before the implementation of the services that would have enabled a student to enrol would have been that he or she was proficient in Afrikaans. If the student had not been in possession of this "fee", entrance would have been denied or at the very least difficult. Once the services were implemented the admission fee disappeared, but this did not necessarily make the new non-Afrikaans-speaking students more "eligible" for the field. The services did enable these new students to bypass normative requirements and be integrated in the field by way of exemption. But this "favour", since it can only be characterised as such, bears the mark of inequality through its very nature. The doxic environment did not adapt its structure to accommodate the new studentship: instead, an appendix to the existing structure was added rather than included to the field. This allowed the

doxa to perpetuate itself unchanged and uninfluenced by the "accommodation" of a new, non-threatening element.

Let us now see how capital circulates in this field and how it distributes power.

4.3.4 Power's object of desire: Capital

As cited below the classroom is like a market place, in Bourdieu's terms, where dominant discourse, or doxa, is produced and "sold". As in any market place, capital is at the centre of all transactions, regardless of who is involved: the "power-ful" lecturer transmits educational capital to learners, who have duly paid their registration fees to receive the relevant services, which will be used later, one can assume, as capital to trade against a job.

Bourdieu equates the dynamics of a field with a linguistic market, using the vocabulary of economics (and therefore of power). Bourdieu (1977: 3) contends that

> *toute situation linguistique fonctionne comme un marché sur lequel quelque chose s'échange. Ces choses sont bien sûr des mots, mais ces mots ne sont pas seulement faits pour être compris ; le rapport de communication n'est pas un simple rapport de communication, c'est aussi un rapport économique où se joue la valeur de celui qui parle.* (Any linguistic situation works like a market where something is being exchanged. This "something" is, of course, words; but these words are not only uttered to be understood. The communicative relationship is not as simple as it looks. It is also an economic relationship where the value of the speaker is at stake.) (My translation)

We argue, in addition, that this market is regulated by the dominant agent in the field, since he or she is the one transmitting capital that will be distributed or sold to both legitimate and, owing to the interpreter, subordinate agents.

The place of the classroom interpreter in this equation is an unresolved issue. In the case of the users of the interpreting services the reception and fruition of this

capital for the users depends partially on the interpreters and how they tackle their power-broking role beyond the task of purely "translating", which one can associate with the notion of the interpreter as an "invisible conduit" of a message. It must be said, of course, that the capital mentioned here is also distributed outside the classroom via study guides, textbooks and all other elements that contribute to the educational objective. Lecturers, too, use English when necessary, as is reflected in the interviews conducted with them. Thus, the transmission of capital does not rest solely on the interpreters' shoulders.

In the classroom, however, the interpreter is the principal broker and facilitator, transforming, adapting and transferring dominant capital and orthodoxy to heterodox users. Through the interpreter, the capital is received and transformed, taking the form of a non-dominant and marginal language. The crux of this transaction is another agent – the interpreter – who one assumes is endowed with a certain level of authority in terms of language and interpreting skills. However, one can also reasonably assume that this level of authority in the dominant sphere is not comparable to that of the "prophetic" lecturers. In the field the interpreter is given the position of liaison agent between the doxic space and the margin; his or her role is not to integrate but to facilitate communication between the two spaces, which remain above all separate. In this instance the interpreter does not benefit from the same position as the lecturer, who remains unchallenged in the field. What remains firmly in place is what Bourdieu (1990: 20) calls "the relation of pedagogic communication [as] an elective encounter between the 'master' and the disciple'" (1990: 20). As a "prophet in the pay of the state" (Bourdieu 1990: 20), lecturers as symbols cannot be challenged, at least on a relational level.

Between students and lecturers, interpreters are the only agent whose relationship to power is unclear. From an institutional viewpoint interpreters do not act on the same level as lecturers and are not students either: they are mediators. They are in the field yet at the same time in its margins, seemingly

having no other power than relaying capital. Institutionally, they seem to be in the limbo of power relations. The ultimate goal of lectures is to educate (for the lecturers) and become educated (for the students); yet interpreters do neither. We will see, however, that those seemingly obvious assumptions can be refuted and questioned.

Having described these key concepts, we will now define the framework within which perceptions appear: what Bourdieu calls "*habitus*".

4.3.5 Habitus

Habitus can be defined, for the purposes of our study, as the "social personality" of agents, i.e. their ways of dealing with the field in which they participate. Habitus is also a strategy that contains, in many complex and infinitely diverse ways, the relation of the individual to the field's circulation of power. In other terms, *habitus* is a set of reflexes that allows participation in the field; it is the recognition of a position within a space and as such is an underlying recognition of where power lies and where it is going. Habitus allows the individual not only to be in the field, but also to remain in it for his or her own purposes. Consequently, *habitus* is an unsaid contract of the individual with the field to accept its rules, even though these might not be fully understood.

Within the field agents operate and act according to this "strategy-generating principle" (Bourdieu 1992: 18) that is *habitus*. This notion is further described as an internalised set of "dispositions" and "reflexes" ("*des structures sociales intériorisées*", 1977) that are constructed in relation to the dominant force or power in a given field; it is what Bourdieu often called a "feel for the game" rather than a determined and unflinching set of reflexes. As was indicated previously, this expression signifies that there are no strict sociological laws at work in the concept, but rather directions and strategies. Also, this "feel for the game" implies

that the game in question, i.e. the field and how it is working, is not fully understood.

Habitus is not so much a function as it is the generation and maintenance of reflexes and strategies linked to a particular field: they are "ways of being" in the field. Habitus is partially defined by the relationships described above and is also, according to Gale and Densmore, made of "tendencies and propensities to act in certain ways". It is informed, too, by the notion of cultural capital, since agents' reflexes are partially based on the sense of "where they belong" (Bourdieu 2001: 604). Already, it is evident that there is within the field studied an orthodox cultural capital and a marginal set of other cultural capitals. In the restricted market place of the Potchefstroom campus, one particular capital has more value than any others. In that perspective the interpreter exists to "give more value" to those agents who have unrecognised capital.

4.3.6 Symbolic violence and doxa

Doxa could be described as a normative, conventional attitude or, more precisely, a set of unspoken norms in force in a given social space.

The origin of power in our study takes root in two doxa – the university (institutional) and Afrikaans (linguistic/cultural). Institutional doxa implies that the field is occupied by agents who accept their norms and positions as natural. Those positions are defined within an institutional framework, which has its own laws and traditions; it is, one could say, like a micro-society with its written and unwritten rules. The compliance with these rules represents the criteria for entrance into the field.

These positions will remain unchallenged owing to the interest all agents have in their own situation: the lecturer is paid to lecture, the student has paid to receive the lectures and the interpreter is paid to interpret. Of course, the monetary factor

is not the only parameter to take into account: one has to assume these social agents also occupy their position because they want to.

The secondary doxa is linguistic, or even cultural, and can be described as the norms and values of Afrikaans as they more or less are applied officially to a university setting, i.e. the language of instruction.

Lecturers will fully acknowledge this dual doxa (all lecturers represent the institution and most lecturers are Afrikaans speakers, although the university is now employing more and more foreign nationals; similarly, not all lecturing staff are Afrikaans speakers), which represents the origin of power, and they may be subtle about it or not, as the data shows. Indeed, some lecturers do not insist on the use of Afrikaans but some, according to the users and interpreters alike, are quite frank about this aspect and do not hesitate to suggest that the users should learn Afrikaans to make things easier (see data). But the lecturer cannot occupy his or her position without embracing or at least continuing to uphold this doxa.

However, the notion of doxa is dynamic, not static, and it needs to enforce itself and to be maintained in order to survive and, to some extent, be enforced. This equation gives birth to reproduction and to the reproductive role of lectures, in our case. Indeed, perpetuating any kind of doxa – be it religious or other – requires the implementation of certain rituals whose aim is to ensure the survival of the norms and values in question. Lecturing in Afrikaans on the campus is, like many other elements that do not pertain to this study, much like a generalised ritual: it may actually be one of the most important rituals.

According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1990: 4), this doxa is enforced through the implementation of *symbolic violence*. They also state that education is defined as

> a power that manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force, add[ing] its own specifically symbolic force to those power relations.

Symbolic violence is the series of acts that maintain the domination of one doxa over any other; in addition, it is the marginalisation of any other element that is not deemed to pertain to it. As such, the English language can only benefit from a secondary importance and status in the lecture room, both institutionally and culturally.

This doxa extends beyond the institutional framework to include ideology or culture. Even in the case where "universal truths" are taught in lectures, can they be taught with traces of ideology, be it linguistic or other? For Bourdieu and Passeron (1990: 10)

> authority plays a part in all pedagogy, even when the most universal meanings (science and technology) are to be inculcated ...
> and
>
> ... the idea of pedagogic action without pedagogic authority is a logical contradiction and a sociological impossibility. (1990: 12)

Symbolic violence is in any case quite visible in the cases where lecturers treat users or interpreters inappropriately (by implying that users should learn Afrikaans, for instance, as seen in the data).

Symbolic violence and the abuse thereof (in the case where a lecturer makes inappropriate comments on the marginalisation of the users) has the effect of bringing about the proxy model in the interpreters. The translation of this is the use of moral filters and moral decision making, as we will see.

In short, reproductive practices aiming at perpetuating the local doxa can take place quite harmlessly if not tainted with abusive symbolic violence – a symbolic violence with no object since the campus is quite openly Afrikaans in culture, a fact that all students accept when they enrol.

Having indicated and inscribed in our particular context the main Bourdieusian concepts we are using for this study, we will now attempt to apply and expand these on the basis of the data collected and analysed in the previous chapter.

4.4 Interpreter *habitus*: Mediator model versus proxy model

From the data gathered it appears that the interpreters' *habitus* revolves largely around two models: mediation or proxy.

The mediator model (loyal to the job and the message) tends to see role and function as boundary-defined facilitation, where power and discourse are transmitted strictly from one point to another. As we have seen in the previous chapter, only a few interpreters use this model very consistently and without compromise; only one of them (Tim) uses it all the time by focusing on boundaries. The object of this model is the task of interpreting. It is apparent from the interview data analysed in the previous chapter that this model implies isolation from the rest of the classroom; although interpreting is still considered a human activity, the centre is the word. The mediator interpreter remains outside the space instead of being in the middle of it. This particular model is close to the generally accepted norms of conference interpreting, since it privileges notions such as neutrality, boundary setting and focus on "the job". The data collected shows it is almost a "defence mechanism" against the proxy model ("loyal to the user"), which in contrast assumes that there is a relation of dependency between user and interpreter, where the interpreter is vested with unsaid power from the lecturer to deliver a message.

The proxy model, on the other hand, evidently implies that the transmission of a message is crucial, but not for the sake of the transmission itself as is the case in the mediator model. In the proxy model the message is not the end, but the means to achieve a particular goal (empowerment, education) that is not linked directly to interpreting as an activity. The proxy interpreter is "in" the classroom,

"among" the agents in it and for him or her interpreting is an essentially human, rather than verbal or technical, task. Of course, this model is less conservative in terms of human relations, but does bring about confusion in terms of notions such as loyalty and role perception. This could be acceptable if situations were not created where the use of such a model prevents any rational decision making, for instance when the lecturer speaks too fast (simplification, not using "bombastic" language) or when he or she jokes or makes inappropriate comments of any kind. This is not in any way about condoning one particular model over the other, but about contrasting the absence of provision of appropriate practical strategies to deal with the proxy model. The long-standing and legendary "invisibility" of the interpreter overshadows the lack of technique for the proxy model. The use of a mediator model simply involves the transmission of the message devoid of any social sensitivity; the use of the proxy model includes social intention in the interpreting process owing to the presence of loyalties and of a certain human factor that prevents the interpreter from "hurting anyone" and saying things that go against his or her value system (swear words, for instance).

Interpreting as an activity does require norms (Inghilleri 2003) in order to generate standard reactions (appropriateness of interpreting a particular type of language, for instance) to extraordinary situations. Mediator interpreting is normative on its own, since it is not involved in the social world, but in language alone. Proxy interpreting, however, complicates matters substantially by demanding a set of norms for social interactions: to the question whether it would be appropriate to interpret swear words, the answer for a proxy interpreter would be difficult to determine (hence the differences in reactions to this question in the interviews with the interpreters). If sensitivity to the social geography in the lecture room is to be taken into consideration, however, and if the proxy model is to be defended, rules need to be defined for it. It is probably due to this absence of rules that interference with the interpreting process of this nature has been frowned upon since the birth of interpreting as a fully-fledged science. If the proxy

model aims at bridging the power differential identified between the central space of the field and its margin, it would be unfair to condemn it. Instead, it would be constructive to support it with practical strategies for the interpreters.

The relevant literature relating to interpreting is beginning to show signs of this dual *habitus* in the form of debates relating to a crisis in the interpreter's role (Inghilleri 2003; Angelelli 2006; Rudvin 2007; Hale 2004). Hale argues that this ambivalence is due to conflicting demands from the outside world: the interpreter is "yielding to the other parties' pressure" (2004: 1). I argue that this ambivalence, in our study, is a choice that the interpreters make quite consciously, as was seen in the previous chapter: when interviewed, the interpreters indicate quite clearly that it is *their* choice to opt for one of the two models described above. When some of them choose to act as moral filters they become proxies, since the enforcement of values on the part of the interpreter is carried out for him- or herself, but also for the users. Clearly, Hale's theory (2004) that a decision or choice is imposed on the interpreter is not accurate: it is the interpreter's choice to adopt a particular strategy. We must acknowledge that he or she operates in a professional vacuum where "norms" are fleeting concepts and have been defined against linguistic backbones, but not social sensitivities. Indeed, normative strategies must be formulated to change not necessarily the environment where the interpreter works, but rather the way the interpreter acts and how he or she can adopt certain strategies regardless of the model chosen. It is unrealistic to ask the interpreter to prefer one model to the other. It is quite possible to be a proxy interpreter and do a good job, even in difficult situations where values are called upon and act as protection for the self and the other. These strategies, however, have not been defined as yet.

The two models bring about different planes of expectation and result. The mediator model is one of withdrawal from relations and objectivation of discourse; the proxy model is one of involvement (to various extents). This involvement in the power vested to the proxy also has consequences for the relation of the

interpreter to the seat of power in the field: as a representative of the user, the interpreter assumes that his or her job is, of course, the delivery of a translated message but he or she is also a power broker on behalf of the user. Although also focusing on the message, the proxy is sometimes (too) sensitive toward the end-user, at the expense of the message, as was seen in the previous chapter. Because of the mostly downstream, lecturer-to-interpreter-to-student, one-way communication model in force in the interpreted lecture, the moral filter used by the interpreter has no effect on the lecturer, for evident reasons. As a consequence, some situations for the proxy model can involve competition with the lecturer (for interpreters who have expert knowledge of the field in which they are interpreting: some think they can do a better job than the lecturer, according to the data, thereby believing they can provide a better service to the user). In addition to this, because the proxy model is focusing more on the "transmission of capital", the proxy interpreter empowers him- or herself with the ability to make decisions on behalf of the users (i.e. simplification, not using bombastic language, as one of the users had it and the synthesis of content when a lecturer speaks too fast).

The data clearly indicates that the users have never requested that the interpreter adopt this role rather than that in the mediator model. Since the users do not show any tangible sign of empathy towards the interpreters – and while the reverse is true – the interpreters make these choices of their own accord.

The two models are not set for any one interpreter, because situations vary and because interpreters naturally will be more comfortable with some lecturers than with others. Also, the data indicates that the notion of responsibility and role is crucial to the perception of their role. This is also a regular issue in the literature: Hale (2004: 10) mentions the "interpreters' confusion about who their client is", for instance. In Roberts (2000: 51), Pöchhacker quotes Anderson (1976: 216f), who states that

> the interpreter's position is also characterized by role overload. Not only is it seldom entirely clear what he is to do, he is also frequently expected to do more than is objectively possible.

This concurs very much with the pressure interpreters felt regarding the choice of either the proxy or the mediator model. The above is in many ways also a consequence of the lack of strategy defined for an alternative model of interpreting that would recognise rather than reject social sensitivity and sensibility on the part of the interpreter. The "role overload" thus described is not so much an overload as it is a lack of mapping for a kind of interpreting that also empowers the interpreter. In a situation where the interpreter is instructed to be "objective" and to reject against his or her better judgement any form of subjective intervention, it is no wonder that loyalty is difficult to deal with. As Hale (2004: 6) puts it,

> the most difficult obstacle to overcome in the interpersonal sphere is the self, the natural inclination as a human to reach out and help, to make judgments about who is right or wrong, to ensure fairness, to fix things when they go wrong.

Hale (2004: 6) further quotes Angelelli (2003), who contends that these inclinations and reflexes are in fact impossible to control. Hale (2004: 6) refutes this argument, however, by asserting that

> they can be controlled when the interpreter is secure in her/his professional identity and aware of the consequences of deviating from the role of interpreting accurately.

This is all very well, but Hale's critique assumes that lecturers actually play the game and deliver clear-cut and well-prepared lectures for which the interpreters have been able to prepare adequately, as they would for a conference paper where the text has been made available in advance. As we have seen in the interview data, this is not always the case and in comparison to a conference situation the classroom interpreter has to adapt to a range of challenging personal choices.

In our case, the choice of the proxy model over the mediator model, or vice-versa, occurs in a context where precisely the so-called professional identity of the interpreter is not normatively defined. During the interviews, the interpreters admit that the kind of interpreting they do is not exactly conference interpreting, but it is not community or liaison interpreting either.

In our case, too, the interpreters clearly are not aware of the consequences of one model over another. As discussed in the previous chapter, none of them mention that they are simplifying or adding to the content of the lecture – a characteristic of the proxy interpreter – but this practice is perceived, rightly or wrongly, among some of the users.

Situations in the field dictate the choice of one model over the other, of one loyalty over the other, and such a choice is made by the interpreter alone for lack of norms. The mediator typically becomes a proxy when he or she feels that the users are not considered appropriately by the lecturer or, on a more permanent basis, when the interpreter believes that his or her job is to empower rather than to interpret. The proxy may become a mediator when he or she has nothing to worry about other than the transmission of the message, or when he or she has made the conscious choice of setting up boundaries, as Tim puts it (see previous chapter).

In conclusion, both proxy and mediator models are a hierarchy of sensitivity to the social environment. The mediator model assumes that this sensitivity should only be directed toward the accuracy and quality of delivery of the message; the proxy model assumes the same, while shifting some measure of weight behind social awareness too. The debate, however, must go beyond which is right and which is wrong: until the proxy model is viewed as an acceptable model of interpreting and adequate norms have been defined for it, it is no wonder that the mediator model will be seen as the only perspective worthy of interpreting, which, according to this study, is unrealistic. That the interpreter can make subjective

choices and bring his or her own judgement in order to act as a filter is not in itself synonymous with bad interpreting but, like the other model, strategies need to be defined in it in order for the interpreter to know what to do in a given situation.

4.5 User *habitus*: passive model and active model

Users are previously powerless agents in this particular field (actually, they were previously absent from this field) – owing to their marginality – and are now given "discreet" power through whispered English. Is there a newly-acquired power and, if there is, is this perceived by the users?

The results produced by the interpreting services are positive and to a certain extent contribute to making the users feel integrated. But this process of integration is complex and depends, in the field studied, on the perceived reliability of the interpreter. The consequence is that if the interpreter does not "do his or her job" the process of integration fails, as is evident from several of the interviews. Users then shift from a passive model to an active one. According to the data narrated in the previous chapter, this active model reacts sometimes to the perceived quality of interpreting, but also to the politics of it. Active students will consistently consider the interpreting services a "trick" to keep Afrikaans on the campus and to make the best of both worlds by implementing a system where it cannot be said they did not do anything to implement a transformation agenda.

In this context, however, the term "passive" indicates that the process is perceived by the user to be functioning adequately, i.e. that the interpreting services are integrated seamlessly into the environment and that they effectively produce positive marks. In spite of the artificiality of the interpreting process, the user feels that the services are working and producing the desired results. This perception exists for several reasons: a connection can be made by the students

between good marks and the quality of the interpreting, but also, quite simply, through the adaptation of language to the user. As was indicated in the previous chapter, some users find the interpreting services very helpful because the (proxy) interpreter speaks their kind of language (the content of the lecture is transmitted but the register may be adapted at the interpreter's discretion).

When the "backstage work" is perceived to function, the integration process is a success and none of the users in this category has anything negative to say about the services. The fact that there is nothing wrong with the services, however, should not always be construed as lack of criticism culture, as one of the active users has it (see previous chapter). If the process is perceived by the user to work and to result in an increase in the marks, the passive user will focus on the result rather than refer back to the process.

Sometimes, however, when the integration process is perceived to have failed (an interpreter not "doing his job", a lecturer not acknowledging the users as part of the lecture or, more generally, when the interpreting service is perceived negatively in itself as an instrument of political correctness), the backstage curtain is askew and allows the users to see the mechanisms of the process as well as its potential failures. The active model surfaces then and leads to stark criticism of the services provided, as well as the local social environment. Active model users show a degree of criticism that can only match the blissful satisfaction shown by passive model users, for whom the services are obviously working.

As with the interpreter *habitus* models, user *habitus* is not restricted permanently to one model over the other. Even very active model users acknowledge that not all classes go wrong and some passive model users mention isolated cases where the services are not delivered appropriately, for a number of reasons. The point is that active users envisage the process as a whole rather than in its details; they seem to have considered the process in a more holistic manner and

have cast a judgement on its relevance in education at large. For that reason, even though they must use the interpreting services and acknowledge that most of the time the interpreting delivered is of good quality, the idea of the services themselves is difficult to accept in a positive light. As for the interpreters' *habitus*, it is inadequate to say that one perspective is more right than the other. The passive model's scope is limited to the practical, everyday advantage that the services bring; the active model focuses on the long-term and global scope of the same services. For the active model the motto very well could be that "the end does not justify the means": the difficult question supporting this *habitus* is really whether they are producing adequate results *the right way*.

Needless to say, the views of both active and passive models remain subjective perceptions. As such, both are sometimes anchored in real situations and reflect a reasonable outlook on the services. However, both sometimes reflect a serious lack of criticism indeed and, on the other end of the scale, a very harsh judgement against what has been implemented, for better or worse, to accommodate them.

The relevance of this dichotomy in terms of the field is essential. The passive model is the doxa's dream of perfect integration with no ripples and is the proof that symbolic violence works perfectly, in the sense that the so-called integration of students who were denied entry into the field previously not only is successful but is accepted ecstatically and unquestionably. The coercion of the passive student into the doxic environment is seamless and the student feels that integration has occurred successfully.

