

Interpreting services in the Western Cape Legislature:
An explorative analysis

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Declaration

By submitting my thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to attempt to ascertain the standard of interpreting services in the Western Cape Legislature. The study gives a brief overview of the legislation regarding language, and is furthermore underpinned by a literature review. The ever-elusive concept of quality in interpreting is also considered.

The empirical component of the study encompassed interviews and open-ended discussions with language practitioners, interpreters and users, which in this case are the members of parliament. In addition, interpreters gave feedback on their training, working conditions and own experiences by means of a filling out a questionnaire. In terms of assessing the standard of service delivered, the users were asked to rate the service on eleven different levels, as derived from the literature and previous studies done by international scholars, again by filling out a questionnaire. The purpose hereof was to marry the literature with the outcomes of the data collected.

The study concludes that there is much scope for improvement of the service that is currently rendered at the Western Cape Parliament. The reasons for this are in part due to a lack of understanding and awareness of what interpreting entails, as well as a lack of understanding of the value of a sound interpreting service. In addition, it appears that interpreters may benefit from training to ensure better delivery of service.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background

Fifteen years of democracy have brought about many changes in South Africa, not least of which is a revised language policy. Our Constitution encompasses the concept of multilingualism and states that people have the basic right to be addressed and speak in the language with which they feel most comfortable. Tolerance and respect for indigenous tongues, formerly disregarded, is a novel concept and needs to be instilled into the South African mindset as well as to be implemented in our daily lives.

In accordance with the Constitution, the National Language Policy Framework [NLPF] was drawn up for the above purposes. In addition, the Pan South African Language Board [PanSALB] was established to support the policy and implementation thereof. Language Units were proposed for each government department and province and were approved by Cabinet in 2007 (Beukes 2008), so as to assist in the growing need for translating and interpreting services. In addition, two further structures were proposed by the NLPF: the National Language Forum, to monitor the implementation of the new language policy, and the South African Language Practitioners' Council, to "manage training, accreditation and registration of translators and interpreters and to raise the status of the language profession and improve the quality of language products" (Beukes 2008: 19). As yet, not much has been done formally in the creation of these structures, a void that leaves language practitioners and practices without a solid backbone. If the profession of conference interpreting is to enjoy the same status and standards that it does in Europe, Australia and the United States, the implementation of these policies is imperative.

To facilitate this policy of multilingualism, widely deemed one of the most progressive on the African continent (Bamgbose 2003), language practitioners have become pivotal role players. However, despite the creation of structures, implementing multilingualism

has proved to be more problematic than envisioned at the onset of the new and free language era. It would seem as if the new government “lacks commitment to its own policy (the National Language Framework 2003)”, according to Beukes (2008: 4), and that language issues are merely simmering on the back burner. Beukes (2008) concludes that five years after the approval of the NPLF, the goals have not been reached, but have rather been trapped between “policy development and policy implementation” (Beukes 2008: 19).

The Language Committee of the Western Cape, in accordance with the Provincial Constitution, recognises and monitors the three official languages of the Province, namely English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. All lingual matters have to be relayed to the Pan South African Language Board in accordance with Section (8)(a) of (Act 59 of 1995) (Provinsie Wes-Kaap 1998: 11). The goals set out by the Western Cape Language Policy encompass the notion of further development of language resources by creating opportunities and support for the training and advancement of professional language workers (Western Cape Language Policy 2001).

Implementation of the various policies regarding language on the national and provincial level is imperative, and more than mere lip-service should be paid to these matters to ensure proper service delivery, training, accreditation and working conditions. Guidelines should be set out and ad hoc-style interpreting should be phased out to ensure the best possible service delivery. Accuracy and clarity of the message should be paramount, especially where governmental and legislative matters are concerned, in order to ensure effective communication.

It is against this backdrop that I will investigate and evaluate the state of interpreting services in the National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature.

1.2 Overview of language policy

By law, interpreting services for official languages have to be available in the National Parliament as well as in most other government institutions, such as the provincial legislatures. The National Language Policy Framework was finally drafted in November 2002 and contains a number of provisions included in the South African Languages Bill approved by Cabinet in 2003 (Wallmach 2006). Around 25 languages are spoken in South Africa. Eleven of these languages enjoy official status in terms of Section 6 of the Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996). Translational activities have been expressly noted as conduits to facilitate the implementation of the language policy. Section 3.1 of the NLPF states that:

The implementation of the language policy will increase the demand for translation and editing work and interpreting services, especially in the indigenous languages. The core of translation expertise in these languages will have to be expanded both in government departments and in the private sectors i.e. freelance language practitioners such as translators, editors and interpreters will have to be developed. The increased need for the services of professional language practitioners will require further skills training.

(DAC 2003)

Despite efforts by the Pan South African Language Board, attempts to institutionalise multilingualism have been unsuccessful (Pienaar 2006: 36). Pienaar believes this to be a widely known fact. In addition, the hegemony English enjoys is widely accepted, despite the fact that a mere 25% of South Africans are proficient enough in English to be economically active in this language (Webb & Kambu-Sure, cited in Pienaar 2006: 36). The same could be argued in a legislative context, where English is widely spoken and understood, but the mother tongue may be preferred.

1.3 Overview of interpreting in South Africa

To comply with the laws regarding language (both on the national and the provincial level), interpreters have become significant role players in modern South Africa. The profession of interpreting has been gaining much respect on both sides of the Atlantic over the last 60 odd years (Wallmach 2006). The United Nations, the European Economic Community and various other multilingual institutions around the globe would come to a complete standstill were it not for interpreters. Interpreters at these institutions are highly skilled and trained individuals who are capable of far more than proficiency in multiple languages. The question I would like to raise is whether or not the same level of professionalism and quality applies locally, in a country where eleven official languages enjoy equitable status and interpreting services have become imperative?

1.3.1 Recent history

Interpreting predates writing, which has been in existence for more than 6 500 years (Cilliers 2006). The profession as we know it today, however, is a mere hatchling. The Nuremberg Trials in 1945 introduced simultaneous court interpreters (Wallmach 2006). In South Africa the profession is younger by half a century. On home soil, simultaneous interpreters were used during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). A total of 28 000 hours or 3 551 days of simultaneous interpreting was recorded from April 1996 to October 1998 (Du Plessis, cited in Lotriet 2002:96).

Interpreting services for the TRC were organised within a matter of a few weeks (Du Plessis 2003). Interpretation services were dealt with by the Unit for Language Facilitation of the University of the Free State (ULFE), and not by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission itself (Du Plessis 2003). After initial training, twenty interpreters were appointed, with freelance interpreters filling the gaps. By 1998, 35 interpreters were employed by the ULFE (Du Plessis, cited in Le Roux 2007). The training was done under time constraints and therefore was very intense. The training lasted no more than a few weeks, according to Lotriet (2002: 87).

Interpreting at the TRC was a huge effort, surpassing that required for the Nuremberg Trials (Du Plessis 2003). This mammoth interpreting exercise had a huge impact on the rise of interpreting services in South Africa and paved the way for the profession to advance and become commonplace in South Africa.

1.3.2 The National Parliament

In accordance with the Language Act, as set out above, the language policy of the National Parliament, accepted in October 2003 (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. 2003. *Language Policy Project of South Africa*), states that:

Members of Parliament have the right to use any of the 11 official languages as well as South African Sign Language (SASL), in the National Assembly (NA), the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and in Committee meetings. The speeches will be interpreted simultaneously into all 11 official languages. Interpreting services will be available in the galleries for visitors, members of other Houses visiting and the media.

Currently, the National Parliament employs a reasonable number of language practitioners, including interpreters, translators and sign language interpreters. Apparently the vision was to appoint 220 language practitioners by 2010 (Lesch 2007).

1.3.3 The Western Cape Legislature

In accordance with Sections 6 and 9 of the Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), as well as Section 5 of the Constitution of the Western Cape (Act 13 of 1998), the Law of the Pan South African Language Board (Act 59 of 1995) and the Batho Pele (i.e. people first) principle, the Western Cape Language Policy draught of November 2001 recognises three languages as official, namely Afrikaans, isiXhosa and English. Section

3.1 states that any one of these languages may be used in debates or any other proceedings of the Western Cape Parliament and its committees.

The Western Cape Parliament must make provision for interpreting services for members from and into the three official languages during sittings of the Provincial Parliament and any of its committees. (Western Cape Language Policy passed by the Provincial Parliament in June 2004)

1.4 Simultaneous interpreting

Simultaneous interpreting is the preferred mode of interpreting in both the National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature. Ideally, simultaneous interpreters work in teams of two for 20 to 30 minute sessions, and for no longer than 200 minutes per day. Simultaneous interpreters typically work in soundproof booths, equipped with sophisticated equipment, in conference or conference-like situations. Part of my investigation will involve investigating the working conditions at the Western Cape Legislature. The object will be to ascertain whether or not the internationally acceptable conditions and standards comply with how the profession, is handled locally as to ensure the highest standard of delivery. Further attention will be paid to the hours of work at these institutions, as this also has a direct impact on the quality of the service.

Simultaneous interpreters do what almost seems impossible. Contrary to popular perception, interpreters do far more than merely substituting words and phrases from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). Simultaneous interpreting may be explained as a faithful transcoding of the speaker's message, rather than the transcoding of words. A complex situation of listening, understanding, decoding, recoding and uttering takes place simultaneously (Cilliers 2003) .

In order to relay this “message” into the target language, a number of cognitive processes occur. Simultaneous interpreters monitor, store, retrieve and translate at the same time as

uttering in the TL. The cognitive load is therefore very heavy and stress levels are intensely high whilst interpreting in this mode. Taylor-Boulandon (2001: 50) says that interpreters need to have mastered their passive language(s) and have a good understanding of their passive languages, a good general knowledge, and university or similar professional background or training. In addition, she lists a number of mental and physical qualities of a successful conference interpreter. Amongst these are an analytical mind and intuition, the ability to think on one's feet and to adapt to accents, situations and subjects on the spot, the ability to concentrate, rapid comprehension of meaning, more than average physical and nervous stamina, a very good memory, a pleasant voice, the ability to speak in public, as well as tact and diplomacy. She also names intellectual curiosity and absolute intellectual integrity, but states that these attributes together, rather than individually, are prerequisites for this complex activity to take place (Taylor-Boulandon 2001).

Extreme concentration and capacity-management skills are therefore required of simultaneous interpreters. Daniel Gile's Effort Model explains the level of difficulty of simultaneous interpreting (Gile 1999). Listening, concentration, comprehension and analysis (A) make up the first "effort", or cognitive component, of the model. The second effort is short-term memory (M), and the third is that of speech production (P). Each effort follows the previous one on a continuous basis in a coordination effort (C). Below is an explanation of the different efforts.

- Analysis has to do with the segmentation and changing of the order in enumeration and the reformulation of the last elements first. This includes paraphrasing and abstracting
- Memory involves storing what has just been uttered in the short-term memory whilst retrieving words from the long-term memory
- Production deals with confidence, voice quality, public speaking ability, and the melodic and rhythmic accentuation of the speech delivery
- Coordination is the coordinated effort of all the above-mentioned efforts.

(Lesch Class notes 2009)

“When the sum of the available capacity exceeds total requirement, the necessary cognitive balance between efforts is disrupted, which results in failure sequences, with different errors and omissions” (Lesch 2007: 11). In addition to these efforts there are many other obstacles to overcome to ensure a smooth and professional delivery. External factors, such as quality of the sound, noise, pronunciation, speed of delivery in SL, density of information and unknown names, acronyms and numbers, can all hamper the process.

Other factors, such as ear-voice span (EVS), the time delay between the SL and the start of delivery, may lead to a better understanding, but put more stress on the short-term memory. It therefore is recommended that the simultaneous interpreter should establish ear-dominance and work with one ear covered (Taylor-Boulandon 2003). Extra-linguistic cues are of the utmost importance. Visual cues may support acoustic input and therefore the SI should have a good view of the SL speaker so as to be able to read the non-verbal messages, such as humour, pain and anguish (Cilliers 2003).

The SI needs to have more than an average knowledge and understanding of both the active and passive languages, as well as their cultures. This will ensure the grasping of the essential meaning of what has been said. A wide general knowledge is a further prerequisite for SI. Documentation is an imperative tool for the simultaneous interpreter. In the case of speeches that may involve the use of specific terminology, interpreters need to be advised to compile terminology lists and acquaint themselves with the appropriate terms and with the subject. Taylor-Boulandon (2001: 136-138) claims that she moves from being an expert in one field only to being an expert in another the week thereafter.

Again, proper training, decent working conditions, good apparatus and documentation play a pivotal role in ensuring quality delivery.

1.5 Quality of interpreting

As interpreters play a crucial role in communication in a multilingual society, it is important to understand that the interpreter's role and function are tied inherently to the quality of their service. This is due to the fact that conference interpreters' ideas on the nature of their activity will have an impact on their delivery and performance (Zwischenberger & Pöchhacker 2010: 1). Much of my investigation on the state of interpreting services will focus on how good or poor the standard of the service currently is. In order to rate delivery, the notion of quality in interpreting has to be considered, although quality will not be the main focus of this research project. However, quality assessment, despite being a very slippery notion in the world of interpreting, stands central to the uplifting and standardising of the profession in South Africa, as it does elsewhere. The investigation into quality conducted in this research will entail peer reviews and end-user assessments. Service providers will be considered so as to establish the role of training and accreditation in the quality of delivery.

1.6 End users and peers

The role of the end user in the assessment of good versus poor delivery is reasonably self-explanatory. The end user or receiver is the person who gains most by good service. However, the end user does not know the message of the source language and therefore may perceive a delivery as being good whilst the message may have been misconstrued (Kurz 2001: 403). Bühler (1986) and Kurz (1998) are of the opinion that end-user evaluation focuses more on the receiver's own expectations than on the actual interpretation. Therefore, an investigation of the state of interpreting cannot begin and end with the end user. I look toward interviews to fill the gap. Professional interpreters would have an understanding of their own shortcomings, as well as those of their colleagues. In his study on quality in interpreting, Riccardi (2002: 121-123) uses criteria such as phonological deviations, prosody deviations, production deviations, the length

and frequency of pauses, and lexical deviations involving common words and technical words. These are concepts that more easily understood by interpreters themselves.

The research project therefore will encompass quality as regarded by the end user, as well as interviews with peers.

1.7 Problem statement

Conference interpreting in a multilingual society, and specifically in a society where multilingualism is enshrined in the Constitution, should be widespread and professional. Interpreters give people the freedom to speak and be spoken to in the language of their choice. In order to ensure a better quality of interpreting service, proper training becomes imperative.

Setton and Motta claim that “what makes for quality interpreting is obviously a question of central interest to the profession, service providers and users, recruiters, evaluators, trainers and testers” (Setton & Motta 2007: 202). They name three sources to consider when establishing the quality of interpreting: “(i) shared, uncodified professional norms, or the implicit consensus among interpreters about what constitutes a good interpretation; (ii) information about the expectations and reactions of users of the service and (iii) some measure of source-target equivalence either semantic equivalence or equivalent effect.” (Setton & Motta 2007: 202).

Déjean le Féal (cited in Kurz 2001: 395) claims that what listeners hear from their headsets should have the same effect as the source language speech has on the source language audience. It should have equivalent content and be carried over with the same clarity and precision and in the same register of language. Interpreting, by definition, is a cross-cultural activity and the question is raised as to whether the “same” effect can be achieved, given the different histories and socialisation, etcetera of the specific individuals.

In researching the quality of interpreting services in South Africa it must be said that the problem is two-tiered. Marné Pienaar (2006: 41) explains that interpreting services in a multilingual context, as in the case of the provincial legislatures, is dependent on the level of training and skill, as well as the apparatus, but also on the support, attitude and approach of the users. In a society where multilingualism is still in an emerging state, language practitioners have their hands more than full. More often than not, interpreters also work as translators, proofreaders and editors, and even in terminology development (Lesch 2007).

Considering these and many other theories, the quality of simultaneous interpreting services in the National Parliament and other institutions will be scrutinized. The possible problems under scrutiny include: (i) the fact that freelance interpreters are widely used, (ii) interpreters who are appointed may not have a significant history of interpreting, and (iii) the possible lack of availability of training.

1.8 Research goals

1.8.1 Primary goal

The primary goal of this study was to investigate the interpreting service in the context of the Western Cape Legislature. Whilst commenting on the state of simultaneous interpreting in the Western Cape Legislature, the problems and possible improvements to them will be discussed. The intention is to ascertain whether a professional service is being delivered and to improve the quality of the interpreting services.

Furthermore, specific attention will be given to working conditions, booth behaviour, documentation and other variables that may influence the standard of delivery at this institution.

1.8.2 Secondary goal

Suggestions will be made on how to improve the standard of the service provided locally. The literature review done in Chapter 2 of this paper will provide the background for this.

The combined goal, therefore, is to engage in a preliminary investigation of the state of conference interpreting. Interpreting at the Western Cape Legislature (as well as the National Parliament) is rendered in a conference-like setup.

1.9 Methodology

This study entails both a theoretical and an empirical component. The empirical component will be dealt with by conducting interviews, distributing questionnaires and observing interpreting services at the institutions selected for the scope of the study.

In order to investigate the state of interpreting in the Western Cape it is imperative to understand the extent to which interpreting is being used, and why. An overview of the history of interpreting locally, as well as a more detailed explanation of the multilingual nature of these institutions as promulgated by law, will be given.

To comment on the activity of simultaneous interpreting one has to understand exactly what occurs when interpreting in this mode. The initial study therefore will entail a literature review of the nature of the activity of simultaneous interpreting, as well as how to define a “good” interpretation. This literature review will include using available resources. Theoretical publications, including articles, will be researched and the knowledge gained will be assimilated to get a better understanding of the activity and to draw certain conclusions.

The notion of quality in interpreting has to be woven into the fabric of this research project. The issue of quality is a much-debated question in the field of Interpreting Studies research. My main focus will be on lifting out the key issues and criteria as set out by various scholars in this field, such as Gile, Pöchhacker, Lesch, Taylor-Boulandon and others. Theories will be used as the basis for the empirical study.

The National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature were visited for observation. The object of these visits was to ascertain whether the interpreters privy to documentation, could they see the speaker and do they sit in soundproof booths?

The empirical research component forms the body of my research project. This was dealt with by handing questionnaires to end users as well as interpreters (interviews with peers). The clarity of the message, fluency, voice control, cohesion, coherence and many other aspects could be assessed in this manner. In order to get a clearer view of the professionalism and standard of the services locally, I also engaged in interviews with those responsible for language practices at the Western Cape Legislature. Questions regarding training and accreditation were raised during these interviews [see addenda A and C]. The service providers were interviewed to establish their criteria and expectations. I also investigated why the Western Cape Legislature prefers to work with freelance interpreters rather than appointing staff on a full-time basis.

The data captured in this part of my research will be dealt with qualitatively and quantitatively. Empirical data will be interpreted with reference to the relevant theory.

Transcribed interviews and questionnaire outcomes will be discussed and conclusions will be drawn.

To prepare for the investigation of the standard of interpreting in South Africa, I considered the different ways in which quality can be assessed. The concept of quality assessment of interpreting has enjoyed much focus recently. Gile (1991), Kurz (2001) and many others have written about this repeatedly. These publications will support my research and form the basis of the empirical research to follow. Many other scholars also have debated this issue over the past few years. I first considered the theory and, once a sound basis had been created theoretically, questionnaires, surveys, interviews and observation were used to form the bulk of my empirical research.

1.10 Hypothesis

This study is guided by the following hypothesis:

Since interpreting in South Africa is a reasonably young profession, proper training is not yet the norm. In addition, interpreters are often appointed on an ad hoc basis rather than on merit and qualification. The state of simultaneous interpreting services in the Western Cape Legislature and the National Parliament is not up to desired professional standards.

1.11 Overview of chapters

1.11.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter gives a brief background to the nature of the activity of simultaneous interpreting and includes an overview of the research problem and methodology. A discussion of language policies at the national and provincial levels will be provided, as these policies stand central to the profession of interpreting in South Africa.

1.11.2 Chapter 2: Literature review

A significant and detailed account of the history of interpreting in South Africa is given, as this provides the backdrop against which this study was performed. In addition, more background on simultaneous or conference interpreting (as a mode of interpreting in the Western Cape Legislature) is provided. This discussion follows a preliminary visit to this institution.

In addition, a more detailed explanation will be given of the activity and the theory regarding simultaneous interpreting as a linguistic phenomenon. It is important to highlight the cognitive processes that occur whilst interpreting in the simultaneous mode, as well as the difficulty of this activity.

As simultaneous interpreting is the mode of interpreting under scrutiny, an in-depth discussion of the particular skills of simultaneous interpreters will be provided. Furthermore, I will specifically consider the difficulties involved in assessing the quality of interpreting. Existing theories and relevant prior research will be incorporated in my literature review. The theory discussed in Chapter 2 will provide the basis for the interviews and questionnaires to be used in the empirical research. Previous studies, performed by people such as Bühler (1986), Kurz (1989) and, more recently, by Zwischenberger and Pöchhacker (2010), will be scrutinised specifically.

1.11.3 Chapter 3: Parliamentary context

The last word will be on the state of interpreting in South Africa, with specific reference to the Western Cape Provincial Legislature. The specific focus here will be on the implementation of the language policies discussed in Chapter 1.

1.11.4 Chapter 4: Methodology and empirical research

Chapter 4 forms the central part of my research project and deals with the outcomes of the interviews, questionnaires, surveys and observations regarding the state of interpreting at the Western Cape Legislature. In addition, interviews were conducted with both interpreters and, where possible, end users or receivers. The goal was to obtain specific feedback from both ends and to fill the gaps in the more formal questionnaires. These interviews were transcribed. The discussion of my empirical research will deal with data collected both qualitatively and quantitatively.

1.11.5 Chapter 5: Conclusion

The final chapter will marry theory and empirical research in order to reach a meaningful conclusion. The situation in relation to interpreting services will be discussed against the backdrop of recommendations and policies and the implementation thereof. The

shortcomings of my own research project will also be highlighted at the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The Western Cape Legislature makes use of conference interpreting, or interpreting in the simultaneous mode. For this reason an explanation of interpreting in the simultaneous mode will be given. In addition, the specific skills that interpreting in this mode requires will be discussed. These specific skills and other influences show the difficult nature of the activity and, moreover, the difficulty of assessing a good quality delivery. The remainder of this chapter will deal with the slippery notion of quality in interpreting. It is important to consider both the role of the sender as well as that of the receiver. Research in this field has been done by many prominent scholars, most of whom have used different sets of criteria, with some criteria concurring. In the quest to narrow down the criteria most applicable to my own study, I will regard those used by the most salient scholars.

The quality and standard of interpreting as viewed by international scholars are also discussed.

This chapter will provide an overview of the history of interpreting in South Africa. The impact of the Language Act of the Constitution particularly, (Sections 6, 29, 30 and 31 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996) regarding multilingualism will be considered. In addition, the implementation thereof will be regarded, as this calls for the interpreting services in the public domain that are under scrutiny in this investigation. The importance of the role of the Truth and Conciliation Commission, in introducing interpreting to South Africa in the recent past and in helping to bring about a more established service, will be noted.

