

Core categories of interpreter competence

Through referenced interview data, literature, and field experience

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Abstract <p>Tämä pro-gradu tutkii asioimistulkin kompetenssia ja sen tärkeimpiä komponentteja. Tällä hetkellä tulkin kompetenssi tuntuu määrittävän pitkälti muodollisilla tekijöillä, koulutuksella ja kokemuksella. Vaikka näihin indikaattoreihin nojaaminen on ymmärrettävää, olisi hyödyllistä, jos tulkin todellista kompetenssia voitaisiin tarkastella. Tämä edellyttää tulkin kompetenssin tarkempaa määrittelyä. Toisaalta tämä määrittely voisi auttaa myös tulkkia kehittämään omaa kompetenssiaan.</p> <p>Pyökkimies tutki tulkin kompetenssia haastatteleamalla asioimistulkkia. Tämä on jo hyvin lähellä tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteita, ja toimiikin tässä teoriataustana ja tulkin kompetenssin lähtökohtaisena määrittelyinä. Sitä tarkennetaan vertaamalla tutkimuskirjallisuuteen ja hienosäätämällä sitä tulkin kompetenssin arviointiin ja kehittämiseen. Tuloksena on viisi kompetenssikategoriaa: kielitaito, kommunikaatiotaidot, ammattietiikka, tyyneys ja herkkyyks tai läsnäolo. Kaksi viimeistä tukevat toisiaan, ja ovat ehkä kategorioista omaperäisimmät. Näiden yhdistelmästä voi syntyä tietoinen mutta hyväksyvä, keskittynyt mutta rento läsnäolo, joka on oikeastaan kaiken hyvin tekemisen perusta ja jonka tulisi olla myös kaiken koulutuksen lähtökohta.</p> <p>Kaksi viimeistä kategoriaa perustuvat teoreettiseen taustaan, etenkin kontekstiherkkyteen ja puolueettomuuteen, mutta niitä on muokattu yleisempään suuntaan kokemuksen perusteella. Kontekstiherkkyttä on laajennettu yleisemmäksi tarkkaavaiseksi läsnäoloksi, jota tukee puolueettomuudesta laajennettu tyyneys, eli sisäinen puolueettomuus. Sen lisäksi että tulkin ulkoiset toimet luovat neutraaliutta, niin myös sisäisesti pyritään kantaa ottamattomuuteen. Käytännössä viestin sisällön selkeä tulkkauksen on usein olennaisempaa kuin tulkkauksen kirjaimellinen vastaavuus.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Mediator, middleman, spokesperson, intercultural communicator, confidential and impartial... Interpreter, through a closer look, is not a role as simple as translating from one language into another. It can include activities such as persuading, agreeing, lying, questioning, claiming, explaining, coordinating interaction (Wadensjö 1998: 42). But what activities and skills are key to forming interpreter competence?

Interpreter competence will be studied through interviews of actual interpreters from the master's thesis by Pyökkimies on what constitutes interpreting competence. This theoretical background will be compared to two data books used for training interpreters in Finnish universities and further reflected through my decade of own field experience as an interpreter. The result is a chart suggesting the most important governmental, face to face interpreting competence categories based on this study. Hopefully, this could further the possibilities of assessing actual competence of an interpreter instead of relying on formal qualification, and perhaps help to focus on these things in interpreting education professional development.

This study does not aim to be a comprehensive view at interpreting theory or history. The main concern is to find some key issues regarding interpreting competence from the literature and present it in a way that makes it easy for a novice to understand, remember and apply them to interpreting work. Then, when reading the actual literature, it should be much easier to make connections and acquire the information presented in the literature, especially the key points. Thus, other beneficiaries of the thesis are hopefully those who are planning to study and work as an interpreter.

I began working as a governmental interpreter in April 2011 and will use this work experience for reflection and commenting to hopefully generate some original perspectives. My major is not in interpreter training but English philology and so it was necessary to look for links to interpreter competence in literature where I could find them and to rely on experience acquired during my own work as an interpreter from 2011 onward.

After the contents and the introduction, chapter number 2 presents the theoretical background. It presents some central concepts related to interpreting theory and the chart of interpreter competence from the master's thesis *Asioimistulkkien viestintähaasteet* (Communication challenges of governmental interpreters) by Irma Lisa Pyökkimies, which is used to analyze the data. A wider perspective to interpreter competence will also be looked at in chapter three.

Chapter 3 on data and methodology will explain how the chart mentioned above will be used as a lens to analyze the chosen works, Cecilia Wadensjö: *Interpreting as interaction* (1998) and Kaisa Koskinen (editor): *Tulkattu Tampere* (2013). These books will also be presented in more detail.

Chapter 4 is the actual analysis, where the chart is compared to the literature to see how much they converge, or how many times each area of competence appears in the literature. Furthermore, this will be reflected and analyzed through experience from working as an interpreter.

Chapter 5, discussion and conclusion, in addition to concluding, provides a new suggested version of the competence category model, or the competence assessment tool, listing the competence categories that emerged as the most important ones in this study. It also discusses those categories that were cut from the chart, and the reasoning behind that. Challenges of this study are also discussed as well as suggestions for further study.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF INTERPRETER COMPETENCE

Chapter 3 will locate this study among interpreting theory; what has been studied, what still needs to be studied? Brief presentations will be given on some studies done on interpreting, but chapter 4 will go in more detail into those that are analyzed in this study. This chapter presents the study that forms the theoretical framework for the analysis: Irma Liisa Pyökkimies: *Asioimistulkkien viestintähaasteet*.

Then, some general terminology and explanations from the field of interpreting, which may be useful in understanding the profession and this study.

2.1 Framework for communicative competence for interpreters

The Master's thesis of Pyökkimies was found through a tip from the Central Finland Centre of Interpreters and turned out to have a scope overlapping with mine, as it studied the communication challenges of public service interpreters in Central Finland. As such it gave answer to one of my research questions: communicative competence for interpreters, from the viewpoint of real interpreter's, my colleagues. An interesting question then arises: to consider this as primary or secondary data? Either way, a peer has done a thesis that overlaps with this one, and I must be careful not to just repeat what has been said before. Hopefully, some new perspectives could be found from the complexity of the actual work.

Pyökkimies' thesis was of special interest to me, as she interviewed my fellow interpreters working in the Central Finland Interpreting Centre (now part of Monetra in 2020). More specifically, we do "asioimistulkkaus", to which she found a bundle of English translations: ad hoc interpreting, bilateral interpreting, community-based interpreting, contact interpreting, cultural interpreting, dialogue interpreting, liaison interpreting and public service interpreting (Pyökkimies 2011: 7).

Some of these translations seem to have little correspondence with the meaning of the Finnish word. Perhaps the best word out of these to describe our work is public service interpreting. This can of course entail many of the other words as well. They describe interpreting from different perspectives, so they can overlap. Public service interpreters

almost always work between an immigrant client and a Finnish official (social worker, teacher, police, legal assistant). Public service interpreting is the perspective that we take on interpreting in this thesis.