The active model is more than acutely aware of the symbolic violence exercised by the doxa and, although the students using this *habitus* are made to accept the rules, they accept them reluctantly and by voicing their awareness of "what is really going on" in no uncertain terms: the interpreting services are a smokescreen for a weak transformation process and the so-called integration in

the name of transformation is only a perversion of the latter. This model is acutely aware of the marginal status, which has not subsided in this new "ideal situation".

Both interpreters' and users' *habitus* can be refined using a geopolitical framework, which we will see in the next section. Proxy and mediator, passive and active models, reflect different positioning arrangements of the relevant agents in the field. More than *habitus*, they are geopolitical choices.

4.6 Geopolitics of hierarchy and hierarchy of geopolitics

4.6.1 Federal and local constituencies

We have seen that the appropriation of power or the lack of this appropriation leads the interpreter to the adoption, respectively, of the proxy and the mediator model. Before power reaches the interpreter, what are its spatial dynamics?

In the distribution of power embodied by the lecturer's prophetic monologue – a monologue whose existence relies on the socially superior position a lecturer occupies in the field – the interpreter is made to act as relay and is expected, quite logically to use a mediator model because that is the model that fits institutional expectations best in terms of neutrality and objective performance. We have seen that there is more to this than meets the eye, as the interpreter sometimes also acts as filter to various extents when he uses the proxy model. This filtering activity is seen through the various choices an interpreter can make and that results in one way or another into the modification of the lecturer's discourse.

One of the consequences of this filtering process is that the interpreter acquires some of the socio-educational and epistemological power that was enjoyed almost exclusively by the lecturer in a non-interpreted class. As we saw in the

previous section, filtering as a proxy means brokering power and redistributing capital subjectively.

This is not so much a shift in power as it is a redistribution of it. Using geopolitical terminology to define how and where this power is directed, I argue that two constituencies appear: one federal (all-encompassing) and the other local.

The overall ("federal") authority belongs to the lecturer, who teaches and distributes capital for all students regardless of whether they use the services or not. Naturally, the lecturer is not expected to give his or her lecture in two languages so the interpreter is seconded to this authority – he or she is institutionally employed – at a "local" level to deal with an equally local community. This community belongs to both the federal and the local constituencies in different ways: federal, because the voice of education is the lecturer's, in the classroom, and local, because the mouthpiece of the federal authority is the interpreter's. This local authority acts in line with what is required from it at federal level and, institutionally, the interpreter is required tacitly to establish a perfect correspondence between local and federal. Both planes are necessarily intertwined, with downstream authority pouring from the federal and reaching the local. In this dynamic, the institutional assumption is that capital is distributed evenly between both constituencies.

The L1 Afrikaans students, however, do not need to be included in a local community, since their natural and tacit adhesion to the doxa of the campus makes them part of the federal constituency almost automatically. In doxic terms, there is no hierarchy – except the pedagogic one – between them and the lecturer: the linguistic field is even.

The emergence of the two models, mediator and proxy, has an impact on the geopolitics of the field studied. On the one hand, the mediator model is a geopolitically neutral perspective in that the capital distributed to it is neither

questioned nor adapted: it is transferred to the local community. However, the proxy model interprets subjectively the capital handed down for immediate transfer: by nature, it is almost seceding from it. If the lecturer's discourse is adapted by the interpreter along parameters such as moral values, simplification, etc. then the interpreter's authority is an entirely new one; it has a degree of independence in relation to its mother constituency. But the consequences of that are quite dramatic because this secession is not always carried out with the users' awareness. Such a problem would not occur at federal level because, typically, the lecturer is indeed in charge of his or her lecture and, as the classroom observations have proved, lectures are not structured rigidly and uncompromisingly like a well-prepared and structured, 45-minute monologic speech. Institutionally, it is accepted that the lecturer deviates at reasonable will in order to add, modify and enhance the content of the lecture. Institutionally, however, the interpreter is not expected to do that.

The mediator model aims at identifying, as much as possible, with the federal sphere. The proxy model, on the other hand, offers a "geopolitical" split that may contribute, albeit unknowingly, to the further alienation of the community he or she represents. As was previously seen, by adopting the proxy model the interpreter is more sensitive towards his or her users, effectively acknowledging them as a distinct class of agents in the field. By defining the users as the object of their sensitivity, the interpreter gives existence to this class.

4.6.2 *Lector* versus *Auctor*

To illustrate these "tensions" relating to responsibility, Bourdieu and Passeron mention a useful medieval distinction, in higher education, between auctor, "who produces or professes 'extra-ordinarily' and the lector, who, confined to repeated, repeatable commentary on authorities, professes a message he has not himself produced". (1990: 57)

The interpreter is and remains, technically speaking, an intermediary: a lector who is neither the formulator of speech nor the receiver. Yet, interpreters embody the paradox that much of the responsibility towards their own constituency – the users – lies on their shoulders and not on those of the auctor. In other words, the choice of the proxy model can be better understood by the discrepancy between the responsibility of the interpreter and the expectation that he or she must be "silent" as to the discourse to be interpreted.

The interpreter is, to use yet another metaphor, between the hammer and the anvil, being entrusted with the crucial social mission to deliver what is being communicated in another language, but having no authority in what to say, only how to say it.

In this space where power relations and symbolic violence are at play, the socio-educational loyalty of the interpreter lies in a vacuum, in the midst of an environment in which he or she has to fit in as inconspicuously as possible (there are no booths in the rooms, just portable equipment): in more ways than one, the field does not adapt to the technical needs of the interpreter and remains by and large a "classic lecture". In this context, the legitimacy with which the dominant agent – the lecturer – is endowed is not transmitted to the interpreter.

Does the auctor also relay the symbolic violence used for the reproduction of the doxa in the classroom? Technically, it does not, for two reasons. On the one hand, we have seen that from time to time the interpreters may use the proxy model, thereby associating with the users and not the upstream authority. Secondly, the *language* used is different and said to be modified through the interpreter. I argue that the interpreter not relaying Bourdieu's symbolic violence leads to the creation of a heterodox community, as we will see below. I also argue that, as a consequence, the interpreter has more responsibility than power, as paradoxical as this may seem.

In this conceptualised view of education the interpreter is the last link between centre and margin, between federal and local. In many ways, an unfortunate conclusion is that it puts (in Bourdieusian terms) the margin further apart from the centre; at the very least, on a sociological level, the distinction between centre and margin is all too clear. Wearing headsets is an act of public self-identification to the "minority". This may be the reason the users never sit among the Afrikaans-speaking students, in spite of the equipment being quite unostentatious.

It appears that the interpreter makes the exclusion of the users official, as stated before, but also effectively grants the legitimacy of the dominant discourse to the excluded addressees. The practical outcome is certainly not negative, therefore, but the following question is warranted, nonetheless: do interpreting services accentuate the users' exclusion further? The data indicates that process-oriented users feel that the services are artificially grafted on them and they do not promote inclusion in the centre. In some cases, in fact, they make them feel even more excluded from this centre (i.e. the lecturer picking out the users of the interpreting services for their using English and not Afrikaans, the lecturer announcing a test when the interpreters are absent). While it has been admitted that the interpreting services are a useful and purposeful addition to the educational system in place on the campus and as we must recognise that there is, whatever the cost, a transmission of the educational capital towards the users, the question is really to determine the extent of the transmission of doxic capital, i.e. to what extent the users are socially integrated in the new system. The subtlety of the actual success of the services is in the way doxic integration is commensurate with linguistic accommodation. This is easier said than done, mostly because it would be unrealistic and unfair to require the interpreter to achieve this, too. The whole system must participate in this complex quest and the definition of strategies for the proxy model mentioned in section 4.4 could very well be a first step towards acknowledging the particular needs of the margin in order to integrate it more into the centre.

The position of interpreters in the field is at least one of "cultural proximity" with the centre – Bourdieu and Passeron's terms – since all of them, as Afrikaans natives, can be considered as belonging to the dominant class. However, they are not active in the cultural sense – only in the linguistic sense, as the lector/auctor metaphor indicated. In many respects the geopolitical divide has also revealed the hierarchy of positions in the field, as we are going to see.

4.7 Initiating the heterodox users into orthodoxy

The interpreter is the channel through which users are allowed and "initiated" into the field whose selection criteria include, among many other things, proficiency in Afrikaans. Without the interpreter, consequently, this initiation cannot take place and users remain, quite literally, on the margins of the lecture, for obvious reasons. The interpreter acts as a "proposer" to a candidate wishing to be inducted into a society whose membership is restricted and is granted on the basis of criteria. The role of the proposer, in this context, is to "formally put forward a motion ... for membership of a society" (OED).

Here we come back to Bourdieu's definition of the linguistic situation as a market (see section 4.3.4) where capital is exchanged through what is essentially a political (the way the position of the various agents in the situation is managed and imposed) and economic (an exchange of value is occurring) process.

The only remaining criterion to be fulfilled by the user in order to enter this economy is a knowledge of the language used in the classroom: from the margins, users finally move to the centre. Do they effectively reach it? As we have seen above, the matter can be quite complex.

There are several issues with this allegory of interpreting. First, such a theory confirms that the interpreters/proposers, although feeling loyalty towards the

candidate, are first and foremost part of the centre and not on the margins: they are, from their position, more proximate to the federal than the local. Their role is important: what they will say will determine the users' perception of the centre of power. The whole initiation process is therefore determined not so much by the institution as a whole but by the link between centre and margin, between federal and local. Through the initiation, the institution's doxa is inculcated, albeit indirectly, making available to the initiate the formerly hidden knowledge.

The downside of this ideal metaphor is that the very presence of the interpreter in the classroom implies a centre and a margin. In other terms, the interpreter's presence *is* the geopolitical split we previously discussed. Without him or her there would not be non-Afrikaans speakers in the room, so his or her presence is essential, although it comes at a price.

In a non-interpreted lecture, the whole field is the centre; in the interpreted lecture, the presence of the interpreter, regardless of whether he or she is doing a good job or not, is an acknowledgement that there are indeed two levels, two ranks in the field (in this metaphorical secret society, there are presumably ranks endowing individuals with more or less knowledge depending on their level within the institution). The interpreter symbolises the visible part of the exclusion of the dominated class. In this respect the institution's

> dominant pedagogic action ... inculcate[s] the fait accompli of the legitimacy of the dominant culture ... by inducing those excluded from the ranks of the legitimate addressees ... to internalise the legitimacy of their exclusion; by making those it relegates to second-order teaching recognize the inferiority of this teaching and its audience ... (Bourdieu 1990: 41)

This assertion confirms, at least on a theoretical level, that the interpreter is the element through which this exclusion is internalised – or made official, to say the least. Of course, "second-order teaching" is better than no teaching at all, as some of the users suggested. But the presence of "second-order teaching"

involves the presence of "first-order teaching" and, consequently, issues arise as to the "equality" that the services allegedly provide.

This exclusion is reinforced by the fact that the language used for Bourdieu's "second-order" teaching is not carried out in the users' first language; in most cases not even in their second. First-order teaching, to pursue that line of thought, is carried out in the native language of its recipients.

On a superficial level, the interpreting services do embody an instrument of integration. But to declare that they provide an equal footing and "level the field" for the users is a contradiction in terms: total equality, however this might be defined, can only be achieved for individuals receiving education in their first language and from a qualified educator. Instead, users are made to receive education in a third language and from an interpreter. The educational process is clearly a success but, eventually, the capital transferred to both constituencies is not identical.

4.8 Discourse as a vehicle of power

It is in discourse, this other regulating element of the field, that power is expressed, that capital is circulated and distributed. Before this mobility occurs, however, it is essential to remember that in education discourse is regulative, according to Morais and Antunes (1994: 243): it drives the principles of order, relation and identity dominant in a given society.

For Foucault the regulative nature described above is not unidirectional in nature and can be moderated:

> We must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies ... Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance

> for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy ... There is not, on the one side, a discourse of power, and opposite it, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy. (1990: 100-101)

In the context of this study, Morais and Antunes' (1994) and Foucault's (1990) views cannot be reconciled. On the one hand, discourse is authoritative and strongly directional in nature. On the other hand, it is omnipresent, almost non-spatial or non-directional. I must agree with the first definition and disagree to some extent with Foucault's in this matter: in the interpreted classroom, the lecturer's discourse is clearly "regulative" because of the doxic position occupied by him or her. In this field discourse is not only authoritative but the source of authority, since what is at stake is precisely the actual language used. The services are implemented because this authority and regulative power is unquestioned and would rather have an "appendix" rather than a reformulation to accommodate individuals from the margin. Foucault's above statement may be true and fair in general, or in theory; but in a situation where language and discourse are one and the same this regulation becomes radical, especially when we bear in mind, once again, the reproductive drive of dominant discourse explained in section 4.3.6.

But in this dually regulated field the situation becomes more complex when a *second* discourse and a second language, running parallel to the "official" ones, take place. This second discourse, transmitted through the proxy interpreter and his or her adaptation (style and/or content) for the user is of an underground nature (it is whispered through equipment) and serves the marginal community in the classroom, who are made to understand the "official discourse" through a language that is by and large equally underground. The interpreter, in this model,

is very much like an openly double agent serving the two discourses. The underground discourse is a "language of liberation" for the margins it serves.

In addition, for Bourdieu

> Le discours quel qu'il soit, est le produit de la rencontre entre un *habitus* linguistique, c'est-à-dire une compétence inséparablement technique et sociale (à la fois la capacité de parler et la capacité de parler d'une certaine manière, socialement marquée) et d'un marché, c'est-à-dire le système de « règles » de formation des prix qui vont contribuer à orienter par avance la production linguistique ... Or, tous ces rapports de communication sont aussi des rapports de pouvoir et il y a toujours eu, sur le marché linguistique, des monopoles, qu'il s'agisse de langues secrètes en passant par les langues savantes[1] (1982).

Bourdieu mentions essential elements in the above. The existence of "monopoles" on what is, for the author, a "linguistic market" leads to the emergence of monopolistic discursive practices. In our case this doxic monopoly breeds resistance through this "*langue secrète*" Bourdieu refers to: another discourse open to the margins or to the new initiates.

This co-existence of monopoly and resistance to it is what characterises the interpreted lecture. In addition to the notion of resistance, in the previous citation, Foucault insists on the fact that discourse, while being a vehicle of capital and power, can also be detrimental to the dominant agent, since it creates its own opposition (even more so in an interpreted lecture, where an underground, marginal discourse runs parallel to dominant discourse). This interlocked dialectic – meaning that one discourse cannot exist without the other, yet is naturally opposite to the other – is reminiscent of Hegel's concept of master and slave. But

[1] All discourses are the product of the encounter between a linguistic *habitus*, i.e. a competence that is both necessarily technical and social (it is both the ability to speak and the ability to speak in a certain social way), and a market, i.e. the system of "rules" that govern the definition of prices that are going to direct, in advance, linguistic production. At the same time, all these relationships of communication are also power relationships and there have always been, on the language market, monopoles – whether we are talking about secret languages or learned ones. (My translation)

in this perspective the proxy interpreter plays an important role in the empowerment of the margin towards the centre.

We will see in the next section that the object of this resistance, of this underground discourse, plays an important role in countering the reproductive aspect of education.

4.9 The reproductive function of dominant discourse

For Bourdieu, power acts to reproduce the relationships Foucault mentions, i.e. dominant discourse is perpetuated to further its own hegemony and domination. We have in our case a unique situation where the vehicle of reproduction through which this power is distributed is also the crux of power itself (Afrikaans as a dominant culture and language on the campus).

The objective of power and its vehicle, discourse, is to perpetuate a set of norms and values that is associated with the dominant agent. Accordingly, Bourdieu and Bernstein's theories on education rest on its reproductive aspect. According to Bernstein (1996: 19),

> [p]ower relations ... create boundaries, legitimize boundaries, reproduce boundaries, between different categories or groups, gender, class, race, different categories of discourse, different categories of agents. Thus, power always operates to produce dislocations, to produce punctuations in social space.

Bernstein implies the same idea (1990: 139) when he classifies the education system as reproducer and as "specialized agency in the field of symbolic control".

On the one hand, Bernstein confirms what the field is made of, but goes further and adds a vector to it. The field is moving in a particular direction and that direction is the reproduction of dominant culture and norms.

Bernstein also emphasises this point, indicating that educational systems tend to reproduce the norms of a dominant culture (orthodoxy) at the expense of heterodox "minorities". Evidently, before the interpreting services were implemented, it was rather difficult for a non-Afrikaans speaker to study at this particular campus of the university. From no access to educational capital the users now have access to some extent, in a field where cultural domination has not been modified in the least.

To indicate what each agent does to contribute to the reproductive effect of the field, Bourdieu (1977: 79) indicates that all agents produce *and* reproduce objective meaning. This inherent reproductive function – which all agents accept, one way or the other, in order to pay their admission fee to the field – is confirmed by Bernstein (1990: 165), for whom this reproduction penetrates all relations and evaluation of pedagogic discourse.

But, to bring a new perspective to the matter, the South African context at large is very different from the field of the interpreted lecture on the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. The government favours the previously underprivileged groups of the population within a complex set of regulations and strategies. From the margins on the campus, black students, in theory, do get to the centre when they leave the campus, through a national system implemented to re-establish some kind of social balance in the country.

Having assimilated all these points arguing for the presence of a reproductive function in the educational field, this notion is to be questioned with the presence of an underground/interpreted discourse. The dual discourse lecture puts a spanner in the works of the reproductive aspect of education, especially when a proxy interpreter is present: the underground discourse does not reproduce doxa, since the margin receives a discourse different from the official one, both in substance (if a proxy interpreter is present) and in form (a different language is used). There is no *reproduction* in this case, just *production* of meaning. The

official discourse is deverbalised, split open, analysed and rendered back into the marginal, underground language, adding sensitivity and awareness towards the users. The process is not reproductive in nature, but really and actually creative. The issue remains that a set of appropriate strategies need to be defined for the ambitious task that the proxy interpreter wishes to tackle.

For Bernstein and Bourdieu education is the mode of cultural reproduction of a dominant ideology: furthermore, it reproduces the social relations that exist *outside* of it. Bourdieu (1977: 10) explains that

> [i]n any given social formation the different PAs [pedagogic actions] ... tend to reproduce the system of cultural arbitraries characteristic of that social formation, thereby contributing to the reproduction of the power relations which put that cultural arbitrary into the dominant position.

I argue that there is an attempt to reproduce power relations, but this is not successful given the presence of an alternative discourse instrumentalised by the interpreter.

For the margin the produced discourse is original and, although it runs parallel to doxic discourse, it is an entirely new one in its own right (provided, as always, that its transmission is carried out with no problem). Thus, the reproductive function of the official discourse, without being interrupted for the centre it serves, has no real effect on the margin – even more so when the interpreters are "doing their job".

In this context the interpreter is doing much more, therefore, than just translating words. If we accept Bourdieu's "prophet" metaphor (1990: 20), where

> the professional ideology which transmutes the relation of pedagogic communication into an elective encounter between the 'master' and the 'disciple' induces teachers to misrecognize in their professional practice or deny in their discourse the objective conditions of that practice, and to behave objectively, as Weber says, like 'little prophets in the pay of the State',

then the margin manages, at least in the linguistic sense, to escape, through the services, the dialectical relationship between master and disciple. To use Hegelian notions, master and slave exist only through their relation of domination and submission. If there is no master there is no slave, and vice-versa: along the same lines, the absence of a master (or the non-recognition of any master but the representative of the underground, i.e. the interpreter) produces no disciple. It is a fitting conclusion to say that the underground margin is more independent than the centre, having no "master" to recognise owing to the production of an alternative and recognised discourse.

Reproduction is not, therefore, a finality, at least for the margin. Should this be disproved, however, Crossley (2003: 44) advocates the study of

> innovative actions by embodied agents [that] can both modify existing structures and generate new ones, breaking the 'circle' of reproduction.

The innovative actions mentioned above are nothing less than the strategies for proxy interpreters that have been advocated in this section. If indeed they manage to break the cycle of reproduction they should receive extensive attention in order to improve the deeper impact of the interpreting services.

4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter we have used geographic and hierarchical frameworks of reference to define the interpreters' and users' habitus that transpired from the data. As a first step we have seen that interpreters and users display two possible *habitus*, namely proxy and mediator and passive and active respectively. While the proxy interpreter refuses to restrict his or her role to the mere translation of a message and goes as far as to show awareness of who is in fact listening to him or her, the mediator interpreter safely focuses on the word only. In the other group the passive user uncritically acknowledges the results produced by the interpreting services by ignoring what the active users consider a smokescreen for unhindered cultural reproduction of domination on the campus.

These *habitus* can be envisaged within a space where federal and local (centre and margin) subspaces are the stage for such a reproduction. While the authoritative federal space manages to keep the margins at bay though a mediator (the interpreter), the latter's proxy model allows the margins effectively to approach, at least to some extent, the centre through a second language and discourse.

I have concluded that in this complex interplay of spaces only the proxy interpreter manages to transmit the message being interpreted in such a way that cultural reproduction is moderated, despite currently unorganised or non-existent strategies.

On the basis of these theories the next chapter will include recommendations regarding the way the interpreting services can be improved by informing the interpreters of the two models or trends identified in the interviews and of the discrepancies between their perceptions and those of the users. They should also be informed of the ripple effects of the dialectical relations between

dominant and dominated leading to the feeling of lack of integration on the part of active model users. In conclusion the theories proposed in this section will be used to determine directions for making the interpreting services a key player in the integration of non-Afrikaans speakers on campus.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

This study originally aimed at revealing the social *habitus* of interpreters and users of the interpreting services at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. Interviews were conducted with users, lecturers and interpreters in order to draw a picture of and generate a theory from the analysis of the perceptions expressed. The point of focus of the study was unconventional in the sense that it did not consider linguistic performances as indicative of a sociology of the interpreting services; rather, it was deemed more appropriate to concentrate on how the various stakeholders in the process, or the field of interpreting in the lecture room, saw their own positions as well as the practices of others. It was predictable that much of the data, especially that coming from the interviews conducted, focused far more on subjective perception than on objective reality. Consequently, in Chapter 2 we debated the question of the generalisation of the findings both at the local level (do the findings apply to all users and interpreters?) and at the global level (can the findings be applied to any classroom interpreting environment?). I concluded that this study should remain contextualised, and care should be exercised if the findings were to be applied to other contexts.

The first consequence of this is that the interpreting services cannot be envisaged as an isolated trope, but should rather be considered an integral part of a broader environment. As such, it is unfair and untrue to argue that the interpreting services are responsible in full for the success or failure of the integration agenda within whose framework they have been implemented: they are not the solution for every issue that will emerge regarding integration on the campus.

According to the data, it is also unreasonable to expect the interpreting services to be a strong factor of integration at all, since the study has revealed that they do not facilitate the integration of non-Afrikaans speakers in the classroom, but rather accommodate their differences. As a result, there is no integration – rather a discreet acknowledgement that those in the margins remain marginal and that the centre is still central. As was concluded in the previous chapter, the services only make the differences more visible, rather than eliminate them. In the broader framework of education on the campus, therefore, the interpreting services do not change anything in terms of transformation. What happens instead is that the dominant system remains untouched, and a parallel system is implemented: a system that is walled delicately behind invisible but nevertheless real social and linguistic boundaries.