2.2 History of interpreting in South Africa

The history of interpreting in South Africa goes back to writings by Jan van Riebeeck (1652-1662), who mentions a Khoi interpreter by the name of Eva. Negotiations between Piet Retief and Dingaan (1837-1838) were reputedly facilitated by a missionary who acted as their interpreter. More recently, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1996-2000) spearheaded the rise of the profession in South Africa, in much the same way as the Nuremberg Trials did in Europe (Cilliers 2003).

In South Africa, conference interpreting in the simultaneous mode has been practised for a mere twenty-five years (Du Plessis 1999) and is therefore still experiencing growing pains, as this study is bound to show. Before 1994, language practitioners looked forward to a new language policy in terms of which interpreters would be trained for different arenas in interpreting and would play a more salient role (Du Plessis 1999:4). Prior to 1994, an interpreting service was available at the National Parliament, but it was restricted to English and Afrikaans in accordance with the language policy at that time (Lesch 2010: 46). A workshop on language planning was held in Salt River from 12-14 September 1991, during the International Conference of Democratic Language Planning and Standardisation (Le Roux 2007: 160). According to Du Plessis (cited in Le Roux 2007), mention was made that translation and interpreting should be readily available as a prerequisite for communication at the social, economic and political levels in a multilingual country such as South Africa.

The interim Constitution made provision for eleven official languages (South Africa 1993; Section 3[2]). Because of the multilingual composition of our nation, the profession of interpreting should be enjoying far greater status and become increasingly important in many sectors. The implementation of the eleven official languages further suggests fertile breeding ground for interpreting in the public sector. In addition to the Constitution, national and provincial language policies advocate the use of interpreting services. However, Wallmach (cited in Pienaar 2006: 43) comes to the following conclusion:

Thus the ideology of interpreting is often very apparent in South Africa, fulfilling an important nation-building function – and of course simultaneous interpreting is the only practicable mode of interpreting when a country has eleven official languages. But sometimes, nation-building becomes tokenism, the use of conference interpreting nothing more than a symbolic gesture.

The National Language Policy Framework (South Africa 2002), drawn up in accordance with the Constitution, was used as the backbone for further implementation of multilingualism, both on the national and the provincial level. From this framework, involvement grew to include PanSALB and the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology to facilitate the practical implementation of the language policies enshrined in the Constitution. The National Language Service assisted in this role, as well as in the advancement of multilingualism and the linguistic empowerment of South Africans across the board (Du Plessis, cited in Le Roux 2007: 13). It would appear that interpreting services should thus enjoy significant importance in the public domain. Both Mtutze and Du Plessis (cited in Le Roux 2007) are of the opinion that interpreting should blossom in South Africa. The Language Act, Act 13 of 1998 of the Western Cape Province afforded Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa equal status. The implications of this are that members have the option to address the chamber in the language of their choice, resulting in the establishment of an interpreting service.

The first sign of better things to come for interpreting in South Africa was seen during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, held from April 1996 to June 1997, where interpreters worked in 65 different locations (Le Roux 2007). Lotriet (2002: 83-84) states that the imperative role of interpreting during these hearings, as well as the pioneering role of conference (simultaneous) interpreting in South Africa, later became apparent. Interpreting in the simultaneous mode was chosen over consecutive interpreting because of time and costs (Le Roux 2007). The particular success of the TRC may partly be due to the use of interpreters, which enabled the participants to recant their (often

harrowing) stories in their own language (Wallmach 2006). Section 11(f) of the Promotion of National Unity and Information Act of 1995 states that “... appropriate measures shall be taken to allow victims to communicate in the language of their choice”. This clarifies the need for interpreting services during the hearings of the TRC.

Interpreting services for the TRC had to be organised within a matter of several days (Du Plessis 2003). These services were provided by the Unit for Language Facilitation of the University of the Free State (ULFE), rather than by the Commission itself (Du Plessis 2003). A team of twenty interpreters was employed initially and, by 1998, 35 interpreters were in the service of the ULFE (Du Plessis, cited in Le Roux 2007). Their training was short, lasting only a number of weeks (Lotriet 2002: 87). The interpreting at the TRC was on a mammoth scale and eclipses even the Nuremberg Trials (Du Plessis 2003). The impact this had on the profession of interpreting in South Africa cannot be underestimated.

The TRC set the tone for interpreting services to expand widely in the public domain, as well as in the private sector. However, this has not come to fruition quite as rapidly as expected. As recently as 2002, Pienaar claimed that interpreting services, where in existence, were still underutilised (Pienaar 2002). According to Pienaar (cited in Le Roux 2007), this is due to the fact that English enjoys more status and there remains a certain level of ignorance regarding simultaneous interpreting.

However, Pienaar (2006: 32-33) mentions that strides toward advancement in the profession have been taken. Visibility and greater awareness of interpreting are evident at the educational level, and universities have increasingly become involved. Research in this field has grown, specifically within a South African context. The number of conference papers and articles in accredited magazines, as well as the increase in the number of Master's theses and doctoral dissertations, are all indicators of this growth. Pienaar (2006) mentions the role of SATI accreditation in advancing the profession.

Whilst interpreting services are available in both the National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature to serve the purpose of multilingualism in accordance with the Constitution and the respective policies adopted nationally and provincially, it still remains to be seen whether these services are in fact being rendered in a professional manner and whether the standard is acceptable at this level.

2.3 Simultaneous interpreting

Simultaneous interpreting is practically synonymous with conference interpreting. Typically, one speaker speaks to a large number of people while the speech is interpreted at the same time, making use of sophisticated equipment. Interpreting in this mode demands specific skills and personality traits. Conference or simultaneous interpreting is a “specialized technique whereby people with different languages and backgrounds can communicate with each other” (Taylor-Boulandon 2001: 57). A good interpreter does far more than merely transfer a language. The whole message is carried over to the target recipient, including all the non-verbal nuances such as humour, anger and so forth. The conference interpreter needs to have a sound knowledge and understanding of both active and passive language, as well as the cultures these languages represent. There has been much debate as to whether conference interpreters should only interpret into their mother tongue. According to Eva Paneth (in Pöchhacker & Schlesinger 2002), it is thought that interpreters should always only interpret into their mother tongue. In South Africa, where interpreting is still in its infancy, this may not always be feasible. The conference or simultaneous interpreter also needs to have the ability to understand and convey meaning in virtually no time at all. Furthermore, the simultaneous interpreter needs to be confident and speak eloquently and clearly, in a pleasant tone of voice. A good general knowledge and inquisitive nature are some of the unique personality traits of a good interpreter (Taylor-Boulandon 2001: 5).

In terms of the importance of interpreting, Taylor-Boulandon (2001: 57) claims that simultaneous interpreting plays a vital role in the way the modern world communicates.

Rarely are international conferences held today without interpreting services. I would argue that, in a multilingual society such as ours, the same principle should apply.

The complex nature of the activity of simultaneous or conference interpreting as the preferred mode of interpreting used in the Western Cape Legislature needs to be understood before one can launch into any discussion of the standard or effectiveness of such a service.

2.4 A brief explanation

Petite (2005: 28) explains that interpreters working in the simultaneous mode, “receive input, need to listen, understand and process it, but also have to produce an output simultaneously, or with only a short time-lag, while still producing further input”. The difficulty of the activity is thus abundantly clear. Jones (2002: 66) regards simultaneous interpreting as an “unnatural activity” that needs to be “cultivated”. Chernov (2004: 6) regards conference interpreting as a complex activity of communication whereby the interpreter concurrently performs with an audiological perception of an “oral discourse offered only once” (Lesch 2010: 41). Added to the apparent difficulty, this takes place “under conditions imposing strict limits on available processing time and the amount of information that can be processed” (Lesch 2010: 41).

We see therefore that interpreting in the simultaneous mode is known as a very stressful activity that demands split attention (Jones 2002). The interpreter cannot predict what the speaker is going to say and needs to monitor him/herself to avoid speaking incorrectly, ungrammatically or to contradict him/herself (Jones 2002: 69). The importance of transcoding the message rather than words is well described by Jones, who states that the interpreter should not be trying to find the “right word”. When this happens the interpreter often misses the next important part of the speech. Jones (1998: 70) states that the interpreter “must get it right, but they must get it right the first time round”.

In Chapter 1 the level of difficulty of this “unnatural” activity was mentioned. The Effort Model was developed by Daniel Gile in 1995 and groups the relation of the different sets of cognitive processes or operations into three different “efforts”, each competing with the other for the limited amount of processing capacity (Lesch 2010: 41). Gile (2001: 164) clearly sets out the way in which simultaneous interpreting [SI] works. He explains his model in the following way: “... complex operations were bundled into three ‘efforts’ (the name was chosen to underscore their non-automatic nature), presented as distinct entities in spite of the probable existence of overlapping cognitive components” (Gile 2001: 164). The following model represents the different efforts that equal simultaneous interpreting [SI]:

$$SI = L + P + M + C$$

Simultaneous interpreting therefore is the sum of the parts of the listening and analysis effort (L), the production and speech effort (P), and the memory effort (M). Seen as a series of building blocks, one can start appreciating how the whole process can break down should one of the blocks be missing. The memory effort in particular places high demands on short-term memory, for instance (Gile 2001: 164). The interpreter’s processing capacity forms the focus the Effort Model, which Gile claims “[pools” together the operations of the simultaneous interpreter into Listening and Analysis Efforts or (LA) (understanding of the source language speech) and the Production Effort (P) (which corresponds with the production of the speech as it is made in the target language) as well as the Short-term Memory Effort (M) (Gile 2001: 9). At least one, and as many as three, of these efforts are active at any one time whilst interpreting in the simultaneous mode is being done (Gile 1999). When all three efforts are combined in a co-ordination effort (C) in addition to the first three efforts, C places an additional cognitive load on the simultaneous interpreter. We therefore see that very specific capacity management skills are required of the simultaneous interpreter. Whilst the concept of quality in interpreting is very elusive, Kalina (2005: 769, cited in (Lesch 2010: 42) is of the opinion that managing the co-ordination of these efforts is one variant of quality delivery.

2.5 Skills

2.5.1 Listening and speech analysis

The very first skill involved is required from the moment the source-language speaker starts delivering. The interpreter starts to identify the words, even though the interpreter does not necessarily interpret individual words, but rather the idea. There often are signals outside the actual words that the interpreter has to recognise and interpret. This stresses the importance of the visibility of the SL speaker.

2.5.2 Production of speech

The interpreter needs additional skills to render the SL message successfully in the TL. These involve knowing when to start. As the speech is being heard and understood, the planning of the TL delivery starts immediately. Further production skills involve dealing with hesitations while searching for the correct terminology. The interpreter needs to be aware of the difference in language structures. Searching for the exact equivalent lexical unit is counterproductive and causes time lapses and hesitations. It therefore is imperative for the simultaneous interpreter to acquire the skill of transcoding the message or idea that carries the same meaning as the SL message. The interpreter needs to be wary of certain pitfalls, such as false friends (*faux amis*). Focussing on language instead of meaning leads to superficial interpretation (Cilliers 2003).

2.5.3 Short-term memory

The simultaneous interpreter stores the first utterances in the short-term memory until understanding takes place. Jones (2002: 73) quotes research done by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer, which shows that the sounds and meanings of system or “unit of meaning [have] to be stored until such time as the interpreter has heard and understood the intention of the speaker”. Ear-voice span (EVS) is a very important consideration. The longer the EVS, the clearer the message becomes for the interpreter, although it adds

to the cognitive load on the short-term memory. Conversely, by shortening the EVS, the cognitive load on the short-term memory becomes lighter, but the opportunity for making false starts presents itself (Gile 2001). Each interpreter decides on an EVS based on their own memory capacity.

Short-term memory is in use continuously during simultaneous interpreting, but there is a constant shift in how much information and for what length of time information is stored.

2.5.4 Additional factors

In addition to the interpreter's own particular skills, traits and professionalism there thus are other key factors outside of his/her control to ensure that the job can be done in the best possible way. The difficulty and cognitive load of simultaneous interpreting is abundantly clear. Jones (2002: 66) claims that this remains an “unnatural activity” and needs to be cultivated. Not all who speak more than one language can naturally interpret. The interpreter needs to interpret more than what is heard through the headset. The nuances of the SL message have to be interpreted and carried over to the TL audience. Taylor-Boulandon (2001) concurs that the simultaneous conference interpreter needs to speak on the same intellectual level as the SL speaker and has to be a proficient public speaker.

Ideally, the simultaneous interpreter should be working in a soundproof booth with a clear view of the speaker so as to be able to read the extra-lingual signs often vital in understanding the total message. Taylor-Boulandon (2001: 58) stresses that it is imperative that the interpreter sees the speaker in order to know when to start, and to read the body language and gestures that allow the interpreter to understand the “social context” (Taylor-Boulandon 2001:58). Jones (1998: 66) mentions that the interpreter should always be in eye contact with the body of delegates in order to read the necessary non-verbal information. He further mentions that the interpreter can even resort to gestures in the booth, if needed. Furthermore, simultaneous interpreting is characterised by the fact that it is practised by using very sophisticated equipment. Jones (2002: 66)

also mentions the importance of a well-designed conference space, allowing good visibility of the speaker and listeners.

The source message is relayed to listeners (using headsets) by way of a microphone. The source message is relayed to the conference interpreter through a headset as well. The importance of proper equipment is tantamount to the success of the activity in simultaneous interpreting. Jones (2002: 67) argues that interpreters should be able to hear the speaker as well as themselves. The best way to do this is to wear the headset on one ear and slightly off, or even totally off, the second ear. According to Jones (2002: 67), recent neurolinguistic research has shown that preference for a certain ear may be to the interpreter's advantage. For a right-handed person the left ear often would be favoured to listen to the source language (Jones 2002: 67).

Jones (2002: 68) explains why volume control is yet another consideration whilst interpreting in the simultaneous mode. Should the volume be too high, the interpreter might resort to straining his/her own voice in order to hear him/herself. Straining of the voice is detrimental in the long run and may cause the interpreter to start shouting. This causes an unpleasant delivery for the listeners. Jones (2002) is of the opinion that a normal conversational tone is optimum for good delivery.

Good equipment is at the core of a good delivery. Jones (2002: 68) reminds us that interpreters should never attempt to interpret that which they have not heard. If the equipment fails the interpreter, the delivery should immediately be stopped until the situation is rectified.

Interpreters need to work in teams of two for optimum performance. The interpreter not actively working still listens and aids his/her partner with difficult issues, such as dates, times, figures, percentages and acronyms, by writing them down (Taylor-Boulandon 2001).

Jones (2002: 72) sets out a number of “golden rules” for simultaneous interpreting, which both explain and reiterate the difficulty of the activity. He reminds us that interpreters have to remember that they are communicating. Secondly, he states that the interpreter must make the best possible use of the technical facilities. He again stresses the importance of the fact that the interpreters must be able to hear the speaker as well as themselves clearly and that no attempt should ever be made to interpret something that had not been heard or acoustically understood. Interpreters have to maximise their concentration. He further mentions that interpreters could easily be distracted by focusing their attention on individual problematic words. Interpreters have to cultivate split attention, with analytical listening to the speaker and critical monitoring of their own output. Jones (2002: 72) also mentions that interpreters should use short, simple sentences where possible, as well as aim to be grammatical. They need to make sense in every single sentence and always finish their sentences.

Due to the particularly stressful nature of the activity it therefore is not possible to continue interpreting for long periods of time. Cilliers (2003) deems it necessary to alternate every 20 to 30 minutes. Because of the high demand on the individual’s cognitive resources at almost saturation level (Liu, Schallert & Carroll 2004: 20), these breaks are imperative. In addition, each interpreter has to be given a glass of water to lubricate the throat.

Working conditions therefore are woven into the fabric of a good and professional delivery. The AIIC (1992) states that, should working conditions be too appalling, the interpreter should switch off the microphone and leave. This would benefit the raising of the standards of the profession. This research raises the question of whether the same can be said as to the state of affairs locally.

2.6 Influences on interpreting standards

There are many factors that influence a sound and quality delivery. For the purpose of this study, the most salient issues will be regarded, observed and discussed. The quest is

to ascertain whether the state of interpreting in the Western Cape is healthy and thriving, as set out by the theorists.

The issues to be regarded include those of staff versus freelance interpreters and how this may possibly have an impact on the service? In addition, training, qualifications and accreditations will be discussed. The importance of documentation and briefing will be considered. Other factors are equipment and visibility, as well as the hours and working conditions. The need for specific standards to ensure a professional service is pivotal.

The AIIC names eight specific issues pertaining to working conditions to ensure the best quality interpretation (AIIC 1992). The members:

- shall endeavour always to secure satisfactory conditions of sound, visibility and comfort, having particular regard to the Professional Standards as adopted by the Association as well as any technical standards drawn up or approved by it;
- shall not, as a general rule, when interpreting simultaneously in a booth, work either alone or without the availability of a colleague to relieve them should the need arise;
- shall try to ensure that teams of conference interpreters are formed in such a way as to avoid the systematic use of relay;
- shall not agree to undertake either simultaneous interpretation without a booth or whispered interpretation unless the circumstances are exceptional *and the quality of the work is not thereby impaired*; (my emphasis KG)
- shall require a direct view of the speaker and the conference room. They will thus refuse to accept the use of television monitors instead of this direct view, except in the case of videoconferences;
- shall require that working documents and texts to be read out at the conference be sent to them in advance;
- shall request a briefing session whenever appropriate;

- shall not perform any other duties except that of conference interpreter at conferences for which they have been taken on as interpreters.

Many of these conditions for work are as yet not applicable in a South African context, as visits to the National Parliament and Western Cape Legislature have already shown. In the next chapter this will be dealt with on an empirical basis.

2.7 Factors relating to service

2.7.1 Staff versus freelance

The National Parliament makes use of both staff and freelance interpreters, while the Western Cape Legislature predominantly uses the latter. In Chapter 3 we will look at whether or not this may have an impact on delivery.

2.7.2 Training, qualification and accreditation

Another area to be considered is that of the training, qualification and possible accreditation of interpreters. Being able to speak more than one language is not the only prerequisite for becoming an interpreter. Being two-handed does not necessarily make one a concert pianist, says Taylor-Boulandon (2001: 173). Taylor-Boulandon (2001: 173) stresses the importance of using trained professional interpreters by saying it is better to have no interpretation rather than poor interpretation. The receiver trusts the interpreter to carry across the message and the question of fidelity is again raised. In the words of Confucius: “If language is not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success” (Taylor-Boulandon 2001: 173). If trained and qualified interpreters are used, the receiver may expect an accurate, reliable, quality delivery.

In South Africa, attempts to this end are being made by the South African Translators’ Institute (SATI), which has been offering accreditation since 1990. Accreditation aims to uplift the status of the profession whilst ensuring the user of service of a decent standard.

2.7.3 Documentation

The importance of documentation in interpreting is not to be underestimated. Stenzl (in Kurz 2001) is of the opinion that receiving documentation ahead of time is imperative. The interpreter may then establish the function of the speech and may possibly form an idea of the expectations of the receivers. The AIIC (1998) confirms this notion in their checklist for conference organisers. Wallmach (2004, cited in Pienaar 2006: 41) states that the majority of political parties still refuse to supply documentation beforehand due to the risk of “leaking” information ahead of time. Section 7. F of the AIIC Code Of Professional Ethics (AIIC 2006) also states that interpreters need to receive documents and texts to be read aloud at conferences prior to the occasion. In the political arena this is often a problem, since parties are reluctant to share documentation prior to delivery out of fear of leaking information.

2.7.4 Specific standards

Feinauer (2005: 163) names “specific standards for interpreters”:

- Render a complete and accurate interpretation
- Confine yourself to the role of interpreting
- Become a skilled communicator
- Have a good knowledge of specialist terminology
- Do not accept more than one assignment for a single period of time
- Refrain from deriving any personal gain from confidential information
- Concentrate – before opening your mouth, engage your brain!

Déjean le Féal (in Kurz 2001:313) describes the standards set by AIIC as follows:

What our listeners receive through their earphones should produce the same effect on them as the original speech does on the speaker’s audience. It should have the same cognitive content and be presented with equal

clarity and precision in the same type of language. Its language and oratory quality should be at least on the same level as that of the original speech, if not better, given that we are professional communicators, while many speakers are not, and sometimes even have to express themselves in languages other than their own.

The empirical research component of this study will ascertain whether these standards have been set and whether they are adhered to. By adhering to specific standards and eliminating influences that have a negative impact on the delivery, a good “quality” service should be the outcome.

2.8 Quality in interpreting

Quality of delivery in simultaneous interpreting has been at the centre of debate and research for some time. The concept of quality is extremely slippery due to its subjective nature, and it may certainly be regarded as multifaceted. According to Pradas Macías (2006: 25), “Quality in interpreting has come to be viewed in relative rather than absolute terms”. Furthermore, quality in interpreting may be based solely on expectation (end-user and peer), or could be widened to include Pöchhacker’s notion of the users’ cognitive grasp of the message delivered to them. This includes the assessment of variables such as speed, pauses, hesitations, intonation, fluency, obvious mistakes, register and style (Kahane 2000: 6). Straneiro (2003:135) believes that there is a “gap between ideal (academic) quality and situated (real-world) quality”.

In researching the quality of interpreting services in South Africa per se, the issue must be considered on two levels. Marne Pienaar (2006: 41) explains that interpreting services in a multilingual context, as in the case of the both the National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature, are dependent on the level of training and skill of the interpreters, as well as on the apparatus. On the second level, the support, attitude and approach of the users has an impact on service. As the implementation of language policies is still unfolding, language practitioners have much to do. More often than not,

interpreters also work as translators, proofreaders and editors and in terminology development (Lesch 2007).

The notion of quality in interpreting therefore remains a field to be researched further in years to come. However, to strategise my own empirical study to follow, it is imperative to regard what has been said and done in the field to date. The most prominent criteria considered are that of *accuracy, fidelity and clarity*. These criteria are particularly product based, however, but as I discuss the views of different scholars it becomes apparent that the product is not the only factor to be considered. Pöchhacker (2002: 97) is of the opinion that each criterion relates to a different area of the communicational situation of interpreting. Factors such as the professional behaviour of the interpreter should co-exist with the more theoretical issues, such as *ideational clarity, linguistic acceptability, terminological accuracy and fidelity* (Gile 1995:34, cited in Saulse 2010).

Fidelity, according to Gile (1995: 49 cited in Saulse 2010), remains at the centre of the issue of quality in interpreting. The interpreter should be able to give the receiver the exact message as uttered by the sender. In Gile's (1995: 59) own words: "The minimum fidelity kernel should necessarily cover the message." The interpreter should be able to know when *framing information (FI)* needs to be added and omitted in order to carry over the exact message (Gile, cited in Saulse 2010).

Different scholars thus clearly view the assessment of quality from various angles and, as yet, no one particular set of criteria by which quality should be assessed has been agreed upon. I will discuss a number of different sets of criteria in order to compile my own criteria on which I will base my own investigation of the state of interpreting in the Western Cape.