Pyökkimies found out what the interpreters interviewed thought to be the components of the interpreter's communication competence (Pyökkimies 2011: 65). She described the communication competence in the interpreter's work to be in the overlapping intersection of these components: language skills (kielitaito), motivation for constant development (motivaatio jatkuvaan kehittymiseen), communication and professional ethics (viestintä -ja ammattietiikka), context sensitivity (kontekstiherkkyys), experience from real interpreting events (kokemus aidoista tulkkaustilanteista). This is the theoretical background through which the data is analyzed. In other words, these categories are hypothesized to be central to interpreter competence. This hypothesis will be tested against the data and my field experience to see how central these categories are in them.

Language skills

According to the interpreters interviewed by Pyökkimies, language skills are the primary tool of an interpreter, though not enough by themselves. For interpreter competence in this study, language skills mean the command of the working languages. This is probably the most obvious requisite for an interpreter, but I will try to find out how it is dealt with in the books. I am also interested in views on native language significance.

Motivation for constant development

It is mentioned in the professional Code of Conduct of community interpreters, that the interpreter must constantly develop their skills (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 3). Pyökkimies' interviewee's ideas included the necessity to develop vocabulary and experience. They collect vocabulary constantly but said that one can truly become a better interpreter only in actual interpreting situations. Even an experienced interpreter needs to update their skills and knowledge to be competent. Following the media of the language and culture area was also considered important to know the current affairs of the customer's culture (2011: 35). The effectiveness of this kind of current cultural

knowledge will be questioned in this study in relation to more universal skills of body and mind, such as concentration and relaxation.

Communication and professional ethics

All the interviewees mentioned (Pyökkimies 2011: 35) that they take special care of the ethics demanded in the professional code. The main two components are confidentiality and impartiality, but also generally doing the best job possible considering all parties and being on time. We are even expected to mention confidentiality and impartiality in the beginning of the interpretation event. These will be the key words that I will be looking for in the data books, and what else might be discussed regarding ethics.

Context sensitivity

Context sensitivity was highlighted as perhaps the most important quality in a community interpreter (CI). A good interpreter can read the Communication and adjust their renderings and behavior accordingly. Conveying emotional messages as they were intended requires accurate listening of the situation. There were personal differences in experiencing emotion, although court was seen as an official situation where the CI should abstain from portraying their own emotion, whereas in a health care setting the CI's admitted to showing most empathy and support to the customer. It would be interesting to find if there is a stance in the literature regarding the CI's emotional involvement and the effect of context; and of course, how important context sensitivity is deemed to be there.

Experience from real interpreting events

This category was not explained further, perhaps there is no need. Experience is perhaps the most popular way to try to guess anybody's competence. However, hopefully the more detailed analyses of competence can equip us with more precise methods with which we can assess actual competence, which may or may not go hand in hand with experience. Even though generally one does usually improve through experience, the more experienced interpreter is not always necessarily the more competent. Neither is experience technically viewed as a competence category in the present study.

Table 1. Competence chart version 1: initial competence categories by Pyökkimies

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere	
Language skills			
Motivation for constant development			
Communication - and professional ethics			
Context sensitivity			
Experience from real interpreting events			

This table shows the initial competence categories from the study of Pyökkimies (Pyökkimies 2011: 35). The occurrences of these categories are then counted from the two data books, before further modification based on work experience.

2.2 Building blocks of Interpreting competence

The research question of this study is interpreter competence and what it consists of. This chapter looks at the building blocks of interpreting competence through concepts, rendition types, roles, methods, and types from the previous studies. First subchapter presents some general concepts and abbreviations used in this study. Then the discussion will go onto the role of interpreter as a neutral mediator and the impartiality that is important in that role. The rest of the subchapters bring further theoretical building blocks through which interpreter competence can be discussed.

2.2.1 Code of Conduct

The interpreter's Code of Conduct can be found on the website of The Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters (SKTL), without further information of authorship. It binds the members of the unions that participated in its drafting. It contains 12 ethical instructions for working interpreters. A few of them are especially prominent in this thesis:

1. The interpreter has obligation of professional secrecy / confidentiality.
6. The interpreter interprets comprehensively, does not exclude anything, or add anything inappropriate.
7. The interpreter is an impartial messenger and does not allow personal emotions, attitudes, or opinions to affect the work.

(translated from asioimistulkkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 1).

The Finnish name asioimistulkkin ammattisäännöstö will be used in quotations for easier reference.

2.2.2 Central concepts of interpreting theory

This chapter briefly explains some basic concepts related to professional interpreting; key definitions related to interpreter roles and duties, which are central in discussing the dynamics of the interpreting situation.

Instead of an alphabetical order, I have attempted to use a top-down (from general to specific) approach by starting with the simplest definitions and proceeding to more complex/specific ones.

Abbreviations like DI and PP will be used for the terms, but the whole terms will also later be repeated as they appear in the text, for reading convenience. Many of these terms can have overlapping meanings, and the most central ones for reading this study are DI and PP, the participants of the interpreting event.

- **Dialogue interpreter (DI):** Translates orally in face to face interaction (as opposed to conferences) (based on Wadensjö 1992: 34)
- **Primary party (PP):** The two parties, who do not share a common language and need the services of a dialogue interpreter or other middleman (Wadensjö 1992)
- **Simultaneous interpreting (SI):** The interpreter is not allowed a gap for interpretation separately, so he has to interpret during the source utterance. (Wadensjö 1992)

- **Source utterance:** The utterance from a PP that the interpreter will have to interpret to the target language. (Wadensjö 1992)
- **Non-person:** Is present in the interaction, but neither as a performer or audience. Ideally, the interpreter's persona does not show strongly in the interaction, definitely not in the form of opinion or value, although some personal aspects of Communication will undoubtedly be present (Goffman 1982:150, Wadensjö 1992: 32). But even these, in my view, could be reduced in favor of an even more neutral, relaxed, and transparent interpreting. In either view, the more "invisible" or transparent the interpreter is, the less he becomes involved or identified in the content or emotional tone of the interaction.
- **Go-between:** Only carries out initiatives of the primary parties. (Wadensjö 1992: 29). This is what the DI should mainly be doing, according to the interpreter Code of Conduct (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 3). The interpreter should not make original statements but only translate and possibly communicate statements made by the primary parties.
- **Broker:** Takes more independent measures to promote negotiation. (Wadensjö 1992: 29). Sometimes breaking of the previous two roles may be viable from a practical viewpoint, and the communication as a whole may benefit from a more independent input from the interpreter, such as explaining a term to the client when the interpreter has a more direct understanding of where the lack of understanding may lie.
- **Middleman:** Generally, an individual promoting communication between two parties (Wadensjö 1992: 29). I would submit that a skilled interpreter does this, but in an implicit, unnoticeable, and "transparent" way. For example, if the interpreter stays relaxed and non-judgmental, at least outwardly in terms of voice and body language, this may promote communication without inserting any original input utterances.
- **Mediator:** A subcategory of middleman, assists in the solving of a *conflict* at hand. (Wadensjö 1992: 29). The interpreter's role is not to *solve* conflicts, but as in the previous category, if one should arise in an interpreted event, of course it would be good if the interpreter could by his own calm behavior to promote solving of the conflict and at least not to create conflict or make it worse.