Within this microcosmic element, however, the interpreting services facilitate communication and allow students who do not speak Afrikaans access to educational possibilities. All the same, in the interview data rifts appeared in the perceptions of users and interpreters. On the one hand, users are polarised between being harshly critical and not critical at all. An analysis of these two groups revealed that the former were focusing not so much on the results produced by the services, but on the way and the environment in which these were conducted, while the latter cast the spotlight on improved marks and experience. At a deeper level of analysis, the critical user envisages the services in the larger framework of transformation; a transformation that fails to materialise, since the services, although linguistically successful, fail to empower fully owing to the ever-marginal status of English and non-Afrikaans individuals in general and to the parallelism mentioned above.

On the part of the interpreters, the issue of loyalty arose as a prime divider. Some "classic" interpreters chose to be the transmitter of a message, but most of the others, while acknowledging this essential aspect of the job, could not but feel loyalty towards the community they felt they represented – the users. In many

ways, and to various extents of awareness, these interpreters choose to alter the message through various subtle and individually-defined strategies such as adaptation (of style, of content) or filtering (i.e. when the lecturer's words are deemed inappropriate for the users and the interpreters alike). Where classic literature on interpreting would argue that such an interventionist model of interpreting is unacceptable, I argue that subjectivity and social sensitivity in classroom interpreters cannot, as a basic notion, be inappropriate. What was identified in the data, however, was that these "proxy" interpreters make varying decisions that lack the guiding principles to exploit this perspective fully.

5.2 Recommendations

The above in no way suggests that the interpreting services should be discontinued. However, a primary recommendation is that they should be considered for what they are rather than what they are not. In brief, the interpreting services cannot be the only instrument for transforming education and integrating formerly disadvantaged groups on the campus. The interpreting services are only part of a larger dynamic and should not bear the unfair burden of effective transformation alone. A host of elements are required for the process to work effectively and deliver positive results for all stakeholders.

The second recommendation is a direct consequence of the first, and has to do with how the objective of the services is viewed by the university's management. It is an incorrect assumption that the university accommodates all languages because it offers interpreting services. The institution recognises Afrikaans as the language of instruction during the day and accommodates English in the evening classes. Therefore, with the implementation of the services, Afrikaans has remained untouched as a dominant language on the campus. English, as the "language of the night", becomes no more by day than a language whispered by the interpreter and heard through the users' headphones. In the two instances where English is used, therefore, it remains a discreet, distinct, distant language. Boundaries are kept safe and cultural walls are preserved. In addition to this, not

all programmes are offered in the evening. In fact, evening classes at the Faculty of Arts are being phased out. Consequently, the interpreting services are an instrument for reinforcing the existing boundaries, rather than breaking them down. While in reality the interpreting services may produce positive results, it would be inaccurate to say that they have brought change to the socio-educational landscape of the campus. The second recommendation, therefore, is of a political nature: the interpreting services are not agents of change. They should continue to be implemented because, in the words of the non-critical users, they are "better than nothing", but their importance in terms of change and transformation should not be exaggerated. More needs to be done institutionally within the general climate of the university.

The third recommendation, and possibly the one with the most bearing on the interpreters themselves, has to do with the proxy interpreting model identified in the previous chapter. The proxy interpreter – the interpreter who is sensitive to the needs of the users – should not be condemned as a good person without interpreting skills. Some users mentioned that they are quite happy with the interpreter adapting the lecturer's discourse for them, whether in style or in content. Such liberty on the part of the interpreter is only inappropriate if strategies and rules are not defined, as is currently the case. However, interpreters sometimes do have to revert to the proxy model when the lecturer is speaking too fast and they have to synthesise the information because it is impossible to keep up with the pace. Further, asking the interpreter to be an invisible conduit has always been, to my mind, an aberration. Just as language is not a mechanistic entity, so the rendition and translation of it should not be either. An interpreter sensitive to his or her environment cannot be a bad thing in itself. However, this interpreter must know what the boundaries of his or her sensitivity are: for instance, the message may be adapted in content to synthesise or summarise what a lecturer rushing through the lecture is saying – this is an inevitable "proxy" situation. The message can even be summarised with additional explanations, in the case of interpreters who specialise in the subject

being interpreted (this was the case for two interpreters: one specialised in Engineering and the other in Law). When the content is deemed inappropriate – swear words, insults or even derogatory comments aimed at the users or at the English language – the interpreters should be given clear guidelines on what to do. In many cases, the interpreters expressed in the interviews that this type of content goes against their own values. If the interpreters are uncomfortable with the language used by a particular lecturer, why should their own values not be incorporated into the guidelines they are given to follow? The recommendation, therefore, is that the interpreters be trained to internalise social sensitivity and to intervene tactfully when their values are compromised, so as neither to jeopardise the message nor to offend the users.

In conclusion, subjective perceptions undoubtedly play an important role in the field of the interpreted lecture on the campus. Some of the perceptions expressed by the users interviewed clearly need to be addressed, although it does remain to be seen on what scale these perceptions are shared by other users. Also, the interpreters must be equipped better for dealing with their own strategies and perspectives on the job, rather than merely to be told, "Just convey the message".

The purpose of this study was not to justify or invalidate the existence of the interpreting services, but rather to obtain an in-depth view of how they are perceived by the users, interpreters and to an extent the lecturers. Certainly, what has been revealed is that the adequate translation of the lecturer's message for non-Afrikaans-speaking students is not a guarantee for the holistic success of either the process of learning or social integration on the university campus.

6. Transcriptions of the interviews

1 – Caroline (user)

5	**<Olivier> Thanks for taking this interview –**	
6	**I just want to know roughly, first,**	
7	**what you think about the interpreting services.**	
8		
9	<Caroline> I think they're	
10	perfect. They're good because,	
11	first thing, they improve my marks, and	Result
12	my marks have improved, and	Result
13	I understand what is going on in classes, since the interpreters are there. They make work	Result – "words"
14	easy.	Superficial statement?
15		
16	**<Olivier> Okay, and is their English appropriate?**	
17	**Do you understand their**	
18	**English well?**	
19	<Caroline> Yes, I understand	
20	the English well. They don't speak	
21	"bombastic"	Type of English used, different?
22	or something, they understand	Closeness user/interpreter
23	that some of us don't know	
24	English properly, yeah.	English as L2
25		
26	**<Olivier> And do you feel that sometimes**	
27	**they're simplifying the contents of**	Simplification?
28	**the lecture for you?**	
29		
30	<Caroline> They're ...?	
31		
32	**<Olivier> "Simplifying". They**	
33	**make the words of**	
34	**the lecturer a bit more simple, maybe**	
35	**in the English used.**	
36	<Caroline> Yeah, I think	Simplification a fact/perception?
37	yeah, yeah, yeah, 'cause everything	
38	they say is understandable, and you can	Proof of simplification?
39	even remember the things that	
40	they said. When you start, you're like, okay,	

that is why she said so and so,
that's because of this and that, yeah.
<Olivier> Okay –
so you're very happy about the services?

<Caroline> Very happy.

<Olivier> Is there any time when
you had the interpreting services
where you felt frustrated or irritated,
or is there anything that had you
think, "You know, no, this is not right"?

<Caroline> No, I never feel irritated. — No irritation at all.

The only thing is I feel tired sometimes. — Tiredness linked to headphones.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Caroline> Then I just take

the earphones and put it aside, not — Justification: They're not boring.
because they're boring or something,
just because I'm tired. Even if the lecturer
is speaking, sometimes I just take my things
because I am tired of listening to what they say
and...ja.

<Olivier> Do you feel that now
with the interpreting services at
this university you're more equal
to the Afrikaans students?

<Caroline> Ja, ja, ja, because at first — Achievement of equality
we felt like they're isolating us or something –
because every time we're in class
we don't understand what's going on;
sometimes you write a test, and you don't
even know that there was a test. Then
you would be writing that test that day –
sometimes we write surprise tests – like
after teaching they would just say, "Okay
now, test!" And then you don't even know
what was happening in the class. So now
even if they say "Right, test! Take out your
papers!", you'd understand because

85	the interpreters have told us about the test.	Superficial critique. Or praise
86		
87	**<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel sometimes**	
88	**that putting headphones on your head**	
89	**makes you a bit excluded**	
90	**from the rest of the class?**	
91		
92	<Caroline> Hmm... No, no, no.	No exclusion
93		
94	**<Olivier> You're okay with that?**	
95		
96	<Caroline> Yeah, I'm okay with that.	
97		
	<Olivier> Okay. In the lecture rooms do you	
98	**usually**	
99	**sit with the other users, the other listeners or...**	
100		
101	<Caroline> Sometimes. Sometimes, yeah –	
102	I sit with my friends, and my friend	
103	is also like...yeah.	
104		
105	**<Olivier> Okay.**	
106		
107	<Caroline> Friends sit with friends.	
108		
109		
110	**<Olivier> Alright.**	
111	<Caroline> So we also	
112	listen to those things.	
113		
114	**<Olivier> Okay. And do you...do you talk**	
115	**to the interpreters sometimes, before the class**	
116	**or after the class? You don't? Really, never?**	
117		
118	<Caroline> No, no, no.	No communication with the interpreters.
119		
120	**<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel**	
121	**that the interpreting services have brought**	
122	**more "equality" for, maybe, black students**	
123	**on the campus?**	
124		
125	<Caroline> What's "equality"?	What's equality?
126		
127	**<Olivier> Do you think that now you**	
128	**you feel – because this university is**	

predominantly
Afrikaans – but do you feel that as a
non-Afrikaans-speaking person you are
more equal to everyone else;
do you feel that you're better off now
with the interpreting service?
<Caroline> Yeah. — Feeling of inclusion

<Olivier> Has it made a difference?

<Caroline> Because other students, they also
Want it in faculties like BRK or something.
Ja, there are few friends of mine there,
and they say it's Afrikaans-speaking — Friends network, resistance
there, so I told them about this interpreting thingy.
And then they said they would go –
'cause I don't know if it's cool for us
to tell others about these interpretings. So...

<Olivier> Okay. Whenever you
have a question to ask to the lecturer in class,
how do you do it? I'm curious, because
you've got headphones but if you have
a question that you want to ask the lecturer,
how do you do it?
<Caroline> You just raise
your hand and ask, like 'cause it's not like
the interpreter is slow, just that
<unintel>
in the level of that lecture. 'Cause, if the
lecturer says then he also says – so you
get the chance to ask, you get the chance
to laugh, you get a chance to all the things.
Things that Afrikaans students
do we also do. Sometimes you get that
maybe a minute later. — Lagging

<Olivier> Would you prefer to have the classes
in English or in Afrikaans with interpreting?
<Caroline> Okay, I do have some classes
in English. It's only Communication in
Afrikaans...ja.
<Olivier> Ah, okay. Alright, okay.
if you had anything that you
would say needs to be improved in the
interpreting services, what would you say
it would be – is there anything that needs

to be improved at all?
<Caroline> No, I think
they're just perfect, just because my marks — No criticism, focus on result
are high; they have improved a lot

<Olivier> Okay.
<Caroline> So that's why I
don't see any problem there. — No criticism

<Olivier> Alright. So what the interpreter says essentially is what the lecturer is saying – you feel that?

<Caroline> Sometimes we understand Afrikaans. We can hear what the lecturer is saying at the same time... We can hear, we hear both these people, *nè*? So, if you feel that, okay this person is not saying the right thing... but they never do that. — How can the user know?

<Olivier> Ja.

<Caroline> The interpreters are always right. — How can the user know?
So we can hear what the lecturer's saying at the same time. We can hear the same so I don't think there's anything to be improved there. It's just perfect.

<Olivier> Okay. I talked to some of the interpreters a few weeks ago and a couple of them told me that they had a problem with lecturers sometimes who make inappropriate or racist jokes, and I wanna know if you have ever had to face this kind of situation, where you see that the interpreter is not translating what the lecturer says because the interpreter feels it's not right for you to hear?

<Caroline> Oh, the thing is that our lecturers are always kept on always disciplining people not to say this and that and this and that he's a good guy.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Caroline>
And when I come into 222 we were only

two, me and my friend, so they have no
Interpreters, But in other classes they are,
they wanted to go there... Ja.
<Olivier> Okay.
So you haven't experienced any problem like
that.

<Olivier> Has there been any time where the
interpreter hasn't translated something
that you felt, "Oops, something hasn't been
translated here"?

The interpreter translates everything

<Caroline> No
<Olivier> Jokes or things like that?
<Caroline> No, no, no.

<Olivier> So you're perfectly happy. Okay.
Do you feel – this would be my last question –
do you feel that you are more part
of the university, more part of the classroom
now with the interpreting services? Do you feel
more included?
<Caroline> Yeah. Yes, 'cause
if some students maybe make a joke in class,
and I also get that, those interpreting staff will
also laugh. Unlike at first, they'd laugh and I'd like
get bored in class and check the time now
and then in the class, as of then I'll be the
most happiest chick. I always get bored, I
always was bored when I went to class.

<Olivier> Okay, that happens. And finally
do you maybe talk to some of the other
Afrikaans students in the classroom or is it
just with...
<Caroline> I used to talk to them
when I asked for papers or something like
when I didn't have a paper. Yeah, I talk to
everyone.

<Olivier> Okay. Okay, alright. Thanks a lot for
your time.

<Caroline> Okay.

2 – Grace (user)

<Olivier> Thank you, Grace, for taking this interview.
So I wanna know, first of all, roughly what you have to say about the interpreting services: Good, bad, middle, in between, whatever.

<Grace> I think it's fine if you are used to it, but generally it's not fine in general, because it's not interactive and part of the university experience to be in like on courses you do... For me, communication is about communicating. How am I gonna communicate with you when I'm getting the information two minutes after everybody else? When you really ask what the questions and actually answered them. And the other thing in this university is, one, it doesn't work because... um... every week or every time they've got a different interpreter, and that's really... it's... You get to understand one guy the one time and then the next time it's another guy and they're not the same. And some of them summarise the work for you so you're not getting the proper content of the work. I even asked one the one day – I said to him, I'm really tired and I need to understand what's happening but I'm not understanding you so I'm gonna leave now. He said "the next work is very important", but I'm like, "We don't understand what you're saying, you..." [and he said] "No, but I try to only tell you what's important." And I said to him, "But you it's not for you to tell me what's important; that's what I should try and figure out myself. You understand?" Then he was like, "I understand; I'll try again." But even the voice – because we're not all talented as interpreting and before they do these programmes I don't think they actually like interview us: okay, your voice

Negative.
No interaction
Pacing
Communication flaw
Always a different interpreter?
The interpreter summarises
Interpreter selection
Criticism of interpreting skills

is right or your personality is right for it. Some
people just don't have what it
takes to interpret and they just don't do a
good job of it.
Sometimes the lectures
are actually interesting and then, especially
with my [name of course] 222 - I think
that is not
even the interpreter but the lecturer
herself – she has a big attitude towards English
People. I mean, we've got two big classes and
I went to the other class the other day: it's not that
full.
So I couldn't understand why
they couldn't make one class English and the — Monolingual system
other one Afrikaans because there's a lot of
English people.
<Olivier> Hmm...
<Grace>
You know, we're all in like third year, we need
this course and they don't. They've got no
understanding for things like that, you know?
So, ja, I'm really not happy with this
interpreting thing. And the other day she mocked — Insensitive lecturer
us: She called us in so we can speak about
how we feel about the interpreting system
and then we won't keep quiet because that's
what we do at this university. You can't say — Non-criticism as cultural phenomenon
Much because then you know you're like the
big apple out or whatever. And then especially
the English students – they always just keep quiet
and feel like they don't have a voice.
Then she says we must feel comfortable,
we must say what we feel
and then I personally said to her, "Well, we don't
feel
like we're part of your class because you ask your
questions, you explain, you ask a question, you say
your jokes... everything is in Afrikaans. And of the
interpreter
doesn't exactly translate your jokes and your
examples — Exclusion
that are like funny or whatever, so we're just sitting
there and everybody else is laughing, so we feel
very left out, and you don't ask us questions."

<Grace> You know, it's like you're really...
She pinpoints a person, and normally it's an
Afrikaans person, and asks a question and
pinpoints that person and, you know, and that's it,
you know, with the assumption that it's only them
in the class.
So she just completely... how can I put it – we're
not in the class,
we're invisible.
<Olivier> You feel excluded.

<Grace> Ja, you know, and then
I said to her, "But I sit in the same class, can't
you just when you ask your question ask
everybody?" Because we also like to feel part
of the class, answer questions, so we can
understand better.
<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> Because the only understanding
of this subject I'm having is the textbook way. So
I read and that's what I understand. And you
ask... you ask the question papers. So, if
I'm understanding what I'm understanding and
you're asking what you trying to say, there's a...
there's a miscommunication. My results
will never be satisfactory in your eyes.

<Olivier> Hmm...
<Grace> You know, and
I actually look at the marks – the English marks

<unintel> Most of us, we didn't do as
well as Afrikaans students. Not at all.
<Olivier>
Alright.
<Grace> You know? So, like it doesn't
play an effect on me through my understanding
but even through my paper like how
I write a paper then I would understand properly.

<Grace> And then I told her, "Okay, so we feel
excluded," and she said, "Oh, okay."
And then I don't remember what happened but

Exclusion

Negative results

Exclusion

it came back – basically came down to "don't
forget that this is an Afrikaans university", and — Afrikaans vs English
she said this in front of the whole English group.
I said, "That's another debate for another day
so I will not debate that one, okay, because you
don't know my reasons for being here, and I
know very well this is only an Afrikaans university."
Trust me, I wouldn't be here and it wasn't initially...
it wasn't by choice that most of these kids are
here, because don't think – you cannot honestly
think – by choice we just come and study at an
Afrikaans university. And if you ever thought of
that, you know, some people have geographical
reasons, some people have reasons of bursaries...
Stuff like that. You have to accommodate them.
You
can't just say this is an Afrikaans university!
You're not living in an Afrikaans country, you — Larger community
Understand. It's a country with eleven languages
and you guys said that you have... If you say on
the
paper you offer English classes and then you must
cater for English classes. Don't now when we're
here
tell us, "But it's an Afrikaans university," and like
everyone else is like,

<Grace>"*Jo*!" Because no one ever speaks,
you know, but I was like I won't debate that now.
We'll debate that on another day because that's
a huge debate.
<Olivier> Hmm...
< Grace>
And she just said, "Okay, no, we'll try and cater
for you." That was fine. The next week, not knowing
she took it personally, which was really
unprofessional of her, because she could've
caught me on the side or
whatever the reason might be... She goes and
mocks. Basically, she didn't remember the faces
of who she was speaking to. She didn't remember
the faces which she was speaking to, so she was
just saying it in a general thing, you know, that
"Oh, ja, the English students feel that we are
neglecting them, you know, so today I'll be
answering you – especially the lady who spoke up." — Linguistic insensitivity

171
172 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
173 < Grace> And then she'll keep
lecturing and then she'll be like "oh, oh, any, ah, ah,
174 English
175 people who wanna answer?" But that like she was
176 mocking us and every second sentence was a
177 mockery of the English people and even when
178 we arrived in the class she just... she had just come
179 back from Europe and she said that she met
180 people in Europe – she also went by London but
she went to a lot of European countries, and she
181 was
182 just really saying some discriminating things like...
183
184
185 <Grace> Listen, you do have English people
186 in the class so you know, and was really not
187 impressed with her professionality about it. So
188 if I just feel if people have an attitude towards
189 English people or towards English itself then they
190 shouldn't lecture what is gonna be an English class,
191 you know? And, oh, this is a big one: on the
192 Friday... she was absent on the Tuesday and
193 she left a notice – actually she left a notice with
194 a person in the class – but everybody came up,
195 she said
196 nothing. Then I'm... I think... I'm not sure
197 how the Afrikaans class found out, because most
198 of the Afrikaans classes she said she'll tell us
199 when we'll need them because it's practical classes.
200 Then for this week everybody showed up and
201 they were all Afrikaans. There was only one
202 English student and he was Chinese. And then
203 the interpreter didn't show up, and then... but the
204 class
205 still carried on. So this poor guy was just
206 sitting there, so he walked out and he told
them that [were] there, in Afrikaans, that there
207 would be
208 a class test the next Tuesday, which was this
209 Tuesday – none of us English students knew about
210 that class test.
211 Then... oh, ja, and after that he had frankly
212 told him when he was walking out that, "You can tell
213 the rest of your English students to come see me

during the day whenever they have time, but make sure they come see me during the day."
It's a weekend – now everybody goes home on a weekend. We come back on Monday, carry on with our classes, then on Tuesday when we... when they came to class she made a class test that we didn't know about. So we anyway had to write the class test and she said she it got nothing to do with her there wasn't an interpreter on that Friday for us to actually get the full information and stuff like that. She just didn't care about it so actually she's using this thing as like a bonus for her. She just concentrate on, you know, one medium or one sector. Episode

<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> And I'm just not Happy.

<Olivier> Ja, well, obviously you're very angry about this.

<Grace> I'm very angry about this! Anger

<Grace> Very angry about it.

<Olivier> And does this makes you feel like you're a minority here?

<Grace> Well, that's obvious. I am a minority, but I've never felt like I'm a minority in this country until I got here. Minority feeling/margins

<Olivier> Ja.

<Grace> And that's where it gets a big issue, you understand. It's like for me, I'm from Johannesburg, so language has not really been made a racial thing where I'm from. It was like you speak that you speak that everyone's comfortable with that, but this university has a good way of making such a small thing a racial thing, you know. Because it comes down to that. Most of our class – like our third-year students from my B.Com class – there's probably only about two, three students that are actually white English-speaking. The rest of us are... we're African and we're Chinese, we're Indian and, okay, I don't have any Coloureds in my Irrelevance of language Issues

class... Oh, one Coloured. But most of us are
Indian,
African and Chinese.
<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> So it... it, it, it seems like it's a bit of a
racial thing, you know, 'cause I feel maybe, 'cause

you know Afrikaans
makes it easier for them, but for us I mean
we've already got like seven languages,
you know. And what I don't understand
sometimes with this whole system – the whole
interpreting thing and this whole system – is that
you interpret for me in English, but isn't North West
a Tswana-speaking place? You understand what
I'm saying? If at least they want to do this
interpreting
thing then they should go for the majority
speaking language, which would be okay
for my class – Tswana. Or if they choose English
it's fine, okay, I don't have a problem with that
but they not even trying to make some other means,
you know, or trying to make it work. It's just like
English and that's it. And the person that's
interpreting
for us is Afrikaans, so their pronunciation is not
even clear. Sometimes I want to correct them: No,
you don't say it like that, you know, 'cause it irritates,
it really aggravates. And then they tell you "no, but
we try", you know. But I don't try to pay money to
the university, I pay it. It's that simple and I expect
to get my, you know, my degree at the end of the
day from working hard at it, and if we're not getting
the information then it's not fair, you know, so I
was very, very angry 'cause we do have another
interpreting class, which is intercultural
communication.
That guy, I must be honest, he really
tries, you know. He... I think because he specialises
in intercultural he tries to make it like, you know, Positive experience
it's suitable for everyone. And the girl who
translates that for us I understand her speaking
for me alone 'cause I understand her and she's
really a good... she translates very good. And
what I like is he pauses in between to give us time

to get the message, and actually you know but that's me because I'm... I'm forward and I can understand
and I'm okay, I went to an English school. But most of my classmates went to African schools so they don't have the same personality trait as I do. They don't have that "I want to pick up my hand and stands on for..." types of thing so they'll keep quiet even though they know the answer or because their environment itself, it's like overpopulated with Afrikaans-speaking people and the actual thing is in Afrikaans. They feel very like "okay, you know, I'm not gonna say anything because this class is not for me".