2.9 Different views

The first distinction reared its head early in the 1980s, when quality in conference interpreting was first being researched (Pöchhacker 2001). The idea that quality could be

assessed in terms of the listener's perspective or that of interpreters themselves (Pöchhacker 2001) was almost immediately evident. Kurz (2001: 394) proposed an in-depth study of "user's expectations" that leads us to understand that different user groups may have different expectations. Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, the user group (institution of the National Parliament) will have to be considered.

Gile (1991), however, adds a third entity to be consulted when surveying quality in interpreting. Besides what he tags the "Sender" (the interpreter) and the "Receiver" (the user), the "Client" (or the commissioner and payer of the service) also has a role to play. Added to this there also is peer assessment to be taken into consideration.

Regarding interpreting as a linguistic activity, the delivery is seen as a "textual product" (Pöchhacker 2001: 412). Pöchhacker (2001: 412) defines the distinction in perspective (imperative for research into quality) as both "product-orientation" and "interaction-orientation".

In a further attempt to clarify and impress why the notion has been so difficult to define, I would like to include the thoughts of some scholars involved with theory making in this particular area.

As explained by Pöchhacker, Garzone (cited in Pradas Macías 2006) argues that quality encompasses a variety of concepts, such as the interpreter, the end user, the SL speaker and even the client, each with their own expectations. Quality therefore may be perceived in many different ways. This, amongst other ideas, contributes to the vagueness of the term "quality" in SI. To further complicate the notion of quality, theory leads us to a plethora of criteria that have been mentioned to establish good delivery. Quality assessment often occurs under the umbrella of the above-mentioned "product-orientation" perspective. Fluency, correct terminology and accuracy have all been discussed and named repeatedly as indicators of quality of delivery by various scholars.

I would like to venture yet a simple step forward and include training, qualifications, accreditation and working conditions, as they all must surely have an impact on the quality of the delivery. To qualify this notion, Edwards, Temple and Alexander (2005: 75) say “[t]here is a growing emphasis on professionalisation, with recognised training and qualifications for interpreters”.

In addition, Kurz (2001: 394) asks whether we as interpreters can “strengthen our position in negotiations with employers, improve training, communicate more easily with the users of our services by having a better knowledge of what the consumer wants?” All of these aspects will need to be regarded in the compiling of questionnaires and surveys for analysis in Chapter 3.

2.10 User-oriented assessment

Kurz (2001) quotes Kotler and Armstrong (1994: 568) in her paper, *Conference interpreting: quality in the ears of the user*: “Quality must begin with consumer need and end with consumer perception.” In essence, the service rendered by interpreting can be evaluated as a product, and therefore the user or “consumer” is the most important role player. In conducting my empirical research, much focus will be on user expectation and user satisfaction.

What constitutes a “good” interpretation for any user is of course another slippery notion. What are the expectations of the users? Déjean le Féal (1990: 155) proposes same effect in terms of the user’s needs and wants. The target speech should “have the same cognitive content and be presented with equal clarity and precision in the same type of language” (Déjean le Féal (1990: 155), Kurz (2001) elaborates on this by quoting Herbert, who believes that different language elements should be employed in given conference or conference-like situations. He mentions technical accuracy for scholars, and elegance of speech for literary or cultural gatherings, to name just a few. The interpreter has to establish a rapport with the listeners.

Chernov (in Kurz 2001: 395) maintains that it is imperative for the interpreter to have knowledge of the “situational context of the communication”. I would argue that this includes the knowledge of who the user may be. Shlesinger (1997, cited in Kurz 2001: 404) mentions that quality as looked upon from the user’s perspective is indeed a difficult concept. She asks, “do our clients know what is good for them?” Shlesinger (cited in Kurz 2001: 404) stresses that even though users may not know what is good for them, they still have expectations.

Gile (1991, cited in Kurz 2001: 403) is mostly concerned with fidelity and does not necessarily deem users as good judges of fidelity per se. However, he does concede that receivers of a simultaneous interpretation could possibly assess the “packaging”. Kurz (2001) compared the findings of three separate studies using the same questionnaire, but at three very different conference situations. The findings of the comparative study confirm:

... the validity of the theories that view translation and interpretation as an intercultural communication process and emphasize the importance of situationality and communicative context (Reiss and Vermeer 1984). They clearly show that the target-language receiver or listener must be seen as an essential element in the process (Kurz 2001: 398).

This is in accordance with Lesch (1999: 91), who stresses the importance of the role of the reader in translation. He states that the reader or listener should effectively be responsible for 50% of successful and effective communication. I would argue then that the role of the receiver becomes almost equally as important as the role of the interpreter in terms of quality assessment. Kurz (2001: 323) emphasises the role of the receiver and quotes Seleskovitch (1986: 236), who says that “the chain of communication does not end in the booth”.

2.11 Quality assessment by peer review

As has been shown in previous paragraphs, user perception and response, however invaluable, are not the holy grail of this research field. There are many shortcomings, as users may lack “the most crucial means of assessing quality – understanding the source message” (Kurz 2001: 403). We turn, therefore, to other participants in this activity who may well fill that gap.

Despite numerous research studies in the field of quality in interpreting, the idea of peer and self-assessment has been somewhat ignored. Bartłomiejczyk (2007) fills this apparent void with her study of self-evaluation and, at the same time, provides criteria developed for her study. In a sense the study works well in terms of assessing what quality in interpreting should be. Who better to ask than interpreters themselves?

Kurz (2001: 406) states that, in a study conducted by Kurz herself, it appeared as if conference interpreters scored higher on the all levels (accuracy, voice, fluency, logical cohesion, sense consistency, completeness, grammar and terminology). On the level of grammar, interpreters scored much higher, but on terminology there was hardly any discrepancy at all (see Table 1). The evidence is all but conclusive. However, I would like to suggest that interpreters may assess the standards they have set for themselves.

The following table of comparison (Kahane 2000: 3-4), based on Bühler’s study using peer assessment, and Kurz, who aimed her study at end-users, explains the difference in importance on particular levels. The results are shown here as percentages and are merely indicative values (Kahane 2000: 3).

Table 1: Quality assessment - Bühler vs. Kurz

	Bühler 1986 Interpreters %	Kurz 1989 Users %

Sense consistency with original message	96	81
Logical cohesion of utterance	83	72
Correct terminology	49	45
Completeness of interpretation	47	36
Fluency of delivery	49	28
Correct grammatical usage	48	11
Native accent	23	11
Pleasant voice	28	17

On the levels of grammatical usage and fluency there are significant differences, whilst on levels such as consistency with the source message, logical cohesion and completeness there is consistence. Kahane (2000:4) again stresses that peers attach far more value to expressive criteria such as native accent and voice or correct grammar. Both these studies are based on expectation.

2.12 Criteria and analysis

In terms of analysing what constitutes good delivery, a set of criteria has to be drawn up. Before plunging in and asking the obvious questions it is worth considering what has been done before. By a process of elimination, a set of criteria most applicable for the purpose of the study should become clear.

Error analysis has been the focus of a number of studies. Bartlomiejczyk (2007) names the following five areas worth considering, namely: competence, performance, omissions and additions, appropriateness and translation. Quality may also be measured more indirectly. Bartlomiejczyk (2007) is of the opinion that Pöchhacker's evaluation is less error-based and leans more toward end-user comprehension of the message delivered by the interpreter. Bühler (1986) and Kurz (1989) both argue that end-user evaluation focuses more on the end-user's own expectations than on the actual delivery by the interpreter. Bartlomiejczyk (2007) includes the following criteria in her self-evaluation study: faithfulness, the ever-important issue of coherence, style, lexis, presentation, completeness and grammar.

Lee (2008), on the other hand, believes that the evaluation of interpreting still lacks a sound theoretical basis and that not enough empirical research has been done on formal assessment. Looking at quality assessment from a broader perspective, one has to consider a number of extra-linguistic issues. Aspects such as interpreters' "knowledge of the languages and cultures, cognitive abilities, note-taking skills, and emotional and physical strength" (Lee 2008: 165-166) all denote competence, whilst unforeseen issues such as the speed of the SL delivery, noise and interruptions could hamper the delivery.

Riccardi (2002: 121-123) provides 17 macro-criteria. For the scope of this study I will consider the most important of these criteria. Phonological deviations, prosody deviations, production deviations, the length and frequency of pauses and lexical deviations involving common words and technical words are issues to be discussed during interviews with professional interpreters.

Pöchhacker (2001: 413), in contrast, suggests only four common criteria, namely accurate rendition, adequate target language expression, equivalent intended effect and successful communicative interaction. I find Pöchhacker's criteria very clear and useful for the scope of this investigation. My own study will be less specific concerning aspects such as lexical units and focus more on the message itself.

Particularly useful is Lee's (2008) adaptation of Pöchhacker's criteria for his own study. Lee narrowed the above-mentioned criteria down to three well-explained criteria:

- Accuracy (lexical symmetry between source speech and interpreted rendition). This includes same or "equivalent intended effect" (Pöchhacker 2001). Omissions, additions, unacceptable changes, misunderstanding of words or meanings are included under this criterion.
- Target language quality (linguistic "correctness", naturalness and contextual appropriateness, e.g. grammaticality, phonology, morphology, syntax, naturalness, register and style).
- Delivery. Lee (2008) maintains that delivery may be assessed sans source text and that public speaking ability and presentation are key here. Articulation, smooth delivery (devoid of too many long pauses, false starts, fillers, repairs and recurring self-corrections) and good voice projection are more criteria to be considered. Eye contact and posture are important when the interpreter is visible.

Ng conducted his study in 1994 (Kurz 2001: 399), focusing on the reactions of the end user. His criteria were naturalness (intonation, pronunciation, accent), grammatical structure, choice of vocabulary and, lastly, speech levels.

Most useful for the scope of this study, which largely involves user expectation and response, are eight of the first sixteen linguistic and extra-linguistic criteria identified by Bühler in her 1986 study (cited in Kurz 2001: 398), and limited to eight by Kurz in her 1998 study (Kahane 2000):

- Native accent
- Pleasant voice
- Fluency of delivery
- Logical cohesion of utterance

- Sense consistency with original message
- Completeness of interpretation
- Correct grammar usage
- Correct terminology

A study (the Survey on Quality and Role) conducted by Zwischenberger and Pöchhacker in 2008 asked all AIIC members (peers) to comment on eleven output-based criteria. This study focused exclusively on simultaneous interpreting. Participants were asked to listen to an audio sample and rate performance on a four-point scale (Zwischenberger & Pöchhacker 2010: 4). The criteria used in the survey correlated largely with those used by Bühler in her 1986 study. In Table 2 below, Bühler's findings are shown beneath the findings from Zwischenberger and Pöchhacker's study of 2008. The values are shown as percentages.

Table 2: Quality assessment - Zwischenberger and Pöchhacker vs. Bühler

	Very important	Important	Less important	Unimportant	N=
Fluency of delivery	70.7 49	28.6 49	0.7 2	- -	704 47
Correct terminology	61 49	38 51	0.9 -	0.1 -	703 47
Correct Grammar	54.4 48	40.4 50	5.1 2	0.1 -	701 46
Sense consistency with original	88.3 96	11.1 4	0.6 -	- -	702 47

Lively intonation	28.2	59.3	11.7	0.9	703
Native accent	14.1 23	42.1 47	39.7 28	4.1 2	701 47
Logical cohesion	74.8 83	24.8 15	0.4 2	- -	698 47
Pleasant voice	27.5 28	58.5 61	12.7 9	1.3 2	702 46
Synchronicity	15.3	52	30.1	2.7	675
Appropriate style	36.2 17	55.6 68	7.4 15	0.9 -	702 47
Completeness	47.7 47	45.7 49	6.3 4	0.3 -	698 47

(Zwischenberger & Pöchhacker 2010: 4-5)

Again, the criterion that seems most important is the *sense of consistency with the original*. *Logical cohesion* ranked second in this survey. AIIC members participating in the 2008 study deemed form-related criteria, such as *correct terminology*, *correct grammar* and *appropriate style* as more important than the subjects of Bühler's 1986 study (Zwischenberger & Pöchhacker 2010: 5).

The most valued delivery-based criterion in the above-mentioned study was that of *fluency of delivery*, followed by *lively intonation* and pleasant voice. *Native accent* and *synchronicity* were deemed least important.

2.13 Conclusion

Although some theorists agree on certain criteria, there remains general divergence amongst the experts as to what constitutes good-quality interpreting. For the scope of this project it is impossible to include all the criteria set out above. However, the literature review, specifically the information on influences on interpreting as well as specific criteria for a quality delivery, provides the backbone of this research project to establish the state of interpreting services at the mentioned institutions.

The literature has proven that both the interpreters as well as the receivers need to be involved in the study. The empirical component to follow will therefore incorporate both, but with the emphasis on expectation.

Preliminary visits paid to the National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature raised certain issues. These included factors such as working conditions and hours, and other issues that may influence delivery. These observations will also be considered as part of my empirical study.

CHAPTER 3

PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

In a multilingual country such as South Africa, with no fewer than eleven official languages, it is imperative for government to have a language policy and, furthermore, to implement the policy so as to facilitate communication and pay more than mere lip service to the multilingual approach. Despite the fact that the Constitution idealistically promotes multilingualism, the practices set in motion by government seem contradictory (Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 9). According to Deprez and Du Plessis (2000: 9), South Africa is moving toward “*de facto* unilingualism”.

The aim of this chapter is to contextualise the Parliament (National and Western Cape Provincial Legislature) with reference to the framework that is applicable.

3.2 Implementation of legislation regarding language

The notion of multilingualism is enshrined in the Constitution, which applies at the national level. The various provinces have their own concurrent laws regarding language, in order to deal with lingual matters on the provincial level. Section 6 of the Constitution, Act of 1996 (as not yet promulgated) states that:

The national government and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must regulate and monitor their use of official languages. Without detracting from the provisions of subsection (2), all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996).

In South Africa, where the population is comprised of many different cultures and speaks many different languages, the benefits of a sound multilingual policy are obvious. However, it remains to be seen how and whether this has been practically and efficiently implemented. Strydom and Pretorius (in Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 111) are of the opinion that there is no obvious strategy for how policy should be applied on the national or provincial level. Furthermore, Strydom and Pretorius (in Deprez & Du Plessis 2000) claim that the difficulties originate with the Language Act itself. They ascribe this to the absence of guidance, and the practical and economic difficulties that the proposed Language Act fails to address (Strydom and Pretorius, in Deprez and Du Plessis 2000: 111). Furthermore, they are of the opinion that an official language is rendered obsolete unless the language is utilised by tasks of government (legislative, judicial and executive) (Strydom & Pretorius, in Deprez and Du Plessis 2000: 113). In addition, the language should be used regularly (Strydom and Pretorius, in Deprez and Du Plessis 2000: 113).

Overseeing the implementation of language policy across the board has proven to be somewhat of a difficult task. To this end, the National Language Service [NLS] has been mandated by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology [DACST] to be the Directorate directly involved in the “practical implementation” of Section 6 of the Constitution (Mkhulisi, in Deprez and Du Plessis 2000: 121).

The Pan South African Languages Board [PanSALB] was initially established with the aim of promoting multilingualism and developing all South African languages (Marivate, in Deprez and Du Plessis 2000: 131). This was to be the starting point from which Section 6(5) of the Constitution emerged (Marivate, in Deprez and Du Plessis 2000: 131).

A Pan South African Language Board established by national legislation must: (a) promote, and create conditions for, the development and use of (i) all official languages; (ii) the Khoi, Nama and San languages; (iii) Sign Language; and (b) promote and ensure respect for (i) all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, including German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu; and (ii)

Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit and other languages used for religious purposes in South Africa.

However, by 2000, Deprez and Du Plessis dubbed the board the “new ‘watchdog’ regarding language issues. Due to bureaucratic difficulties, the board has been tardy in its becoming operational (Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 10).

Marivati (in Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 134) states the six areas of focus of PanSALB, namely (1) status planning, (2) language in education, (3) translation and interpreting, (4) lexicography, terminology and place names, (5) development of literature and previously marginalised languages and (6) language rights and mediation. A subcommittee on Translation and Interpreting deals with providing directives for, and establishing, translating and interpreting services (Marivati, in Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 135). The Board recognises the importance of these services in the promotion and acceptance of multilingualism and regards these activities as one of its key responsibilities (Marivati, in Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 135). To this end, PanSALB has made strides toward standardising the profession with the proposal of establishing a regulatory body contained in its report titled *Towards the regulation of the language profession in South Africa* (Marivati, in Deprez & Du Plessis 2000: 135).

3.3 National Parliament

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996 (South African Parliament 1996) recognises eleven official languages (English, Afrikaans, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesoto, Sepedi, Setswana, isiNdebele, Xitsonga and Tshivenda). In addition, South African Sign Language and various other so-called heritage languages, such as German, Gujarati, French, Arabic, Urdu and Chinese, are recognised (Wallmach 2006: 1). The Constitution also considers the transformation of formerly “marginalised” languages (Beukes 2008: 5).

Legislature regarding languages cannot guarantee multilingualism and therefore the implementation thereof became imperative. To that end, the National Language Policy Framework (NLPF) was approved by Cabinet in 2003. The NLPF stipulates that all national government and public institutions have to use more than one working language (Wallmach 2006:2). In addition, all official government publications must also appear in all eleven languages, and official correspondence and communication with the public needs to be in the language of the individual's choice (Wallmach 2006: 3). Beukes (2008: 5) mentions that language development is a high priority. As mentioned, the establishment of the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), an agency concerned with the development and promotion of all South African languages (including marginalised languages), is evidence of this (Beukes 2008: 5). Beukes (2008: 6) clarifies the difference between the management of lingual diversity as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and the operational issues concerning constitutional multilingualism. Designated government departments need to bridge the gap between the Constitution and language policy development and implementation.

3.4 Implications for interpreting in Parliament

Parliamentary procedures, by definition, are linguistic activities involving speech and resulting in text (Lesch 2010: 44). Lesch (2010: 44) states further that: "...the objectives of parliamentary discourse reveal global similarities: to legislate or contest legislation, to represent diverse interests, to scrutinize the government's activities, to influence opinion and to recruit and promote political actors."

In linguistic terms, the National Parliament of South Africa aims to accommodate people across all cultural and language barriers. The National Parliament, in accordance with the Constitution, therefore makes provision for all eleven of the official languages to be heard. Sign Language interpreting is also provided. Interpreting services have been made available in the National Assembly and Portfolio Committee meetings. Wallmach (2006: 3) states that translation and interpreting services have been specifically recognised as the conduits through which to facilitate the implementation of the language policies set out in

the NLPPF. The Language Policy Implementation Project (LPIP) established by Parliament in 2003, provides the necessary link between language policy and multilingual communication within the institution, both in its daily procedures as well as its outreaches (Lesch 2010: 44). Lesch (2010: 45), further maintains that the true value of this project is underscored by the fact that more than 90%, or 38.7 million South African citizens (according to StatisticsSA) do not have English as their mother tongue (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2007: 28). Hence, the role of the LPIP is to ensure that constitutional linguistic rights are being met and that the democratic ideal of a multilingual, multicultural parliament is effective in terms of communication. In terms of these ideals and demands, the LPIP initiative appointed conference interpreters to meet the needs of interpreting services in both Houses of Parliament (Lesch 2010: 45).

Developing a system of simultaneous interpreting brought about changes and challenges. The ideal is and was to meet industry standards. Therefore an infrastructure of technical and functional systems had to be introduced. Whether or not this has been properly achieved remains to be determined. However, simultaneous interpreting service outputs in both Houses increased by 550% and provide continuous interpreting in all official languages for all parliamentary proceedings (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2007:9).

3.5 Overview of interpreting in the National Parliament

A preliminary visit to the National Parliament proved to be insightful as to the level of importance the profession enjoys at this institution. It is evident, however, that much has to be done before interpreting services will reach the standard to be expected of such an institution.

A number of issues were immediately apparent and will be dealt with in a following section, on my empirical research. The working conditions vary, as space is an obvious problem. Makeshift booths have been set up in corridors around the building. These booths are remote, but equipped with a monitor, enabling the interpreter to see the

speaker. Only in the National Assembly are a number of well-equipped booths with a clear view of the proceedings.

There still seems to be a shortage of interpreters, causing extended periods of work, which is detrimental to the overall quality of the service. Interpreters service all the meetings of the Portfolio Committees, the National Chamber of Provinces [NCOP], as well as the National Assembly.

3.6 Dominance of English as communication medium in a Parliamentary setting

Despite all the measures taken to ensure equal language rights for different language users in parliament, English still seems to enjoy hegemony, particularly amongst speakers (Lesch 2010: 54). There are several reasons for this.

3.6.1 Communication

Lesch (2010: 54) states that it is generally assumed that an English message will reach a “wider audience”. According to Beard (2000: 37 in Lesch 2010: 54), the true audience is the radio or television listener or viewer. However, Lesch (2010: 54) emphasises that this is an assumption made by politicians in a multilingual country.

Lesch (2010: 54) further mentions that a large number of South African parliamentarians were educated in English and therefore feel comfortable enough in that language.

3.6.2 The neutrality of English

Using one indigenous language rather than another is sometimes perceived as biased, whereas English as *lingua franca* is perceived as being neutral (Lesch 2010: 54).

3.6.3 Logistical and technical issues

Having interpreters for the lesser-used languages on permanent standby is costly and therefore it is imperative for speakers to give advance notice of the language of choice for their speeches. Lesch (2010: 55) mentions that this inhibits the choice of language. The adoption of language policy and the further implementation thereof means the employment of staff interpreters in all official languages and should make this reason obsolete (Lesch 2010: 55).

3.6.4 Quality issues

As discussed previously, quality in interpreting varies. In the case of the African languages, interpreters often interpret into their second and in some cases third language. In an optimum situation, the preference is to interpret into one's mother tongue (Jones 2002: 8-9; Paneth 2002: 31). As a result, speakers of African languages often feel that their message will be more clearly understood if they opt to speak in English (Lesch 2010: 55).

3.6.5 Audio-feed broadcast

In the case of the National Parliament audio-feed broadcasts (SABC's *Parliament Live* and MultiChoice's *Parliamentary Channel*), the speeches are normally broadcast in the original (floor) language. Viewers do not have the benefit of an English translation. Thus speakers may be influenced in terms of language choice when they know that a debate will be broadcast (Lesch 2010: 55).

3.6.6 Status connotations

Despite being debatable from a sociolinguistic point of view, the perception of being superior or better educated when one is able to deliver a speech in English (amongst African-language speakers in some non-English speaking communities) persists (Lesch 2010: 55).

3.6.7 Texts and subject matter

Terminology often proves to be problematic when the subject matter becomes technical, as it often does in relation to legislation. Documentation, briefings and committee discussions are therefore mostly in English (Lesch 2010: 56).

3.6.8 Speeches

Speeches are often based on texts available in English only. According to Lesch (2010: 56), some speeches may be entirely plagiarised in the case of briefing documents or explanatory memoranda. Lesch further mentions that speeches are often prepared by someone else than the member delivering the speech and English may be the common denominator.