- **Opacity/Transparency:** If the interpreting situation is opaque, the primary parties do not understand a word of each other's language; the more transparent it is, the more they understand of the language. Of course, a fully transparent interpreting situation is mainly theoretical, as it would render the interpreter unnecessary (Wadensjö 1992: 44). According to my experience, English-Finnish public interpreting in Jyväskylä tends to be very transparent, usually in the direction that the Finnish official understands English rather well, sometimes even speaks some. They could speak even more, but usually prefer to work on their mother language to better focus on their own work. There are those rare words that might be better understood in Finnish than English by the immigrant. Words like KELA (The Social Insurance Institution of Finland), neuvola (clinic) or others which are specific for the Finnish welfare system and are perhaps often heard by the immigrant in Finnish. Sometimes they may not even have a good equivalent in English. So, it may actually be competence, if the interpreter leaves some things untranslated.

2.2.3 Role of Interpreter as a mediator

- **Mediator:** a subcategory of middleman, assists in the solving of a *conflict* at hand

The way interpreter competence is defined depends a lot on how the role of the interpreter is defined. This chapter talks about these roles and tasks. What kind of competence and challenges does the interpreter have connected to mediating? Should a good interpreter possess diplomatic qualities that a mediator would need?

The term mediator has an authentic significance: a person who helps others to arrive at an agreement (León: 1997). Interpreter's clients often have a similar same purpose, but the interpreter's primary obstacle is the language, not the differences in viewpoints. The objective of mediation is to resolve a conflict, while the interpreter does not necessarily have a conflict to resolve, although some sort of goal is usually set for the meeting, and the interpreter is essentially part of the team trying to meet it.

Usually the officer's job is to help the client, but there are cases where that might become more complicated. During police interrogations or even just child welfare meetings, there may be a certain tension between the interests of the officer and the client. It is an important part for the competent interpreter to remain calm and neutral and perhaps sometimes do even a little more to help maintain Communication of the officer and the client. Sometimes that could entail calmly explaining a misunderstanding that may be due to emotional involvement. For this to work, it is again important for the interpreter to seem neutral.

When an interpreter chooses the mediator, the third-party style, they may

1. Summarize and rearrange
2. Negotiate solutions to the client's problems with the adviser
3. Act as an adviser
4. Permit long turns at talk

(Wadensjö 1992:42)

Starting from the last point, it is not difficult to see why allowing long stretches of talk can be a problem. It challenges the working memory of the interpreter. This effectively triggers the first point of summarizing and rearranging, as it becomes more and more difficult to remember the details of the speech. Instead, the interpreter is forced to focus more and more on the core message. A dialogue interpreter might miss the change to relay the message more completely, a chance he has because of his possibility to determine the lengths of turns. Sometimes factors like time saving, transparency of the interpretation, the police officer's need to read the speaker and other factors might make this a suitable course of action.

It seems a certain kind of a paradox that allowing long stretches of talk is a tendency linked to a mediator. It would seem a mediating thing to do to exercise one's power of managing the turns in lengths that allow the mediator to mediate, i.e. allow him to negotiate with more accuracy, for instance. Allowing long stretches of talk also tends to lead to another problem: dialogue between the interpreter and just one party, while the other is left outside. Wadensjö encountered this problem (1998), where the nurse complained that the interpreter was too indulged in conversation with the patient, while

she was left out. Meanwhile, the interpreter was trying to clear up a misunderstanding (an example of the dilemma of perceived competence vs. actual competence).

Perhaps we could say that the more the interpreter assumes a mediator style, the more he assumes a coordinating role. This can mean more control over the length of talk turns. One good way to an interpreter to stay on top of his work and in a good flow is to actively maintain evenly short turns, about one sentence or point. More information is needed about the attitude of clients towards this kind of interpreting behavior, if it will it be seen as proficiency or too dominating? (another example of perceived competence vs. actual competence). In my experience it works rather well and creates a good rhythm that the clients can get used to, others more easily, while some may even take such a rhythm by themselves.

Going back to the list of what an interpreter may do when he assumes a mediator role, items 2) Negotiate solutions to the client's problems with the adviser and further, 3) Act as an adviser, are interrelated. They have also caused me plenty of consideration during interpretation work.

The interpreter Code of Conduct does not allow advising (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 3). Sometimes it takes specific restraint to avoid advising, sometimes it is even difficult to justify if the advice the interpreter has seems to be important. In this case, could strategy number 2) be implemented? Could the interpreter discuss possible advice with the official? A public interpreter gathers a rather unique perspective on the governmental system, and perhaps this information should be used. Interpreter input has been discussed during meetings between interpreters and our employers, and there seems to be a permissive attitude towards the interpreter sharing useful information with the official. But it should be discussed with the official, the interpreters should not just go ahead and take initiative in adding any message to the client.

To varying extents, an interpreter undertakes the role of a mediator. Considering this, we might want to look at some requisites expected of a mediator:

1. The mediator must be a person recognized by both parties.

2. The recognition should be based on moral, ethical, and professional qualities that authorize the mediator for the job.
3. The mediating should be accepted voluntarily and without pressure of any kind.
4. The mediator should create an atmosphere of confidence.
5. The mediator must remain impartial without favoring any of the parties.
6. The mediator has to guarantee confidence.

(Translated from León: 1997 mediación/negociación como estrategia en la resolución de conflictos).

Point three is something that is brought up by Cecilia Wadensjö as well regarding the working environment of an interpreter. While an interpreter might not necessarily enter a conflict situation as a mediator does, an interpreter might be seen as a necessary evil, as pointed out by Seleskovitch (1985) as well.

Point four will be discussed in many instances of this study. Creating an atmosphere of confidence is not a separate competence category in this study, but it could well be. Instead, it can be seen also as a byproduct of the other categories of competence, especially professional ethics, and equanimity.

A more detailed list was provided of the abilities of a good mediator, suggesting that he should: observe, listen, paraphrase, clarify, summarize, ask questions, feedback, confront, regulate, analyze and clarify, balance the power, mobilize and feed. Paraphrase, clarify, resume, ask questions, feedback can be grouped as listening techniques. which could be categorized under Communication skills.

Of these abilities, many can be directly associated with a good interpreter as well. Also, the mediator as well as the interpreter must demonstrate both interest and neutrality. This paradoxical Communication skill that could be called *detached curiosity* goes under one of the competence categories of this work, equanimity.

Further defining the intermediary roles

Defining further the intermediary roles, Wadensjö turns to the social anthropology literature, (1992: 28), quoting F.G. Bailey (1969) who makes a distinction between a “middle-man” and a “mediator”. A middleman he defines generally an individual promoting Communication between two parties, whereas a mediator, as a subcategory of a middleman, assists in the solving of a conflict at hand.