<Olivier> Hmm...
<Grace> It's just for me to just get this degree and get it over and done with. So, ja, I feel that this place is just not really... it's not working with this interpreting Stuff.
<Olivier> Do you think that the interpreting services were implemented for political correctness?

<Grace> Yes, it's just a camouflage. It's almost like this whole – what do you call it, this system that the government created where you have to have a black person working for company? It's the same thing, you know. It's a camouflage that's just that, "Hey, we... we're providing for you African people so get away from us." You know, it's not even the <unintel>actual university and they think we don't notice, we actually do, but you know what, we're profiting while we're here so don't actually care, and it's not a fight that I would want to fight now that is, you understand.
<Olivier>
Okay
<Grace> So I'm not interested in that but I'm... I'm saying that it affects my studies for now.

Non-criticism as cultural phenomenon

Political correctness of the services?

342 **<Olivier> Ja.**
343 <Grace> You understand,
344 but once I have the power I would take them on
345 about anything, I really would. If I was a lecturer
346 here I would take them on but I just feel like, for
347 now, I don't really need to. For now, get one thing
348 done and then I will concentrate on other things.
349
350 **<Olivier> Ja.**
351
352 **Olivier> Other people have said that they have**
353 **benefited enormously from the interpreting**
354 **services. How do you think they cope? Do you**
355 **think that it's because they shut up about the**
356 **quality or...**
357 <Grace> They benefit from it,
358 because now at least they're not just thrown
359 in the deep end, see. Anything, like, something
360 is better than nothing. And that's why they seem
361 they benefiting, they used to get nothing, you
362 know – everything was in Afrikaans, so at least
363 now they're getting some sort of an option.
364 And that's why they feel they're benefiting, but
365 it's not what they deserve.
366 **<Olivier> It's not very**
367 **much.**
368 <Grace> And they don't know what
they deserve, and that's the thing with this
369 university,
370 is they know that most African people in this
371 University, or anybody that's English, and especially
372 dealing with the students... they don't know their
373 rights and their whereabouts. And these people
374 are very lucky, these people for this
375 University, because they're dealing with people
376 that are... that were very indoctrinised, so mentally
377 they don't know their rights. They don't know their
378 worth and they know that. I mean, they've got the
379 privileged people working here, so all these people
380 know that and that's why they play around... yeah,
381 they play around with these people because they
382 know their mindsets.
383
384
385 <Grace> Then you get people like me, who
386 have had better, who know what I'm worth and

Better than nothing.

Better than nothing.

I come here, and I feel this, and obviously I'll stand up for... but that makes one out of how many people.

<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> And one voice does not really make that big of an impact in the class of, let's say, ten people that are originally North West. And North West, I'll say, Africans, because that's the ones I'm used to are completely different to the ones from Johannesburg, you know. We are more cosmopolitan, we know our rights we know we're worth and stuff like that. And that's why they... they... they deal with all this stuff.

<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> It's not that they're happy with it. They think that's what they are worth or that's the best that can be done for them.

Lack of criticism as cultural phenomenon

<Olivier> Sure.

<Grace> You understand?

<Olivier> Okay. Well, you've pretty much said everything that I needed to ask you. Do you have other classes where you have interpretations, other than [name of course]?

<Grace>

<Olivier> or...

<Grace> No. But I'd like to have other classes where I have interpretation, so you could... they have lecturers that are just not clear in English.

<Olivier> Ja.

<Grace> And we have that a lot.

<Grace> I mean this university could afford to have one English lecturer in every single department.

<Olivier> Ja.

<Grace> You know, I mean they've

429 got how many people teaching the same... those
430 two subjects I'm talking about.
431 **<Olivier> Ja.**
432
433 <Grace> They can have at least one that's
434 English or one that's more fluent in English
435 to teach us. They've got the money, they can't
436 tell me they don't have the money, you know.
437
438 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
439 <Grace> They just don't want
440 to, you know, because I know it's a cultural thing,
441 which is fine. Then don't accept us in the university –
442 that's my point. Don't say we can come here
443 and then give us false hope, and then we catch
444 you and that's another thing. And that's what I
445 hate about the university, it's nothing else. It's got
446 nothing to do if you wanna keep your culture; I'm
all for that! Hey, keep your culture, keep your
447 language:
448 it's all good! But don't allow me to come into your
449 boundaries, just for you to treat me like I'm worth
450 nothing.
451 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
452 <Grace> You know?
'Cause it's the same... basically it's the same
453 apartheid
454 thing they're still doing, you know. It's just now in a
455 camouflaged way because it's now there's another
government owning the place, now we can do it
456 even
better, because we can camouflage. So, ja, you
457 know
I'm very... actually very... I'm glad I'm doing my last
458 year
at this university but I think it's something that
459 definitely
460 take them on.
461
462
463 **<Olivier> Ja.**
464 <Grace> You know they really... they
really are treaded on thin ground you know. And ja,
465 ja,
466 they really have.
467 **<Olivier> Has there been several occurrences**

Cultural issues

where you have felt that the interpreter was doing more than translating, with for example simplifying or trying to?

<Grace> That's what they do.

<Olivier> Talk down on you, or...

<Grace> They do, they do. And... and I mean it's... it irritates me because he's sitting there, he's part of the class, so he's listening and trying to assess what they're saying and at the same time he's trying to interpret. So whatever he's saying, it doesn't make sense because it's it's what came out like, you know, second hand. I'm sure like when we were younger we used to do that leadership thing, where you start the message here and you pass it over to ten people...?

Interpreter simplifies, summarises

<Olivier> Ja...

<Grace> It's the same thing: information is lost, but now it's lost more because while it's being given to him he's thinking about ten million things like, okay what is this guy trying to say, and he's trying to make notes at the same time; he's trying to explain to us – it's not working.

Feeling that information Is lost

<Grace> You know, and he just completely simplifies the whole contents of whatever is being said, you know?

Simplification, negative perception

<Olivier> Ja.

<Grace> And then we just sit there and we're like, "Why are we here?"

Integration

<Olivier> How does that make you feel when he simplifies things for you?

<Grace> Irritated, you know, like I could just stand up and say, "Shut up, I'll do my own translation!" You know, if I could you know, like don't give it to me anyway then, if that's what you're going to do, because I'm

English competence

not
even getting it right. And I mean I speak better
501 English
than half of those guys, so half the time anyway I
502 feel
503 like trying to correct them.
<Olivier> But have you had several interpreters
504 **for**
505 **that course or is it...**
506 <Grace> Yes, yes, no...
507 **<Olivier> ...always the same guy?**
508 <Grace> No. We've got... like they always change.
509 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
510 <Grace> And there's two that I can't understand.
511 There's one lady, she's very good, she's really
512 extremely good. She... ja, her English is very good
but again the words that she uses you know will be
513 like,
514 it's like her words,
515 and you know like when you've got an interpreter
516 you look at your book to try and find where she is?
517 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
518 <Grace> And instead of maybe saying something
like... because she'll come up with a nicer fancier — Correspondence
519 word — between material used
520 and then I wouldn't be able to see where I am in the — And what the interpreter
textbook to try and underline it, and then we can't
521 pick — Says
522 up our hands
to ask him to repeat that because it, it just, you — Difficult to intervene as
523 know, it takes — English speaker
524 the class out or whatever.
525 **<Olivier> Ja.**
526 <Grace> But if I was... if it was Afrikaans students
they can pick up their hands and say, "I didn't
527 understand — Perception, subjective
528 what you just said." We can't do that.
<Olivier> You think Afrikaans students have it
529 **easy here?**
530 <Grace> Easy is a understatement! These kids — Us Vs them
are baby fed their degrees. We're like... *Jo*! That's
531 another
532 thing to tell a story!
533 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
534 <Grace> They have it so easy it's not funny. And
535 again they're using the camouflage thing but now — Pcness of the services

lectures are in Afrikaans. We get translated, true, textbooks are in English... so they get everything given to them via Internet in Afrikaans.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Grace> So I'm using the textbook. It's taking me about five hours to study one chapter, for example, and then they're taking an hour just to do the summary, and that's what's gonna be in the exam.

<Grace> And everything is stored for them at Xerox and on their computer and everything is in Afrikaans... and especially with this communication class that I'm speaking about. At the beginning I asked her, okay, so do we have a study guide or whatever? And at the beginning she said no, you know, and then she gave me like photostats from her computer, which is very kind of her. She did give me a study guide thingy and then she leaves things for them again at Xerox with extra explanations what could be in the exams, warra warra. Then she forces us to come to class but the whole class and the transparencies, everything's in Afrikaans, so I'm sitting there listening to this lady who's speaking three times as fast and I have to keep up with what she's saying, and I can't do that. They get to copy it down so she'll speak, speak, speak, keep quiet, allow them to copy it down. Now while she's speaking the interpreter is speaking, so when she starts the interpreter starts. I've only written down two sentences; they get to write down the whole slide!

<Grace> And then... and that's their study notes, that's it! That's all they study for the exams.
<Olivier> Hmm...

Practical problems

<Grace> Me, I have to go and sit down for like ten hours and go study what was said in class.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Grace> That's a big disadvantage. They get spoon-fed everything in the school actually.
<unintel> They really get spoon-fed.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Grace> And then all the time now it... it's gonna be a stereotypical thing that English students are just not as intelligent, but that's not even! It's so even obvious that why they're not passing that well and, like with my Economics class, we were experiments: they were changing the curriculum, which apparently they do every I don't know how many years. Now they did it with us... They didn't give us study guides, one, and they kept making us... like what the honour students are doing this year, we did it in our first year.
<Olivier> You mean you didn't have study guides in English?
<Grace> No, we didn't have study guides, period. But what they did is obviously, again, Afrikaans students will – what can I call it – they will have an advantage. Because, like class tests and what what that are put on the Internet, the memorandums, for one, are always in Afrikaans and their English... their Afrikaans lecturer she was extremely good,

<Grace> *nè*? We only got to have... we got a lecturer that can't really speak English and he's just... he's not fluent. And he's just... he's just not really that interesting, to be honest, and he's the secondary

Very subjective critique

Margin/mainstream

man so he gets his information from the other lady. So they get the best of everything: over that they get everything stored for them, *nè*? And just saying this is, I looked at the results – I always look at the results between English and Afrikaans students...

Inequality

<Olivier> Okay...

<Grace> And again they got way better marks than us!

Results – based on what evidence?

<Olivier> Really?

<Grace> This is our third year, our last year: they're experimenting with us on our last year! How can you do that? That's just something I feel is really not fair. Now I have to come back next semester for an extra six months, to do a subject that I could've passed already because I was an experiment and they didn't give enough care to the English students to make sure we also pass. So this whole translation thing is... just doesn't working. It's got more issues into it and it provokes more emotion than just translation.

Unequal treatment

<Olivier> Okay.

Sensitivity of the issue

<Olivier> Alright. Well, thanks a lot for making my job easier! Do you have anything else that you would like to say that you think is important?

<Grace> if you can like get this to bigger people – like really bigger people – that can just wipe this thing out you know, and get us proper English lecturers, I think we deserve that.

English as medium of instruction

<Olivier> Okay.

<Grace> We don't deserve a secondary tongue from a student who's not even that qualified in what they're doing then.

Second-hand discourse

<Olivier>

<unintel> ...just for the sake of debating I'm Also... I'm a conference interpreter and lots of people come and see me and that. Well, it's other settings obviously – it's international conferences.

<Grace> You're experienced in what you're doing?
<Olivier> Ja.
<Grace> You're really experienced in it.
<Olivier> But some interpreters here have been doing it for three years.
<Grace> You think so?
<Olivier> Ja, I know so!
<Grace>
<unintel> ...how bad they are.
<Olivier> Okay
<Grace> oh, for something like a debate that is something that is – how can I put it – it's not... it's... it's... it's... it would be ridiculous to have six

<Grace> thousand people speaking at six thousand languages.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Grace> That's understandable. But here we've only got two languages. Actually, it's supposed to be three.
<Olivier> Hmm...
<Grace> And I feel Tswana should've been even put before English in my eyes because these people live here.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Grace> You know, they should be given a university that's close to their home so I mean three languages – or, *eish*, not even three – two languages... These people are saying, "It's fine, we don't mind not hearing Tswana; English is okay!" What's so hard about giving them then what they want?
<Olivier> Would you prefer... are you Setswana-speaking originally?
<Grace> No. I'm not.
<Olivier> Okay, but if you were, would you prefer classes in Setswana or interpretation in Setswana or in English?
<Grace> Yes, I would.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Grace> I think I would.
<Olivier> Okay.

682 <Grace> Although it would be wiser for
683 me to have it in English.
684 **<Olivier> Ja?**
685 <Grace> Because it's more international. But, ja.
686 **<Olivier> Okay.**
687 <Grace> So I'm just not happy and this university
688 is using this thing as a political – indirectly political – Political move
689 thing I think, you know, to discriminate people.
690 **<Olivier> To score a BEE card or...**
691 <Grace> Yeah.
692 **<Olivier> Okay.**
693 <Grace> Ah, this university is doing so well, like...
694 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
695 <Grace> You know, but, ja, for conferences it's
696 a different matter.
697 <Grace> You've got a whole lot of things...
698 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
699 <Grace> They can't tell me with two huge
700 classes they couldn't make the one English!
701 **<Olivier> Ja.**
702 <Grace> And most of the Afrikaans students
703 actually wanna study in English. We've got that in
English makes more
704 our Economics class: we have people coming to sense
705 study Economics in English because they know
there's nothing that they're gonna do with
706 Economics
707 internationally in Afrikaans.
708 **<Olivier> Ja**
709 <Grace> So, Business Economics, they forced
it to be English now for all the... most of the
710 students
711 are coming now to the English classes. When you
do your honours now they only do it in English
712 because,
again, you're working in a country with the first
713 language
is English – what are you gonna do with it in
714 Afrikaans?
715 **<Olivier> Ja.**
716 <Grace> You understand? Unless you're gonna
717 be working in the North West your whole life...
718 **<Olivier> Ja.**
719 <Grace> In which I'm sure they don't have that
720 many limitations for their future, so there's not much
721 you can do with it, so if they would think of this

thing not as a political thing but as a thing that is profitable to their future it just would help their kids actually. Politics

<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> You know, nobody else but their kids.

<Olivier> Right.

<Grace> And if they're so uptight about their culture and their language, that means they haven't implemented it right to their kids in the first place. Because that's why my dad can risk me studying in English, because he knows I'll always be Sotho or my mother knows I'll always be Xhosa in my blood and I bet she knows that she has given me the right fundamentals, for her to not be so uptight about something like study in English and making a, you know, a living in South Africa. Culture

<Olivier> Hmm...

<Grace> So maybe they should go correct their own little issues before they try and chop it on to someone else.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Grace> Ja, it makes me angry.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Grace> Ja.

<Olivier> Okay. Well, thanks for your time, Grace.

<Grace> Thanks. I think I needed this talk! It's been years!

<Olivier> Okay.

<Grace> Ja.

<Olivier> No problem.

<Grace> Wow, it's been three years!

<Olivier> Thanks.

3 – Steven (user)

Olivier> So thank you, Steven, for accepting this interview – and I wanted to know, essentially, what you thought of the interpreting services. Has it been very helpful to you?

<Steven> I've just started using the interpreting services this year and, firstly – okay the first time I used them, they're Initial irritation

actually very irritating. I was very, very irritated because like I had to listen to someone speaking in my ears, as in the other person speaking there in the front, and you also had to watch some of what that person is doing there, and had to listen. But then as time went by I kind of get used to it and it really helps, 'cause like even with concentration, you know, you switch off from... Okay, he's just that person is just speaking, and you can't hear his voice. He... you have to listen to this one and watch in exactly what that one is doing there in the front. So it, yeah, it really helps and even with my marks it improved really. ≠ natural

Result: positive

<Olivier> Okay.

<Steven> Ja.

<Olivier> And do you feel that you are having the same lecturer as the Afrikaans-speaking students? Do you feel that you are on an equal footing now, or is it more complicated than that?

<Steven> It's okay. Let's just say like that: I don't feel like we have the same lecturer because like sometimes like you don't feel part of the class. I mean, like you're the only one, you're like the weird one and stuff, and then everybody's listening there so it's... I don't know, I don't necessarily feel like we have the same lecturer. Afrikaans people, they are more advantaged, like they have more advantages.

Exclusion

<Olivier> Okay. And do you feel that wearing that headphones make you be apart from the rest of the class? Do you feel you're really now another community in the class? Do you form another group of people in the class?

<Steven> Yes, I form another group of other people in the class. I don't... we're not like the one group that's like the people who are listening and like they also ask who would like to sit there, who would like those earphones... Ja, we don't feel part of the class.

Slight exclusion

<Olivier> Okay. Do you sit together in the classrooms with the other users, or do you...

<Steven> No, we don't necessarily sit together, but I sit like with my friend. Maybe I only sit with my friend when we're in the class.

<Olivier> Okay. Whenever you have to answer a question in a lecture room, or whenever the lecturer asks questions, or whenever you have a question, how do you do it?

<Steven> I usually just raise up my hand because like I have to listen sometimes, the lecturer gives you some things, so I have to listen to the interpreter saying at the same time. I sometimes listen, like I ask questions like maybe like a lot of the lecture has passed, maybe five minutes ago, and things like that: "No, I don't understand this, let me just ask a question." And they – the lecturer – always does help me to answer. I mean, I don't find anything complicated with the answering and asking questions.

<Olivier> Okay, so that's fine with you?

<Steven> Yeah, that's fine.

<Olivier> Okay. Have you experienced anything that you thought was particularly frustrating or irritating when using the interpreting services? Were there a time when you thought, "This is not going well; I'm not getting as much as I would like to"?

<Steven> Yes, especially the problem, I must say, is like the network thing. Like when students don't switch off their cell phones in class, and then like maybe they put it on silent and then there's like "tin tin tin" like on my ears. I get really, really irritated and sometimes like the interpreters, they just like speak too loudly in your ears, even if you try like to switch the headset. Sometimes, I have to say, it's very irritating sometimes, especially we like to speak to the interpreters sometimes. This lady we get used to, and then the other week it's this next guy, and this guy you have to get used to his voice. So that's like the most irritating part about it.

<Olivier> Okay. But it has made a difference for your studies?

Mingle

Normal interaction

Use of cell phones

Insensitivity? Changing of the interpreters

72 <Steven> Ja, my studies, it has made a difference,
73 because like we're just using it in the second semester – Result: positive
74 [in the] first semester we didn't like Communication,
75 we only had it in Afrikaans and my marks were not that good. But with the interpreting services, my marks are
76 actually very good.
77 **<Olivier> Okay, and the English that the interpreters use**
78 **– is it okay with you? Do you understand them?**
79 <Steven> Ja, I do understand the English. Just for me, English okay
it's not a problem. It's not a problem.
80 **<Olivier> Okay, alright.**
Okay, that's super. If you have to give a tip to the
81 **interpreters**
to help them improve on their services, what would it
82 **be?**
83 <Steven> On how to improve? I won't necessarily improve
84 anything, because I think like they are perfect. The only No criticism
thing that like you know sometimes... the lecturer speaks
85 English
in class and then like you're listening there, and one
86 moment
87 the interpreter is just like... he's just still, he's not saying
anything, and we don't like that. I'm sitting at the back: I
88 think
he should tell us like "Okay, listen up, the lecturer is
89 speaking
90 in English", or something.
91 **<Olivier> Okay.**
Interpreters do
92 <Steven> Ja, 'cause that would be very helpful, 'cause like not
translate
93 the lecturer sometimes is speaking there, and like the everything
94 interpreters just keep quiet, and then I don't know what
95 happens in class.
<Olivier> Yes. Do you often speak to the interpreters
96 **after the**
97 **class, or before or...?**
No interaction
98 <Steven> No, not really. with
99 **<Olivier> Not really? Okay.** interpreters
100 <Steven>No.
101 **<Olivier> Alright. If I tell you, just speak more about the**
102 **interpreting services, is there anything that nags you, is**
there anything that you feel is problematic? Or is
103 **everything**
104 **fine, or is there anything that frustrates you more than**

105 **anything else? Now it's your chance to say something!**
106 <Steven> There's nothing, really, I'd just like, you know,
107 I don't feel like part of the class sometimes, about these interpreting services stuff, because like I'm a B.Com student
108 –
109 in B.Com we have like English classes there, you know, it's
110 English – all of us are English – so I think even if you had like our own separate English
111 classes, it would've been good. I would have, like... I would feel more
112 in class.
<Olivier> Ja. And what do you think about... do you think that
113 **the university has implemented interpreting services just to be**
114 **politically correct, or just to help everyone? What do you think about that?**
115 <Steven> I think the interpreters... they just like want to be like politically... I mean it's not like, okay, they're maybe
116 helping
117 because it's not everybody in **<unintel>** like the interpreting
118 services. There's this other friend of mine; he is doing like a
119 BSc and he's doing, I don't know, C sharp or something,
120 and it's really difficult for her to listen like doing the computer
121 Work in Afrikaans. So I do think like they're helping some
122 students, but then the others they are not helping them.
123 **<Olivier> Okay**
124 <Steven> There's... I don't think it's really helping like a lot.
125 **<Olivier> Okay, ja, of course it's only on a limited number**
126 **of courses, because it's a bit difficult. Do you think that the**
127 **interpreting services are going to allow more black students**
128 **to come in to this traditionally white university? Let's face it...**
129 <Steven> Not really, because like we all know this is an Afrikaans university. Even if like the interpreting just
130 includes
131 us a bit, but I don't think so because I think many people will
132 prefer all the other classes to be in English, not having to
133

Exclusion

Unclear – discard

Contradictory, discard

Interpreting services don't change the cultural context

listen
like in the voices in your ear. I wanna know what the
134 lecturer's
saying personally, not through someone else. I don't think
135 it's
136 going to attract more people.
<Olivier> Ja. So would you say that the Afrikaans
137 **students are**
138 **more privileged in this university?** <Steven> Ja.
<Olivier> Okay. So you feel that the interpreting
139 **services are**
140 **helping to some extent, but they are not...**
141 <Steven> Helping... like they are helping to some extent, ja.
<Olivier> Okay, alright. Is there anything else that you
142 **would like to say?**
<Steven> Not really. I think the interpreting is actually very
143 good,
I mean like even if they could like make it available to more
144 people
145 that will be a help, ja.
146 **<Olivier> Alright, okay, Steven – thank you very much.**
147 <Steven> Okay, cool.