3.7 Western Cape Provincial Legislature

The census of 2001 profiled language usage in the Western Cape (Lesch 2005: 16) and concluded that Afrikaans as first language was spoken by 55% of the population, followed by isiXhosa at 23.7% and English by 19% (Lesch 2005: 16). In accordance with the multilingual approach the country has followed since 1994, the Western Cape Language Act of 1998 (Act No. 13) afforded Afrikaans, isiXhosa and English equal status as official languages of the province.

The Provincial Administration of the Western Cape [PAWC] is a government department that provides support for implementing language policy through its Central Language Services (Lesch 2005: 17). Various strides have been taken towards implementation and, to that end, the Western Cape government agreed on a provincial language committee with the specific aim of advising local government in the Western Cape on language policy (Lesch 2005: 17). The Language Policy of the Western Cape, established in terms of the Western Cape Language Committee (a statutory body of the Western Cape Provincial Government) and other stakeholders, was passed by the Provincial Parliament

in June of 2004. This gives effect to Sections 6 and 9 of the Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). It also has as its purpose to give effect to Section 5 of the Constitution of the Western Cape (Act 1 of 1998), the Western Cape Language Act (Act 13 of 1998), the PanSALB Act (Act 59 of 1995), the NLPF (2003), the Batho Pele principle, IKapa elihlumayo (growing and sharing the Cape), the development strategy of the Western Cape, the South African Government's call for social cohesion, and the development of provincial and national economy (Western Cape Language Policy 2004).

The Language Policy has as its goals to promote the use of the three official languages of the Western Cape (Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa) by the provincial and local government of the Western Cape; to elevate the status and advance the use of indigenous languages of historically discriminated status used by the people of the Western Cape, such as the Khoi and San languages; to ensure that the Western Cape is a caring home for all by promoting multilingualism; to support the Batho Pele initiative of impartial service delivery by promoting equal access to public services and programmes by removing communication and language barriers; and to give increasing effect to the equal constitutional status of the three official languages of the Western Cape, amongst others (Western Cape Language Committee 2004). The promotion of Sign Language by having interpreters available is yet another aim of the policy (Lesch 2005: 17).

3.8 Implications for Provincial Parliament

The official languages of the Western Cape are Afrikaans, isiXhosa and English. The Western Cape Language Policy (2001) dictates that "(t)hese languages may be used at any of the debates or any other proceedings of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament or any of its committees". The Policy states that "the Western Cape Parliament must make provision for interpreting services for members from and into all three official languages during sittings of the Provincial Parliament or any of its committees" (Western Cape Language Policy 2004). The Western Cape Provincial Legislature therefore "provides language services within its directorate of proceedings that support the work of the legislature and its committees" (Lesch 2005: 17).

The Western Cape Legislature employs a number of language practitioners on a full-time basis, mostly involved with the translation of bills, acts and proceedings. With regard to interpreting services, the Legislature makes use of freelance interpreters interpreting between English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. Interpreting is always unidirectional, from Afrikaans and isiXhosa into English. This unidirectional approach at Parliament impacts directly on the quality of the interpreting delivery. A member who is not proficient in English cannot judge whether or not their message has been conveyed (Lesch 2005: 18).

Interpreting services are available for all sittings of Parliament, as well as for standing and portfolio committee meetings and public hearings upon request (Lesch 2005: 17). Interpreters for lesser-used languages cannot be at the beck and call of Parliament (Lesch 2005: 18), as this is economically and technically not feasible. The member therefore has to notify parliament well in advance if a language other than English is to be used, which, according to Lesch (2005: 18), impairs “spontaneous language choices”. Compared to interpreting at the much larger National Parliament, the service here is far less organised and structured. The booths are remote and the speaker can only be seen via a monitor. The equipment seems antiquated and unreliable. Three booths have been created, but only two interpreters work at any given time. Maintenance of the equipment is outsourced and the equipment frequently fails. On my initial visit to the Western Cape Legislature equipment did fail. Conditions certainly are not optimum for quality delivery.

The Language Policy of the Western Cape Legislature states that there are three official languages: Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. Interpreters work only into English when the speaker is addressing the chamber in one of the other two languages. The service is therefore somewhat rudimentary. Only two interpreters were working on the day of my preliminary visit. One interpreter works from isiXhosa into English and another from Afrikaans into English. Therefore, the interpreters are not working in the preferred team situation in terms of which they should relieve one another.

Interpreters used in the Western Cape Legislature are not permanently employed. However, the same interpreters are used frequently. These interpreters often will be

called in on short notice, which excludes them being presented with the necessary documentation pivotal to good delivery. In addition, the Western Cape Legislature pays interpreters by an hourly rate, far below industry standards. An average of seven hours per day needs to be worked in order to equal the payment received by interpreters in the private sector.

3.9 Conclusion

A liberal approach to language is enshrined in the Constitution and steps have been taken to implement a language policy. However, it appears as if language issues may be on the back burner and that practical and economic difficulties have hampered progress. Despite all the obvious teething problems that interpreting services in the Western Cape may be experiencing, the service has become an integral part of the legislature and should therefore grow and strengthen to the level and standard of professionalism seen around the world. Professional language practice is at the centre of this investigation. Lesch (2005: 16) mentions the importance of the proper training and development of language practitioners to ensure an altered perception regarding language diversity. In the following chapter an empirical investigation with specific reference to the Western Cape Legislature will be undertaken to see how far along the professional ladder interpreting services in the Western Cape have moved.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1. Introduction

The state of interpreting in the public domain in the Western Cape cannot be discussed further without conducting an empirical investigation. The purpose of the empirical research is to ascertain at what level, and under what conditions, interpreting is being done at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. In addition, it is important to regard specific issues such as training, working hours and conditions to see how these may impact on the level and standard of the service. The remuneration of and documentation sourcing by interpreters will also be investigated and discussed, as, in my opinion, these issues play a pivotal role in the overall structure of the interpreting service at this institution.

For the purposes of this empirical investigation, several visits were paid to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament for me to familiarise myself with the language unit, which is responsible for the interpreting services. Feedback from interpreters in the field could result in additional interviews with the language practitioners, and vice versa.

The empirical component of this research project was dealt with in three different ways. Data were collected by handing out questionnaires to interpreters as well as users. The first questionnaire (see Addendum E) was handed out to interpreters. The questionnaire starts with a brief look at personal information. This is followed by questions regarding training, languages and working conditions. Feedback on their experiences was required. The second questionnaire (see Addendum F) was handed out to users to ascertain how the level of the service is rated. Demographic information about the participant gives us a clearer idea of how interpreting services are being used and for whom. However, the body of the questionnaire rated the service on eleven different criteria as discussed in the previous chapter. The participants were given four options in terms of which to rate the

service: excellent, good, average or poor. In addition to the questionnaires, interviews and closed discussions could be held, should more issues pertaining to this research project be raised in the primary round of research.

The participants in the research project were selected carefully with the aim to arrive at the most unbiased result. Several visits were made to the Western Cape Legislature to select participants for this study. All the participants were handled anonymously.

A: METHODOLOGY

4.1.1 Research design

The research design entailed the following procedures:

- i) Obtaining the necessary permission from the head of language services at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament to conduct my empirical research at this institution.
- ii) Conducting interviews with senior language practitioners at the Western Cape Legislature. (See list of proposed questions in Addendum D.)
- iii) Transcribing of the interviews with language practitioners. (See Addendum B and C.)
- iv) Conducting interviews with interpreters.
- v) Transcribing of interviews with interpreter(s). (See Addendum A.)
- vi) Conducting interviews with users.
- vii) Transcribing interviews with users.
- viii) Questionnaires for interpreters. (See Addendum E.)
- ix) Questionnaires for users to rate the service. (See Addendum F.)
- x) Statistical analysis of questionnaires for users.
- xi) Qualitative discussion of outcome of questionnaires to be handed to interpreters.

- xii) Discussion of outcome of interviews.
- xiii) Discussion of statistical analysis of questionnaires.
- xiv) Discussion of overall outcome.
- xv) Reaching a meaningful conclusion.
- x) Recommendation to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

4.1.2 Interviews and open-ended discussions

After obtaining permission to conduct my research at the Western Cape Legislature, appointments were made by the staff at the language unit to enable me to have a number of open-ended discussions with members using the interpreting service. In addition, appointments were made for interviews with language practitioners. I met with several interpreters and arranged a formal interview with an interpreter who had been working there for some time.

4.1.3 Discussions with users

Informal open-ended discussions were held with users where and as available to further give background to the empirical study. These discussions were to be relayed accurately and without bias from notes taken. The notion behind these open-ended discussions is to try to get an idea of how the interpreting service is seen and understood by members using the service, and whether the users appreciate the importance of the service in a Parliamentary situation, where communication is paramount. The discussions thus were largely unplanned and the questions were open-ended. Rather than being led, the user could give his/her own account of how the service was experienced. I asked about the quality of the service in general, as well as the standard of the equipment, as this may have an impact on the service.

4.1.4 Questionnaire one

This questionnaire was handed to as many interpreters as possible that were available in the Western Cape Legislature. Since the Western Cape Legislature make use of freelance interpreters, a few visits had to be made in order to find enough respondents.

A brief section on personal background involved closed questions on aspects such as age, gender, and staff versus freelance, followed by open-ended questions on training and work experience, affiliation to institutes, mother tongue, etc., as this should vary from one respondent to the other. In addition, respondents were asked about other jobs they might do and how that might affect their performance.

Section two of this questionnaire deals with the working conditions. This was included due to the fact that working conditions play a seminal role in good delivery. The respondent was asked to rate the standard of equipment and the level of comfort on a Likert scale. They were asked to rate the comfort of the booths and their level of soundproofing. A closed question about speaker visibility was asked, with three options. The remainder of the questions in this section dealt largely with yes/no options, followed by an open-ended elaboration or explanation where necessary. The next question dealt with the ever-important issue of documentation in advance. The respondents were asked to elaborate on the importance of this issue in terms of their own opinion. The respondents were also asked whether they worked alone or with a partner.

Working conditions varied and therefore these questions were left open so as to give the respondent the option of discussing his/her situation.

Section three of the questionnaire involves feedback on experience and is intrinsically subjective. Therefore the questions were wholly open. The respondents were required to comment on problems and difficulties that they might encounter and, lastly, were asked to comment briefly on how the profession can be enhanced.

4.1.5 Questionnaire two

As with questionnaire one, the respondents only had to fill in a number and therefore would remain anonymous. This questionnaire was dealt with in two ways.

The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section again deals with demographic information, in order to give a broader view of the respondent's reaction in section two of the questionnaire.

Section two is an eleven-tiered table, according to which the respondents were asked to rate interpreting on a Likert scale of poor, average, good or excellent. The eleven levels on which the respondents rated the service are:

- Clarity of message;
- Accuracy;
- Correct terminology;
- Audibility of voice;
- Audibility in general (equipment condition);
- Pleasantness of voice;
- Pronunciation;
- Grammar usage;
- Smooth delivery/few hesitations;
- Professional behaviour; and
- Confident public speaker.

Once all the data had been collected, the results were dealt with statistically and presented in graph form. This would be followed by a quantitative presentation of the results, as well as a discussion pertaining to the data, but with specific reference to the literature as set out in previous chapters.

4.1.6 Interviews with interpreters and language practitioners

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. In addition to the interviews with the interpreter(s), the aim was to have closed interviews with the persons in charge of interpreting services at the Western Cape Legislature. The information collected during the interviews will be discussed qualitatively in terms of the relevant theory, followed by interpretation, deductions and conclusions.

4.1.7 Analysis and discussion

Once all the data had been collected, the relevant information was handled statistically and presented in graph form. Each graph will be discussed individually.

The data collected from the qualitative discussion will be handled accordingly. Any additional information obtained during the interviews held with the interpreters, senior interpreters and language-service heads will be discussed and interpreted broadly. Deductions will be made regarding the level of service and the standard of the profession locally.

4.1.8 Additional material

During visits to the Western Cape Legislature, additional material pertaining to this study was collected. This involved documentation regarding employment. Additional material such as speaker's lists and other relevant documentation were also collected to be discussed later on in this chapter to add further weight to the study. (See Addenda G, H and I.)

B. ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.2 Interviews and discussions

4.2.1 Interpreters

On both days that I visited, the interpreters were presented with speaker's lists and the Order Paper (see Addenda H and I). These were left in the interpreting booths for their perusal. With the exception of one, the interpreters arrived quite late, around fifteen to ten minutes, but even as late as five minutes, ahead of the bell that rings to signify the start of procedures in the chamber. This left very little time to settle in and prepare before interpreting commenced.

In addition, the late arrivals made interviews impossible, since there was no time. However, all the interpreters were very interested in my study and completed the questionnaires when they had a spare moment in between interpreting. The overall message was that they hoped something could be done to uplift the profession and create a greater awareness of what the profession entails.

I did subsequently contact one of the regular interpreters at this institution who was willing to be interviewed. Feedback on personal background, experience, working conditions and level of service was discussed. I asked the interpreter about specific difficulties and problems that interpreters may encounter at this institution. Additional feedback on the personal background, experience, working conditions and level of service was discussed, since this always has an impact on the level of service, as mentioned in Chapter 3 of this study.

4.2.1.1 Account of interview with interpreter

The interview with the interpreter entailed the following:

We talked about the number of interpreters currently working in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, as well as the mode of interpreting. I asked about notification ahead of interpreting (see Chapter 2, paragraph 2.7.3), since interpreters work solely on a freelance basis at this institution, as well documentation that they received ahead of time,

if any. I asked the interviewee to comment broadly on the working conditions at this institution. I asked about difficulties with code-switching. I furthermore enquired about remuneration and how that may impact on the service from the interpreters' point of view. We discussed the state of the equipment and how this may compromise the level of the service provided (see Chapter 2, paragraph 2.6). We discussed at length the validity of training and experience, as well as the professionalism, of the interpreters used by the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. I asked about possible suggestions to improve the service in general, and lastly wanted any additional comment from the interpreter's perspective.

4.2.1.2 Discussion of interview with interpreter

On 4 May 2011 I had the opportunity to meet with one of the interpreters regularly called to work at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. The first important point to be mentioned that resulted from this interview was the fact that there clearly are not enough interpreters available and that interpreters are sometimes asked to interpret into a language that is not their mother tongue.

The simultaneous mode of interpreting (see Chapter 2, paragraph 2.3) is used for all of the sittings in the parliamentary council chamber. However, consecutive interpreting is used for committee meetings, but this happens very infrequently (about twice or thrice annually).

Interpreters are very seldom notified well in advance. From this particular interview it appeared that interpreters may be called on the very day they are needed. On one of the occasions I visited the Parliament during the course of my research there, an interpreter came rushing in whilst Parliament was in sitting and immediately started interpreting. She had been called to come in immediately since they had an interpreter who could not speak the target language properly.

On the matter of documentation, the interpreter said that documentation is often not available ahead of time and sometimes not at all. The importance of documentation is an ever-present matter in interpreting research (see Chapter 2).

The working conditions in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament came under scrutiny in this interview. The interpreter was of the opinion that the working conditions were not at all up to standards set internationally. The equipment is antiquated, the chairs are uncomfortable, the booths are not ventilated and also not necessarily soundproof.

The interpreters work without partners at this institution. This poses problems and difficulties for them, since they sometimes work for long hours without being relieved. It should also be mentioned that, even when not interpreting actively, the interpreter has to be fully alert, since code-switching may happen at any time. The interpreter therefore has to be alert to jump in and start producing at any given time. This again stresses the importance of working with a partner.

We took the discussion of code-switching a bit further, as this is starting to appear as one of the key problems for both users and interpreters in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. If the meeting is addressed in Afrikaans, the isiXhosa-speaking member would be listening to the English channel, for example. If the speaker suddenly switches to English the interpreter will stop, but the speaker may well revert to Afrikaans, in which case the member has to search for the headphone and correct channel again.

Remuneration is always important, since it is all too obvious that most people will naturally migrate to where there are better wages. Since the Western Cape Provincial Parliament has a minimum one-hour guaranteed (R300) policy, people may go elsewhere where at least half a day's wages are guaranteed. The interpreter explained that, in the case of a short or cancelled meeting, an interpreter may show up, having paid his/her own travel expenses, be paid R300, sent home and then taxed. The interpreter thus earned R100 net despite setting aside a day. According to this interview, the interpreters are aware of what is being done elsewhere and in the private sector.

The interpreter was aware of the lack of training and accreditation of interpreters at this institution. However, the interviewee was of the opinion that the interpreters working in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) are all people with a natural flair and ability to do the job and that they are constantly improving their skills. The often-faulty equipment seems to be a bigger issue with an impact on the overall standard of the service delivered at the WCPP.

The remainder of the interview dealt with how the service may be improved. From this it became very apparent, once again, that the perception regarding interpreting services is completely wrong. The service as a communication tool is totally undervalued. A greater awareness of interpreting and what interpreting entails, and the importance of expression in one's mother tongue, has to be established.

4.2.2 Interviews with language practitioners

Specific questions about the level of service and the growth of the profession in this institution were discussed during this interview. Training, experience and specific requirements for interpreters at the institution were discussed (see Addendum D).

An issue that was raised in my interviews with the language practitioners was the fact that English enjoys language dominance at the WCPP. Both language practitioners I spoke to felt that English may be the common language.

On why the WCPP only uses freelance interpreters, one respondent felt that it may be due to budgetary restrictions, while the other felt that there would not be enough interpreting to warrant full-time employees.

I asked how many interpreters were on the database. Both agreed that there were fourteen, one being a sign-language interpreter. I furthermore questioned the interviewees on how they sourced their interpreters. Some interpreters were obtained from the

Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, while others were sourced by placing advertisements in local newspapers (see Addendum G).

The language unit at the WCPP is not concerned with training and accreditation. They have a far more practical approach, although the senior language practitioner said they were in fact looking for a combination of practicality and qualifications. The lack of training and qualifications seemed to be a concern for the other language practitioner, as he thought that this may have an impact on the level of the service and indeed sometimes received complaints from members about the service. In his opinion, the service needs to be improved.

The remuneration structure, as discussed in my previous interview with an interpreter, was verified by both language practitioners.

4.2.2.1 Discussion of interviews with language practitioners

Interviews were held with two language practitioners at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. I asked them about their specific roles in the WCPP with specific reference to the interpreting service rendered at this institution. We discussed language dominance and the possible reasons, and the repercussions thereof for interpreting.

The issue of freelance versus staff interpreters and reasons for this were discussed. I asked them how many interpreters were on their database, as well as how many interpreters per language. The next question dealt with the sourcing of interpreters for this institution, which then led to the issues of training, qualification and accreditation.

A very important aspect is the remuneration received by interpreters. I therefore asked not only what currently was being paid, but also needed feedback on how this may possibly be to the detriment of the service.

I asked about documentation ahead of interpreting, as well as the standard of the equipment. We discussed the service with respect to language direction. The difficulties of code-switching were touched upon. Lastly, a look at the interpreting system overall as it is being dealt with currently and possible improvements were discussed (see Addendum G).

4.2.3 Open-ended discussions with users

The open-ended discussions were dealt with in an informal, unstructured manner so as to see how the users perceived the service in general. (The rating of the actual service was done by handing out questionnaires with very specific levels on which the respondents had to rate the service and was dealt with separately.) Since many of the forty-two members at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament frequently made use of the interpreting services, I interviewed a number of them to ascertain whether the service is at all meaningful and asked them about their personal experiences of using the service. We talked about their perceptions of the service in general. I also enquired about the state of the equipment and what, if any, problems they had with the system in general. I tried to ascertain the importance of interpreting as a tool to facilitate the policy of multilingualism in the Legislature. As regular users I asked them what, if any, recommendations could be made to improve the service.

4.2.3.1 Discussion one

One member in particular was very helpful, as he was very eloquent and could give a full and detailed account of his experience of the interpreting service at this institution. He uses the service for each sitting and is therefore well acquainted with it.

He felt that the interpreters generally lack emotion and cannot lay emphasis where needed. Therefore, he suggested that the essence of the message was often not captured. He felt that the interpreters were merely transcoding words, but not necessarily the

message. He was concerned that, when he addressed the chamber and was speaking emphatically about a certain issue, his message was “lost in translation”.

The member felt that this was especially true when the interpreters were working from isiXhosa into English or Afrikaans. The “passion is missing... it seems like only words are streaming out”. He mentioned that one could see the speaker being very animated, maybe even jumping around, but that only a monotone voice was heard through the headset.

Being proficient in Afrikaans and English he conducted his own test, listening to both the floor language and the interpreted version. He felt that his thoughts regarding the service were somehow verified, since the interpretation “was just not the same as the original message”.

He further mentioned that there were often lapses. These occurred for two different reasons. Firstly, the interpreter simply cannot keep up. He finds this to be one of the main problems and stressed the point. He said that in these cases the interpretation was a “waste of time... members just don’t understand the message then”.

The other reason members miss part of what is being said was due to code-switching. This happens regularly and without notice. Users then have to grab their earphones and search for the correct channel. By the time the users have caught up with what is being said on the floor, the “message is almost lost or missed”.

Newer and better earphones and equipment, with which users can access the correct channel more easily, may help with this problem. “The buttons switch from one to the other...the message or part of the message is lost”. The member felt that he wanted to make a recommendation to Parliament regarding the state of the antiquated equipment, when he had the opportunity. He felt rather strongly about this, since he regarded the interpreting service as essential.

He further deemed it necessary that interpreters should be given a speakers list in advance to be able to prepare for speaking. From a practical point, he suggested that it was essential for the members of parliament to contact the Speaker or the Chief Whip regarding their presence and/or intentions (regarding language). A matter of courtesy may eliminate issues such as interpreters not being on hand when necessary, or being paid (on a freelance basis) and being redundant on the day. “This mere courtesy will enable the language department to be more prepared with their interpreting service. It may be petty, but that type of discipline is necessary.”

4.2.3.2 Discussion two

I asked another member to briefly comment on the interpreting service at the Western Cape Legislature in general. The response was: “I can follow when necessary”. This user was of the opinion that when interpreters work from isiXhosa into Afrikaans and English, the speech is not as fluent as the original speaker in isiXhosa. He said he could only hope that what he heard was accurate. At the same time he does see the benefit of the service, since “it gives one the opportunity to follow what is going on”. “In terms of how the service overall is perceived on a scale of 1-5, I would rate it about 3 or 3.5.”

In terms of the state of the equipment, the user commented that the earphones were reasonably comfortable, although he stressed, as did the previous respondent, that finding the correct channel posed real challenge to the user of the service. “We have to search for the correct channel and sometimes therefore the switching from one language to another is a problem.” He concurred that parts of the message may be lost during this time. This particular user felt that code-switching should preferably not take place. He is of the opinion that there is no real problem between English and Afrikaans, since most members understand these languages.

He is concerned that there may be administrative issues hampering the interpreting service, saying “Interpreters are not always available” and “Interpreters are not ready”.

Most importantly and emphatically, he noted that “interpreters need to speak better English...(sic) fluent English!” The user felt that because of poor language proficiency, the nuances of the languages and messages were lost.

The respondent felt that it was difficult to comment on whether the interpreters delivered an accurate rendition of a speech, since “one can only really assess this if you understand both languages”.

He found it difficult to comment on whether the interpreters were professional, since he could not see them.