- **Non-person:** is present in the interaction, but neither as a performer or audience (Goffman 1982:150, Wadensjö 1992:32)

In a manner of speaking, interpreters are treated as though they were absent. This is called as being a non-person: is present in the interaction, but neither as a performer or audience. Such are considered servant-like roles, as well as the very young or old, or someone who does not speak the language of the encounter, or a photographer.

It is important for an interpreter that the role of a non-person can be used as protection. This can mean refraining to discuss about oneself, or to avoid answering questions directed to oneself. Apart from some other non-person's, however, an interpreter obviously cannot avoid questions altogether, and must be attentive about questions that have to do with the Communication. While a non-person enjoys the privileges of saying whatever to whomever, an interpreter most certainly does not. On the contrary, he must in a way adhere to the servant's credo of speaking only when spoken to. The dialogue interpreter, as Wadensjö puts it, has a scripted role, and is supposed to talk, but without contributing to the content (Wadensjö 1992: 33).

I find this theme an important one for an interpreter to internalize. It can help to ignore other social roles, which might consider it impolite not to take part in a conversation. Especially when there are long silences, the interpreter's non-person role helps to keep quiet comfortably knowing that input may be expected of other participants, but not from the interpreter.

Interpreter as a cultural mediator – theory and analysis

For an interpreter, working between different cultures is not an exception, but rather another day at the office. Interpreters work not only between different ethnic cultures,

but between a variety of parties that normally might have little contact with one another. Such parties might include majorities and minorities, Middle-European professors and Finnish municipal decision makers, African parents and Finnish day care workers, nurses, police officers and so on.

Wadensjö (1992: 288) presents a dilemma regarding the interpreter as a cultural mediator. In this function the interpreter might alter some culturally specific content of a source text to fit to the cultural background of the receiver. This can be avoiding taboo topics such as money, sex, drinking and religion and balancing the degree of formality.

The objective is to maintain Communication by protecting the parties from getting embarrassed or puzzled or angry. Yet they may remain ignorant regarding these cultural conventions and appropriate reactions. Being a cultural educator is not one of the most basic duties of an interpreter. However, if the situation allows, it could of course be a very useful addition to the interpreter's benefits to act as a cultural educator to some limited extent. This could aid immigrants to adjust to their receiving culture. However, it is often defined that an interpreter should not contribute to the content of the conversation, including informing participants about cultural differences (Wadensjö 1992: 51). Whether or not this is a good norm, should perhaps be defined by the context of the interpretation event. Regardless, an interpreter must possess the necessary sensitivity, tact, and *detached curiosity* to feel comfortable between distinct parties and to make them feel comfortable as well.

2.2.4 Impartiality in Code of Conduct and reality

Impartiality is a central aspect of interpreter competence. This is how it is mentioned in the tenet 7 of the interpreter's Code of Conduct (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 2):

An interpreter is an impartial messenger and does not allow emotions, attitudes, and opinions to affect their work. If things that come up in the interpreting event are against the interpreter's own ethics or moral, the interpreter does not show it through gestures, tone of voice or choice of words.

Before every interpretation event, the governmental interpreter should tell the clients that he is confidential and impartial. Yet there is always the risk that the goal of the

institution, if in conflict with that of the client, will seem more important to the interpreter, as the institution pays the salary and orders the interpreter.

There are other factors contributing to the risk that the side of the officials gets across better than the side of the laymen. The officer's statement is often more concise and better formulated and often the content is more thought out. This can easily lead the interpreter to see this kind of statement as deserving more care from the interpreter as well, although the interpreter's involvement in the translating process must remain as full as possible even if the original utterance is not well thought out. In other words, the interpreter's precision on the rendition should be independent on the precision of the original utterance. Note that the rendition itself will, according to this principle, be as precise or imprecise as the original. In a way, the interpreter's precision works to the benefit of the one whose rendition is precise but does not change the power relations.

In a case where a child was held at a temporary house, the mother requested that his father could visit them later in the evening when he would be back in town. However, the arguments of the personnel against this seemed more convincing, which also resulted in a more convincing interpretation. That in itself is fine, a convincing argument should lead to a convincing interpretation and vice versa, in style and in content faithful to the original utterance. However, the interpreter must be careful not to get more or less convinced himself by a less convincing utterance of a layperson but provide a rendition just as faithful to the original utterance.

2.2.5 Methods and types of interpreting

As in the case of impartiality, other features of competent interpreting may vary according to the method and type of interpreting. What are the most common types? The report on legal interpreting (Oikeustulkkausraportti 2008: 9) lists methods and types of interpreting (Tulkkauksen menetelmät ja lajit). These were written in Finnish in the report and I translated them into English for this study. The translated text from the report is in indented.

The report identifies 3 different interpreting methods, depending on the number of clients, nature and circumstances of the interpreting event:

1 Consecutive interpreting

Where the interpreter waits for the speaker to finish and then in turn interprets. The interpreter can take notes while listening to the client speak (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 9).

This mode is perhaps the most common in public service/community interpreting. It would probably be the recommended method for a beginning interpreter, but it does pose particular challenges compared to the simultaneous methods.

First challenge is to make sure that the turns of talk are of a controllable length. What that length is, depends on the interpreters' memory or notetaking techniques and the interpreting situation. In police interrogations, for instance, it might be more detrimental to interrupt the suspect than in a day care meeting. It also depends on the number and Communication style of all the clients and the situation how difficult it is to control the flow of conversation. In a transparent interpreting even, consecutive interpreting has the added benefit that primary parties may partly understand each other directly.

2 Simultaneous interpreting

The speaker and the interpreter produce their message at the same time. According to the Court interpreting report, this is accomplished through technical equipment in a soundproof interpreting booth. (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 9)

In simultaneous interpreting it may be easier to maintain accuracy because it happens almost at the same time with the incoming original speech, for example in 1-3 word stretches. This can allow keeping on top of everything said and relay it accurately and without delay, as the interpreter does not have to rely on memory. On the other hand, this might have led to some untypical English syntax, such as word order. This should not be a problem as long as understanding is achieved. If it is done in a booth with equipment and perhaps with written material, it may be somewhat different to the simultaneous interpreting that the current study is handling, which was classified as whispered interpreting in the report.

3 Whispered interpreting

Interpreting simultaneously becomes whispered interpreting when it is done with portable equipment without a booth or without any equipment. (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 10)

Above is the division made in the Court interpreting report, but it has some slight semantic problems. First, the so-called Whispered interpreting is not necessarily done by whispering (which could be less than healthy for the vocal cords in the long run). Depending on the situation, it can be done in a normal voice, sometimes for more than three people, and the volume of voice depends on the size of the group. Although it is true that the interpreter needs to be mindful of the volume of the voice when interpreting simultaneously not to overlap the source speaker, but even in consecutive interpreting larger group events such as parents' evenings in schools can be problematic because the interpreting volume can disturb other participants. So perhaps three people could be a good limit for simultaneous interpreting without equipment because three people can still sit close enough to hear a normal speaking voice. These things may be alleviated by seating arrangements to some extent, which could be an area of further research that could yield practical benefits. Generally, when interpreting simultaneously in the same space where other non-customer participants may be disturbed, it is true that a lower than normal speaking voice is often required.