4 – Bruce (user)

1 **<Olivier> It's Bruce, right?**
2 <Bruce> It's Bruce.
3 **<Olivier> Okay. Well, thanks a lot for taking this**
4 **interview.**
5 <Bruce> You're welcome.
6 **<Olivier> Thanks – and I want to know: What's your experience**
7 **of interpreting services right now?**
8 <Bruce> Okay, my experience...
Because normally, when I came in, I wasn't really
9 good
Student can speak a bit
10 with Afrikaans, even though I did it at of Afr.
11 school during my final Matric, but I think somewhere,
somehow, it helped me a lot, you know [the
12 interpreting services]. Result
13 **<Olivier> Okay.**
14 <Bruce> That's my take on it because I believe,
15 maybe, if I didn't have interpreters I wouldn't actually
16 know what to do, and how to do it. Result
17 **<Olivier> Right.**
18

<Bruce> Even though only the practical that they didn't do, there were no interpreters. But that one you had to like prepare on your own separately, then come prepared to class and what you do is just collect out the practical, and it was maybe on the computer or on the sheet, just the way it was. But most of my classes is okay, I do have interpreters, and I do appreciate it, and I think I've learned a lot through interpretation and studying, because now at least I can understand some of the terms in Afrikaans. Because, normally what I do, I will listen with one ear to the teacher and one ear to the interpreters.

Gratefulness

Bilingualism

<Olivier> Okay.

<Bruce> And I do understand sometimes. Right now, okay, preparing helps you tremendously, a lot in my case, honestly.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Bruce>Because I didn't know Afrikaans when I came in.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Bruce> Ja. But now at least I can hear some of the words.

<Olivier> Has the interpretation services changed your relation to the lecturer as well?

<Bruce> Relation?

<Olivier> I mean, did you feel that you are free to ask questions now in class, or was it a bit difficult if you didn't have interpretation services?

<Bruce> You know, let's say for instance that the lecturer was talking now in class and I didn't understand. it will not be easy for me to ask a question, because I will not understand actually what the lecturer is saying by the time, but as soon as maybe you say something and I do understand the interpretation, I might ask something, or maybe recommend something wasn't supposed to be, so and such and such and such.

Student speaks directly to the lecturer

58
59 <Bruce> But relation-wise I don't think it
60 would change a relation, because what I believe in –
61 if I don't understand something, I would go to the
lecturer strictly, or put in an appointment or
62 something,
63 and speak to the lecturer. That's what I do normally.
64
65 **<Olivier> Okay, and do they speak English, the**
66 **lecturers?**
67 <Bruce> So far, ja, some of them are. But,
you know, I think there is a certain or specific
68 standard
used at each and every institution, because you
69 can't
just go and ask maybe an obvious question. You
70 have
to show the lecturer that at least I did something I
71 did
such and such a point, then he might ask you,
72 because
73 you cannot just go there and ask an obvious
question – "By the way it is written there in the
74 textbook" – and
75 you didn't do anything, didn't make any effort maybe
to go into the textbook and understanding the
76 content.
77
78 **<Olivier> Okay.**
79 <Bruce> Let's say maybe I'm working
80 through a specific section in the textbook, and I don't
81 understand, it's quite tricky –
82 and then what I do when I get to the lecturer?
I tell the lecturer, "This is what and what I did, and I
83 understood
to this extent, but my problems are one, two, three."
84 Then in
such a way the lecturer is able to answer me back.
85 But
if I just go the lecturer and I say I have a problem,
86 okay,

87 in the first question, he's gonna say, "What's your
problem," and if I don't know what's my problem it's
88 not

Change of topic

No problem: importance

Of individual initiative/

The I. Services are not Fully responsible for 100% of the success or failure

Of students

easy for the lecturer to answer me back in such a
89 way.
90
91 **<Olivier> Okay. Alright. Do you**
feel, it feels very... it feels easier for the lecturers
92 **to deal**
93 **with the Afrikaans students?**
94 <Bruce> Afrikaans only, or...
95
<Olivier> Afrikaans only. Did it feel easier for the
96 **lecturers,**
97 **to act, or to interact, with the Afrikaans students**
rather than with the people who use the
98 **interpreting**
services? Do the lecturers speak more easily to
99 **the**
Afrikaans students or with the people who use
100 **the**
101 **interpreting services?**
102
103 **<Olivier> You know the terms?**
104 <Bruce> Yes.
<Olivier> Is the lecturer only dealing with the
105 **Afrikaans**
students, or does he consider that the class
106 **involves**
English-speaking students and Afrikaans-
107 **speaking**
108 **students?**
109 <Bruce> I don't...
110 **<Olivier> What's your feeling?**
111
<Bruce> I don't think... I don't think so. I don't think
112 so,
Because, normally when the lecturer teaches, he's
113 just
looking at everyone. He's telling just everyone to do
114 such Inclusion
and such and such and such a thing and the
115 interpreters
116 are just telling you what exactly he is saying.
117 **<Olivier> Alright.**
118 <Bruce> And you just listen to what he's saying,
and I think somewhere, somehow, when the lecturer
119 speaks
120 in class, normally (unintel)

my main aim is just to understand what
the lecturer is saying in class...
<Olivier> Right.
<Bruce> ...and what am I supposed to do. But so far I think most of
my lecturers are just addressing everyone. They're telling
everyone what to do.
<Olivier> Okay.

<Bruce> Because normally when we have to do something
in class we do it together. If it's hard for all of us then he will
do it on the board himself, tell us – all of us – this is how and
how and how you're supposed to do it.

<Olivier> Right.
<Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> And how would you say is the English of the interpreters? Is... is it understandable, do you understand the English of the interpreters or do they have a strong accent... or how is it?

<Bruce> Okay. First things first, what I believe in, these people certainly they are trying, they are putting an effort, in helping someone to understand something, even though some of them, they might not be perfect. But they do play an important role for someone who doesn't really have a clue on a certain language. Okay, maybe in someone who knows both languages perfectly, you might have complaints such and such and such. I don't think you were supposed to say this, but when this guy say

Personal initiative

No criticism

something and you realise he's not supposed to say
151 that
you just know, okay, he was not supposed to say
152 this... Then
153 you just rectify yourself, that's what I do normally.
154 **<Olivier> Right.**
<Bruce> But concerning maybe the language or the
155 accent,
156 Okay, when somebody starts doing something
157 he's not perfect but, as time goes on, he grows
158 and I think, as time goes on, they will be
159 okay.
160 **<Olivier> Okay.**
161 <Bruce> Because this is not
162 something just for me personally.
163 **<Olivier> Right.**
164
165 <Bruce> This is all for everyone and the people who
166 come after me.
167 **<Olivier> Right.**
168 <Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> But... I'm okay for the conclusion that
169 **their English is good**
enough, and you understand them perfectly
170 **when**
171 **they speak?**
172 <Bruce> Not all of them, that's what I said.
173
174 **<Olivier> Oh, okay.**
175 <Bruce> But my aim is not to
176 look at the negative part of things: Look at what they
177 have given to me.
178 **<Olivier> Ja.**
179 <Bruce> And what ideas
I get from him speaking because, sometimes if she
180 was
not saying anything and I'm listening to the lecturer
181 in
Afrikaans, it could have happened that the whole
182 45
minutes I didn't hear anything, but due to what he
183 did and the
lecturer's effort that he has put in what he said, I do
184 have

But perception that not all is Perfect

Acknowledgment of result

Unclear. Slight idea?

185 an idea even though that she was not straight to the
186 point.
187 **<Olivier> Right.**
188 <Bruce> I do have a
189 slight idea of what the lecturer was saying.
190 **<Olivier> Yes.**
191 <Bruce> Then I will just go and read and go back
192 to the lecturer who said something like this, because
they are also human like us, they can make a
193 mistake
while during a class. But if you go back to him he
194 will
195 tell you, no, I think I did a mistake here and here and
196 here.
197 **<Olivier> Hmm...**
198 <Bruce> Then you were supposed
to do or say how those things are done, normally, I
199 think
200 so.
<Olivier> Do you talk to the interpreters
201 **sometimes,**
202 **or do they talk to you to know what's going on?**
203 **To know if you're happy with the services?**
204 <Bruce> Okay:
205 What they do is they'll say there's certain pamphlets
they'll send to us, just to mark if we're satisfied and
206 then
207 the recommendation. That's how we communicate.
208
209 **<Olivier> Ja.**
210 <Bruce> Yeah. But let's say out of hundred,
I'll say seventy per cent of them, their English is
211 good.
212 I'm not blaming those ones who their English is not
213 good, because that person is taking his time to do
214 something for somebody and...
<Olivier> Ja, no, it's not to find something
215 **negative at all,**
216 **it's on the contrary – to find something on which**
217 **they can improve.**
218 <Bruce> Exactly.
219 **<Olivier> So you're right in that.**
220 **So you would say that**
the English sometimes of the interpreters could
221 **be**

Objectification of problems

No criticism because at least it's something

improved?
<Bruce> Yes, it could be improved because it really depends on the background of somebody else.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Or a help with the English one and how much she knows the English.

<Olivier> Ja – but your English seems to be quite good...
So... ja, okay.
<Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> No problem.
Bruce> But I am like that, I don't have a complex because the difference between the English that is taught in class and the link the English that is used by engineers
<Olivier> That's right.
<Bruce> Those are terms...
<Olivier> That's right.
<Bruce> Then that person has to translate those terms and has a manual sometimes, and is reading the manual.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Sometimes it could... it can happen that the manual has errors, and what theory he thinks is right at that time because he'll listen to the lecturer, he's reading at the same time he is thinking.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> That's normally what happens.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> And the English of those interpreters that you think could improve, is it because of the accent, or is it because of the language itself?
<Bruce> Hmm... Now that's a tricky one, you know, accent and the language, because I didn't know English until maybe Standard

Seven, but then after that I studied to be serious
about
the language because I realised I have to know the
language even though I'm not concerned
about the accent, but knowing how to communicate.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> Okay, that's why it's important.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> That's why it's
important. I don't think each and every one of us
can have hundred per cent pure English
fluent accent.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Because...
because we're different races, different backgrounds
and different languages.
<Olivier> That's right.

<Bruce> You know – the first language, I think that's
the main route that plays an influence in somebody
else transforming to another language.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Because if you can get a different
guy from maybe another country then that guy
comes, wants to speak English. Okay, he can speak
English but somewhere, somehow, there are gonna
be gaps.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Or indication that
they're sure of, okay,
he is not that hundred per cent English.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> But that is not something that
I don't actually concentrate on, or look at.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> I just look at what the guy says and then I
make sure I understand what the guy says and what
I am supposed to do from that.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> Yeah.
**<Olivier> Do you feel that now you are more
equal, in terms of equality for all and education
for
all? Do you feel that you've been given a chance
to
be more equal to the others in this Afrikaans-**

speaking institution?
<Bruce> In this institution,
am I equal to everyone? Maybe I don't understand
your question – repeat it again?
<Olivier> In the
classroom now, just in the classroom...
<Bruce> Just
in the classroom...
<Olivier> Do you feel that you are
more equal to the Afrikaans-speaking
students in the terms of understanding, or...?
<Bruce> Understanding... ?
<Olivier> ...getting a chance to get
higher marks?
<Bruce> Higher marks, okay. Do you
know what happens... there are two things that
happens. The first thing that happens is everything
comes from the inside...
<Olivier> Hmm...
<Bruce> How much do you want to do for yourself,
and how much do you want for yourself in life. The
second thing is the positivity, and concentrating on
the chance that you are given. Because I, personally
from my background, I come a long way in life so,
okay, on marks wise, it depends on how much work
I did before a certain test. Because normally when
you write a test you can see, okay, I did so and so
and
so and if you did that you can see, but lecturers do
say, "Work hard, make sure that you keep up
and then you will get good marks."
<Olivier> Hmm...

<Bruce> Because I think it's my duty personally
to go an extra mile, and try to do something for
myself.

<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Yeah, that's what I believe in.

<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> Okay, no problem.
Has there been any time in the classes where
you have interpretations, where it's been

What does equality mean?

Change of conversation?

Change of conversation?

irritating
or frustrating?
<Bruce> Ja, it does.
<Olivier> Okay.

<Bruce> Normally what happens, there is a certain sound in the earphones, I don't know where does it come from, and sometimes I think a satellite thing or something, another interpreter from another room might speak up on your headphones. That happens normally. — Cell phones/insensitivity

<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> And I don't know but as soon as you tell them something is happening they make sure that they rectify the problem.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> Cell phone interference or something like that as well?
<Bruce> Cell phones, especially when they ring.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Those certain sounds that it makes on the air.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Yeah.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce>
Yeah.
<Olivier> Alright. Is it very important for you to feel that you are part of the class, because when you have interpretation then you feel that you understand everything? So, necessarily, you feel you are more part of the class? Whereas if you didn't have interpretation services you would feel excluded?
<Bruce> Definitely, because I will not understand.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> That's the main thing.
<Olivier> Is it important for you to feel included personally?
<Bruce> It is important.
Because when we're working on something

Together, each and every one has to have an input.
That's my belief, normally.
When I do projects and the past experience of the jobs
that I did before I came in, and the different projects
that I did, and stuff.
<Olivier> Right.
<Bruce> We're different people from different countries.
Everyone has to have an input for something to
be successful, and it's somebody's responsibility
to pick himself up.
<Bruce> That's what I believe in.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> So, if you
don't normally... if you feel out because let's say for instance I'm in a class, I don't feel that I'm in the class,
I'm gonna be afraid to ask my next colleague or my classmate to ask something, or even go to the lecturer.
But as soon as I feel that I'm in, then definitely I'm not
gonna be scared to do anything to anyone. I'll ask anyone,
"I have such and such a problem", then that person will respond to me, "Do this, and this and this" or I'll go
straight to the lecturer. That's what I'll do.
<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel it feels easier for the Afrikaans-speaking students to be here and
in those lectures?
<Bruce> To be in those lectures?

<Olivier> Let's face it: I mean you, in order to understand
the lecturer, you have to take a headset, and you have to go through a middleman in order to understand...
<Bruce> ... to understand the lecturer.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> For them...
<Olivier> Yes: Is it easier for them than it is for you, do you think?
Do you feel that it's somehow
a bit unfair, even if you feel that you have to be positive about everything, but deep down inside

do
you feel that there's still some unfairness?
<Bruce> For them, it is a more advantage than to us, because that's their language. It's like easy for them to understand, but Margins/mainstream
for you sometimes it's a double take: you have to translate
and make sure you understand, see. For them, it is good
for the lecturer to speak in their language, but for us somewhere, somehow, it is not.
<Olivier> Okay, so you still feel there is a discrepancy between the Afrikaans-speaking students
and people like you, who use the interpreter?

<Bruce> Discrepancy?
<Olivier> A difference, a discrepancy?
<Bruce> A difference? There is a huge difference. Because, for instance when we're
doing practicals, let's say I have four periods of 45 minutes by four. I'll sit there for four periods, then what
happens there, then okay, the practicals are collected
in Afrikaans, *nè*? Then, in the introduction they'll tell you what to do. Okay, I'm listening, I'm trying to actually understand what the lecturer is saying but I can't really understand, even though I can see what the lecturer is doing. But I'm trying, in fact, to get
an idea. It's not... But the second option, also, is you have to ask them. But no, the difference is there, because
let's say for 45 minutes I was sitting there and I didn't understand: After 45 minutes they start working and after the 45 minutes I have to ask and understand.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> Now that's time management, also.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> So I'm losing out while they're working fast, you know?
<Olivier> Ja.
<Bruce> That's what happens, normally.
<Olivier> Okay, no problem. Do you feel that you

Disadvantage

are closer
to the lecturer or to the interpreter?
<Bruce> Closer to the lecturer or the interpreter?
<Olivier> Because the
Afrikaans-speaking students necessarily have a
direct relationship...
<Bruce> Yes, they have a direct
relationship with the lecturer.
<Olivier> ...to the lecturer,
but you, I mean, you go through a middleman.

<Bruce> Yes, a middleman. Let me see now, just
repeat your
question... Let me think?
<Olivier> If you
let your heart speak, do you feel you're more
loyal
or you feel closer to your interpreter, or your
lecturer? Who would you trust more?
<Bruce> Who would I trust more?
<Olivier> Ja. Don't think so much
about it: Who would you trust more?
<Bruce> Between the two persons, who will I trust
more?

<Olivier> One of them knows what he's talking
about...
<Bruce> Yes.
<Olivier> ...and the other
speaks the language that you want to hear.
<Bruce> Yes.
<Olivier> So who do you trust?
<Bruce> Ooh, that's quite a tricky one, because there's a middleman...
Then I'm the middleman also because I'm listening
to two persons at the same time.
<Olivier> Right.

<Bruce> You know, I'm in the middle.
<Olivier> Yes.
<Bruce> Obviously...
<Olivier> It is
a difficult situation. Would you say it's a difficult
situation to deal with?
<Bruce> It is, sometimes. It is
a difficult situation because, you know, when, like for
Instance, when you talk to me you tell me you're

telling me something that, like for instance,
when you tell someone,
someone has to come to me and tell
something – those are to different codes, or direct
speeches, made to, you know, to one person.

<Olivier> Right.
<Bruce> Because that person
might miss something. Then you might say "but I
said, you know, to such and such and such, not
such and such and such". So that there are two
advantages and disadvantages also to that.
That's why I'm the middleman also.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> So, I'm
standing in the middle, listening to this one and
to that one, and I have to make sure that when
I'm in the middle, I have to take both and make
sure that, you know, I'll go
for one at the same time.

<Olivier> Alright. Thanks a lot for your time – is there anything that you would like to add, or...?
<Bruce> Okay, because now
I'm currently working on research also, so I really think
also for other faculties, this
thing might help, you know.
So also they might also get interpretation so that it
might help understand what is happening.
Because what I believe in
in life, I also believe that what I have, some of the people must also have, so they must also benefit,
I don't believe
in benefiting individually for my own life, and stuff
and stuff and stuff and like that.
<Bruce> Because I have spoken to several people in different races, and all of them believe that, you know.
They've sympathy for both, that's what I can say, they both
Think, but okay I'm benefiting, but what about the
other one, you know. They are facing challenges

and difficulties, you know. Maybe if they also, you know,
if they get interpretation, I think they might be fine. Because we're all here for one goal, just to get education
and then we build, you know, a nice future, all of us together.
<Olivier> Ja. Let me ask you one last very tricky question, and a very difficult question,
but it's a respectful question.
<Bruce> Okay, sir.
<Olivier> Do you feel you are a minority on this campus?
<Bruce> Minority, minority – in what sense?
<Olivier> Do you feel you represent a majority of students? Or do you feel really that you represent a minority of students now? Do you think you are considered on this campus?

<Bruce> How do I think I am considered academically, or just generally in life?
<Olivier> Socially?
<Bruce> You know, coming to that part of who do you represent, you know, the way I speak to you, there's a difference between the other groups of people because people's mentality differs. And you cannot judge one person – if somebody does something wrong, you cannot say that all of these people do something wrong. Because in each and every person there's a certain goodness about that person, so that's what I'm saying. I cannot say I represent a minority or a majority because each and every person that you speak to, that's my belief, there's something good you're gonna get in that person. Even though at first point you might say something that is out, but as you sit alone and you start thinking, that thing might develop into

Change of conversation?

something
positive, and you are living something in the process
also.
<Olivier> Alright.
<Bruce> That's what I say.
<Olivier> Super.
<Bruce> Because life, you know, now has changed
a lot, it's not... Change of conversation?
it's not all my part, maybe I am myself, Bruce, you
know.
I mean, I come from a very joined family, with
different
languages, you know.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> And some
of the people when I came in, they've been really
nice – of
all the races, you know?
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> Some of
them even now, they still come to me and ask me,
"How are
you doing; are you still coping?" You know? There's
not really
about... Maybe they have to
do something or give me money for that thing.
You know when somebody just come in and ask
you, "Are
you fine; are you still coping?" That means
something – that
person is concerned about you, and that makes me
aware
I have to be also concerned by just everyone.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Bruce> That's my take about life.
<Olivier> Okay. Thank you, Bruce.
<Bruce> You're welcome.

Mary, Isabel and Rick (users)

<Olivier> Thanks a lot for taking this interview.
Just remember to speak loud, alright, if you can.
So I just want to ask you a few questions about the interpretation services, which you are using for
communication
courses, right?

<Mary> Yes.
<Olivier> Okay. Generally speaking, what would you say about the interpretation services? Just speak your mind about it – not so much about the quality of it, but what is your feeling about this? Has it made a difference, have they... just express yourself about this.
<Mary> I think it made a big difference. — Result
<Olivier> Yes?
<Mary> But I think it came a bit too late into the... well, we were only introduced to it at this year, which is our third year now, so it's a bit too late for us now to... come into it now, but I think it did make a big, big difference to us. — Result
<Olivier> Okay. In terms of marks, I guess?
<Mary> Yes, especially marks.
<Olivier> Okay. And you, what d'you think about the interpreting service here? What has it made into your life at the university?
<Isabel> It made life easier.
<Olivier> Ja.
< Isabel > Yeah.
<Olivier> Okay. Has there been any time when you Used the interpretation services, where you've been frustrated or irritated? Can you remember any time, or a series of incidents, where you've been really frustrated or irritated with what was happening with the interpretation?
<Rick> Especially when the cell phones are ringing in the class.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Rick> That's what irritates me the most.
<Olivier> Yeah – the interferences of the equipment.
<Rick> Yes, and sometimes they're slow when they speak. They change the interpreters all the time. — Changing of the interpreter
<Olivier> Alright. Okay, good – never the same interpreters. Okay, irritation or frustration sometimes.
<Mary> Just irritated by cell phones as well, especially in [name of course] 221. Seeing as it is a triple [name of course] period, and I think people get bored and they play with their cell phones.
<Olivier> Really?

<Mary> Ja.
<Olivier>Okay.