4.2.3.3 Discussion three

The third respondent immediately explained that the Western Cape Provincial Parliament made use of interpreters for all three official languages of the Western Cape, Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. However, he stressed that the level of service was not equal in all three languages, especially isiXhosa.

The respondent felt that this was an issue of quality and training. The pace of the interpretation varied from one language to another. He felt that the service was better when listening to Afrikaans or English, but that the “the pace and therefore the quality is compromised” when one switched to isiXhosa.

He felt that the Speaker’s List (the only documentation that the interpreters receive) tells a story. He feels that isiXhosa “takes a backseat by being given a only a headline, followed by English and Afrikaans” for the rest of the speech.

This user felt that the issue of skills and training was a major factor hampering the service. Training was much needed, especially for the isiXhosa interpreters. He felt that the isiXhosa interpreters failed to “keep up”. “It is better to follow the English conversation.”

The respondent further remarked that technical problems frequently occur with regard to the equipment. “Sometimes we have difficulty hearing.”

The respondent would like to make some recommendations in the future to improve the service. His main concern was that the Afrikaans into isiXhosa was sometimes not available. “For instance for Afrikaans you go to channel one, for English you go to channel two, and that is all.” Furthermore, he mentioned that isiXhosa was interpreted into English, but not into Afrikaans. “We need to have a designated channel from isiXhosa into Afrikaans. “There is also no balance in terms of usage of English and Afrikaans.”

The respondent again remarked on the difficulties of having to switch channels when speakers code-switched. However, the occurrence of this varied “from day to day, depending on the speaker or speaker’s list”. “Sometimes the interpreter lags behind.”

4.3 Questionnaires

Two sets of questionnaires were handed out to the respondents in this study. Both sets of questionnaires were handled anonymously and were numbered.

4.3.1 Discussion of questionnaires

4.3.1.1 Qualitative discussion of response to questionnaire one

I handed out the first questionnaire to seven of the interpreters on the database of the Western Cape Legislature.

The first section of the questionnaire dealt with personal information. The respondents ranged in age from 30 to 60 years. All but one of the respondents were male. All the respondents worked on a freelance basis. Three of the respondents had some sort of

formal training and four had not received any formal training. The training varied from the short course offered at Stellenbosch University to one respondent being busy with a degree through UNISA. The length of time the respondents had actively been interpreting varied from 14 years to one year. Most of the respondents, however, had been interpreting in excess of five years. The respondents had been interpreting in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament for twelve, three and two years respectively, with two respondents still in their first year at this institution. None of the respondents had SATI accreditation, although one respondent was affiliated to PanSALB. Four of the interpreters had isiXhosa as mother tongue, whilst the other three respondents were Zulu, Afrikaans and English respectively.

The three respondents who were isiXhosa first language stated that their language direction was as follows:

❖ **Respondent One:**

This respondent, who was isiXhosa, interpreted:

ISIXHOSA > ENGLISH

ISIXHOSA > AFRIKAANS

❖ **Respondent Two:**

This respondent, who has isiXhosa as mother tongue, interpreted:

ISIXHOSA > ENGLISH

ENGLISH > ISIXHOSA

❖ **Respondent Three:**

This respondent, who has isiXhosa as mother tongue, interpreted:

ISIXHOSA > ENGLISH

❖ **Respondent Four:**

This respondent, who has isiXhosa as mother tongue, interpreted:

AFRIKAANS > ISIXHOSA

ENGLISH > ISIXHOSA

ISIXHOSA > AFRIKAANS

❖ **Respondent Five:**

This respondent, who has isiZulu as mother language, interpreted:

AFRIKAANS > ENGLISH

❖ **Respondent Six:**

This respondent, who has Afrikaans as first language, interpreted:

AFRIKAANS > ENGLISH

ENGLISH > AFRIKAANS

❖ **Respondent Seven:**

This respondent, who has English as first language, interpreted:

ENGLISH > AFRIKAANS

AFRIKAANS > ENGLISH

The reason for stating all of the directions is to show that interpreters are sometimes required to interpret from a language that is not their mother tongue but, on occasion, their second or third language.

The following question asked the respondents to discuss what other jobs they did (interpreting or otherwise) and how it affected their performance at the WCPP.

❖ Respondent One: *None*

❖ Respondent Two: *None*

❖ Respondent Three: *Simultaneous and consecutive interpreting at church.*

Improves my interpreting skills and be regularly called to practise will improve my skills.

- ❖ Respondent Four: *No other jobs. Practising interpreting here, means when service is needed you must be available.*
- ❖ Respondent Five: *Not applicable*
- ❖ Respondent Six: *Lecturer in Xhosa language acquisition. I have a natural flair for working in and between languages.*
- ❖ Respondent Seven: *Editing, proofreading, consecutive interpreting. Need to have multi-language practitioner skills to ensure income and employment. Also do outside work as WCPP does not provide predictable, regular income.*

The second section of the questionnaire dealt with the working conditions at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

- ❖ The first question (Question 12 on questionnaire) asked the respondents to rate the quality and standard of the equipment on a scale of: Excellent, Good, Average or Poor.

Respondents One, Two, Three and Four rated the equipment as good, whilst Respondent Five rated the equipment as average. Respondents Six and Seven rated the equipment as poor.

- ❖ The next question (Question 13 on questionnaire) asked whether the booths are soundproof and comfortable, on a scale of: Extremely uncomfortable Somewhat comfortable, Not comfortable and Very comfortable.

Respondents One, Two and Three rated the booths as very comfortable, whilst Respondents Four, Five and Six said somewhat comfortable. Respondent Seven

rated the booths as not comfortable and added that the booths were poorly designed.

- ❖ Question 14 on the questionnaire asked whether the speaker was visible.

All the respondents answered yes, either physically or via a monitor, depending on whether in Chamber or committee meetings.

- ❖ Question 15 asked if the documentation was received in advance.

Respondents One, Two, Three and Four said yes. Respondent Five said yes, but that it depended on what type of meeting. Respondents Six and Seven said no.

- ❖ Question 16 asked how long in advance, if the answer to Question 15 was yes.

Respondent One: *Here before meeting. @ City of Cape Town, day before.*

Respondent Two: *An hour before commencement.*

Respondent Three: *20 minutes – 10 minutes.*

Respondent Four: *15 minutes before commencement.*

Respondent Five: *Sometimes half an hour to an hour.*

Respondent Six: *N/A*

Respondent Seven: *N/A*

- ❖ Question 17 asked if, in their opinion, the documentation assisted them in any way.

All the respondents answered yes to this question. The respondents were asked to explain why:

Respondent One: *To be aware of what the discussion is about.*

Respondent Two: *It assists in knowing in advance which speaker speaks which language.*

Respondent Three: *To be able to know the issues of the day and language used. (Terminology).*

Respondent Four: *Perusal of agenda, ability to convey fully names, issues, dates etc.*

Respondent Five: *Yes, it makes me aware and prepares me to know in advance.*

Respondent Six: *It would enable me to prepare and handle data more effectively.*

Respondent Seven: *It is essential as it helps for preparation so one can keep up with speed of what is read in speeches. Also helps with accuracy of figures. Given context as member often will “fall in” and it has taken interpreter a while to “catch up” with what they are talking about.*

- ❖ Question 18 asked the respondents to say whether they worked alone or with a partner.

All the respondents answered that they worked alone.

- ❖ Question 19 asked at which intervals partners relieve each other.

Since all the interpreters work alone, this question was not applicable.

- ❖ Question 20 asked how many hours per day the respondents worked at the WCPP.

Respondent One: *Depends.*

Respondent Two: *Average 4 hours.*

Respondent Three: *3-6 hours.*

Respondent Four: *4-6 hours. Depends. May go 8 hours.*

Respondent Five: *N/A*

Respondent Six: *As many as required.*

Respondent Seven: *Depends on sitting. Can be whole day, on stop-start basis for committees. Longest continuous session is usually house sitting - about 3 hours.*

The last section of this questionnaire asked the respondents to give feedback of their experience.

- ❖ Question 21 asked the respondents to comment on their problems and difficulties encountered as an interpreter.

Respondent One: *Soft speaking or fast speaking.*

Respondent Two: *None.*

Respondent Three: *The speaker may speak in a language and then switches immediately and without warning to another language.*

Respondent Four: *Interpreting techniques e.g. fluency, delivery with little or no hesitations or backtracking. Voice quality e.g. breath-control, especially when speaker reading from document and interpreting happens at a fast pace.*

Respondent Five: *The manner in which the speakers are talking e.g. how fast they are. Sometimes political terminology, therefore training is essential.*

Respondent Six: *No time to prepare, no positives, long hours, no relief, poor equipment, poor pay – only per hour wanted, not as per booking.*

Respondent seven: *Poor quality headphones. Booth rattles when door are (sic) opened. There should be no traffic through the booths – to access interpreters for queries or delivery of documents. Lack of fresh air – cannot open door during committee sittings. Very difficult to maintain high standard during long sittings as cannot get fresh air or get a snack or go to bathroom as no partner to relieve.*

- ❖ The last question (Question 22 on the questionnaire) asked the respondents to briefly comment on how, in their opinion, the profession can be enhanced in South Africa.

Respondent One: *At this moment youngsters are scared of interpreting, but for us the older interpreters the more experienced we become.*

Respondent Two: *To enhance this profession, institutions like the provincial legislature must go out there to schools and offer career guidance to students, so it becomes known to more that there is a profession known as interpreting.*

Respondent Three: *Interpreters should be given time by the speaker to be able to interpret. The speaker should not just rush and have no point in his speech to finish a sentence. The speaker should be aware that there is a person interpreting for him/her.*

Respondent Four: *From school level interpreting should be subject. Publication that acknowledge and celebrate and encourage language practice at all institutions. Interpreters and translators. (sic)*

Respondent Five: *Education and training is essential, especially to (sic) this kind of profession i.e. translation and interpreting.*

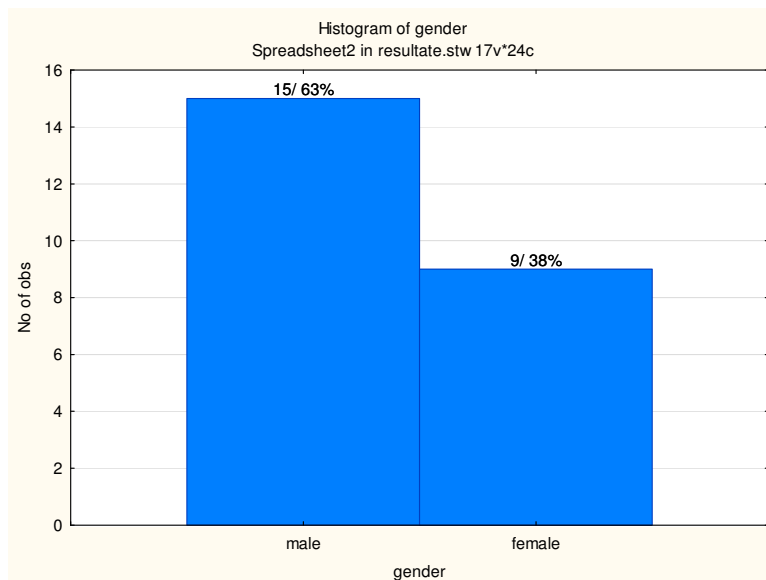
Respondent Six: *Uplifting status of profession – establish Board/Council. Establish fair practises (sic) re documentation, equipment, working hours, contracts, payment.*

Respondent Seven: *Profession is poorly understood. Training is scarce and when are offered they are (sic) far too expensive and not necessarily of a high standard. English remains the default language so interpreters aren't always used to their full capacity. Low standards are easily tolerated and this reduces standing of the profession. Lack of evaluation systems in most institutions also contribute to uneven standards.*

4.3.1.2 Statistical analysis of data obtained from questionnaire two

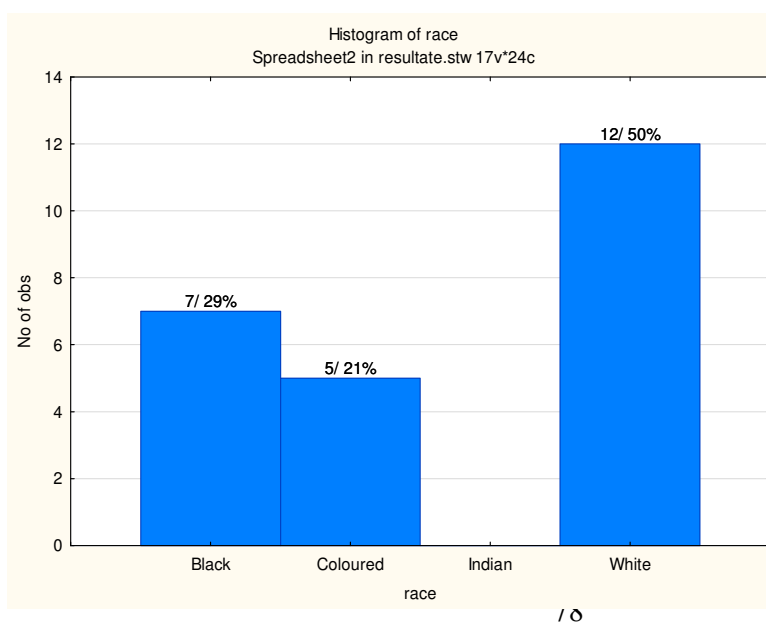
The aim of this questionnaire was to establish from the members (users) how they rate the service. A total of 42 questionnaires were distributed on four different occasions during May and June of 2011. Twenty-four completed questionnaires were returned to me. The return rate is thus 57%, which, comparatively speaking, appears to be a relatively decent rate. A similar study conducted by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport in conjunction with Professor Deumert (Department of Linguistics of the University of Cape Town), in March of 2011, yielded only 16 responses out of 42, or 38% (Deumert 2011). Graphs one to four below provide details of the demographic data of the respondents.

Graph One: Gender



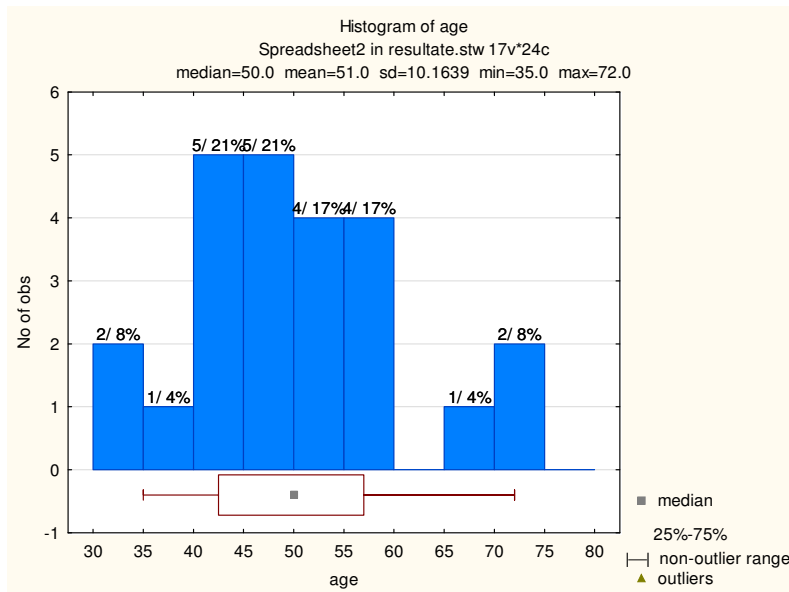
Out of the 24 respondents, 63% were male and 38% were female.

Graph Two: Race



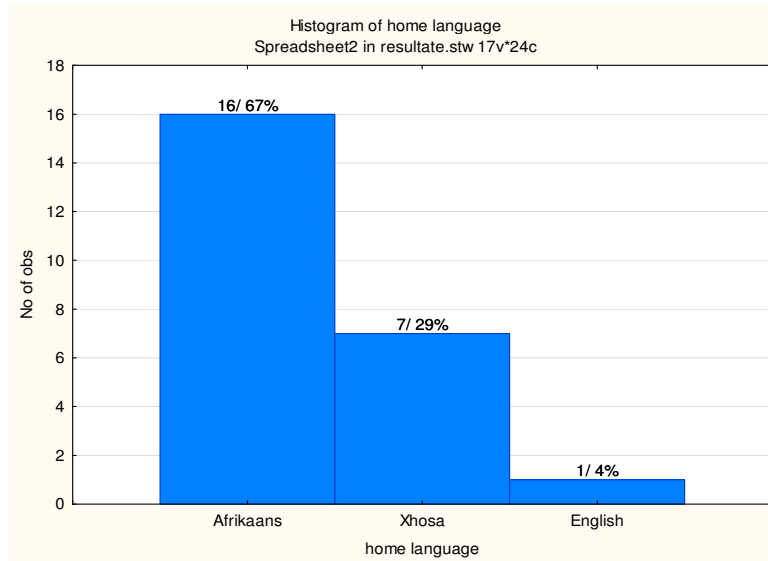
The graph above shows the racial mix of the respondents. The results show that 50% were white, whereas 29% were black and 21% were coloured.

Graph Three: Age



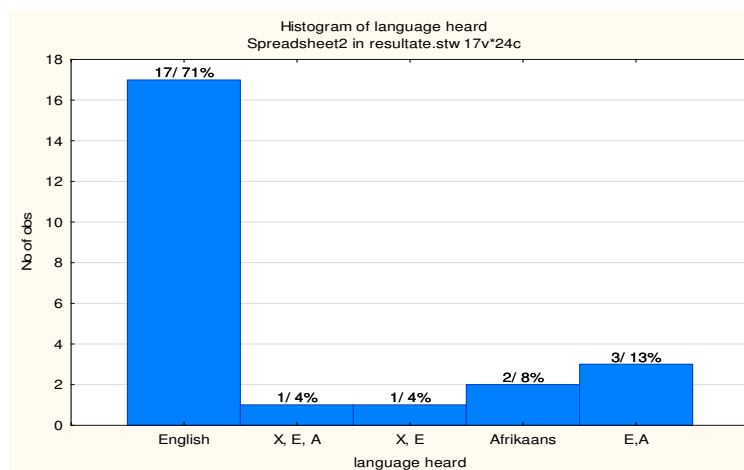
The median age of the respondents according to graph three is 50 years, with 8% under the age of 35 and 8% over the age of 70.

Graph Four: Home language of respondents



An overwhelming 67% of the respondents had Afrikaans as home language and 29% had isiXhosa, whilst only 4% of the respondents had English as first language.

Graph Five: Language heard by respondents

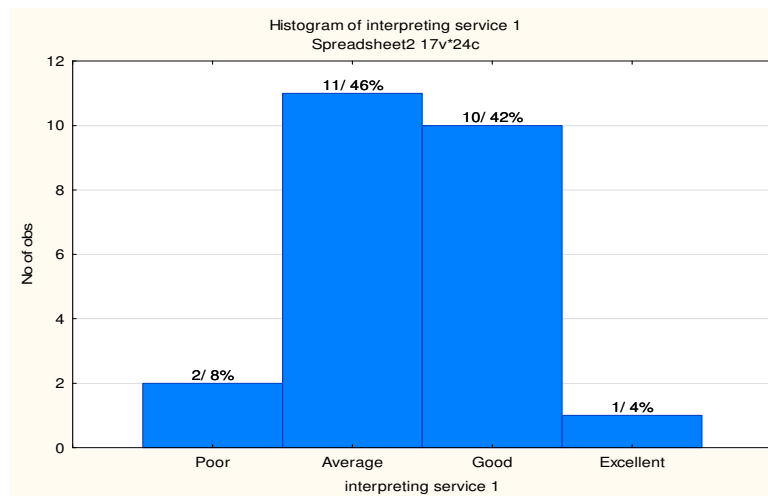


The hegemony of English is clearly visible from this graph, which shows that 71% of the respondents listened to the interpreting service in English. The perception may be that the English interpretation is more accurate. A mere 8% of the respondents listened to Afrikaans, whilst three respondents listened to the Afrikaans and English interpreting.

One respondent used the service for English and isiXhosa, and one respondent (4%) listened to the service in all three language languages.

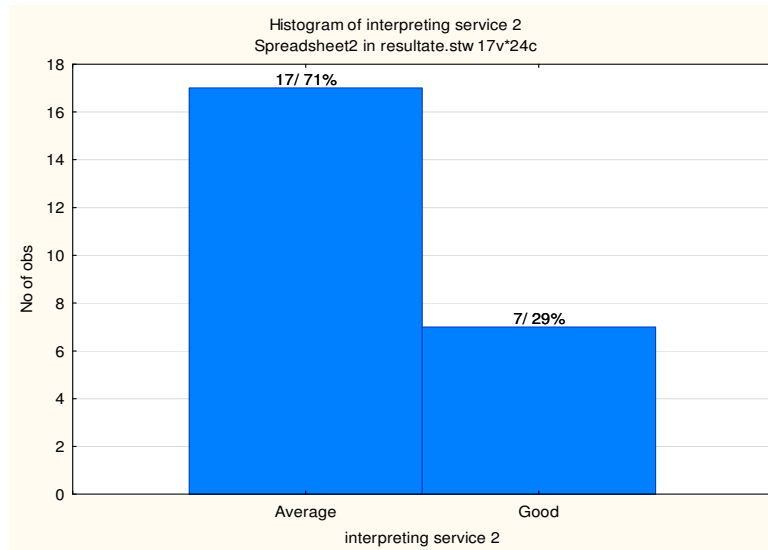
The following graphs show the respondents' ratings of the interpreting service on eleven different levels.

Graph Six: Rating of service: Clarity of message



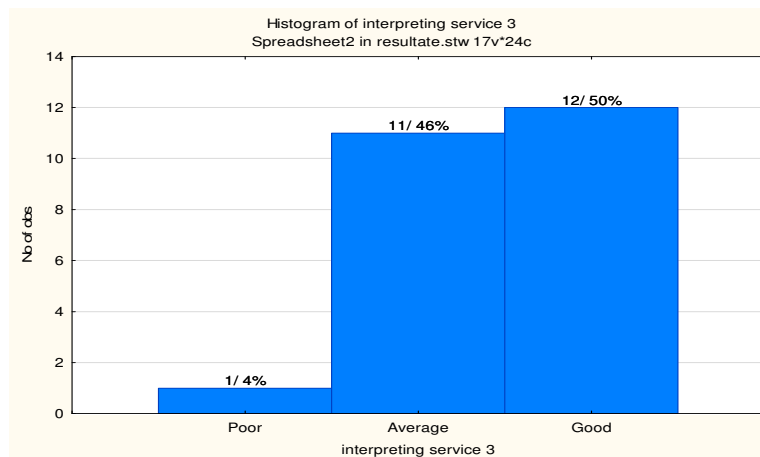
The first level on which the respondents were asked to rate the service was that of “clarity of message”: 46% of the respondents scored it as average and 42% scored it as good, whilst 8% thought of the clarity as poor and 4% rated it as excellent.