Second, the semantic meaning of simultaneous does not entail any equipment but rather any (interpreting) done simultaneously. Therefore, it would be better used as an umbrella term for all simultaneous interpreting. If equipment is used, then the term could be "equipped interpreting" or something of the sort, and it would be a subcategory of simultaneous interpreting. Whispered interpreting could be another subcategory, though the health effects of long-term whispering should be considered and perhaps studied further. Would a competent interpreter have to learn a whispering technique that does not strain the vocal cords (if such a technique exists) or refrain from whispering but otherwise lower the speaking volume? Control of speaking volume is definitely a part of interpreter competence and is placed under communication skills in this study.

Interpreting types

In the Court interpreting report, the types of interpreting are based on the nature of the situation, the language, and the method. The most common types are public domain

interpreting (or public interpreting for short), conference interpreting and court interpreting.

Public interpreting

Public interpreting is two-way interpreting of a conversation or negotiation between an officer and a civilian. For spoken languages it is consecutive and for sign languages it is simultaneous. (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 11)

Actually, for spoken languages it can be either consecutive or simultaneous. Most of the interpreting in Finland can be classified as public domain interpreting, as it happens in a public domain. Even though courts belong to the public domain as well, perhaps this group needed to be distinguished from court. This makes sense as court interpreting is more challenging and even tends to have a different paygrade. A more fitting title to this classification could be interpreting domains, with sub-domains, as necessary. These classifications can admittedly easily get a bit confusing and overlapping. Consider conference interpreting for example, it could theoretically happen in either a public or private setting and consecutively or simultaneously, with or without equipment. So perhaps the taxonomy between public and private is not that useful, and another term could better fit this category. One possibility could be liaison interpreting, but it has similar problems. In either case, care should be taken to use terms as accurately and descriptively as possible, which is also important in interpreting competence.

Conference interpreting

Conference interpreting means interpreting in meetings or negotiations with many participants and two or more working languages. Conference interpreting is simultaneous or consecutive. (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 11)

Court interpreting

Court interpreting happens in criminal-, civil-, application-, and administrative cases. Most commonly in so called ordinary criminal cases. Finnish courts use mostly consecutive- and whispered interpreting between two languages in both directions. (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 11)

More accurate and descriptive would be to say that courts use mostly consecutive- and simultaneous interpreting, mostly in both directions but not necessarily always in a transparent interpreting event where all the necessary court parties understand English. In such a case it may be that only Finnish is translated into English to the immigrant customer. This has its risks of course and is rarer perhaps in court than other domains. I had a situation recently where the judge answered the client before I could interpret.

Later when the judge asked why he changed his statement, he said that this is what he had said, but it is not his “case” if the interpreter did not interpret it. And surely, it is not the interpreter’s problem if the primary party who is also the paying client does not wait for the rendition? But often the amount of time saved may triumph over relatively rare mishaps such as this. Especially since there is usually the possibility of correction after the fact.

The purpose of court interpreting is to enable the customer to participate in their own language in the handling of matters pertaining to them in for example police-, customs-, or immigration officials. Court interpreting can be required in and out of court sessions, in criminal-, civil-, and administrative matters.

The interpreter’s profession requires excellent interpreting- and language skills, but also cultural knowledge related to the working languages, all-round education, interest in current affairs, knowledge of the area of interpreting, Communication skills, stress resilience and concentration and the ability to teamwork with very different people. Other skills required in interpreting are a good memory, quick skills of analysis and association and filtering the central content and meaning from speech.

Depending on the method of interpreting, the interpreter also needs to be able to divide their attention simultaneously between listening, talking, and monitoring their own performance and they need to command a specific note taking technique. (Oikeustulkkausraportti 2008: 14).

It must be mentioned here that it is possible to perform well as an interpreter, even in court, without the command of a specific note taking technique, although such a technique would undoubtedly be useful. Without it, one needs other strategies, such as to interrupt speakers, even when they are giving personal testimonies, which has been accepted so far.

All the interpreter requirements are emphasized in court interpreting, where the interpreter’s influence on the situation is rather large in many respects. interpreting in various juridical contexts is also perhaps among the most demanding linguistic professions because of their institutionalism and publicity (court sessions are usually public) (Oikeustulkkausraportti 2008: 12).

Perhaps the important point regarding competence here is that Court interpreting is the most demanding area of interpreting, demanding a higher level of competence in most or all the competence categories. However, for an interpreter it is good to remain relaxed, and do it like it was any other interpreting situation. Giving it full attention and do ones best but without creating any extra stress or performance pressure.

Prima vista interpreting /translating

Prima vista interpreting refers to the verbal or gestured translation of written material related to the interpreting event.

There may be documents such as interrogation records, early childhood learning plans, psychological, learning, and other tests that the interpreter may need to interpret directly to the customer or use them as support for oral interpreting. Written material usually makes the interpreting easier.

Written interpreting

In written interpreting speech or gestures are translated into writing that can be written on a computer screen, big screen, or dot screen. It can also be handwritten. The clients are mostly hard of hearing or deaf, but sometimes this method can be used also for someone with normal hearing, with details such as numbers that can be hard to catch from direct hearing.

Remote interpreting

Usually the interpreter works in the same space with the clients. Current technology makes it possible that it does not have to be so. Remote interpreting refers to an interpreting situation where the parties are in different locations and an audio- and/or visual link is made between them with technology such as telephone lines or internet.

When the connection is made by phone, it is mobile interpreting, phone interpreting or video phone interpreting. Mobile interpreting is done via a video phone, palm computer (PDA), a laptop or other portable and wireless device. Written interpreting can also be done as remote interpreting.

Remote interpreting may be tempting for the customer who pays for the interpreting, as the costs are smaller especially for short interpreting events over long distances. However, the quality of the interpreting is usually lower because of the lower quality of audio and the absence of the possibility to use parts of the interpreter's competence such as non-verbal communication, or most directive measures such as gaze, body language and peaceful demeanor.

There are certain problems in this division made in the Court interpreting report. Whereas public, conference and court interpreting refer more to the domain where the interpreting takes place, *prima vista* interpreting /translating, sign language, writing, and distance interpreting refer to different things, including the method and situation, which were admittedly mentioned as the criteria. The criterion of situation is perhaps what most binds this classification together.