Cell phone interference

<Rick> It does become a problem.
<Olivier> Is this the Afrikaans students who are playing with cell phones?
<Mary>Ja, it is.
<Olivier> Okay. Do you think that they have no consideration for the users of the interpretation services or...
<Mary> I don't think they don't have any consideration. I don't think they understand how it works, that they know that it bothers us. I don't think they're told that.
<Olivier>Okay, no problem. As students is it very Important for you to feel part of the class?
<Isabel> Yes.
<Olivier> Is it an important part of feeling, okay, about being at the university? Being a part of the lecture room?

Rick> Yes, because we have to understand what is going on in the classroom.
<Olivier> Alright. And do you feel that the interpretation Services have made that possible? Do you feel completely included now, with the interpretation services?
Do you feel that you are more part of the university studentship?
<Rick> Not completely included, because all the classes are only in Afrikaans and the other Afrikaans people would be looking down writing with your earphones on.

Partial inclusion

<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel included now or do you feel excluded?
<Isabel> Included.
<Olivier> Alright.
<Isabel> Ja, I can understand what she [the lecturer] asks.
<Olivier> Okay. And how is the lecturer coping with the interpretation services? Because the lecturer is supposed to cater for the whole class, so if you feel included now, is the lecturer part of this?
<Mary> No.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Mary> No.
<Olivier> Explain?

<Mary> She doesn't understand why the interpretation
services are there, because she keeps... when we have
a group, we went on the first lecture to her, she called the
English group forward...
<Olivier> Right.
<Mary> ...to the class, to have... to give their
input or to say something about it, and she... we told
her that we... the [PowerPoint] slides are not translated,
can she put them in English for us? And so she said
she was gonna tell the interpreter to interpret the slides,
but then that takes more time now in the lecture,
and she's trying to... the Afrikaans people have to wait for
us.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Mary> So now we explained this to her, and
she still doesn't understand, and she just says to us
it's an Afrikaans university...
<Olivier> Oh, Okay.
<Mary> So...
**<Olivier> So do you feel that in this particular case,
the interpretation services are just here as a token of
political correctness?**
<Mary> Yes.
<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel the same?
<Isabel> Yes.
**<Olivier> Okay. What's your feeling about that?
Do you feel in that particular
episode that you
are being excluded?**
<Rick> Yeah, but the
fact that she said "this is an Afrikaans
university", you
need to think about this.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Isabel> And she tells us
that after class we could come and see her –
but we have other classes, we don't have
time to do that. We also want to be in class
there, be taught in class, not have to come
back later.
<Olivier> Yes.
<Mary> Because

Mainstream/Margin

Exclusion,
Afrikaans
domination

we always have to go find her, and she usually
Doesn't have time to translate the slides to
English, so she just says, "There's a study
guide at Xerox; go and get that."

<Olivier> And whenever in
that particular class you have a question
to ask to the lecturer, how do you do it? Do
you raise your hand and speak English, or
what do you do? Do you never ask
questions in that class?
<Isabel> We don't ask questions.
<Olivier>Okay. And do Afrikaans students ask
questions
in that class, or is it a general thing – nobody
ask questions in the class?

<Rick> No, they do ask questions.

<Olivier> Okay, but these are mostly Afrikaans
students?

<Mary> Yes.
<Olivier> Okay. And how would you
feel about... if you really had to ask a question in
that particular class. How would you do it? Would
you know how to ask a question in that class?

<Mary> Well...

<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel that in that particular
episode
equality hasn't been achieved, that you're still
excluded in retrospect, because you are
English-speaking?

<Rick> Yes. I experience it because, this
other time, like black students told her that we
feel excluded in the class, she should ask questions
in English and all, and then she made fun about it
in front of the class – that "who's that lady who said
she is excluded in class, I wanna ask her a
question!" and all of that, and she must give
an answer in front of the class...
<Olivier> Okay, ja, is that something that you

Exclusion episode

observed in other interpretation lectures or is it just in this one?
<Rick> [name of course] 222.

<Olivier> [name of course] 222 – and do you have other interpreted lectures?

<Mary, Isabel & Rick> Yes, 221.

<Olivier> Alright, and in the 221 lectures everything is good?
<Isabel> Yes, everything is equal. Except for the people with cell phones.
<Olivier> Ja, but the lecturer in 221 is more inclusive and considerate?
<Isabel> Yes.

<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel somehow – I mean this is gonna sound like a very bizarre question, but when you're in the lecture room, will you trust the lecturer more, or the interpreter more?

<Mary> The interpreter.

<Olivier> Okay. The interpreter is here for you. Would you feel the same, both of you? Do you feel that the Afrikaans students have more of a connection with the lecturer?
<Mary> Ja, they do. I think they do have that.

<Olivier> Okay.
<Mary> I think she helps
them more as well, because we had a test yesterday that the English students didn't know about. Marginalisation
<Rick> Uh-huh.
Because the interpreter wasn't there on Friday.

<Mary> So she... there was only one guy who went, and she told him to just go, because there was no point in him staying if he can't understand.

<Olivier> Yes, okay.
<Mary> But she didn't tell him there was a test, so none of us knew.

<Olivier> Alright, okay. Do you have other users in 222 and 221 for [name of course]? Do you have other users... are there other users of the interpreting services or is it just the three of you?

<Isabel> No, there are others.

<Olivier> Okay, and do they feel the Same? Have you talked to them about this?

<Isabel> Yes.

<Olivier> Okay, alright. Other things that you would like to tell about the interpreting services, things that you think can be improved, apart from the interferences, the cell phones and the problem in 222,is there anything else that you could see improved? Do you think that now you benefit from the same chances to succeed in education as the Afrikaans students, or is it slightly unequal? Do you think that you hear exactly in English what the lecturer says in Afrikaans, in other terms?

<Rick> Yes, because we do understand a bit of Afrikaans. It is not that we don't understand it completely, so... but the interpreters are more accurate.

Afrikaans is understood to an extent

<Olivier> Okay. Do the interpreters sometimes differ from the lecturer? Do they rephrase? Do they say things differently? Do they sometimes simplify even things for you?

<Mary> No, I think they say it as it is, yeah.

<Olivier> Have you ever felt at any point in the past where you felt that you Knew... you discovered that the interpreter wasn't translating something that you thought was important?

<Mary> No.

<Isabel> No.

<Olivier> Okay. And last year there were reports of a lecturer in an interpreted lecture who was cracking racist jokes. And have you ever experienced this? A lecturer saying jokes maybe racist or not, that the interpreter had difficulty translating, or was not translating? This hasn't happened?

<Rick> No.

<Olivier> Alright. Have you anything else that you would like to say otherwise – you are happy... or not happy?

<Mary> I think most students

Anger, negative feelings

came out of the lecture angry yesterday, everyone – all the English students were angry with her.

<Olivier> How does that make you feel, being in that class? Because I mean, just a few minutes into the interview you jumped on 222 and you told me this was really a problem. How does that make you feel? Do you come out of the class angry, frustrated? What do you feel exactly? what would you feel like saying to the lecturer? Let's imagine that this lecturer is here but cannot respond to you, he or she can just listen to you – what would you say to her or him? Don't be afraid, she's not here and she will never hear that.

<Mary> I would say, "Why Is it so difficult for her to treat us the same?"

<Olivier>Alright. And what do you feel? What would you feel like saying to this person? Do you feel it's a problem, expressing this aloud? Do you think that it's difficult to say these kind of things that Mary just said?

<Isabel> I just wouldn't know what to say...

<Olivier> Okay. Do you feel that at one point you're gonna be able to go to that lecturer and say to her or him exactly what you feel, or do you

think it's gonna be too hard?

<Mary> I think we'd be afraid of her dropping

Feeling of marginalisation, of punishment

our marks. That's what the other students are afraid of – to go to her because they're afraid that she is gonna just fail us.

<Olivier> Okay. Are you also afraid of that?

<Rick> No, she's rude.

<Olivier> Okay. How rude exactly? Not to worry, there's no name – I don't want to know who this lecturer is, so it doesn't matter. Nobody will get reported.

<Rick> She doesn't really care what she says in front of other people about a person.

<Olivier> Okay. Are there any particular persons that she has personally insulted in front of you, or like this?

<Rick> She never mentions the person's name, but she was like, you know... How can I say?

<Mary>I think that girl was the one that she was talking about, because afterward she went to the lecturer, and said to her whether it was really necessary for her to point that out, that she was the one who asked her to ask the English people questions. And the lecturer responded to her and said, "Because you challenged me",

Lack of professionalism

and she said that she mustn't be so sensitive.

<Olivier> Okay, alright.

<Mary> That's where she doesn't consider anybody else.

<Olivier> Have you thought about talking to the interpreter about it? Do you think that the interpreter can do something for this, because after all he does or she does represent you? You don't listen to the lecturer technically speaking, you listen to the interpreter, so he's like your buddy or

should be,
at least. Have you thought about talking to him or her?

<Rick> No.

<Olivier> Okay. So that's obviously a difficult situation, because you have trouble expressing yourself About it. Is that a very painful situation to Some extent? Or is it relatively okay, but it could be improved? Okay, a really big problem. Alright – let's not venture further. So apart from this [name of course] 222 class, you haven't identified any other problem in this class? How do the Afrikaans students fare with the lecturer? Do they communicate with her or with him easily? Or is it the same thing, that she provokes them as well, or does she have the same attitude with them? Or do you think it's just with the English-speaking people?

<Rick> Yeah, she does make nasty comments to them, too.

<Olivier>Okay, so you're not the only one.

<Mary> No.

<Olivier> Okay, alright. Anything else you would like to say? No, you're okay? Alright, thanks a lot for taking this interview.

Corné (interpreter)

<Olivier> Thanks for taking this interview. I wanted to know, first and foremost, what you think about your job as an interpreter here.

<Corné> How I experience my job as an interpreter, or what I think about the duty of an interpreter?

<Olivier> Speak about your job in general, how you feel about it...

<Corné> Well, I think interpreting on the campus really opened up a door for something that no one has done before, and I know from experience, from speaking to students and

New opportunities

for the things they tell me and the gratitude that — Gratitude
they express after an exam or something like that,
when they come to me and tell me that I
I helped them in class, that it's very fulfilling job — Interpreter fulfilled
to be an interpreter. And it feels as if you're making
a difference in someone else's studies, at least,
even if it's just in a small amount, so it's... I really do
like interpreting, and I think it's a really handy
tool to keep our campus and our — Keep our identity
campus identity – and that's something
that a lot of people on the PUK campus feel very
strongly about, so I really I think it's a great thing.

<Olivier> Do you feel that you have a certain... that you were given a certain social responsibility?

<Corné> I think so – why, yes, it sounds very — Social empowerment
melodramatic, but
I really do. I believe that there are students on
the campus who came here – bursaries, or
for whichever reason came to the PUK – who don't
manage their studies if they have to study in
Afrikaans, who really have problems understanding
the lectures, understanding the notes. And
interpreting helps them out a bit, and it feels as — Interpreter helps
if I'm making a difference, ja.
<Olivier> Okay. How do you feel in relation to your users, to your listeners – do you feel that you're a lecturer
sometimes, somehow?

<Corné> I think they sometimes see me as — Perception of users
a lecturer because
a lot of times after the contact

session they'll come to the interpreter and ask, — Interpreter as lecturer
"Could you please explain question four?" And
we have to explain that we don't necessarily know
what the answer to question four is because we
just interpret what the lecturer says. So sometimes
they definitely see us as a "surrogate lecturer" but — Authority=lecturer
I think the lines get a bit foggy
sometimes – the line between interpreter and
lecturer – because they see you as the person giving
them the — Voice/Body
lesson, and not the person just being the megaphone

for the lesson, so I definitely sometimes think it's a grey area.

<Olivier> Do you feel that in the physical space of the lecture now, the lecturer caters for the Afrikaans-speaking students, and you're the one catering for your non-Afrikaans-speaking students?

<Corné> I definitely think in some cases, yes,

Ignorance of the margins

that it's you – the lecturers tend to forget that there are English students in the class, but it's most of the time the lecturers who are only experiencing the interpreting system for the first time, or only those lecturers who haven't been interpreted for that long. After a while, I find that lecturers start to interact with the interpreter as well, because if the interpreter asks a question for the English students, or you can't hear the lecturer, or something like that, the lecturer soon realises that it's a partnership, and that they have to tend to look after the English students as well. I know that in some cases, and in some classes, the lecturers really go out of their way to try and speak English – sometimes terribly, sometimes the interpreters prefer the lecturer not to try and speak English – but some do, and some don't. I think it is 50-50, but I see, or I find, that it's usually the lecturers who aren't used to interpreting yet who forget about the English students.

<Olivier> Okay. Do you communicate with the users sometimes?

<Corné> I do, I do. I think the relationship between the interpreter and the user is something that every interpreter has to work out for themselves. For me, as an interpreter, I prefer to build up a relationship with the users so that they feel free to come and ask me questions and come interact with me, so if I hand them the earphones or if I sit in the class, and I open up my study guide, I like to greet them and ask them how they've been. And now there are students who have been in my classes or the classes that I interpret from three years back, so

Individual choices

we already have a long-going relationship. We know each other. After a holiday they'll ask me, "How was your holiday? How have you been?" I prefer to be more informal – to have a more informal relationship with them – but I know that there are interpreters who feel that they have to keep their distance from the students. I'm not one of those, I prefer them to see me as one of the students who is just being there for them. I want them to feel as if they can approach me. I was sitting in a computer lab one day on the Internet, and an English student whom I noticed a few times in some of the Pharmacy classes came to me and asked me if I could translate a piece of data on her computer, because it was this file, it was in Afrikaans, and she couldn't understand it, and she asked me to please come to her computer and translate the thing for her – because she knows I can understand it, and she can't... she can't help herself. So I think if I didn't have that relationship with my students she wouldn't have had...

Interpreter=student

<Olivier> Yes?

<Corné> She wouldn't have been able to come to me.

<Olivier> How do you feel in relation to the lecturer now?

<Corné> In some cases, you really feel like a partner. You feel like the lecturers appreciate your being there – they want to help you. They want to work with you. In other cases, the lecturers are sometimes a bit sceptic about what you're doing there. I think sometimes they feel as if you're taking over their job, and you have to first show them that you're not... that you're really just going to say what they're saying in English, so... But with most of the lecturers, for example, in some of the Nursing classes, I've been interpreting the class for two to three years, and I really have a relationship with the lecturers. Every year, I try to sort out my schedule so that I can interpret those classes, and the lecturers know me – they remember my name, they call me if their classes are cancelled,

Empathy with the lecturer

and tell me on my cell phone that they won't be
having classes, or where they are in their module.
So with most of the lecturers, I really get along
well. They... we really have a good work ethics going.

<Olivier> About those lecturers who feel that you're overtaking their job – how did that materialise? How did you notice that?

<Corné> I'd say about two out of thirty [lecturers] or so

Lack of professionalism among The lecturers is rare

that I've interpreted for, who initially

didn't understand the whole
concept. Mostly, it's very Afrikaans lecturers
who don't really know what to expect of
the whole thing, but they warmed up to it. They're
definitely warm to it and I don't feel that on a permanent
basis. But initially you had to... it felt as if I had
to prove that I'm there to help them. I'm really
there to make their jobs better, not to take over
their job. It was as if they'd come to me and say,
"Well, I'm here now. I don't know what you want
to do today, but I'm here in the module," and I had
to explain to them, "But I do what you do: You say
what you're going to do in class today, I prepare
for it, and that's what I interpret. I can't tell
you what to do, I can't tell you how to treat the students,
how to work with the students. You do what you
do, and I just do it a second over in English!" And
they really have to warm up to it sometimes.

<Olivier> Okay. About your own performance, what do you think is your biggest problem, or your biggest issue, in the quality of your interpreting? If you had to be honest?

<Corné> Well initially I really had a
problem with my volume.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Corné> I have a strong voice
so, really, interpreting at a very low pitch,
very low volume, was my biggest problem.
I think I got the knack of it now – speaking
very softly – but initially, I spoke louder than
the lecturer while I was trying to whisper. But

now, I think I get it. I don't think I necessarily mess with number and concord, and "is" and "are" and those things. I'm a bit rough around the edges with my English now; I haven't spoken English since two months, but I think most of the times it's just the terminology: you have to really keep up to date with the terminology. You have to sit there with your books if you can't remember everything, and make sure that you know

Technical, linguistic issues

what the Afrikaans and the English of each term is, because sometimes after a holiday or so, you forget things that you've interpreted for two years, and you really have to refresh your terminology. I think that's the biggest problem; I don't think my language as such is a problem. I think the students understand me and they haven't complained about it. I know from the the data that we have that they don't complain about my language use, but I definitely think that I have to keep up to date with my terminology.

<Olivier> Yes. Then again you don't really have an Afrikaans accent when you speak English.

<Corné> No, luckily not. I grew up in Jo'burg, so... and I love languages, I love English especially. So I don't think I have an Afrikaans accent.

<Olivier> No, you don't.

<Corné> Luckily, they don't usually believe I'm Afrikaans. I'm actually doing a study on the accents of the interpreters for my English final year paper.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Corné> I'm trying to do research on the effect that your home language, your mother tongue, has on your your accent as an interpreter – so it's quite an interesting field for me, but I think really my biggest challenge is really just keeping up to date with the terminology.

<Olivier> Okay. Do you often... it happens to all of us, but do you often backtrack, meaning that you translate something, and you come back on it, either because you feel that you need to explain yourself further...

<Corné> Definitely, not that often, I think the longer you interpret the easier it gets to cut out backtracking. But sometimes it is necessary if you don't immediately grasp the English terminology for a word – you explain it elaborately, and try to explain what the lecturer said instead of just saying it in one word, and then I backtrack and sometimes you feel as if the lecturer didn't explain it well enough in Afrikaans, so that you can literally just translate it to English and they will understand, and you try to elaborate on the concepts of it, so that the students understand it better. So, definitely, backtracking happens.

Technical issues

<Olivier> Okay.

<Corné> And usually it's handy if you can just backtrack well enough not to "um" and "ah" in between – it sounds as if you... you're speaking the truth so...

<Olivier> Do you think that when you're backtracking and therefore going further, essentially, that you become the lecturer?

<Corné> Well, in a sense, if you're saying more than the lecturer is saying, then for a brief split second, you probably are lecturing in a way. But most of the time, you lecture on... you interpret on something that you don't... that you're not qualified to lecture on. You don't have a clue what they're saying in this Pharmacy class on metabolites and things like that, you don't know what it is, so you have to explain it in such a simple way that you literally... you're just saying what the lecturer is saying. But I think for that brief second, when you're backtracking, and you don't necessarily grasp the terminology and you have to explain it for yourself, in a way you're explaining it to the students as well, but I think that's not the idea. The idea is to say exactly what the lecturer says, so backtracking really should be the last resort.

Lecturer=interpreter

<Olivier> Have you caught yourself at any time giving extra textual indications? For example, the

teacher – the
lecturer – is writing on the screen, or has that
Happened in your
interpreting?
<Corné> It has happened – sometimes the lecturer will be writing something on the board, on the blackboard. And he's not necessarily saying it in Afrikaans, but he's silent, and without noticing it you'll say "three plus four is seven" instead of just keeping silent. When the lecturer is silent, that does happen and you have to stop yourself immediately. I find myself doing that in the Mathematics classes, especially because there are moments when the lecturers are so silent – they just don't do anything, they don't say anything, and it feels as if you should be interpreting. And then without noticing it, you start saying what he's writing on the board, and I have had to stop myself from doing that. But most of the time, he'll say "on page five" in the Afrikaans guide and he forgets to tell on which page it is in the English guide. And it's not the same, so you have to say "it's on page seven" in the English guide. Then you have to interpret it for yourself; you have to improvise otherwise if you say "page five" the English students won't know where they are. So you have to improvise with that but I think, really, the more you interpret, the longer you're in the business, in the flow of things, the better you manage to just say what the lecturer says.

Correcting mistakes

<Olivier> Yes, okay. Have you found yourself at any time
in a difficult situation – meaning the lecturer was saying
things that you judged were not acceptable to translate?

<Corné> No, luckily not. I know that there have been cases – I don't know the details of it, but I have heard interpreters say that they've had a situation where the lecturer said something in Afrikaans – a very Afrikaans concept – that you don't necessarily get

in English, and I've had to explain what the lecturer said. I can't remember, it was a word like "*grillerig*" or something that you don't have in English, and I had to explain that, but never any racist slurs or anything that I've taken offence to.

<Olivier> If you were in such a situation, and if I gave you one second to decide on what to do, what would you do?

<Corné> Honestly, if a lecturer made a racist remark or something that goes against my core values, I will rather not interpret it. I'll take the trouble later – I'll take the trouble that comes my way for it later, but I won't be able to interpret something that offends me, and I know that it offends the people that I'm interpreting for.

<Olivier> What kind of trouble would come your way?

<Corné> I don't know. Well, the lecturer would probably not be pleased if I don't say exactly what he says, but I wouldn't necessarily care. But I don't think that Professor [head of the interpreting services], for example, would take offence if I don't interpret a racist remark.

<Olivier> Would the users take offence at the fact that you're making a choice for them?

<Corné> Well, probably, in a sense. If there are... sometimes, we have Afrikaans students in the classes who listen to the interpreter, so that they can understand the English textbooks. And if they understand what the lecturer was saying, and you don't say it, probably they would have a problem with it, but I don't know. I think it's a thin line between doing your job and being yourself, and I think that's something I would definitely struggle with. I've never been in that situation but...

<Olivier> Okay.

<Corné> But I know for a fact that I have very strong opinions about such things, so that would

Add. Explanation Of idiomatic concepts

Not interpreting Comments deemed Offensive – moral values

Individual choices

Interpreter

choices

be a bit difficult for me.
<Olivier> Okay, alright. Is there anything else that you would like to say that would contribute to your perception of the job?
<Speaker> No, I don't think so.
As I said, I really enjoy interpreting.
I'm really thankful that it came my way,
because I started as an assistant in my first year and
then went on as an interpreter, and I really enjoy it.
I enjoy it, being part of something that's bigger than
just studying my own course. I feel as if I'm

Scope of the services

making a contribution, and I'm making friends, and
I'm broadening my horizon, and I study languages.
And I'm in this building most of the time, and if I just
stuck to my course this would be my world on the
PUK – and being an interpreter opens up my world
to Medicine and Pharmacy and Mathematics and
Engineering, and things that I would never have been...
have had any contact with, so...
<Olivier> So you are a "qualified" interpreter?
<Corné> Well, not necessarily qualified, but I
enjoy the ride, going along the route.

<Olivier> You mentioned the difference between a "qualified" lecturer and a "qualified" interpreter. The only difference is that the "qualified" interpreter doesn't know much about the content of the work that he or she's speaking and that's it?
<Corné> Yes, it is. Sometimes people ask if I
can't get a degree in the things that I interpret, but
the truth is you don't necessarily know what you're
saying. You know how to say it in the other language,
but you don't know what exactly you're saying.
I can interpret Mathematics and do it perfectly, and
say "the integral of five squared is this", but I don't have
a clue what I'm saying.