Graph Seven: Rating of service: Accuracy



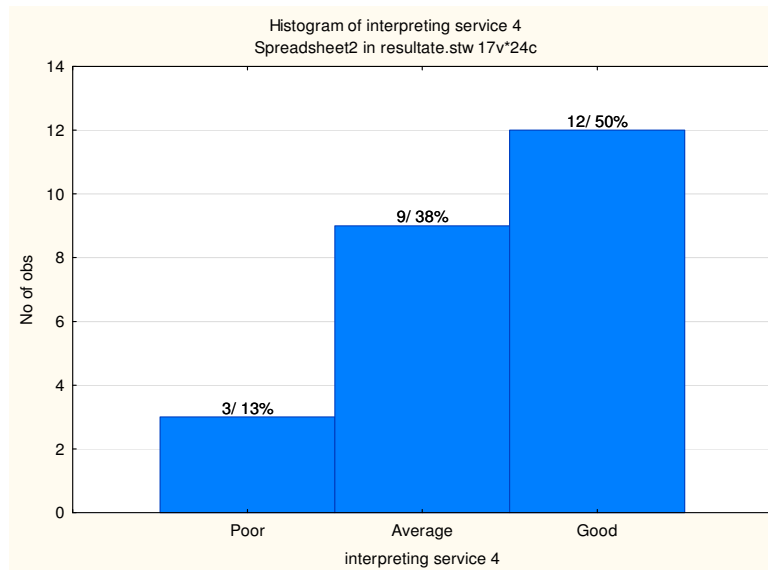
On the level of accuracy, no respondents rated the service as poor or excellent. Seventy-one percent rated the accuracy as average and 29% rated it as good. I would say that this leaves room for improvement, since accuracy is pivotal to the message.

Graph Eight: Rating of service: Terminology



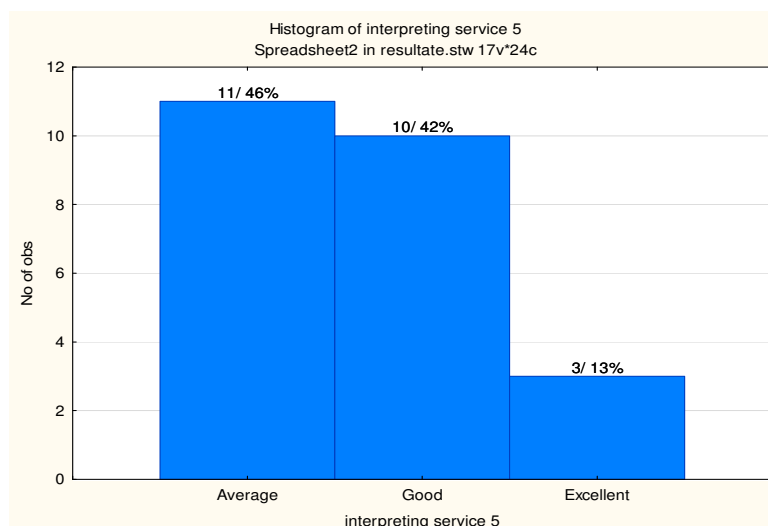
On the level of correct terminology, the respondents rated the service quite high. Although not one respondent viewed the service as excellent, half of the respondents (50%) rated the service as good. Forty-six percent thought that the use of correct terminology was average, and only 4% rated it as poor.

Graph Nine: Rating of service: Audibility of voice



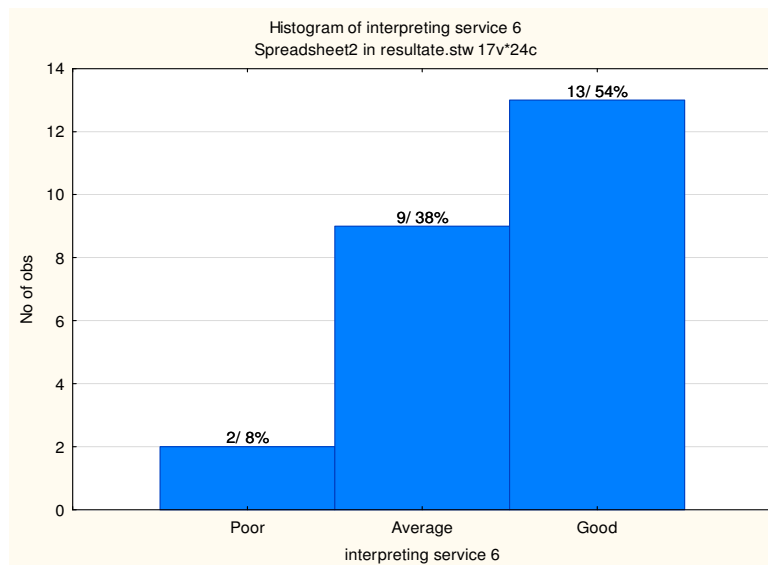
On the level of audibility of voice, 50% of the respondents rated is aspect of the service as good, but 38% thought of it only as average and 13% as poor. Audibility of voice is extremely important. What would be the point of listening to the interpreting service if the interpreter is inaudible? One should distinguish here between audibility of voice and audibility in general, which pertains to the equipment. The following graph deals with that issue.

Graph Ten: Rating of service: Audibility (Equipment)



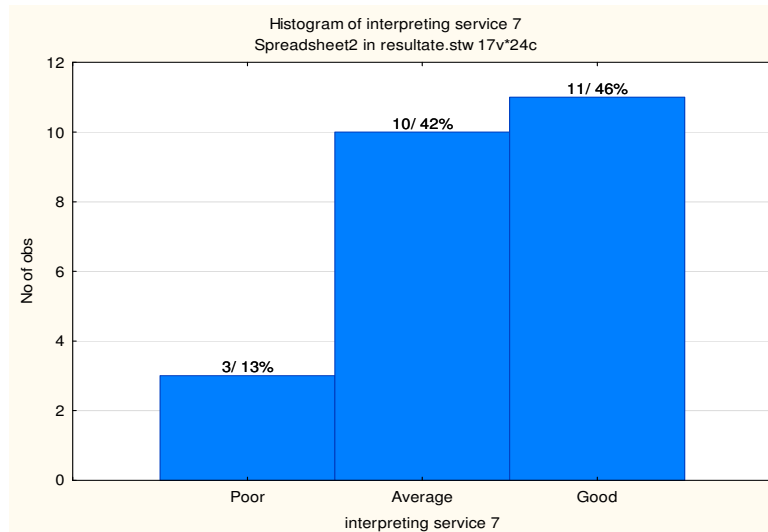
In comparison to audibility of voice (Graph Nine), the respondents audibility in general (equipment condition) slightly higher. Only 13% of the respondents felt that the audibility in general was excellent, while 42% rated it as good and 46% as average. Overall, the problem with audibility lies more with the actual interpreter than with the equipment.

Graph Eleven: Rating of service: Pleasantness of voice



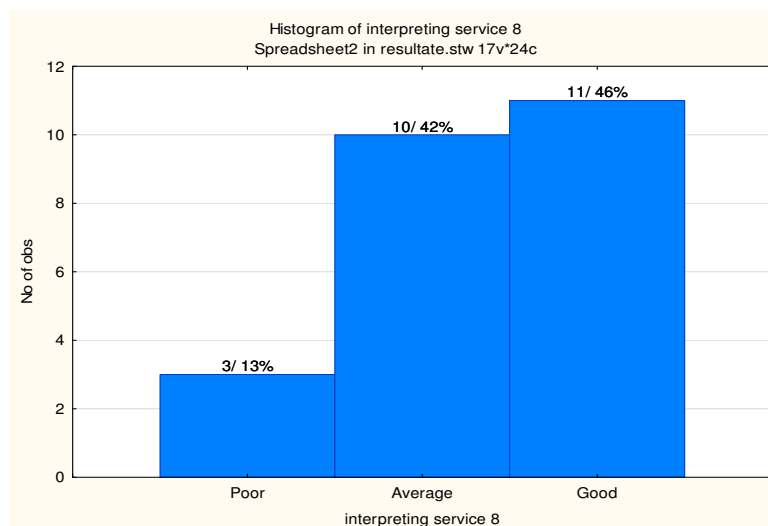
Fifty-four percent of the respondents felt that the interpreters had a “good” pleasant voice as opposed to the 38% who scored them as average. Eight percent scored the service as poor on this criterion.

Graph Twelve: Rating of service: Pronunciation



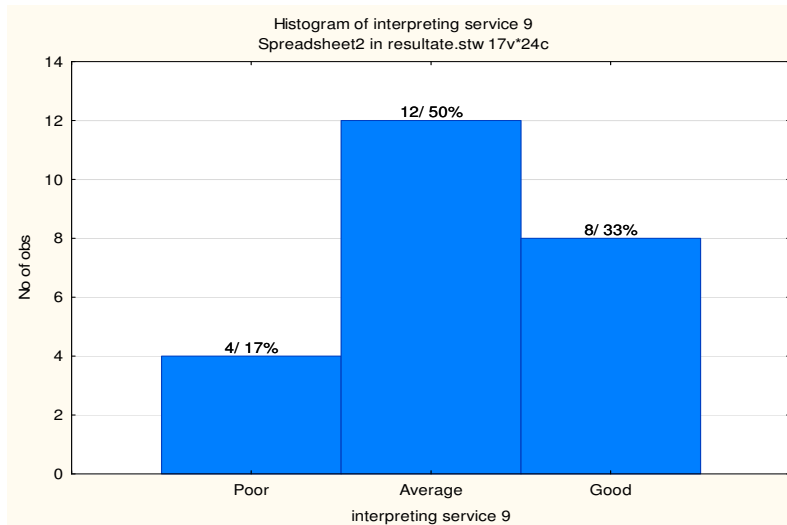
On the level of pronunciation, the interpreting service was scored as follows: 46% of the respondents rated it as good, 42% as average and 13% as poor. Again, no respondents rated the service as excellent.

Graph Thirteen: Rating of service: Grammar usage



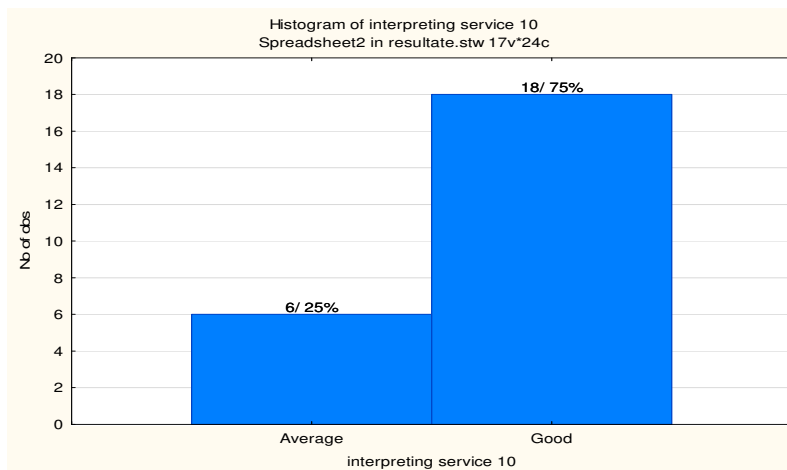
This question dealt with grammar usage. The results were exactly the same as for the criterion of pronunciation, with 46% rating grammar usage as good, 42% as average and 13% as poor. Again, no respondents rated the service as excellent on this level.

Graph Fourteen: Rating of service: Smooth delivery / few hesitations



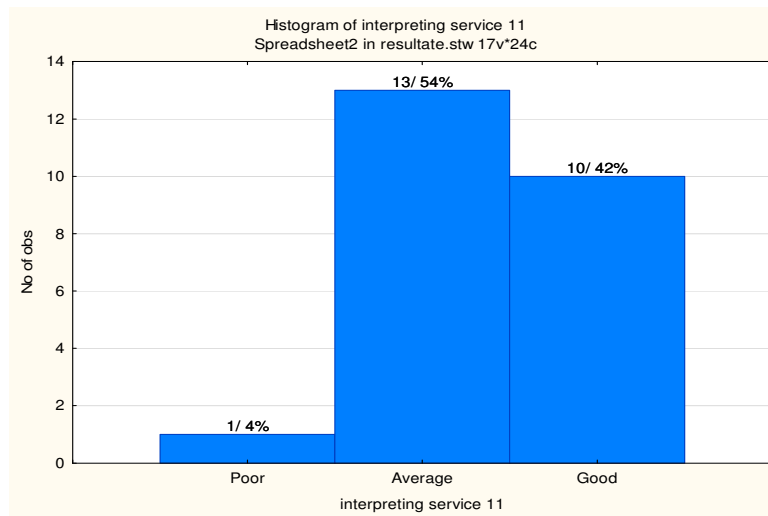
This graph depicts how the respondents felt about the service in terms of a smooth delivery without too many hesitations. Fifty percent rated the service as being only average on this level, whereas 33% thought that it was good. Seventeen percent thought that it was poor.

Graph Fifteen: Rating of service: Professional behaviour



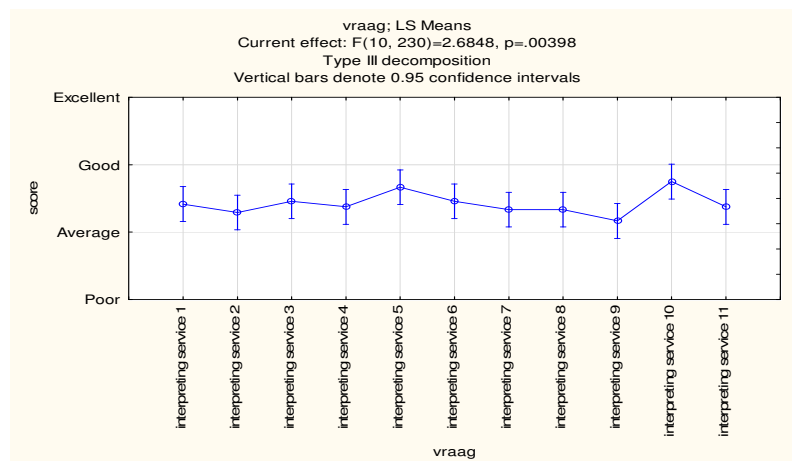
Seventy-five percent of the respondents thought that the professional behaviour of the interpreters was good and 25% rated it as average. No respondents thought of the professional behaviour as either excellent or poor.

Graph Sixteen: Rating of service: Good public speaker



Four percent of the respondents did not regard the interpreters as confident public speakers and rated them poor on this level. However, 54% thought that they were average and 42% rated the interpreters as good, confident public speakers.

Graph Seventeen: Rating of service: Summary



This graph clearly shows the levels on which the service was perceived by the respondents to be better and on which levels the respondents rated the service poorly, which means that improvements can be made. Accuracy, audibility of voice, pronunciation, grammar usage and particularly smooth delivery (few hesitations) are areas that did not score high. However, the respondents seemed reasonably happy with

the state of the equipment in terms of audibility in general (condition of equipment), while professional behaviour rated best of all the levels.

4.3.1.3 Discussion of statistical analysis of data obtained from questionnaire

The hegemony of English in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is evident. This correlated with what was said in the various interviews and remarked on during the literature review section of this study.

Graph 17 acts as a summary, showing on which levels the service could be improved. As mentioned previously, areas for improvement are accuracy, audibility of voice, pronunciation, grammar usage and particularly smooth delivery/few hesitations (Graphs 7, 9, 13 and 14). However, the study shows that few of the respondents perceived the service as poor in general, but equally few respondents rated the service as excellent on any one level.

The areas in which the respondents scored lower clearly point to the lack of training. Interpreters scored poorly on the level of grammar usage, which is jarring to the listener. The outcomes of Questionnaire One clearly showed the mother tongue and the directions into which the interpreters were working. Not working in a language in which one is completely proficient, as mentioned in Chapter 1 of this study, may influence the service and particularly on the level of grammar usage.

Several matters regarding the interpreting service in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and interpreting as a profession became apparent in this part of the research. I will try to show how the outcomes of my questionnaires, as well as the input from the various discussions and interviews, often led to the same answers or problems.

4.4 Training and accreditation

In terms of training and accreditation, it became apparent that the interpreters were selected on availability rather than qualifications. Out of the seven respondents who

answered the questionnaire, not one interpreter had obtained a diploma or degree, one respondent was still busy with a BA degree, and another had done a short course. Thus the institution seems to pay little regard, if any, to training and accreditation (see paragraph 4.3.1). Language proficiency seems to be the most important criterion for being able to interpret in the Western Cape Legislature but, as shown above, language proficiency is not always up to the standard one would expect, since the service was rated relatively low in terms of grammar usage.

4.5 Remuneration structure

As mentioned previously (see paragraph 4.3.2), the WCPP does not employ interpreters on a full-time or staff basis, but deals with interpreters on a freelance basis. This could be ascribed to the fact that there are budgetary restrictions. In the course of this study it became apparent that interpreters are often called in on short notice (often on the same day) (see paragraph 4.3.2) and can sometimes not be assured of a full day's pay, despite having to be available for the whole day in certain instances and thus foregoing work elsewhere at a full day's pay. This seems to lead to unhappiness amongst the interpreters. The interpreters search for work elsewhere, where remuneration is more secure. The Western Cape Provincial Parliament pays interpreters an hourly rate (see paragraph 4.3.2), with a minimum of one hour per day guaranteed. This means that a person may set aside a full day to interpret but, on the day, the meeting may be cut short or even cancelled and the interpreters could leave with remuneration of a mere R300 for the day. This notion is qualified further by one respondent, who clearly states that she has to do several other jobs outside the WCPP to ensure a regular and predictable income (see paragraph 4.4.3). I believe that this may well have an impact on the level of interpreting standards, since the better interpreters will surely seek more financial security.

4.6 Working conditions

The working conditions for interpreters in the Western Cape Legislature could be improved on various levels. The equipment could be upgraded, as the system is fairly

antiquated (see paragraph 4.3.1.2). In my interview with a senior language practitioner it was mentioned that the system was in the process of being upgraded to a certain extent. However, the users found the equipment to be somewhat adequate in terms of audibility (see paragraph 4.3.3.1). During the interviews it was mentioned that the problem with equipment was linked to sudden code-switching and the subsequent search for the correct channel.

Interpreters are not given stationery on which to take notes, as one would expect should be done at this level of interpreting. Water is available in the adjacent room, but since the interpreters work without a partner it is not always possible for them to access it when needed.

4.7 Booths

The booths are on average reasonably comfortable, but there certainly is room for improvement. The booths are not completely soundproof (see paragraph 4.3.1.2), and it was mentioned that poor ventilation may lead to poor concentration, since the doors have to be closed in order for the booth to be soundproof. It was also mentioned that the booths are dimly lit. This poses two problems for the interpreters, one being that, when documentation is indeed present, it may be difficult to read, and the other being that it is sometimes difficult to stay alert during long sittings and when one is not interpreting actively. Booths are equipped with monitors for meetings in the Chamber, so that the speaker is thus remotely visible, which is not always the optimum. However, for Committee meetings the speaker may be physically visible. There were no real complaints regarding this issue.

4.8 Documentation

Documentation in advance seemed to be an issue of importance. The documents are not always received long enough in advance. Most of the respondents (see paragraph 4.4.3.1) felt that they would benefit by having enough time to peruse their documentation, even

just to know what language a particular speaker will use. Other benefits mentioned were terminology, issues, dates, awareness and context (see paragraph 4.4.3.1).

4.9 Working without partners

None of the interpreters worked with a partner. This is problematic, since the interpreters cannot be relieved should they need a drink of water or a bathroom break (see paragraph 4.4.3.1). The hours worked per day vary in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. An average day might be between three and six hours. However, there are instances where the house may sit into the evening and an eight-hour working day is required. This seems to be hard particularly when working alone.

4.10 Working hours

The average working time in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament derived from the responses to the seven completed questionnaires varied from three to six hours, but on occasion could extend to an eight-hour working day. The matter of working hours is elaborated on by one respondent, who explains that one sitting can last up to three hours. We have to bear in mind that interpreters work without partners.

4.11 Feedback from interpreters

In terms of their own feedback and experience, the interpreters mentioned unexpected code-switching by the speakers as being a difficult issue to contend with (see paragraph 4.4.3.1). The matter of poor equipment was again raised. The users complain to the interpreters about losing part of the message whilst searching for the correct channel on their headsets. Yet another issue that was mentioned in the questionnaires and during the various interviews is the preference for English. Speakers often choose to speak in English, rather than in their mother tongue, and the standard of English is not always high. The task of the interpreter is therefore made much more difficult, as the interpreter

has to struggle to understand the source message whilst having to produce a translation simultaneously.

4.12 Conclusion

The interpreting service in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is compromised by certain factors. The general notion of English being the “common” language undermines communication in the mother tongue, the whole *raison d’être* for an interpreting service. Effective communication is thereby often compromised, both from the interpreter’s and the user’s perspective. Code-switching is one of the bigger problems that affects the service, again from both the interpreter’s and user’s side. This happens frequently and without warning, for instance when a member is speaking in English and suddenly switches to his/her mother tongue when trying to make a point or becoming excited. Hereby the effect of the interpreting service is hampered and it is thus poorly understood and under-utilised.

It therefore is necessary to create a greater awareness of interpreting. This notion became apparent in every interview, discussion and open-ended questions asked in the surveys. From every angle, whether the interpreters themselves, the language practitioners who organised the service and the members who become the end users, it was agreed that the service is undervalued. The true value of the interpreting service and the particular strength thereof in ensuring proper communication seems to be clearly misunderstood. The particular value of interpreting as a communication tool also became evident in the surveys done and in the interviews and discussions held with language practitioners, members and interpreter(s).

If the service was better understood, the fulfilling of certain key issues, such as providing documentation well in advance and giving reasonable advance notification for interpreters, would enable them to prepare better and deliver a much more professional service. The members and the speaker need to be aware of the difficulties in interpreting

without documentation and ensure that the interpreters receive more than a speaker's list, and to have it in plenty of time.

In addition, greater awareness would probably involve a bigger budget from which interpreters could be remunerated according to industry standards. This would also mean that interpreters with the necessary training and skills would make themselves available to work regularly at this institution. Interpreters could then possibly also benefit from working with a partner and thus be relieved of the long working hours that are sometimes needed. Furthermore, according to industry standards pointed out in previous chapters, the interpreters will be able to relieve one another after the customary twenty or thirty minutes.

An improved awareness and bigger budget would also result in better and soundproof booths, with proper lighting, ventilation and comfortable chairs, since the study shows this not to be the case at the WCPP. According to the language practitioners and interpreters, the equipment is antiquated and needs to be upgraded in order to facilitate a good and effective interpreting service, although the users found their headsets reasonably satisfactory in terms of audibility.

As mentioned before, the levels on which the service was rated lowest, such as grammar usage, accuracy and smooth delivery (without too many hesitations), point to the fact that interpreters may benefit from training. Training plays a pivotal role in ensuring a decent standard of service, as we have seen in the literature review in previous chapters. Again, a person who speaks more than one language does not necessarily have the particular skills required to become a good interpreter.