However, court interpreting for instance can include *prima vista* interpreting /translating, sign language, writing, and distance interpreting so in that sense these should not be constituents of the same class. Instead one could make a classification of different domains of interpreting, including public, conference and court interpreting

and types or methods of interpreting including prima vista interpreting /translating, sign language, writing, and distance interpreting and indeed also simultaneous, consecutive, and whispered/equipped interpreting. Study of these classifications may give a good idea on what interpreting practice consists of and provide an angle for interpreting training and competence. Examining different types of renditions in the following chapter can allow a closer zoom into that interpreting practice

2.2.6 Spectrum of faithfulness to the content of the original utterance: Types of renditions

Rendition is the DI's oral translation of the PP's utterance. In this chapter we will add different types of renditions to our analytic toolkit. They provide another looking glass for the observation of interpreter competence at a closer range, at the level of the actual translated sentences, or renditions, that the interpreter produces. Wadensjö classified DI renditions of PP utterances as follows: (1992: 70).

1. **Close renditions:** to qualify as such, the information found explicitly expressed in the rendition must be equally found in the preceding original, i.e. the close rendition is in all important respects informationally and interactionally equivalent with the original, and has approximately the same style as judged from the retrospective analyst's point of view. If the DI performs her task by translating the whole of the PPs' originals, and nothing but that, and does so in an accurate manner, she would provide close renditions. Obviously, no real-life DI on duty act as a 'translation machine' all the time.
2. **Expanded renditions:** the renditions include more information than is explicitly expressed in the original.
3. **Reduced rendition:** the renditions include less information than is explicitly expressed in the original utterance.
4. **Substituting renditions:** (substitutions): the renditions constitute a combination of expansion and reduction.
5. **Summarizing renditions:** one rendition (one DI turn at talk) contains constituents assembled from a sequence of two or more prior PP utterances.
6. **Lack of rendition:** PP contributions have no counterpart in DI- contributions.

Not all these renditions seem equally competent in light of the most basic interpreting instruction to translate all without adding anything. However, this rule does not always apply completely, often because of human style or practical reasons. Sometimes this rule may need to be bended to ensure understanding (often expanded renditions). This dilemma between the theoretical rule and practical interpreting will be addressed in the analysis section of this thesis, especially under the Professional ethics category of interpreting competence assessment. These types of renditions may be used as analytic

tools for observing how and why competent interpreting practice may differ from theory.

2.2.7 Dialogic (versus monologic) language view

Now that we have added the different types of renditions to our toolbox, let us span out a little further into why they are necessary. Why is there need for all these different types of renditions, why not only use close renditions? Why not simply translate everything said and nothing else as accurately as possible? Surely this is what a competent interpreter should do? Perhaps, if the interpreting events are seen only as text. But if they are seen as dynamic and living dialogues, things may not always be so simple. This chapter specifies the dialogic language view as our approach for studying interpretation and considers what this means. Then we will have another tool for analysis, and hopefully for a better understanding why competent interpreting may not always be synonymous to an accurate translation machine.

In *Interpretation as Interaction*, Cecilia Wadensjö repeatedly brings out the monologic view of language as text. In the light of this view, interpreting is a necessary evil, transferring a meaning from language A into language B, and the result is considered successful or unsuccessful depending on how many errors are made. From this perspective, interpreting does not appear a very creative act.

This study will rather look through the dialogic model or dialogism inspired by Mikhail M. Bakhtin and presented by Cecilia Wadensjö in her book *Interpreting as Interaction*. Dialogism means viewing language as Communication rather than just text, and through this perspective, we can try to understand why and how an expanded rendition might take the place of a close rendition and how does interpreter competence relate to the norm of translating everything.

Dialogism views interpreting as interaction, something more complex than just the translation from one language to another. In my own experience, the complexities of real life interpreting do not really fit into the monolingual language view, but sometimes the dialogic view is required to understand some interpretation that differs from “translate all” (TA) or that might even seem incompetent on the surface. I follow

dialogism in the analysis to take into consideration the various roles an interpreter needs to play, to find out what abilities and characteristics are then required for competent interpreting. These will be further discussed in the analysis.

2.2.8 Spectrum of faithfulness to the style of the original utterance: Relaying by replaying, relaying by displaying

If the content of the rendition can be more or less faithful to the original utterance, so too can the style in which it is delivered. In the continuum of the amount of immersion/involvement that an interpreter puts to relaying of a message in the same style as the original, one endpoint can be described as "relaying by replaying", the other "relaying by displaying" (Wadensjö 1998: 247). To be more precise, it is not so much about the involvement of the interpreter as the acting of involvement. By definition, an interpreter should not be actually involved with either of the primary interlocutor. However, when the interpreter 'replays' a statement, the primary interlocutor is more likely to associate the interpreter with the statement. How do these styles of interpreting presented by Wadensjö connect to practical governmental interpreting work and interpreter competence?

Relaying by replaying

When relaying by replaying, the interpreter attempts to "present the expressiveness of the preceding talk". This is done through imitating the semantic, syntactic, phonetic, and paralinguistic communication features, including voice characteristics and performative style. This requires proficiency in the specific vocabulary. Furthermore, it may easily associate the interpreter with the statement. When replaying, the interpreter may need to use other means to mark the distinction between the interpreter role and the content of the statement, for instance emphasis, modulation of voice, gaze direction.

Relaying by displaying

In relaying by displaying the expressiveness of the original speaker will not be transmitted. Therefore, possible aggression, sarcasm, animation, hesitation will be replaced by a matter-of-fact professional style. Only the content will be transmitted. For

a beginning interpreter it is safest to stick mainly to relaying by displaying. Between the lines of Wadensjö (1998: 264), can one then perceive an implication that relaying by replaying is a sign of competence or at least experience?

In practice: Replaying by necessity

A middle ground between replaying and displaying could be called replaying by necessity because it means that sometimes the DI needs to modify his speech parameters such as volume and speed and rhythm to match those of the source speaker in case of simultaneous interpreting.

In a house call interpreting (9.2012) I was relaying a conversation between a mother and a family worker to the father simultaneously with their conversation, because having to wait for me between each turn would have made the conversation too long and perhaps interfered with the train of thought of the mother. This could be especially detrimental in an interpretation event such as this, where the officials need to find out how the family is really doing, and giving the mother time to think about the answers might cause her to clean up her answers.

When the source speaker (the mother) spoke rather quietly, I had to keep my own volume low to be able to hear over it. Also, I had to speak in bursts of 1-3 words as the source speaker, to be able to keep my interpretation going between pauses in her speaking rhythm and during it. In a way the circumstances and the source together influenced some parts of the expression of my interpretation. This could thus be labeled semi-replaying or replaying by necessity. In addition to this, of course there is a full spectrum of faithfulness to the style of the original utterance or 'acting' that the interpreting can contain.

2.2.9 Further discussion on interpreter competence

My major is not in interpreter training but English philology and so it was necessary to look for links to interpreter competence in literature where I could find them. In addition to the major themes of interpreting competence that have been discussed in this subchapter, other interesting links arose during the research, that ultimately fell outside

the scope of this study, but could be useful views to interpreter competence, training, and the profession more widely. The rest of this subchapter will look at them.