Interpreter is only A voice

<Olivier> Yes.
<Corné> So I think that's the biggest difference
between an interpreter and a lecturer – they really
do know where they're coming from.
<Olivier> Okay. Just one last question: do you feel that sometimes you're speaking better than the lecturer?

<Corné> When they're trying to speak English? Definitely!
<Olivier> No, I mean is your English better than their Afrikaans sometimes?
<Corné> I think here and there, in some of the faculties, the language is not necessarily the main focus. That's a fact. They focus so much on their academics, on their study matter, that they don't necessarily focus on their language.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Corné> And being someone who is interested in languages, that is something that I pick up on, so, yes, there are cases where the language of the lecturer is sometimes not necessarily up to standard, and I know that if I was speaking Afrikaans, I would probably be saying it better. But then again I speak a different type of Afrikaans than most of my friends.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Corné> I probably am a bit more sceptic about it.
<Olivier> Don't you feel that you have a lot of responsibilities on your shoulders, interpreting here?

<Corné> Yes, definitely, definitely. I think because Language always is such a fragile concept, and the whole issue on languages on campuses in South Africa at the moment is something that is very flammable, especially with what's happening at Stellenbosch, and so forth. And I really do think that interpreters have a great responsibility in doing their jobs well, so that we keep everyone happy – so that we really offer everyone something that can make them happy, that can help them in their studies, so that we don't get the problems that other campuses have. So, in that way, I think we really do have a big responsibility.

Importance of keeping Afrikaans on the Campus

<Olivier> Okay. Thanks a lot.
<Corné> It's a pleasure.

Tim (Interpreter)

E-mail

> – You talked, during your interviews, about "boundaries" between you,

> the user and the lecturer. Could you tell me a bit more about this?

Boundaries are vital to the success of the programme. A lecturer must understand that they are not free to lecture in just any style they wish. This is a qualified statement as I mean that should they spend the entire lecture writing on a board with no microphone then no one can hear them. The user does not realise that the interpreter cannot hear (unless told such) and this impacts negatively on the programme. I had issues where the lecturer (a temp for the semester) would speed read a lecture and finish in 10 minutes. This is frustrating as, one, I am not a professional interpreter and my skills may not be at the peak of that of a professionals; two, no one can react that fast.

Difficulty in accommodating the new system

> – You talked a lot about professionalism: How would you define
> professionalism in interpreting?

The programme's success is linked with the professionalism of the Interpreter and their assistant. Let us not forget that for many of the users, those two people are the "face" of the programme. Arriving late is a serious problem or not arriving at all is even worse. Often the people fulfilling these roles are just trying to make a little extra money and they treat the programme as such. They line up three assisting roles (and it is often the assistants who do this) spread across campus and cannot pack up, get to the next lecture hall, and set up in time for each of these. Only the assistants can know if the burden is too difficult, as the person developing the schedule

Seriousness of the interpreters

cannot consider
all these factors. This often leads to them swapping out
29 with one
another or getting someone else to cover a shift and this
30 causes such
a flux in a routine that it becomes problematic to the
31 interpreter and
the users wonder why there is always a swap. Should an
32 Interpreter be
late or not arrive, the assistant can also not just take
33 over, they
are not a substitute. The interpreters themselves also
34 have faults:
taking on roles outside their field of knowledge is a major
35 problem. I,
as a law expert, cannot interpret say Chemical
36 Engineering. I should
first "qualify" or "develop" into that role and many do not
37 do this
and struggle throughout the period and drop half the
38 lecture.
39
> – You mentioned you were quite keen on
40 **maintaining Afrikaans as the**
> instruction medium on the campus: How did you
41 **see your role in that**
42 **> light?**
43
The interpreter's role is paramount herein. A dual
44 medium lecture can
mean that although your communication skills are
45 proficient in either
Afrikaans or English on a social level that you need not
46 concern
yourself sitting with your Afrikaans friends in a class and
47 not
understanding them. To this end, we do not need to have
48 students group
together unless truly technical problems may arise which
49 need closer
attention. Should Afrikaans and English sit together in
50 one class and
both receive the same level of education from the same
51 lecturer then
the programme is a success and Afrikaans need not be
52 done away with as

the instruction medium on campus, as both language
53 groups are being
serviced equally. I have sat in the English classes
54 available to
students and the quality was very poor. If the lecture was
55 not handed
over to the most junior of lecturers it was handled by a
56 lecturer who
could not cornmunicate effective in English. Thereby the
57 lecture
suffered as did the sentiment of the English student
58 towards the
university. My English classes where all between 6 pm
59 and 10 pm at
night – what sort of student life was that? In fact, I
60 dropped out of
university for a period of three years as a result of it.
61 Now, all sit
in one class and have the same lecture, share the same
62 jokes, go for
coffee after class together and the institution becomes
63 one of
"co-operative learning" (my own phrase if you understand
64 it?).

Interpreting better than dual-medium?

65

> A few issues I'd like you to react to (again, feel free
66 **to write your**
67 **> impression in an unstructured way):**
68 >
69 **> – Minority/majority**
70

Minority being the English-speaking or non-white
71 population and to a
limited extent the English-speaking white population on
72 campus. They
are often pushed aside and treated very badly and I have
73 stories that
would make anyone upset. The majority being the
74 Afrikaans-speaking
population that is accommodated, not just within lectures,
75 but
throughout the academic process. I have felt before that
76 because I
wrote my tests in English my marks suffered as I
77 expressed myself in a
78 particular way that was not understood by the Afrikaans

Margins

marker, this
person mostly being an Afrikaans-speaking person. They
79 could not
80 understand my comments to grade me properly.
81
82 **> – Your responsibility**
83
To ensure that you are prepared, that you know where
84 you have to be,
to arrive on time, to not engage the users but to follow
85 through with
the job. More particularly, the interpreter must be honest
86 with
themselves and should a particular class or lecturer
87 influence their
competence for the job, they must recuse themselves.
88 They are the best
judge of their own quality. The hardest thing I had to do
89 was to admit
to myself that I had to drop a particular class as I could
90 just not
follow the train of thoughts of the lecturer. He was new
91 and would
jump outside the material, I had just started and after two
92 lectures I
had to admit that my experience was not sufficient
93 enough to do just
to the quality of the programme and the interpretation
94 and for the
benefit of the users I asked that a more advanced
95 interpreter do the
96 job. Despite the financial loss to myself, I did this. All
97 interpreters must exhibit the same responsibility.
98

Interpreters should only be conduits

> – To what extent would you have assimilated your
99 **role to the**
100 **> lecturer's?**
101
The job we do is very difficult. They need only
102 understand this and
consider the interpreter as their extension, not an
103 annoyance in their
class. Our ability to do our job to the best of our ability
104 becomes a
credit to them when their studies show pass rates and, in
105 effect, their

careers at an Afrikaans university are dependant on the
106 success of
this programme because without an interpreter the
107 pressure for them to
lecture in English rather than Afrikaans would be very
108 large.

Interpreters' Group I: Johan, Esti

1
2 **<Olivier>**
3 **Okay, for those of you who don't know me, my**
4 **name is Olivier Wittezaele, and apart for being a lecturer in French, I'm also a conference**
5 **interpreter...**
6 <Johan> Okay.
7 **<Olivier> ...and I'm also the chairperson of the**
8 **National Interpreters' Association in South Africa,**
9 **and I'm doing my dissertation on interpreters – as**
10 **If I didn't have enough on my plate already!**
11 <Johan> Okay.
12 **<Olivier> And I don't want to tell you exactly what**
13 **I'm working on, because this would, according to**
14 **scientific research, bias your answers, so I just**
15 **want this conversation to be as free-flowing as**
16 **possible. And what I need to say from the beginning**
17 **is that I've observed you for quite some time now,**
18 **and I think you're bloody good with what you're**
19 **doing, and what I'm interested in, to be quite frank, is not so much your linguistic capacity or your**
20 **performance,**
21 **per se, it's really external factors that can influence your performance and your situation in the lecture**
22 **room. Okay?**
23 **So I'm going to start with a first question**
24 **that I want you to answer as freely as possible,**
25 **as sincerely as possible, and I'm going to mention**
26 **A word that you often hear in interpreting research and it is called "loyalty". In your job, you're**
27 **servicing**
28 **people... but I want to know, according to you, who**
29 **do you think you are servicing first, who is your**
30 **client, who are you loyal to in your interpreting?**
31 **Think about this and...**
32 <Esti> The students. I'll definitely say the students.
33 When I don't know a word I always feel bad for the

students. I'm not thinking of Prof [head of the
34 interpreting services] or anybody

Loyalty to the students

35 like that, I'm always thinking about the students
36 when I do something bad.
37 **<Olivier> Okay.**
38 <Esti> So I would definitely say the students.
39 **<Olivier> Students.**
40 <Esti> Ja.
41 **<Olivier> Interesting.**
42 <Johan> Ja, my answer would be the same.

Loyalty to the students

43 I would put myself into that position if, for example,
44 I was in class and I couldn't understand a word.
45 **<Olivier> Right.**
46 <Johan> And then, I mean, the student... if they're
47 my client... so I mean they ... I must interpret to the
48 best of my power so that they can
49 understand it clearly and, like I said,
50 I always put myself into that position and what
51 would it have been like if I were there, in their position.
52 **<Olivier> Okay. And how do you see your role**
53 **exactly? Because in conference interpreting**
54 **essentially what you're doing is that you're**
55 **translating in another language**
56 **what seemingly very important people are**
57 **saying but everything seems fairly straightforward.**
58 **But you're in a situation which is different: you're**
59 **in a university, and your students, in case you**
60 **haven't noticed, are from various backgrounds.**
They are different from the "majority" of the
61 **students**
62 **on the campus. So how do you see your role as**
63 **interpreters at the university?**
64 <Johan> Well, I see it a bit more informal than,
65 for example, conference interpreting and, yes,
66 I feel it's not a very strict atmosphere or I'm not...
67 I don't know
68 if that's the correct word to use, but
69 I feel it's not as strict as conference interpreting and...
70 **<Olivier> Why wouldn't it be as strict as**
71 **conference interpreting?**
72 <Johan> Well, just because I can associate
73 with them; I'm a student as well. So, for example,
74 when you interpret at a conference like you
75 said, it's important people. Students are

Informality of interpreting

also important to me but it's just I can associate
with them: I'm a student as well.
<Olivier> Okay
<Johan> So...
<Olivier> That makes sense.
<Johan> Yes.
<Esti> I find it a bit difficult to differentiate
between what you have to do, and what you shouldn't
do. Like some interpreters who explains terms when

Lack of job description

the lecturer just gives the term, and then he thinks
the interpreter thinks that he has to explain something.
The other day I had a student who asked me
for some notes because the lecturer sends me the

Interference lecturer/interpreter

notes beforehand, and I gave her the notes and later
that evening the lecturer called me, and he said no, I
shouldn't do that, that's a problem and so on.
Sometimes you do some things which
you're not supposed... which is not really the role of
an interpreter, and then it is difficult to decide what
you should do and what not.
**<Olivier> But do you think part of the stress that you
are probably experiencing as interpreters – because
let's face it, it is a very stressful activity – stands
from this pressure between the users,
your students and the lecturer?**
<Esti> No, I think the stress just comes from
trying to find the words and the worry, ja.

<Olivier> Okay.
<Esti> In my specific situation I studied
Actuarial Science, so my major is Mathematics,
so I'm mainly interpreting mathematical subjects. So
in those situations what makes it easier for me is I
understand the work – it is first- and second-year work –
so sometimes it is difficult for me when the lecturer
explains something but I know another way to explain

Intervention from The interpreter

it better to them, or just to say
one more sentence for example.
If something is very important, and I know it is very
important, then I would say "okay, remember this, it is
very important". And then sometimes, I'm in conflict, I
don't know whether that's correct but...
and then sometimes you get lecturers which
make a mistake, write something incorrect...

<Johan> Yes.
<Esti> ...on the board and then you wonder: "Should I say the right thing, or should I say what he is saying, just a wrong number?"
<Olivier> Should you?
<Esti> I don't know!
<Johan> Well, sometimes I would first ... I think my job is to say... just exactly to interpret what he says or she, then I would say the wrong number, but then I would say...

Confusion in difficult situations

<Esti> You could maybe raise your hand and tell the lecturer?
<Johan> Ja... just tell the lecturer, "Okay, I think that's wrong." Or sometimes the students do that as well. And then I would say, "Okay, that thing should change to that, okay."
<Olivier> Okay. So you feel that there's more to it than just interpreting – you can literally intervene in the discourse.
<Johan> Yes, I feel in our situation, Well, it's difficult, ja. I also don't know whether it is ethically correct, but sometimes I do that – just to say an extra sentence or whatever.
<Olivier> Where do you think your ethics stop exactly? Where do you think is the boundary to what you can say, and what you can't say? Let's take a very practical situation – we'll take a very easy situation, and we'll take a tough situation, just for the record. For example, you have a lecturer who makes a mistake in numbers – let's say that the result of an equation is 130 but he says or she says 120. What do you do? What is your strategy when something like that happens?
<Esti> Well, most of the times, he is writing it on the board, so sometimes he's writing 120 and he's saying 130, and in that case, I don't know, I've said the right thing that is standing there, while he said the wrong thing. I don't know if it's correct, but I've done that because otherwise it makes the students also be mistrusting to what you... if you say something and they see he is writing something else, it makes them think the interpreter doesn't

Correcting mistakes

even know what's standing there.
<Olivier> Right.
<Esti> What's he saying.
<Olivier> Right.
<Johan> Okay, but sometimes you're in a situation,
for example, when I interpret an engineering
subject which I don't have a clue of and then
I wouldn't know
that he is making a mistake, so... and
then you would just interpret the mistake. Well,
it's just because you have a background of the
course, then sometimes you can identify, okay, there's
a mistake. But then, like I said, I would correct it.
<Esti> Ja, sometimes you don't need a
background if it's sometimes you...

<Johan> Okay, yes, I understand.
<Olivier> Would you define your role –
before I talk about the second example – would
you define your role as a representative of the
lecturer, rather than an interpreter?

<Johan> Just repeat the question?
<Olivier> Would you see your role as representing
what the lecturer says, or is it more than that?
<Johan> Well, I think I'm not sure what they
expect of us as a classroom interpreter, but I see
myself as a representative of the lecturer. I mean,
just an English version, ja. I see that.
<Olivier> Okay
<Esti> Representative, meaning not really that
close to the lecturer, but more...
giving sort of the general idea? I would say not.
What is the question?
<Olivier> Okay... Do the users consider you the
source
of the information, or do they consider the lecturer
the source of information?
<Esti> Ja, that's some of them really. You can
see, when you're talking, they're looking at you and
I think they should look at the lecturer.
<Olivier> But that's an interesting point because
that, to me,
gives me the idea that your responsibility
is just enormous. You are responsible for the

Not sure what the Expectations are

Interpreter=lecture r

proper education of people. And I've identified in conference interpreting that you can get away with murder sometimes, because the people are, you know, they're pretty much all on the same level in the conference room, but here you are responsible for people getting their qualifications right.

<Johan> Yes. Sometimes a difficult situation for me is if they don't look at the lecturer – he might just say "okay, take this and do that and you do this", okay, and I'm a bit behind and I can't just say "okay, you look at that, you look at this, you look at that". Then I have to say "okay, you have to take that equation..." – I mean, that is a difficult situation if they don't look at the lecturer, and then it's because of that lag also, some problems might occur.

<Olivier> Ja, okay.

<Johan> So that's where I see, okay, you're not just a direct interpreter. That's when I see myself as a representative of... you know, from... you know, of explaining to them the work.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Esti> I don't know. I don't see myself so much as a representative of course. When you're behind you can maybe give a hint: you can say look at that equation or instead of saying "look at that equation" but I would try not to do that, if it's possible not to do it.

Tutoring

<Olivier> The second example – I'm just taking on an anecdotal basis by some... an interpreter a few years ago told me that he didn't know how to react when the lecturer uttered a racist joke, and I don't know if that ever happened to you. I know that it very rarely happens, I'm pretty sure, but how would you react in such a situation?

<Esti> I think I would translate it so that the students can go and complain and do something against the lecturer, because it's not... I mean they should hear. It's bad for them, maybe they feel bad about it, but then they have the chance to do something against it, so I would. I think I would.

Social sensitivity

<Olivier> You're on the side of the students.

<Esti> Ja, ja, ja.

<Olivier> You feel closer to them than the lecturer, but maybe in your case that's because Afrikaans is not your first language?

<Esti> It might be. There are also some lecturers...

<Olivier> Or because you feel that you're the minority yourself?

<Esti> There are also some lecturers which, I don't know...

<Olivier> Okay.

<Esti> It's not that I don't like the lecturers.

<Olivier> Explain further: are there lecturers that are more disagreeable to interpret?

<Esti> More difficult to interpret, obviously. Some speak better, some worse, but it's not that I don't like... not like when you said I feel closer to the students, that doesn't mean that I feel that I don't like the lecturers.

<Olivier> No, of course, okay.

<Johan> Ja, you can actually see sometimes, I see myself as a double role that I play. I mean, you're the representative of the lecturer but then also sometimes of the students, of the English students. If something in the class... sometimes they have transparencies which isn't or aren't translated then, okay, then I feel I should tell the lecturer, because sometimes it is just impossible to interpret everything. I mean, it is just sometimes it is impossible.

Double role

<Olivier> Ja.

<Johan> so then I see myself playing a double role, but then I had this situation once where the lecturer... it wasn't a racist ... he didn't make racist remarks but he said... he started speaking about language affairs of the university because there was...he wanted to provide Afrikaans notes but he hadn't finished the English note yet, but it was just a week before the exam and then there was this huge thing in the classroom where the English students didn't want him to provide the notes because they didn't have the English notes yet.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Johan> So, okay, but then he started stating that they should start learning Afrikaans; they're at

an Afrikaans university. And I felt very uncomfortable.

Derogatory remarks, dominance of Afrikaans

Because, I mean, it is not their responsibility to start learning Afrikaans: that's where my role comes in.
<Olivier> Ja.
<Johan> I'm supposed to interpret that to them, so that was a very difficult situation for me and I didn't really know how to handle it.
<Olivier> So how did you get away with it?
<Johan> Well, I didn't say to them "Okay, you must start learning Afrikaans!" I didn't interpret that. It was ... I can't explain it. It was very... it was a difficult situation, the students were very loud, the English students were very upset. And at the end of the class, he didn't provide any notes – not to the Afrikaans or either to the English students.
<Nicolene (research assistant)> You weren't per chance recorded in that period – can you remember? It's a pity.
<Johan> No, I wasn't recorded. I was really upset because I felt it's a very young lecturer. He just got...
I know a bit of his background and I just felt "you don't have..."
< Nicolene (research assistant) > ...the authority?
<Johan> Ja, the authority to say things like that. I mean, your job is to teach them, and that's not our job.
< Nicolene (research assistant) > May I add something else? We have another interpreter and she says she's interpreting for a lecturer who's constantly making racist remarks, and she leaves it out, because she feels she needs to protect the students. So she is also on the side of the students, but she feels they shouldn't hear it, it's gonna hurt them. Then you're taking more responsibility on yourself, because they have the right to know what is being said in the class. So we also advised her to interpret, but she said really she can't, she's a soft person, she doesn't want to say those words – sometimes

he swears –
and she doesn't want to swear, she doesn't want
them
to hear it. So these situations do become complex as we go along.

<Olivier> To put it into perspective, the birth of
modern conference interpreting as we know it was
observed during the famous or infamous
Nuremberg trials after the Second World War,
where the Allies – the Western Europeans – tried
and convicted former Nazi officers, and you can
read a lot about the history of those first interpreters
who had to transcribe, to translate what people
like Herman Goering would be saying. And
it would be much worse than an Afrikaans lecturer
saying racist things. So how do you think they
coped?
What do you think they had to do?
<Esti> Were they Germans, or what nationality were
they?
<Olivier> Some of them were French-speaking
Germans, some of them were German-speaking
French. They were... needless to say, nationality
played
a big role but
if you had been an interpreter back then
and you would have to say a lot of things that
probably
a lot of people don't want to hear. But do you think
you would have to say to them...
<Esti> Maybe it feels, I don't know what the
situation was, but maybe they feel safer if they're
in a – what do you call it – this where the interpreter
sit in the conferences then the people don't see
you, so maybe if they see you maybe you feel more...
<Johan> Exposed, or...?
<Esti> Ja, you feel more exposed, so maybe
you don't want to say it in that...
under these circumstances.

Visibility of the interpreter

<Olivier> I think this is an interpreting term that you
mention – authority – and you mentioned that the
lecturer
didn't have the authority to decide on this particular
issue that you've identified, and I always ask myself
questions about my authority as an interpreter.
Do you think, for example, that the interpreter that

[Nicolene] speaks about has the authority to decide what people should hear and shouldn't hear? I mean we're talking about censorship here.

<Johan> Ja, actually.
Actually, I think you don't have that
authority as an interpreter, you should interpret
Everything. But like I said sometimes in the
situation, it's very difficult.

<Olivier> Yes.

<Johan> But...

<Olivier> And do you find yourself in difficult situations like this a lot, or is it frequent, not frequent?

<Johan> No, not for me. I don't know for you.
<Esti> No, I don't have had any frequent

bad things. I've had one lecturer who referred
to Ikageng and the electricity and the people don't
know how to use it properly, and I didn't interpret
that, but it's not straight racism.

Derogatory remarks

<Olivier> Okay, ja. I want to know if you sometimes speak to the students for whom you interpret, or do you interact with them at all?

<Johan> Yes, I do.

<Olivier> Okay. What do you do – do you ask them whether the performance was okay, or... ?

<Esti> Wish them good luck for the exams.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Johan> Ja, I never ask them whether
my performance was good.
I don't do that.

<Olivier> Ja.

<Johan> Okay, but I want to sometimes. But
I just feel, okay, he would maybe feel compulsory
to say, okay, no it was good, then I just wait for him
to fill in or to evaluate me at the end of the
semester. But sometimes I would have
liked to be evaluated, for example, one month
into the semester, and then know, okay, for this class
they don't like that or this, so that I can do
better. But yeah, well, I speak to them, I greet them
on campus, because you really get to know them.

<Olivier> Yes.