In contrast to the above, the levels on which the interpreting service scored better were that of audibility in general (condition of equipment) as opposed to audibility of voice, which did not score well, and that of professional behaviour. This notion was reiterated in the interviews and discussions, during which it became clear that the interpreters who

work in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament are a dedicated group who try really hard, despite the fact that they may earn more elsewhere.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to investigate the interpreting service in the Western Cape legislature. This was also done in relation to the interpreting service in the national parliament. In completing the aims that had been set, the content as deliberated in the study was as follows:

The first chapter of this study provided a broad overview of the study in its entirety. A background to and history of interpreting in South Africa was given, and the goals of the study were set out. This was followed by Chapter 2, where the focus was on the literature review. This provided further background to the empirical component of the study. The simultaneous mode of interpreting, as predominantly used at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, was explained. In addition, the factors that may influence simultaneous interpreting and therefore may impact on the service rendered were discussed. Most importantly, however, the relevant theoretical framework for interpreting was set in this chapter.

In Chapter 3, interpreting and, specifically, interpreting in a parliamentary context was considered and discussed broadly. The legislature concerning language and implications thereof were reviewed. Specific issues relating to language services and interpreting services at the National Parliament and the Western Cape Provincial Parliament were discussed. This formed the backbone of the empirical study, which followed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 formed the body of the research project and dealt exclusively with the empirical component of the study. In the first part of this chapter, the methodology was explained for obtaining the relevant data. The second part of the chapter contained an analysis and interpretation of the data collected during the course of the study. The aim

was to marry all of the data collected by means of interviews, open-ended informal discussions and questionnaires. A further attempt was made to utilise the theory discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 and the outcome of the empirical study to reach a meaningful conclusion.

In the final chapter of this thesis, the study is brought to a conclusion that highlights the shortcomings of the study. In addition, an answer to the hypothesis regarding the interpreting service in the Western Cape Provincial Legislature is formulated. Certain recommendations are also made in this chapter.

5.2 Testing of the hypothesis

The hypothesis set in Chapter 1 (paragraph 7) that underpins the reason for this study, and that states that the service in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is not up to the professional standards expected from such an institution, is confirmed. The lack of awareness and understanding of interpreting services and therefore the value of such a service needs to be created in this parliamentary institution, the Western Cape Provincial legislature, where good communication plays a pivotal role.

Improvements to the service rendered in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament can only be made if the importance thereof is truly understood and appreciated. On all levels, ranging from the need for a bigger budget to the training of interpreters, better equipment, better working conditions and times, receiving documentation in advance, remuneration structure and provision for interpreters to work with partners, the service needs improvements to be made. This seems to be evident when the study is regarded in its entirety. What was further deduced is that the manner in which the interpreting service is provided lies on the periphery of the language policy of the Western Cape, and the challenge is to bring it totally in accordance with the Language Policy of the province. In my opinion, a policy should entail that a concurrent interpreting service is available and that the members of the legislature should at least be able to tune into any of the three languages of the province as the debate is being delivered in the house.

5.3 Recommendations

As mentioned before, a greater awareness needs to be created of the importance of a good interpreting service as a communication tool in a multilingual institution such as the Western Cape Parliament. Once this has been established, the rest should fall into place.

The Speaker should stress the importance of members' constitutional right to speak and address the house in their own language or the language they feel most comfortable with, and not necessarily to revert to English as the binding language. Trust that there will be good interpreting of their speeches and the notion of getting the entire message across clearly should be firmly ingrained in the culture of the institution. Code-switching, which seems to be one of the stumbling blocks to both the interpreters and the users of the service, could be minimised if a fulltime concurrent service was available. However, it should be noted that code-switching as a rule should not be problematic to a trained professional interpreter. The problem at the WCPP is rather that of working hours and the fact that interpreters work alone. This translates into working long stretches without relief. Even though interpreters are not interpreting actively, they still need to be alert at all times, as members may code-switch at any time.

Receiving documentation in advance is imperative and the Speaker should carry this message across to members so as to ensure that providing the relevant documentation in advance becomes part of normal parliamentary procedure.

Once a better understanding of the value of a good interpreting service has been established, proper budgetary requirements for the improvement of the service should be reassessed. Upgrading of the equipment and booths should be considered. Comfortable seats, water at the desks and interpreters working with partners are matters that also need to be addressed. Furthermore, the interpreters should not be expected to supply their own stationery to take notes. The remuneration structure should be amended to meet the industry standards expected of such an institution.

Interpreters could benefit from proper training and possibly accreditation. More discretion in terms of training should be used when contracting interpreters the work here. The areas under scrutiny, as seen in the outcome of the survey done amongst the members, point to a lack of training. This could be improved if the budget allows for interpreters to attend workshops or even short courses, which would result in a better overall service to the institution and its members.

5.4 Limitations of the study

I did not make any transcriptions of the speeches and the interpreter's rendition of the speech. It is suggested that this should be done in follow-up studies in the legislature. Furthermore, one has to bear in mind that interpreting will never be entirely objective and that characterising the quality of the interpreting service in the legislature is a daunting task. One of the biggest stumbling blocks during the course of this study was the apparent unwillingness of users to give feedback by filling out questionnaires. It would be recommended that, in future studies, the Speaker becomes more involved in requesting feedback from the members in order to ensure greater feedback across all language users.

5.5 Conclusion

Regarding the improvement of the profession in South Africa, one issue in particular became apparent immediately, namely the lack of understanding and awareness of the profession. If people had a better understanding that merely being bilingual did not necessarily constitute a good interpreter, and if they further appreciated the level of particular skills involved, the status of the profession may be enhanced. The need for proper training and a standardised level of performance, or the appointing of accredited interpreters, would be paramount in uplifting this profession. To this end, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament needs to make budgetary provision for the service to be upgraded.

Speakers in the house need to be aware that their message probably would be lost in part if they kept switching from one language to another without warning. Both interpreters and users listed this as one of their main complaints. Interpreters often lag behind when this occurs suddenly, and the users then struggle to find the correct channel to listen to the interpreter in the language best understood by them, thereby often losing part of the message. In terms of effective communication, the message – indeed the entire message – is paramount. That is the entire reason for offering an interpreting service.

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ADDENDUM A

Transcription of interview with interpreter at WCPP (4 May 2011)

Q: How many interpreters work at the WCPP, to your knowledge?

A: There are no permanently appointed interpreters, there are only contract posts and with people who interpret are called in for an interpreting session. As far as I know, there are, for Afrikaans, three people who interpret, and if one of these three is not available they make use of a person whose mother tongue is not Afrikaans, who speak an African language, but is fluent in Afrikaans also. When it comes to the Xhosa interpreters, then there are a few more, and some of them also interpret from Xhosa into Afrikaans ... or from Afrikaans into Xhosa. So I do not have an exact number for you. I do know however, that the Afrikaans into English interpreters number three. There used to be four, but now there are three.

Q: Am I correct in saying that only simultaneous interpreting is practised at the WCPP?

A: We do simultaneous interpreting when we interpret for the council chamber...the parliamentary council chamber or for the committee rooms, but there is an auditorium where, when in use we do consecutive interpreting, however this is used very infrequently.

Q: How often would you say this happens?

A: Maybe twice or three times per year. Really very infrequently.

Q: How long in advance are you notified that you will be interpreting on a specific day?

A: It varies. Sometimes you are notified beforehand. Sometimes you are phoned on the very day, to see whether or not you might be available. And the problem there arises,

where the committee organisers have to ask that interpreters have to be organised. And that usually happens at the last minute. So sometimes you see notices in the newspaper that certain public meetings will take place, where certain issues will be discussed and you see it weeks before the time. You know someone is going to be interpreting, but a day before you hear that you will be interpreting.

Q: Do you receive any documentation ahead of time?

A: Often no documentation ahead of time and often no documentation while interpreting. Sometimes if we go and ask, documentation is actually available. What is normally available in fact, is when there is a parliament sitting and there are documents available which give you the programme and give you a list of speeches as well as questions that will be answered, but of course you do not have the answers available.

Q: Can you comment about working conditions in general?

A: Not according to international standards. According to international standards, you should be able to prepare in advance. At least, at least, a little in advance. We never receive documentation with which we can prepare. Therefore you are always there, always prepared to react to anything at any time. We work in interpreting booths, which offer the basic facilities. You have a chair to sit on you have a table in front of you on which you can place things. There is an interpreting device in front of you, which has a microphone. You can place an earpiece on your head. If a sitting takes place in the council chamber, you can watch proceedings on a television, a monitor, which does not always give you a good view of the speaker. When the meetings take place in the committee rooms, where the interpreting booths are situated, you can see the speaker and you can also get a reasonably good “feeling” of the atmosphere...and this is so necessary to help you to interpret well. We are not supplied with stationery to make notes, water is not provided, although outside of the area where we interpret there is usually a water canister and we can go and help ourselves to water. The interpreting equipment is not always functioning. The services are provided by a company, which is contracted to

maintain the equipment. They are merely told to keep the equipment in a working condition. We do not touch it. These things are very sensitive. Even so, the interpreters are sometimes blamed for breaking the equipment. So, we interpret without being relieved, therefore alone and not with a partner as one should, and sometimes we work very long hours, because sometimes... (sic). Because of the nature of the discussions, very long meetings are held, with breaks during mealtimes. We are then given food.

This means you work for hours and hours without being relieved. This is extremely exhausting. Even when you are not interpreting you cannot relax, because the speakers switch languages. Sometimes you are called in and you do not interpret one word. But there are times when you called in to interpret and you end up interpreting practically the entire day. It all depends on the choice of the speaker. We interpret only from English into Afrikaans or, whoever is interpreting does so only in one direction. But even so you have to keep listening, because the speakers change languages quite frequently and as they please.

Q: In my interviews with the members, this became apparent. They struggle to find the right channel as this code-switching happens so frequently and unexpectedly.

A: For instance if a Xhosa-speaking member has to listen to the English channel when the speaker is addressing the meeting in Afrikaans, and the Afrikaans speaker is jumping backward and forward between Afrikaans and English, the Xhosa listener will lose sentences and thereby half the message in the process, if he or she does not switch channels as the speaker switches languages.

Q: A question I would like to avoid, but find necessary. Can you tell me about remuneration for interpreters at the WCPP?

A: OK, we are paid per hour, but only the hours that we are in fact working and each hour is rounded off to the next hour. This means that you may be booked for a day, you show up and work for less than an hour and can only claim for that hour. In this way the

parliament has lost some interpreters. People feel that they are taken advantage of. They make themselves available for the whole day, but cannot earn a day's income, where they may have been able to do a full day's work elsewhere at full pay for the whole day. The rate at the moment is R300 per hour, which means that if you work three hours per morning, without relief, you can earn R1200 per half day. There is a minimum pay of one hour, regardless of whether you work for ten minutes or one full hour, you will still be paid for that hour. This means however, that sometimes, you show up at your own travel expense, and there is no work and you are paid for an hour. This is taxable so in fact after all is said and done you end up earning around a R100 or so for the day you have set aside. So obviously, it is better if you can work longer hours. That is how that is. This is something about which people feel very unhappy. The thing is that you have a contract. You make yourself available, for a certain number of hours, this is what the programme asks of you. The interpreters feel that when you have made yourself available, for say for instance a day, then you should be paid for a day, regardless of whether your services have been made use of or not.

Q: I would imagine that at least a minimum of say three or four hours should be paid so as to make it worthwhile for interpreters?

A: In the private sector, interpreters are paid either for half day or full day. But at parliament, strictly per hour. The reason they have given us is, this is general practice, but I am not so sure of whether this is true or not and whether all the provincial legislatures and parliaments do in fact handle this situation in the same way, but this is what has been explained to us.

Q: It would be interesting to see how other provinces deal with this matter, but that is a whole different research project. We have touched on equipment and so on. What can you tell me about the state of the equipment currently?

A: The interpreting booths were erected many, many years ago and equipment bought and installed at this time. I am sure that, at the time, the equipment was most certainly

excellent, but that was also during a time that only two languages were dealt with. But now we are handling three languages. We are sitting in three interpreting booths in two separate committee rooms. One of the committee rooms is also used to interpret for the council chamber, but when all three booths are being utilised, there is a soundproofing issue. Three languages have to be interpreted as is expected nowadays, the third interpreter has to go and work in the committee room next door, otherwise there is a noise disturbance for the listener.

Q: For the listener?

A: Yes. Yes, that means that one interpreter usually sits alone in the one committee room and that if something occurs that he does not understand that well the person has to run very quickly next door to find out what precisely is going on.

Q: In other words the professionalism of the service is severely compromised?

A: It can definitely be better, definitely improved. We work there in an interpreting booth, which has very dim lighting. No decent bright... healthy light to work in. This can be rather exhausting if you happen to work a long day. When, on occasion, you do receive documentation, you find that the light is rather weak as to read by. When you do not have documents with you, you find that you struggle to stay awake and alert in that dim light. I am not sure how good the ventilation is. One closes the door to the booth to avoid noise disturbance and to try and soundproof, or as near as possible you can soundproof your booth. I think this can be better, definitely. We also sit on little chairs that are very old. You know, those cheap typist's chairs that do not really give your back any decent support, or anything of the kind. No one really complains about this, but I find them really uncomfortable.

Q: Can you comment at all about the level of training, experience and professionalism of the interpreters at this institution?

A: According to my knowledge, there are no interpreters currently working on contract at the WCPP that have had more practical training than myself, and I did the short course at Stellenbosch. At one stage there were interpreters that received training for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but even that training lasted no more than a few weeks. But to my knowledge none of those interpreters are still working here. You will find therefore, that this is not a bunch of truly handpicked interpreters that have really had intensive training, but mostly people with a natural ability and flair for the job and who have through experience nurtured and built on that natural ability and still constantly improve their skills.

I don't think that there is ever an issue of complaints about the quality of the service, these people do good work, but members do complain about the service, regarding the equipment. Sound not coming through etc. In my opinion I think we are lucky to have a handful of very capable interpreters at the WCPP. People with a particular language affinity, and people who can function linguistically and intellectually on a high level. People who take particular pride in what they do and people who really try their utmost best to deliver a good service, despite the fact that they may not have had the best training and despite the sometimes not so ideal circumstances here at the WCPP.

Q: As one of the interpreters working at this institute for a number of years, do you have any suggestions as to how the service may be improved?

A: Right. I think that if you treat people well, you get good service from them. I think that we are underpaid and that the interpreters are generally not happy about this, but we are not the type of people who will demonstrate. I think that the interpreting facilities need to be replaced by more modern booths and equipment at whatever is needed to ensure a smooth service.

I also think that the whole concept of interpreting needs to be introduced to the user in a far more specific manner. The importance of the service needs to be stressed. These are politicians. These are people who do not operate in a language sphere at all. But in fact

here at parliament, or in the political arena it is all about getting the message across, selling their message to the world out there. They just do not realise the importance of the contribution of the interpreters to their cause and to achieve their goal.

I think we should try and create a much larger awareness of the value of interpreting. Then there will surely be a much larger demand for the service from a user point of view. This will lead to an understanding that better facilities and conditions for interpreters are needed. I think that people who are responsible to make provision for interpreting services and who are responsible to arrange interpreters also need to have a better understanding of what this is all about. In other words it is a process of awareness, but with both a top-down and a bottom-up approach.

One has to budget for interpreting services, for salaries of interpreters. One has to budget for interpreters going along to places where meetings are held. I can tell you a story about a meeting that took place elsewhere. Once. It was arranged for interpreters to go along to a rural centre. At the last minute this was cancelled due to expense. The local interpreters they ended up using were totally incompetent and unqualified to get the job done. This is why I am saying it is necessary to create awareness on all the different levels. Therefore, provision must be made for a budget for all these things. A previous Premier showed a greater awareness of this and said that a budget needed to be provided, but then there was a change in leadership and it appears that this type of thing is regarded as less important. It again boils down to status. Status. The status of language is undervalued, the status of language practitioners is not acknowledged, and the value of the contribution of interpreting is completely under appreciated. Because of this, proper provision is not made.

Q: It is as you said. For a politician it is all about getting the message across, not so?

A: The people in our legislature specifically are not English speaking, but English appears to be the language of status, therefore people try to speak English. They do not want to be seen as not learned. The English use is often poor and people deprive

themselves of the ability to express themselves well. When they do in fact speak in Afrikaans, it is usually when their “passion” takes over. They feel so passionate about a certain issue that it appears that their own language kicks in. If this happens throughout, so much more and better communication would take place, but politics is but a game.

Recently at the end of a session, a member, an Afrikaans-speaking member, came and thanked us (interpreters) for our contribution. She is one of the people that always sticks to her mother tongue and therefore always uses the interpreters, but some of the other people do not even acknowledge the interpreters and never even think about greeting us. At the last couple of meetings, which were long full-day meetings, deep into the evenings, we break for a quick supper around 6 pm. Usually everyone goes to eat in the members’ dining room. But at the last few meetings the interpreters were asked to sit with the secretarial personnel in a separate room. We are seen as the hired help.

It is interesting that if you look at who the interpreters are, it is often people with a few degrees, as opposed to the members who in certain instances do not even have matric and, taken from the political arena, people who would most likely never meet on the same level. In other word there is somewhat of a reverse position of power. We found this amusing.

Q: Any last thoughts on the interpreting service as a whole at the WCPP?

A: Again, here it is about the people’s perception about the service, the value of communication. And the importance to provide for decent language services and to promote proper communication. People do not realise this, people underestimate this the value of thereof. They therefore also undervalue the people who provide the services.

ADDENDUM B

INTERVIEW WITH SENIOR LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS AT WCPP (9 JUNE 2011)

Interview One

Q: What is your role here at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament?

A: My role? I am employed as a senior language practitioner. There is a language practitioner that I am supposed to be supervising. Two actually. For the isiXhosa, but there is only one. And then for the Afrikaans... So my role is to oversee that and all the papers for the parliament are in order and that they are there on time.

Q: Is there any language dominance present here in your opinion?

A: I would say so yes. For an example, most of the things are done in English. And then there are other languages, Afrikaans and isiXhosa and maybe later on then for instance there is a sitting today and the first language that is done is English and then you get any documents requested for a parliamentary sitting are in English and then it comes to us and then we have to translate the documents into Afrikaans and isiXhosa as well. It is only then that the documents go to parliament...they try to make the languages in an equal level.

Q: What do you ascribe that to?

A: English enjoys dominancy probably because it is the language that is being used by many people...Maybe it is a common language. Most of the people use English...that they're doing. And at the same time I will say that they've got the ...(sic) most Afrikaans-speaking people and Xhosa-speaking people so their common language they are using is English, also because you will find out that Afrikaans-speaking people, they

don't know or understand Xhosa and at the same time Xhosa people do not know Afrikaans, but both participants, they do understand English. They can communicate easily in English and they are communicating to each other...(sic).

Q: Do you make use of staff or freelance interpreters?

A: Here at this legislature we are using the freelance interpreters.

Q: Why only freelance and not staff interpreters?

A: Quite frankly, I am not one hundred percent sure of that one. Because of when I started here they were already using only freelance interpreters and I didn't really question as to why they are using the freelance interpreters. I assumed that it is maybe for saving purposes, I don't know. Maybe they are saving the money or maybe they are giving people outside an opportunity for a job? Maybe that is also one of the reasons, so it is really just my assumptions. I don't know exactly why they don't have staff, but they don't have people here employed permanently as interpreters.

Q: How many interpreters do you have on your database currently?

A: I think we have about twelve. Let me see. No there are thirteen actually.

Q: How many interpreters for each language, do you know?

A: Yes I do. For instance for English, in fact for Afrikaans into English we have four. And for Afrikaans to isiXhosa we have three. And then the rest is for isiXhosa to English.

Q: How do you here at the WCPP go about sourcing interpreters for your database?

A: In terms of ?

Q: How do you attract potential interpreters when you need new interpreters for your database, by placing advertisements in the newspaper, or by word of mouth?

A: Usually we advertise it in the newspaper, in different local newspapers actually. We put the advert in the Argus, even in City Vision in Khayelitsha, in other newspapers as well. We do it specifically in the local newspapers around Cape Town and then people will respond on that one. And then we do the sifting process people apply for one post and then you are called for an interview. And then they will go through the process of an interview and then we will select them to be freelance interpreters and then they will be put on our database as interpreters.

Q: On what basis are these interpreters selected? Can you briefly tell me about the process and what you are looking for during your interviews?

A: Ok. What we are looking for when we interview for example is to see if the person is in a position to interpret correctly and in a good manner in terms of, is he like flowing with the speaker. Because usually, most of the time we are using simultaneous interpreting. So ... (sic). Using the chamber and this other one is using the committee room. And then we want to check if they can listen there and can they ... (sic) can they capture what is being said, can they be able to relate that in a correct manner so that the next person (user) can understand what the speaker is saying in another language. That's what we usually do. That is normally done by myself and my colleague together. So one of us might sit somewhere, because those interpreters in the booths can also interpret for the committees and the assembly at the same time. ... (sic) So if they are sitting at the committees they will be in the inside and the interpreter on the outside. and then we have a copy ... let's say ... the minutes, and the person might be interpreting and then we take it from there.

Q: When you interview prospective interpreters, are you at all concerned with training, qualification and accreditation (for example SATI) here, or do you evaluate more on performance?

A: To be quite honest with you, here it is more about the practical, because we have never looked at SATI for instance. What we are looking for are good interpreters. At the same time are the qualifications. If we can see that this person has done this course at maybe Free State or Stellenbosch or whatever, then we at least know this is our kind of people and then the practical side we want to get to see it as well. Sometimes ... (sic). But at the same time it might not because we're dealing with members here, we would love to get the best people we can get for interpreting so that at least we know that we can deliver what is needed by the members. So what we do is look at, specifically at the practicality and the qualifications.

Q: Can you tell me about remuneration of interpreters at this institution?

A: Here they are paid by the hour. So that means if they work for one hour they are paid R300. So if they are paid for two hours they will get R600, so that means then the hourly rate is R300.

Q: Is there a minimum of hours per day?

A: There is a minimum of one hour per day. For example a sitting is planned, interpreters are called in and when they get here there is no meeting, we have to pay them for that hour. Sometimes they can also be here and a meeting is planned for say an hour and the meeting finishes in ten minutes, they may leave, but will still be paid for the full hour.

Q: Do the interpreters get any documentation beforehand? And when do they receive this?

A: Yes, definitely. When there is a sitting...(sic) committees it is like a debate, so whatever committees...that they will be doing. So with the house, we have all the documentation of that particular day. The order paper, we've got the motion paper. From the chairperson's office, the programme of the day as well, so that they know about the

different people and what they will be talking about, particularly the different members and their questions and whatever is going to happen on that particular day during the sitting. We also give it to them, but sometimes it depends because sometimes they are not on time to go through the documentation. Like for instance when the house starts at 2.15 pm, they may only arrive at 2 pm. That does not leave them enough time to read what is in those papers. Some of them are very experienced, because they have worked here for so long, they know what is going on and they know what to do.

Q: How would you rate the interpreting equipment?

A: The equipment that is used by the interpreters, there is a new one now that they will be using as of today in fact. But before it was really bad. It is bad in the sense that, say if we have a meeting (not for the house) so a committee meeting and a meeting in the chamber and a meeting in the auditorium. Then there is a cross-like, I don't know how to explain, like a crossing of lines or whatever. You will find that people in the chamber are hearing someone interpreting for say the auditorium. So that was the "antique" problem, but now we hope that it's sorted in the chamber as well. And sometimes the members are not sure whether they will be debating their issues. Sometimes or ... (sic) whatever. Then they will complain that the interpreters are not interpreting their speech... their buttons in front of them on their desks.. Like if you want one channel for example, you know where to press channel one. So sometimes they do not do that and need someone to assist them. So let's hope that the new system will be better and it should work like a charm.