Creativity and musicality in interpreting work and competence

The relationship of interpreting with creativity is somewhat paradoxical; On one hand, the interpreter should not be creative in terms of content, but instead faithful to the content created by the original speaker. On the other hand, the interpreter needs to constantly create the language for that content in another language. Wadensjö says that interpreters always function also as an author, by necessity (1998: 93). They have the responsibility to compose new versions of utterances. The choice of words caught my eye here, since composing is a verb often associated with composing music, especially classical. It is thus a word that seems to associate a certain amount of creativity to interpreting. A more conclusive study on creativity in interpretation would be interesting, especially a neurological point of view of brain functions, and how interpreting activates the “creative parts” of the brain, and how this would relate to competence in the work.

The common features of music and language are widely studied., so it would be well grounded to study the correlation between aptitude in music and proficiency in interpreting. Paula Siippainen categorized as musical students (which was still subject to change) those who have a musical family AND own interest OR consider themselves musical. According to Kaustinen (2007), some accordance was between students with a good sense of rhythm in music and language.

One of the important similarities concerning this study is that both music and language are perceived and processed accurately and rapidly in real time. This was confirmed by Swain in his book *Musical Languages* (1997), as quoted by Viitala in her 2009 thesis, which studies the connection between musicality and understanding English in 7th graders. As a background, some similarities between music and language are established as by Sloboda (1985). Sloboda connects the phonemes of language to a note of music since both are recognized through frequency and duration.

Different theoretical definitions of “musical aptitude” are introduced in this thesis. Here the term will be used as by Shuter-Dyson (1999) as the potential to learn music. This is

specified by Radocyn & Boyle (1988) as being the result of genetic heritage and of maturity and the development of musical skills without formal education. (Viitala 2009, : 13).

How does this relate to interpreter competence; how important musical aptitude is in forming “interpreting aptitude”? One of the closest links is Karma’s definition (1973): musical aptitude is the ability to perceive the structure of acoustic material. This is vital in interpreting: an interpreter constantly perceives the structure of acoustic material in order to be able to handle the lexical information. Therein lies a difference as well: an interpreter needs to modify and relay this information, something that a listener of music does not. Even an interpreter of music, i.e. a performer, in classical music, does not restructure the acoustic material, let alone in real time. Instead, they reproduce the same acoustic material, practiced over and over. There are, of course, the artists who do adaptations. In light of this, (group) improvisation would seem to be the musical activity with the most obvious benefits for an interpreter.

The silent witness: Importance of meditation and mindfulness practices in interpreter competence

“When you have peace within, you listen observantly and are wholly present. This is a demonstration of love that others value. Love arises from peace and manifests as respect and acceptance.” Translated back from the Finnish translation of *The Gift of Peace – Thoughts for a Peaceful World* (Enrique Simó 2010: 34), this statement from a book related to meditation practice could almost directly serve as a more informal definition of an important part in interpreter competence.

Neutrality, detachment, and impartiality are key notions in the professional ethics of interpreters (Colin and Morris 1996, Berk-Seligson 1990: 227-38, quoted by Wadensjö 1992: 240). They are also one of the five competence categories suggested in this study, based on work experience. Isn’t it fascinating that these are also key notions in Buddhism and most spiritual practices that aim in the dissolution of the ego or the discovery of objective truth beyond personal perspective or attitude? Much in the same way as science and even this thesis aims for. This is also how an interpreter should work, achieving mental silence, i.e. the absence of distracting thoughts, attitudes,

opinions, etc. in order to interpret as loyally as possible (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 2).

The health benefits of different schools of meditation, both mental and physical, are already established by medical studies. The suggestion here is to consider meditation as a professionally important practice for interpreters in terms of competence and stress resilience. This connection is largely based on personal observations and common sense and further study is called for about how meditation can affect interpretation specifically.

Meditation practice can be roughly divided into two broad categories, mindfulness (Open Monitoring) and focused attention. In Open Monitoring the mind is left as open as possible for everything to flow through, whereas in focusing you focus on one specific thing, such as a candle flame or the top of your head or your own breath. In interpreting, receiving a message to be relayed resembles focused attention, as the DI keeps his attention firmly on the source speaker. Open Monitoring is useful as the DI leans back between messages so to speak, and openly awaits without knowing who the next source speaker will be. In practice, these two modes of awareness coexist and overlap. I suggest that combining and controlling them is very useful in increasing competence in interpreting.

Furthermore, the reduction of distracting thoughts or “mind noise” is essential. This is a focus area in some schools of meditation practice, and at least a byproduct of others. The mind becomes more silent, leaving the attention more space to work towards the desired goal, being more aware, relaxed, and attentive, which in this case would translate into better concentration on understanding and relaying of Communication. Perhaps the most subtle thing to say here is not to chase after competence with the thinking mind. When the doer disappears, competence may arise more spontaneously, effortlessly, by itself. There is no need to struggle, rather to let go of trying to be a good interpreter, let go of such thoughts at least, and the interpreting may happen more effortlessly, almost as if by itself. This is widely talked about as the flow state.

The importance of cultural knowledge to interpreters came up (Pyökkimies: 2011). However, cultural knowledge may be a poor substitute for being in a state of sincerity, full presence, openness, awareness, and willingness to help that cuts directly through

the cultural layer to a more universal human connection. These are other common goals or products of meditation. It means that even if an interpreter is unaware of some cultural behavioral norms, he can behave in a way that inspires trust (this may require that the other parties are also willing to look past cultural conditioning, at least enough to enable Communication and the matters to be handled).

How to inspire trust universally beyond cultural norms? This has much to do with Communication skills, non-verbal communication, posture, and facial expressions as well as tone of voice and rhythm of speech. The more the interpreter is peaceful and present, the more natural and trust-inspiring non-verbal Communication becomes. This can even become a self-value, that the interpreter wants to be present as a personal, consistent life choice, not just to fill the current role. This can build a bridge between work life and other life and so help in maintaining well-being even through challenging life and work situations.

“Electrophysiological studies (EEG) measure the electrical activity from groups of neurons on the surface of the scalp”. According to a EEG research by Aftanas and Golocheikine (2001,2002,2000), long term meditators showed increased activation in the alpha power range over the left frontal brain regions, “which is thought to reflect a reduction in brain regions that mediate mental effort and external attention. Increased activation in alpha activity has commonly been observed in meditators of different traditions and been found to correlate with reduced levels of anxiety”. Perhaps the most obvious reason an interpreter should meditate is the strengthening of attention and clearing out the mind of distracting thoughts and emotions, opinions, and evaluations.

Finally, it must be pointed out that cultural knowledge can also support in achieving trust inspiring presence in the interpreting event. It could be seen as a case of approaching the same goal from different directions. But cultural knowledge is immensely vast and subject to change, (especially in a lingua franca like English) whereas the benefits of awareness, presence, focus and other cognitive skills apply regardless of culture, time, and place. To oversimplify, an interpreter’s training would be more effective if focused on cognitive and mindfulness skills rather than reading about different cultures.

Lingua franca interpreting: Can a competent interpretation be done to and from non-native languages?