<Johan> I mean it is the same group in every
class, so... And then I had the situation the other
day when some of them came to me and they

asked what am I doing exactly, am I studying, or...
And then I explained to them what I am doing and,
well, I gave them a bit... well, I told them what I felt about the courses and they should really work hard at that and that, so... I mean it's... ja, you really build a relationship with them. Feelings
<Esti> I was interpreting one subject from a lecturer which I know personally because he's from German parents, and I see him regularly so I asked him if all my students passed the subject. So he told me yes, and I was really happy. So it's really... you get to... you want to help them.
<Olivier> Ja, well, it means that the message was carried across and that obviously...
<Esti> Ja, but it makes... I mean it makes you feel that you want them to pass and, ja, you care for them. Ja, exactly.
<Johan> Ja. Actually that's your ultimate goal for them: to pass the course.
<Olivier> You realise that from my experience – I don't know what you think, [Nicolene]– but you speak like lecturers, not like Interpreters. Do you build the same kind of relationship on another level with the lecturers – so you communicate with them? Or would you say that...
<Johan> With some, but some come into the class, and it feels as if you're being ignored.

Interpreters' Group II: Etienne, Shané, Jan, Willy, Philip

<Olivier> Okay, so one of the things that I want to work on today... and this is going to take the format of a free flowing conversation, so whenever you want to speak you just let your ideas flow, you let your thoughts... So we're gonna have a conversation about several topics that are related to you as classroom interpreters and I'm not really gonna tell you what I work on, okay, in order not to provide a bit of bias so you just... just speak your mind.

<Olivier>Alright, are we okay with it?

<Etienne> Yes
<Shané> Yes
<Olivier>Okay. So one of the questions that I was wondering about when I started observing you in practice, is how difficult the job of classroom interpreter is. And this morning, for example, we spoke about the conference interpreter and it's a fairly easy deal, because we're in a booth and we're, you Know, two against the whole world, but you are sitting among students. And I wanted to ask you about one topic that regularly crops up when dealing with interpreting in general, and it's called loyalty – and I wanted to know, if you had to answer this simple question without thinking too much about it, who do you think you are loyal to as interpreters in the classroom?
<Shané> I think the students.
<Jan> Yeah, the students
<Willy> The students!
<Olivier> Thank you! Why?
<Willy> Because we're the voice

Interpreter as voice

of the lecturer, we're
their connection to the actual subject,
to the information that they're supposed to be
learning and going to be writing exams about, and
hopefully apply in the future, and it's our job,
basically.
I feel it's my job to provide the best possible

Loyalty to the user

service and to do that I need to be loyal to them.
I can't *not* be loyal to them.
<Olivier> Alright.
<Etienne> The profession of interpreting... We're loyal to the profession of interpreting.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Etienne> Because we have to follow the ethics of interpreting – not as closely as you would with the purely... like conference interpreting, but I think as closely as we can.

<Olivier> But it was something that was mentioned this morning, among other things – that apparently the kind of interpreting that you're doing is not as strict, I quote, or not as formal, or as stressful, as conference interpreting.

Or what is the difference exactly? Is there a difference?

<Etienne> I think [one of the managers of the services] said this morning that our type of interpreting isn't strictly simultaneous interpreting. It's almost a hybrid with liaison interpreting because we aren't as isolated from the audience as you would be in a conference setting, and we interact with the students directly, so that's why I think it's different. You're supposed to be as accurate and prepared as well as you would for a conference, I suppose, but it doesn't seem as formal.

Rules of CI don't apply

<Shané> Yes. I think because at a conference... I think – I've never done it, once almost – but at a conference you only have contact with the users once, but in the classroom you see them every day for the whole semester, maybe even the whole year, and you build up some sort of a relationship with them.

<Etienne> Yes.

<Shané> And also you see them on campus and all that makes it feel less formal, I think.

<Olivier> Right.

<Etienne> And also that classes are sometimes discussions, so then there's an input from the students and then from the lecturer, then from the students again, so then you interpret what students are saying as well. So, therefore, ja, it's a bit different than just sitting in a booth and interpreting what's being said by the speaker.

<Jan> I think, in such a context where you're interpreting for both parties, your loyalties should lie with the message rather than either of the parties, in a certain sense, because you're trying to convey the message irrespective of other factors that might want or that might interfere with it. And if you bring the message that was conveyed by the lecturer to the students, then you've satisfied both their needs as well.

<Olivier> Okay.

<Jan> I agree with that.

<Olivier> Okay, you mentioned building a relationship with the students – do you

all build a relationship with the students,
do you like to liaise with them in order to know...?
<Etienne> Yes.
<Willy> I think it's unavoidable
<Olivier> Ja.
<Etienne> Ja.
<Shané> Yes, it's not as if you go and try to
make friends. It just happens, because it's the
same faces every period, every...
<Etienne> Ja.
<Shané> Every day it happens.

<Etienne> It just is sort of superficial.
<Shané> Yes.
<Etienne> Close acquaintance type thing.
<Philip> But some of the students that I've
been interpreting for for three years, now I see
them on campus, and we talk and I say "How are
you?" and "What you're doing now?" and "How's the
studies going?" and whatever. I know them now,
I know their names, I know their faces, I have
grown with them in their cause so
it's actually... I know what's happening.
with them, so then I could talk to them.

Informal relationships with students

<Olivier> Do you feel close to them sometimes?
Do you have a certain empathy towards them?
<Etienne> Definitely.
<Jan> Ja, I would say so because sometimes
the lecturers aren't very good in giving lectures,
and nobody in the class really can understand,
so as this goes, we battle because we're also
sometimes battling to find out what the message
is all about. Sometimes, you really get a very
abstract matter and the person jumps around
between the stuff and the concepts of everything
which is about the subject, and sometimes you
get a feel that it's difficult, this is a difficult matter
to understand, no matter if you can speak the
word, if you can pronounce the word, it doesn't
matter sincerely about that, but more about the
integrated perspective from which that person
comes from. The lecturer...

Judgement on Quality of lectures

<Olivier> Right.

148
149 <Jan> Because he just prefers, you know,
150 to these different light bulbs that go on everywhere.

Keenness to see the users succeed

151 And students have to make sense of
152 this, and you have to make sense of this sometimes.
153 So you have empathy for that student, because
154 you want him to understand, you really want that
155 student to be able to get the message, and so you
156 also want to get the message. So I don't know, it
157 kind of sounds...
158
159 **<Olivier> It really makes sense. Do you sometimes**
160 **explain – do you provide further explanations on the**
161 **discourse of the lecturer? Do you add extra elements**
162 **that you think are going to help users of your services?**
163
164 <Willy> I am... I do it in a few cases, where I can,
165 'cause when I interpret I constantly...
166 when I say something, when the lecturer asks for
167 feedback from the students, I always have a

Difficult for the user to communicate in class

168 look to see them, because lots of times students
169 are too shy in class to raise a hand, and then in
170 that gap where the lecturer allows for questions,
171 it is usually a few seconds or whatever, in that I try
172 to fill in, because I've got quite a good idea of
173 what they do not understand.
174
175 **<Olivier> Right.**
176
177 <Willy> Now I try to provide a little
178 more information regarding that...
179 <Shané> Especially when you know the
180 subject matter and you're familiar with that.
181 <Etienne> Ja, especially then, 'cause it's difficult
182 to give extra information
183 when you're only familiar with the vocabulary that's
184 part of the subject and not only the in-depth content.

Providing more

185 **<Olivier> Do you see yourself as lecturers**
186 **sometimes?**
187 <Etienne> No, no.
188 <Willy> I think it's... You must be careful
189 because you also have responsibility toward the

Afrikaans-speaking students in the class, and if you provide too much extra information to the English-speaking students, you're depriving the Afrikaans-speaking students of that extra tuition.

<Olivier> Right.

<Willy> In a certain sense – and I think part of the objectives of the interpreting project is to equal the playing field for Afrikaans- and for English-speaking students, and you have to keep that in mind.

<Olivier> Right. Do you interact with the Afrikaans students at all?

<Etienne> Ja, sometimes.

<Jan> Sometimes.

<Olivier> How?

<Philip> Some of the groups... like I, for example, I've been here since the beginning of the project, so I also like, I would say, I've grown with them in their courses and the same faces for three years, so you sort of... we have some banter sometimes, we just make small talk or whatever. So, yes, we do but not quite as usually, just a few people.

<Willy> It also happens sometimes that, especially in courses where the tuition is not that good, where the Afrikaans students... some of them would prefer to listen to the English.

<Olivier> Ja.

<Willy> In a effort to better understand the content of the module.

<Jan> I found that as well. It's quite... it was extremely strange, because I thought it would only be the English-speaking students who make use of the interpreting service, but it's not, actually. I've had a few cases with Afrikaans people who also take headsets either because of technical factors like the microphone isn't working in and the lecturers' microphone isn't working in the in the class or something and they the class is so full that they need to sit at the back, and they can't hear the lecturer clearly. Or other factors where they just want a link between the English textbook and Afrikaans lecture, so they use kind of... at the

same time use both the English and the
Afrikaans, and try to make sense of it with the textbook.

<Olivier> Right. One of the things that I've observed is that
in the lecture room the interpreters
seem to be the most active agent in the room – think about this: the students are laying back and,
you know, hearing what you're saying, or what the lecturer is saying; the lecturer is very familiar with his or her field,
and you're in the middle, trying to relay the knowledge, and you're probably the most exacerbated or, you know, overrunning, overdriven element in the classroom.
How do you perceive this? Do you feel this sometimes, that you're...?

<Willy> Definitely. I think it's almost a case
of you're so involved with them in content, that
you could write most of the tests in probably
most subjects – in law, for example.
<Shané> Ja, I felt that as well.
<Willy> You could write most of the tests
without studying, and could get a good pass mark.
I think that is the intensity of your involvement
In the class.
<Etienne> I've often wondered – especially when
you're interpreting for many periods a day – I often
wonder whether a lecturer is as tired at the end of the
day after doing as many lectures as I've interpreted,
as tired as I am at the end of the day. And I don't think
so, because I think, like you said, we are more active –
they are so familiar with the work
it's not really that much trouble for them.
So, yes, I agree with that.
<Shané> Many of the subjects that I've interpreted,
I've done as well, like when I studied, and for some of
them, you know, I got 55 or 56 or whatever
and I barely passed, but I interpret them. Now
I start experiencing, I don't know, I feel that I
understand the work so well now, but not as well as
I did when I studied it, because I'm so involved with
everything he says, or the lecturer says. We've really
been active.

Involvement

Interpreters do More than lecturers

<Olivier> Well, research has shown that the interpreters and translators alike have the tendency to understand things better, because they are used to understanding a text not as a content, but as a process, so therefore if you're an interpreter, for example, you're not going to translate words, but logical links between things. That's how you access better interpreting, I guess.
How do you cope – one of the big things in the interpreting is really coping strategies – how do you cope with your responsibility of transmitting this knowledge? Because the lecturer is responsible for transmitting knowledge for people but, as we said, the lecturer is pretty familiar with his or her stuff, but you may not be. And still, I guess, the users may then trust you with their success. How do you cope with this burden? It's a positive burden, but it's a burden nonetheless, isn't it?

<Etienne> I don't think about it too much.
<Olivier> Sorry, maybe that's a coping strategy?

<Etienne> Absolutely.
<Willy> I just think that what I do is... I just make

sure that I'm prepared for the class, that I know what's going to be happening, so that when it comes to especially the main problem, I find that the terminologies and that when it comes to that certain term that I know what's being said, what the term's about and what it's going to lead to further on in the lecture.

Ted (interpreter)

<Olivier> Thanks for taking this interview. To repeat some of the questions you had last time, has there been any change as to your perception of your job?
<Ted> As in... at this university, at this campus?
<Olivier> Yes – as an interpreter?
<Ted> It's not really changed for me, it's kind of still the same, except now I've got a new contract. It's a term contract, and now research also falls into my job – but in the actual practice it's still pretty much the same. I don't see any major changes; nothing that I can think of right now.

<Olivier> Okay. Once again, how do you see
Your role as an interpreter?

Interpreter as facilitator

<Ted> I see myself as a facilitator type,
helping students to understand the contents of the
classes – and that's much better than they would have
if it was only in Afrikaans. Few of them really
suffer with Afrikaans, some of them only use
it as "supplementary", I think.
So you just fill in the gaps with
Those different, difficult words that they
don't necessarily understand in Afrikaans.
Sometimes they use the interpreting services to, you
Know, touch it up a bit.
<Olivier> Okay. And if I mention the term "authority"
to you – in the classroom, the lecturer does have
authority, of course, but do you feel that you
Have authority with your particular audience?

<Ted> Strangely enough, not. I think, maybe
in the beginning, when you're new in the
class, that kind of thing, but as soon as you
continue a little bit further on, halfway through the
semester maybe, maybe it's the second semester
with the same group – then it starts to become more of a...
I don't know, it becomes more a friendship-type
thing between me and the students. And
I don't think they see me as a "helper"

Confusion interpreter-lecturer

but they still tend to ask... rather ask
me questions than ask the lecturer questions,
and especially about the contents
of the work. But now at the Agricultural College
where I've started interpreting now, it's
completely the opposite. They see you as an
authority figure – it's quite a strange concept for me,
but I think that could be because the lecturer on that
side treat you as they would any other lecturer: they
don't treat you still as a student, I think. In this campus (i.e.
NWU)
the lecturer still treats you as a student.
<Olivier> Do you think so?
<Ted> I think so, because most of us are students –
all of us are students, *were* students, when we started

Lack of recognition from the lecturers

with the project. So they tend to treat you as a student because you look like a student. And they see thousands of faces every day on campus, you understand, so they... they don't really make that distinction, whereas at the Agricultural College they actually go and they... they see you, you sit down between classes, maybe have a cigarette or a cup of coffee with them, chat a bit and then you go and interpret again.

<Olivier> The fact that some lecturers see you as a student here, does that make you feel closer to your users?

<Ted> Even if they didn't, it would still make me feel closer to my users, because I am. If you look at a, like a communication model, in this case its not only to a sender and a receiver, it's a sender and a receiver which I'm playing, and *then* there's another sender-receiver, and I'm playing that middle role. So I'm playing the channel and I tend to allow to be closer to the students than I do to the lecturer, and by doing that, I obviously always feel closer to the user.

<Olivier> Have you found yourself in any situation where you chose not to translate?

<Ted> Yes.

<Olivier> Can you can you tell me more about that?

<Ted> There's a few things, like jokes – jokes which play on Afrikaans puns and things like that. I know where it's going because – especially in the one Class which I previously had during my studies, I know the lecturer very well, and I know basically all the jokes, so I know when she starts with something, I know where she's going, and then I don't interpret the joke as such, I basically just tell them "this is what she's just saying".
And then there's other cases where there Were some, in my opinion, a bit direct, derogatory, maybe racist remarks

by some lecturers, which I then refused to interpret
94 because
95 I feel that they can understand that in Afrikaans, and we — No translation of Derogatory remarks
96 do live in South Africa, it's not that we don't... it's got
97 nothing to do with the contents of the work. It's got to
98 do with all the peripheral things, which in my opinion
99 isn't key to my role as an interpreter, so therefore I'm
100 not going to interpret it. It's the same as interpreting a
101 "oo" or "ah": you just don't do it, so it's just...
102 Ja, there's a few things that happened.
103
104 **<Olivier> Yes, okay. a few racist or derogatory...?**
105
106 <Ted> Yes, derogatory things. I can give you
107 examples – the most recent one was not at this campus,
108 not at the university, it was at the Agricultural College,
109 and the one lecturer keeps referring
110 to the English students, which are predominantly
111 African black people, as "blacks", but he says it
112 in such a way that it becomes a derogatory term.
113 I've got not no problem with using black
114 and white speaking interpreting, you know, black
115 people here, white people there, or whatever. But
116 As soon as they start hammering on "black black
117 black" and it becomes a derogatory term, and then
118 after that I just keep quiet when he starts
119 speaking about that. I know it might not be
120 ethically correct, but my ethical set of values – in my
121 ethics, that's the correct way to handle it.
122 **<Olivier> Do you think that you also act, then, here or**
123 **there, as a cultural social filter?**
124 <Speaker 1> I think so, in a large context,
125 yes. Because a lot of the things that are said, a
126 Lot of the work is provided by the lecturers from one — Lecturers' cultural viewpoint
cultural viewpoint. And I'm fortunate enough to have a
127 broad
128 cultural knowledge, so I try to make it as easily
129 accessible to the cultures which are present in the
130 user base. So, for example, if in
131 interpreting to people that have never seen
132 a tractor before, you know from India, you're not going to
133 refer to a tractor, you're going to refer rather to an
134 elephant, for example, whatever. And I'll bring that in,
135 and then later on, I'll bring in the tractor just to now

"linkage" between the elephant and the tractor, so they now can see "okay, well obviously this tractor does the same job as what the elephant does for us" and by that way help them bridge the words as well As provide them insight into that specific topic or whatever.

<Olivier> Yes, that's clever. Do you feel here that you're given power in the lecture, or that you are empowered?

<Ted> I think that you don't necessarily feel it, but you do have it because you influence, as interpreter, you influence what the students or what the users would eventually study and write down. If you make one little mistake you influence maybe the results of a test or exam, which could influence their degree at the end of the day. So I don't think it is power as such that, you know, now I feel like I got this awesome power. I think it is more a greater responsibility – I'm going to use a line from Spiderman: "With great power comes great responsibility." And that's exactly what it is. So, yes and no to that question.

<Olivier> Okay. When the users come to you, what is it for? Is it to ask you for explanations, any further explanations?

<Ted> Sometimes they come to me, specifically in Mechanical Engineering. They come to me and they ask "Oh, what did he mean here?" And in some other cases they even come to me and ask me to help them with the equations which they Have to work out.

Interpreter can act As tutor

<Olivier> Yes?

<Ted> And if I'm not a hundred percent certain with the work, I'll refer them to the lecturer, to their fellow classmates or something, but if I am comfortable with the work and I believe that I know it well enough to tell them, then I do.

<Olivier> do they come to you first, or do they go to the lecturer?

<Ted> Usually they sit just behind me, so they

tap me on the shoulder when it's a non-
interpreting break, or it's the end of class or something.
They'll just ask me when they're either giving their
headsets back or something like that, and they'll ask
me and if I don't know then I'll refer them to the lecturer
after this.

**<Olivier> Okay. In your personal performance
now, what would you say, honestly now, what is your
biggest flaw in your interpreting itself?**
<Ted> My *décalage*, my following distance.
I tend to – especially with the Afrikaans – I tend to leave it
to
go on a little bit too long before I start
for the verb and things like that. I
understand that it's a difficult thing but I still see Technique
that there is room for improvement. I can still practice that.
But I think, if I look from the beginning, from
When I first started interpreting, from now, I improved
greatly when it comes to that.
<Olivier> Yes?
<Ted> I'm able to kind of see where the lecturer's
Going with the sentence, before the fourth or
fifth word, so then I am able to put in a verb, and if it is
the wrong one, then I just rephrase it – the first part of
the sentence – or rephrase the verb or the end or
something like that. But I do see my
décalage as a bit of a problem.
**<Olivier> Would you say that the users can feel
frustrated as to this?**
<Ted> Yes, I feel frustrated sometimes, so if I
feel frustrated, I can imagine they feel frustrated.
<Olivier> Yes.
<Ted> But on the other hand
a lot of lecturers start their sentences and then
pause, and carry on only five to ten seconds later.
if you take that in context and in balance,
it shouldn't be too much of a break
anyway, so I don't know, I haven't ever
spoken to them about it.
**<Olivier> Okay. Do you sometimes backtrack, meaning
that you explain something several times, or you
go further than the lecturer to explain something?**
<Ted> Yes, yes, I do do that.
<Olivier> Okay.
<Ted> And that again comes on to the base

of the cultural context, the culture to which you are
225 interpreting.
226 **<Olivier> Okay.**
227 <Ted> I'd rather explain something twice if
228 There's a gap in the interpreting, to
229 make sure that that concept – especially if it's an
230 important concept – that I can reemphasise it constantly
231 and that I can make sure that they understand it, because
232 that's one of my greatest fears: that I say something
233 wrong in class and they do not remember,
234 or they do not mark that work to study, or
235 whatever, and then I don't want them to come
236 Later and say "but the interpreter didn't tell us we we're
237 supposed study that", so if it's a key integral part of the
238 course or subject, I just say it again.
239 **<Olivier> Has it happened, sometimes, that a user did**
240 **complain about you or your colleagues?**
241
242 <Ted> I don't know about me, but I think there were
243 one or two complaints, and I know that there was in the
244 recent week – somebody was given a warning.
245 **<Olivier> Oh?**
246 <Ted> At the Agricultural College.
247 **<Olivier> Okay.**
248 <Ted> But I don't know it, I heard from my...
249 from my assistant that that happened.
<Olivier> Okay. Alright, but specifically here?
250 **Nothing?**
251 <Ted> Nothing really, no, nothing that I can remember.
252
253 **<Olivier> Are there any other elements that you**
254 **think are worth mentioning about your job?**
255 <Ted> I just think that it's important to take
256 into consideration the whole aspect of the user
and the way in which we sit in class: we don't sit in a
257 booth,
258 we sit in class, we use a combination of four,
259 five interpreting modes, and it's for 45
260 minutes – a period is 45 minutes – so you sit there
261 for 45 minutes, using 90, between 70 and 100
262 percent of your concentration ability...
263 **<Olivier> Of course.**
264 <Ted> ...for 45 minutes and then you got a
ten-minute break, and then you got another class to
265 interpret
266 sometimes, or whatever, so you get extremely tired and if

you had one off day, it's your whole day, it's off,
that's what I found.
<Olivier> Yes.
<Ted> If I have one off day, if I don't feel well the morning when I wake up, or whatever, then I... my whole day
suffers as a result.
<Olivier> Yes.
<Ted> And the context of the students – I've seen that students the whole time, the students have seen
us the whole time. That plays an important role for me, I don't know how, I don't want to take guesses
but there's lots of a research that can be done on that as well.
I guess it's got something to do with [the fact that] we've seen them
Every day, they have been able to put faith to the interpreter, to the voice, to the information coming through as well.
<Olivier> Yes.
<Ted> So that brings a different
challenge in, an ethical challenge I think.
<Olivier> Yes. Have you been trained by the DLA to deal
with every interpreting situation? Do you think that when you first landed into the classroom to start interpreting, you were equipped to deal with everything?

<Ted> When I first started interpreting in a classroom
it was two days after I applied for the job, and I applied for assistant. I went, I did my little test with them
and then I started interpreting the next day.
They didn't train us, they didn't give us
a training session and things through the year, but
lots of things are actually common knowledge.
There are few things that you know you need a little bit of help to see, that does happens. But as soon as you can see it, then
you automatically start thinking of ways to combat that problem or something like that, so I believe that through that training and through common knowledge as well, and through
listening to other interpreters and speaking to them,
sharing your experiences, that I'm well prepared, now I

can
basically deal with anything that happens.
<Olivier> Now you have experience. Okay, alright, thanks for your time!
<Ted> It's a pleasure.
<Olivier> Alright.

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