Q: An additional service of Afrikaans into isiXhosa has been established more recently. When and why was this service added?

A: I started here in 2008, so this is my third year. Since then there was (sic) only two channels for interpreting from Afrikaans into English and isiXhosa into English. After the election in 2009 there was a demand for Afrikaans into isiXhosa interpreting, by the members. I am not so sure why, but in my experience here I assume it has to do with the fact that when you feel angry or passionate about something you want to be able to

express, to say what you want to say in your own language. Also members want to hear these emphatic speeches in their own language and not always only in English. Because, if someone is speaking in isiXhosa you would have to listen to it in English, but the members may want to hear it in Afrikaans and vice versa. So I think that is the reason for the establishing of the new service.

Q: Can you comment on the fact that code-switching on the floor is common and that listeners sometimes struggle to get to the correct channel?

A: I do agree with this, yes, although there is not much we can do about this. But this is not the only problem. Sometimes, it is because I never know if the IT people have done their job. And also it's like I said a further problem, when there are meetings at the same time. When, say for instance, there is only a meeting in the chamber and there is no meeting in the auditorium, there is usually no crossing of lines, things should be working out smoothly.

Q: Do you think the system works at present? The interpreting system as a whole.

A: The system that involves interpreters as well as the users? I am trying to think because these are the people I am working with, and they also work with the City of Cape Town, while some of them are doing their private jobs as well. Sometimes (and I hope I am answering your question now) these people also have their own issues. For example they may get called in to interpret here for a day. They are told that they will be here from 9 am until 6 pm and they may turn down something else. Then for reasons unknown to us the session is suddenly cancelled or rescheduled. That is not fair now. Besides the money issues that are of course obvious, but suddenly they have travelled here they must go home with nothing to do and of course only get paid for one hour. So as a language practitioner I think this is not fair. This is one of the things about the system that I think should be changed. It is not the interpreter's problem if things change or are cancelled. They should be paid for the time they are called for. The City of Cape Town for instance pays either half or full day depending, so it is a better deal for the interpreter.

Q: Can you comment on how the service may be improved?

A: The equipment has been improved now. We may need more interpreters also, because say for instance three committees meet on a day, and the interpreters we have on our database are not available, then it becomes a problem. The Afrikaans-isiXhosa interpreters as mostly used by the City of Cape Town, so if we do not inform them in time, we have a problem. Another thing that I think can be improved as well, we need to have a system of where we are informed about meetings in a timely manner so that we can inform the interpreters. For instance at the moment we may call them today for a meeting tomorrow. So we need to have a structure by which we can organise these things. I am sure as well that we should be pro-active by discussing with the committees about informing us on time so that we can inform the interpreters on time and get the best possible interpreters before they go elsewhere. People do not understand the importance of the service and are not aware of what it involves, but when the system falters they are the first to complain.

ADDENDUM C

INTERVIEW WITH SENIOR LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS AT WCPP (9 JUNE 2011)

Interview Two

Q: What is your role here at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament?

A: I am a language practitioner here at the WCPP.

Q: Is there any language dominance present here in your opinion?

A: I do think that in some respects there is.

Q: What do you ascribe that to?

A: It is only because most of us speak different languages and the only common language that we all understand is English.

Q: Do you make use of staff or freelance interpreters?

A: We make use only of freelance interpreters.

Q: Why only freelance and not staff interpreters?

A: Our staff complement is so thin and therefore they won't have enough to do interpreting.

Q: How many interpreters do you have on your database currently?

A: We have about 14 interpreters on our database currently.

Q: How many interpreters for each language, do you know?

A: Because of the many challenges, when it comes to language matters, we do not have equal numbers when it comes to different languages. For instance, we have four interpreters for Afrikaans into English and vice versa. Additionally we have three interpreters for Afrikaans into isiXhosa and vice versa. We have six interpreters for isiXhosa into English and vice versa. And we have one sign language interpreter.

Q: How do you here at the WCPP go about sourcing interpreters for your database?

A: We got most of our interpreters from the provincial language unit, which is based in the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports. We got the others by advertising and conducting our own interviews.

Q: On what basis are these interpreters selected? Can you briefly tell me about the process?

A: Purely in (sic) their language capabilities, for example, language proficiency.

Q: Are you at all concerned with training, qualification and accreditation (for example SATI) here, or do you evaluate more on performance?

A: That is a real concern, as sometimes one can clearly see that there is room for improvement. Secondly, sometimes our clients, i.e. the Members of the Legislature, complain to us about the level of the service. When that happens we know that we should do something to improve the level of the service.

Q: Can you tell me about remuneration of interpreters at this institution?

A: Interpreters here are paid an hourly tariff, based on the hours they have worked.

Q: Do the interpreters get any documentation beforehand? And when do they receive this?

A: Different kinds of document are offered, depending on the event. For example, during the Premier's State of the Province Address we provide the interpreters with a copy of the Premier's speech. When we are having annual reports we will give them copies of the annual reports as provided by the different departments. This may only happen though as little as ten minutes before the meeting. Even then sometimes this may not happen at all, since no documentation is given to us by those who do the presentations during the meetings.

Q: How would you rate the interpreting equipment?

A: The equipment is not a hundred percent perfect. We often encounter technical problems. I can safely say that there is still room for improvement.

Q: An additional service of Afrikaans into isiXhosa has been established more recently. When and why was this service added?

A: This service was added due to a demand from the Members of the Legislature. You will remember that the most isiXhosa-speaking people do not understand Afrikaans and the same applies to Afrikaans-speaking people who do not understand a word of isiXhosa. Therefore this service proved necessary over a period of time and was established.

Q: Can you comment on the fact that code-switching on the floor is common and that listeners sometimes struggle to get to the correct channel?

A: This mostly happens when people on the floor switch from Afrikaans into English, English into Afrikaans and from isiXhosa into English. All I can say about this is that it can disturb interpreters when delivering the service and everyone requires from them to deliver a good quality service.

Q: Do you think the system works at present?

A: Yes, it does although there are problems here and there. You will understand that we are all human so problems will always be there.

Q: Can you comment on how the service may be improved?

A: If the equipment used in our institution can be improved it can lead to our interpreters providing our clients with a quality service. It is not nice when people are disturbed by a technical problem. We need to improve on that level.

ADDENDUM D

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

1. What is your role at the WCPP?
2. Is there language dominance at the WCPP?
3. What do you ascribe that to?
4. Do you make use of freelance or staff interpreters?
5. Why freelance and not staff?
6. How many interpreters on your database?
7. How many interpreters per language?
8. How do you source your interpreters?
9. On what basis are they selected?
10. Are you at all concerned with the training and accreditation of these interpreters?
11. What type of remuneration do these interpreters get?
12. What documentation if any do interpreters receive and when?
13. How would you rate the equipment?
14. Additional service of Afrikaans into isiXhosa has been established. Can you tell me when and why? (One member calls for the service from isiXhosa into Afrikaans.)
15. Can you comment on the fact that code-switching on the floor is common and that the listeners have trouble switching to the correct channel?
16. Does the system work at present?
17. Can you comment on how the service may be improved if necessary? #.....

ADDENDUM E

Questionnaire 1

Personal information

1. Age.....

Gender

Male

Female

Highest academic qualification.....

2. Are you employed as a staff or freelance interpreter?

Staff

Freelance

3. Have you received any formal training as an interpreter?

Yes/ No

4. If yes, what are your qualifications?

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5. What was the duration and scope of the training?

.....

.....

6. How long have you been practicing as an interpreter?

.....

7. How long have you been practicing as an interpreter as this specific institution?

.....

8. Are you an accredited member of SATI or any other institute of interpreters?

Yes/No

If yes, please state name of institute.....

9. What is your mother tongue?

.....

10. In which languages do you work? Please state the direction. If working in both directions, please state.

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11. What, if any, other jobs do you do? Please explain why and do you think that it may affect your performance here?

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Working conditions

12. How would you rate the quality and standard of the equipment?

Excellent

Good

Average

Poor

13. Are the booths soundproof and comfortable?

Extremely comfortable

Not comfortable

Somewhat comfortable

Very comfortable

14. Is the speaker visible? (Physical/Monitor)

No

Monitor

Physical

15. Do you receive documentation in advance?

Yes/No

16. If yes, how long in advance?

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.....

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17. In your opinion, does the documentation assist you in any way?

Yes/No

If yes, please explain

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.....

18. Do you work alone or with a partner?

Alone/Partner

Elaborate if necessary

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.....

19. If working with a partner, at what intervals do you relieve each other?

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20. How many hours per day do you work?

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Feedback of experience

21. What, in your opinion, are the major problems and difficulties you encounter as an interpreter?

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22. Can you comment briefly on how the profession in South Africa can be enhanced?

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ADDENDUM F

Questionnaire 2

Demographic information

1. Gender

M/F

2. Race

Black

Coloured

Indian

White

3. Age

.....

4. Home language

.....

5. Which language heard

.....

Please rate the interpreting service on the following levels:

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
1. Clarity of message				
2. Accuracy				
3. Correct terminology				
4. Audibility of voice				
5. Audibility in general (equipment condition)				
6. Pleasantness of voice				
7. Pronunciation				
8. Grammar usage				
9. Smooth delivery / few hesitations				
10. Professional behaviour				
11. Confident public speaker				

ADDENDUM G



WES-KAAPSE PROVINSIALE PARLEMENT

REGISTRASIE VAN BELANGSTELLING TOLKDIENTSTE

Die Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement nooi graag tolke, om hul belangstelling te registreer om in 'n databasis ingesluit te word, om tolkdienste gedurende parlementêre sittings, parlementêre openbare aanhore en komiteevergaderings te lewer.

Die volgende kategorieë van vertolking word vereis:-

- (a) IsiXhosa na Afrikaans en omgekeerd;
- (b) Engels na Afrikaans en omgekeerd;
- (c) Engels na IsiXhosa en omgekeerd; en
- (d) Vertolking in gebaretaal.

Handig asseblief u Registrasie van Belangstelling en 'n volledige CV in by die Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement, 6de Vloer (Kamer 6.18), Provinsiale Parlementgebou, Waalstraat 7, Kaapstad 8001.

Sluitingsdatum: 27 November 2009.

Navrae: Mnr Jabu Nkabinde by telefoon: (021) 487-1775, faks: (021) 487-1814 of epos: jnkabinde@wcpp.gov.za

Human Communications (Cape) 90157A/Burger

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2. Mr P Uys: That the House debates the blundering of the Speaker, together with his weak handling of the Legislature and its affairs, with special attention to his continued meddling into operational matters of the Western Cape Parliament.
3. Ms N P Magwaza: That the House debates the recent removal of babies, in an undignified way and at night, from a place of safety by the government of the Western Cape.
4. Mr M Ozinsky: That the House debates –
 - (1) the interference on Tuesday, 7 June 2011, by the Premier in the visit of the Pinelands North Primary School to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, after the necessary permission had been granted by the Western Cape Education Department of; and
 - (2) the embarrassment that this has caused to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.
5. Mr J J Visser: That the House conveys its sincere sympathy to the African National Congress on the heavy blow suffered by them in the recent municipal elections in the Western Cape.

See also: Ms A J du Toit Marais (p 6); Ms C F Beerwinkel (p 6); Mr P C McKenzie (p 6); Ms E Prins (p 6); Ms J Witbooi (p 6); Mr P Uys (p 7); Ms L Brown (p 8); Ms C F Beerwinkel (p 8); Ms A J du Toit Marais (p 9); Mr J J Visser (p 9); Ms J Witbooi (p 9); Ms C Labuschagne (p 9); Mr M G E Wiley (p 9); Mr M Skwatsha (p 9); Mr P Uys (p 9); Mr M C Walters (p 9), Mr H P Geyer (p 11); Ms L Brown (p 11); Mr P Uys (p 11); Ms C Labuschagne (p 11); Mr M Ozinsky (p 11).

BILL REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

1. *Western Cape Laws Repeal Bill* [B 1 – 2011] – (Standing Committee on Community Development).

ADDENDUM H

Thursday, 9 June 2011]

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No 13 - 2011] THIRD SESSION, FOURTH PARLIAMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

THURSDAY, 9 JUNE 2011

1. The House met at 14:15.
2. The Deputy Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.
3. [14:17] The Deputy Speaker announced that the vacancy which occurred owing to the resignation of Ms de Lille had been filled by the nomination of Mr D Plato with effect from 8 June 2011.

The Member had taken the oath in the Speaker's office.
4. [14:18] Interpellations.
5. [14:41] Questions.
6. [15:11] Questions to the Premier without notice.
7. [15:30] Statements by Members.
8. [15:45] Mr H P Geyer moved without notice: That the House –
 - (1) expresses its sincere condolences to the Sisulu family, as well as to all the friends and loved ones, of the late Ms Albertina Sisulu;
 - (2) recognises that our nation has lost one of its greatest citizens, a woman who came to symbolise all that is strong and good about our country;
 - (3) acknowledges that Ms Sisulu was unwavering in her commitment to justice for all our people and the values that she lived are now embedded in our Constitution; and
 - (4) calls on all our people to pay tribute to her sacrifices by sustaining and defending the democracy that she and so many others worked so hard to attain.

Agreed to.

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9. Ms C F Beerwinkel moved without notice: That the House, though belatedly so –
- (1) wishes all our learners well with their June examinations; and
 - (2) urges all educators and parents to do all in their power to encourage and motivate the learners during these challenging times, as this is one of the most important examinations of the year.

Agreed to.

10. Ms P W Cupido moved without notice: That the House –
- (1) congratulates two Western Cape students, Carla van Niekerk and Mikhail Hendricks, from the Cape Academy of Mathematics, Science and Technology for receiving first and second positions in a national essay competition this year;
 - (2) notes that learners at this school, despite the fact that it is known as a science, technology, engineering and mathematics institution with a focus on “hard” science, have widened their horizons and proved that they also have a flair for humanities; and
 - (3) acknowledges the role of encouragement played in this regard by Ms Van Schalkwyk, the school’s librarian, through an extra-curricular skills development programme run by the school library.

Agreed to.

11. Mr E H Eloff moved without notice: That the House congratulates Mr Ernest Vilander on his nomination as farm worker of the year in the Hex River Valley Region.

Agreed to.

12. Mr M G E Wiley moved without notice: That the House –
- (1) congratulates Fish Hoek Surf Lifesaving Club on their unique achievement of winning all age categories, namely nippers, juniors, seniors and masters, at their respective national championships; and
 - (2) furthermore congratulates Eloïse van Geysen of Fish Hoek on being appointed captain of the National Ladies Surf Lifesaving Team.

Agreed to.

13. Mr M Skwatsha moved without notice: That the House congratulates an investigative and independent filmmaker, Cape Town based Liz Fish, who has scooped top honours for an environmental award at the prestigious Banff World Media Festival.

Agreed to.

14. Ms E Prins moved without notice: That the House –
 - (1) congratulates Nelson Nicholls, a pupil of Heidelberg Karate Kyousei, on the gold medal he won at a Southern African meeting in Maputo in Mozambique, where he competed against countries such as Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana; and
 - (2) further wishes him well with his preparations for the Commonwealth Games, which will be held in Australia next month.Agreed to.
15. Mr Z C Stali moved without notice: That the House congratulates Orlando Pirates on grabbing the crown as PSL Champions for the 2010/2011 season.
Agreed to.
16. Ms C F Beerwinkel moved without notice: That the House –
 - (1) congratulates Alexander Chiu from Brackenfell, who is the world's top mathematics student; and
 - (2) notes that he wrote the advanced secondary level University of Cambridge international examinations last year at the Chester House Senior School, and is currently studying electrical and electronic engineering at Stellenbosch University.Agreed to.
17. Ms J L Hartnick moved without notice: That the House wishes the Western Cape Transplant Sports Association athletes well who will be representing South Africa at the World Transplant Games, to take place in Gothenburg in Sweden from 17 to 24 June 2011.
Agreed to.
18. Mr E J von Brandis moved without notice: That the House wishes Gary Kirsten, who was born in Cape Town and played 101 tests for South Africa, all the best with his appointment as the new coach of the Proteas, the South African cricket team.
Agreed to.
19. Mr E J Eloff moved without notice: That the House congratulates actress Terry Phetho on becoming the first South African to star in the daytime TV drama *The Bold and the Beautiful*, as she landed a recurring role as a heart surgeon in this long-running US soapie.
Agreed to.
20. Ms A J D Marais moved without notice: That the House gives recognition to the youth of Tygerberg 2, who have made a specific contribution to our sweet victory in the municipal elections 2011.
Agreed to.

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21. Mr M Ozinsky moved without notice: That the House congratulates the learners of Pinelands North Primary School on the well thought out presentations to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Environmental Planning on Tuesday, 7 June 2011.
Agreed to.
22. [16:14] Speaker's Debate.
Economic freedom of the youth.
Debate concluded.
23. [17:31] FIRST ORDER
Consideration of Report of the Budget Committee on the *Division of Revenue Bill* [B4 – 2011] (NCOP), dated 30 March 2011 (See Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports, p 61) (Ratification of final mandate).
There was no debate.
The mandate conferring authority on the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's delegation in the NCOP to support the Bill, was ratified.
24. [17:32] SECOND ORDER
Consideration of Report of the Standing Committee on Governance on the *Community Schemes Ombud Service Bill* [B21B – 2011] (NCOP), dated 19 April 2011 (See Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports, p 69) (Ratification of final mandate).
There was no debate.
The mandate conferring authority on the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's delegation in the NCOP to support the Bill, was ratified.
25. [17:33] THIRD ORDER
Consideration of Report of the Standing Committee on Governance on the *Sectional Titles Schemes Management Bill* [B20B – 2010] (NCOP), dated 19 April 2011 (See Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports, p 69) (Ratification of final mandate).
There was no debate.
The mandate conferring authority on the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's delegation in the NCOP to support the Bill, was ratified.
26. The House adjourned at 17:34.

R G HINDLEY,
Acting Secretary to the Provincial
Parliament.

ADDENDUM I

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF WHIP – WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT
KANTOOR VAN DIE HOOFSWEEP –WES-KAAPSE PROVINSIALE PARLEMENT
IOFISI YOMBHEXESHI OYINTLOKO - IPALAMENTE YEPHONDO LENTSHONA KOLONI

29 March / Maart / Matchi 2011

Debate on Vote 9 – Environmental Affairs & Development planning

NO/ INANI	PARTY / IQELA	NAME/ NAAM/ IGAMA	TIME/ TYD / IXESHA	DESIGNATION/ AMP/ ISIKHUNDLA
1	DA	A W Bredell		Minister: Local Government, Environmental Affairs & Development planning / Plaaslike Regering, Omgewingsake & Ontwikkelingsbeplanning
2	ACDP	P W Cupido	2	MPP / LPP
3	DA	M C Walters	15	MPP / LPP
4	COPE	J A v Zyl	5	MPP / LPP
5	ANC	M Ozinsky	20	MPP / LPP
6	DA	J J Visser	15	MPP / LPP
7	DA	A W Bredell		Minister: Local Government, Environmental Affairs & Development planning / Plaaslike Regering, Omgewingsake & Ontwikkelingsbeplanning

The names and the times may be changed during the course of the debate. A party may, however not give some of its time to another party.

Die name en tye mag in die loop van die debat verander word. 'n Party mag egter nie van sy tyd aan 'n ander party afstaan nie.

Amagama namaxesha angatshintshwa ngexesha lengxoxo. Iqela alinakho ukuba linikise ngexesha lalo kwelinye iqela.

Alta Rossouw
Chief Whip / HoofswEEP/
021 487-1607

3/29/2011
10:01 AM

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF WHIP – WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL
PARLIAMENT**

KANTOOR VAN DIE HOOFSWEEP –WES-KAAPSE PROVINSIALE PARLEMENT

**IOFISI YOMBHEXESHI OYINTLOKO - IPALAMENTE YEPHONDO LENTSHONA
KOLONI**

INTERPELLASIE / INTERPELLATION 1

Ms T N Bevu to ask Mr T L Botha, Minister of Health:

What is being done to address the issue of turning back patients who suffer from renal failure because dialysis is too expensive for public hospitals?

29 March / Maart / Matchi

NO/ INANI	PARTY / IQELA	NAME/ NAAM / IGAMA	TIME/ TYD / IXESHA	DESIGNATION/ AMP/ ISIKHUNDLA
1	DA	T L Botha	3	Minister: Health / Gesondheid
2	COPE	T N Bevu	2	MPP / LPP
3	ANC	J Witbooi	2	MPP / LPP
4	DA	T L Botha	2	Minister: Health / Gesondheid
5	DA	A JdT Marais	2	MPP / LPP
6	COPE	T N Bevu	2	MPP / LPP
7	DA	T L Botha	2	Minister: Health / Gesondheid
		TOTAL	15	

The names and the times may be changed during the course of the debate. A party may, however not give some of its time to another party / Die name en tye mag in die loop van die debat verander word. 'n Party mag egter nie van sy tyd aan 'n ander party afstaan nie./ Amagama namaxesha angatsshintsiwa ngexesha lengxoxo. Iqela alinakho ukuba linikise ngexesha lalo kwelinye iqela.

Alta Rossouw
Chief Whip
(021) 487-1607

29 March 2011
10:02:22 AM

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF WHIP – WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL
PARLIAMENT**

KANTOOR VAN DIE HOOFSWEEP –WES-KAAPSE PROVINSIALE PARLEMENT

**IOFISI YOMBHEXESHI OYINTLOKO - IPALAMENTE YEPHONDO LENTSHONA
KOLONI**

INTERPELLASIE / INTERPELLATION 2

Mr M Ozinsky to ask Mr B S Madikizela, Minister of Human Settlements:

Whether the province will have the final say over the beneficiaries of the Pelican Park housing project; if so, (a) what criteria will be used to identify beneficiaries and (b) how far is the process of identifying beneficiaries?

29 March / Maart / Matchi

NO/ INANI	PARTY / IQELA	NAME/ NAAM / IGAMA	TIME/ TYD / IXESHA	DESIGNATION/ AMP/ ISIKHUNDLA
1	DA	B S Madikizela	3	Minister: Human Settlements / Behuising
2	ANC	M Ozinsky	2	MPP / LPP
3	DA	B S Madikizela	2	Minister: Human Settlements / Behuising
4	DA	J J Visser	2	MPP / LPP
5	ANC	M Ozinsky	2	MPP / LPP
6	DA	B S Madikizela	2	Minister: Human Settlements / Behuising
		TOTAL	13	

The names and the times may be changed during the course of the debate. A party may, however not give some of its time to another party / Die name en tye mag in die loop van die debat verander word. 'n Party mag egter nie van sy tyd aan 'n ander party afstaan nie. / Amagama namaxesha angatshintshiwa ngexesha lengxoxo. Iqela alinakho ukuba linikise ngexesha lalo kwelinye iqela.

Alta Rossouw
Chief Whip
(021) 487-1607

29 March 2011
10:02:22 AM