For a non-native English speaker, these questions are of special interest: Can a good interpretation be done to and from non-native languages? Is interpreting to native language always considered easier in literature? This is interesting to many because of the role of English as a lingua franca, used by larger number of non-natives than natives. This was originally a separate research question, but in the course of research not much information of this came up, and so it remained as a suggestion for further study.

Throughout *Interpreting for International Conferences* Danica Seleskovitch talks about how difficult it is to be an interpreter, and among the competence she poses is native status in the target language. In her view simultaneous interpretation is always less satisfactory when done into a B language (1985: 138). My own experience is somewhat contradictory to this. I interpret more fluently from Finnish to English than English to Finnish, even though Finnish is my mother language, especially simultaneously. I have received confirming feedback from US and British natives that they understood everything very well. This may be because English is a more fluent language. In any case, native status being necessary for fully competent interpretation to a language is something I question. It should be put into further study and not just assumed to be true.

Interestingly, Seleskovitch also distinguishes types of interpreting situations, where a non-native has a better chance of being successful, such as a fair where English was a lingua franca for all participants. If both primary parties are non-natives of English, perhaps it is better if the interpreter is as well.

Is it more likely that natives might “not be able to see the forest from the trees”? When translating from their native language, can natives be more prone to overlook some characteristic weaknesses of their language, weaknesses that a non-native might pay more attention to? Even more importantly, they might not be able to relate to difficulties in understanding that non-natives might encounter, due to their possible lack of perspective, and to explain differently if their view of the language is more set.

To shed light on what might such a perspective contain, here are a few suggestions on an ideal interpreting style: renditions that are clear and simple, concise, to the point. The register might be a bit on the informal side, simple words when the situation allows; simplicity seems to be the most practical choice for achieving understanding. It should be noted that in some events such as the court, the interpreter's hands seem to be more tied regarding register and pre-established vocabulary, although simplicity often rules there as well, at least in practice. Pre-established vocabularies as such are a great aid to a successful communication event, and further work should be done in establishing shared vocabularies within different sectors of society. In specific vocabulary such as legal, having different varieties for the same word (penal code and criminal code for '*rikoslaki*') creates unnecessary challenge for everyone. This is of course a problem of language in general.

The structure of the ideal simultaneous interpretation can resemble the source language more than in other language use situations. The result can be somewhat less natural English than from a native speaker, but possibly easier to understand, at least to a lingua franca audience. For these subjective reasons, which have objective implications, I find it relevant, also to a broader global audience, to further investigate the possible strengths of non-natives in interpretation (and other professions, especially language teaching).

How loyal to source culture should an interpreter be?

How does an interpreter need to consider transferring cultural information from one language to another; being loyal to the source culture on one hand, and making an understandable rendition on the other? As a hypothesis I would state that an interpreter more than a translator, to work competently, needs to focus on the aspect of carrying the message across, even if it means less loyalty to the source culture.

When translating between two very different cultures, the translator has to balance between loyalty between these cultures. At one extreme, the translator might want to create the same effect in the target language, as the original text is meant to create in the audience of the original language. However, achieving this might entail heavy duty localization. For example, in an episode of the sitcom *Frasier*, the name of an American

antique evaluation show “The Price is Right” was localized to “Antiikkia, antiikkia”, which is perhaps the closest Finnish counterpart to the American television program. In this case the localization was quite successful, if these two antiquities programs are quite similar and inhabit a similar cultural niche. It is important that in both cultures, antiques are viewed somewhat as an interest for someone from a “higher middle class”, people like Frasier and his brother. Yet the program can be interesting across classes and happened to be of interest to the father as well, although his interests are more often sports and beer rather than opera and gourmet. As a result, it was probably the only time that the brothers and the father were actually planning on watching the same program from TV. By replacing the name with the name of the Finnish show *Antiikkia, antiikkia*, (antiques, antiques) the immersion was perhaps enhanced for the Finnish viewer as a similar situation could have a similar comic effect in the Finnish culture for similar reasons.

This kind of localization can be problematic though. The main problem is substituting aspects of source culture with aspects of target culture, thus flattening the cultural experience of the source culture. For interpreter, the problem of cultural loyalty is less subtle and more practical in real-time. On the other hand, the DI has some possibility to explain again, so they can perhaps start with a more direct translation and then localize more if the audience does not understand. A government official used the expression “keppi ja porkkana”, which I relayed as “stick and carrot” but as the customer seemed to make a questioning sound, I repeated it as punishment and reward, thus eliminating the possibly culturally tied idiomatic expression and only conveying the meaning. Maybe this is enough for everyday governmental interpreting.

This concludes the subchapter Building blocks of Interpreting competence. The following subchapters take a brief look into the world of interpretation research, then a look at interpreter employment and education in Finland

2.3 Examples of interpreting research

The idea here is to glimpse into the world of interpretation research, especially from the competence point of view. Below are some examples of interpreting research projects. The main areas are Conference Interpreting, Court Interpreting, Media Interpreting,

Liaison Interpreting and Sign Language Interpreting. The majority of the projects relate to the first three areas and to interpreter competence, the interest of this thesis.

- Oral language analysis applied to interpretation corpora
- French: oral discourse in speech and writing Aptitude testing for conference interpreting
- Delivery and presentation in CI Interpreting from Spanish into Italian,
- Error analysis and classification
- Recovery strategies and classification of additions
- Interpretation research at the SSLMIT of Trieste 97 7. Attention and concentration aspects in SI 8. Role of short-term memory in SI 9. Linguistic and cognitive strategies in SI 10. Interpreting in political and judiciary institutions 11. Dialogue interpreting and interpreter-mediated media events 12. Electronic tools for translators/interpreters 13. Languages for special purposes: cognitive mechanism acquisition and processing strategies

(Gile, Daniel 2001: 57)

The problems of interpreting research are of particular interest as well, though not the topic of this study, it is obviously present in the making of. Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast interviewed 11 Translation & Interpretation studies PhD candidates in a PhD group at the University of Saarland, Germany, to investigate problems they were facing. All of them experienced a lack of background knowledge and agreed that they were not adequately prepared for PhD work. “Most of the candidates felt that they were lacking the necessary theoretical overview of existing theories in their field of research for them to make meaningful decisions with respect to their own work and/or orientation.” (Gile 2001: 57). This was a challenge in the present study also.

Interpreting is still not widely studied, but there is already something about error analysis, recovery strategies and concentration aspects. Error analysis and classification is touched upon briefly in this study, and how the types of renditions differing from close renditions are not necessarily errors but may even be competence.

One of the most interesting of these topics regarding my research is Aptitude testing for conference interpreting, as I am interested in gathering information of what does interpreter competence consist of. The cognitive skills related to simultaneous interpreting (SI) are related to this, and to special personal interest to me. What are the central aptitudes, cognitive skills, and personality traits for a good community DI (dialogue interpreter); this is my main line of questioning in this thesis.

Attention and concentration aspects are viewed in this study to be of paramount importance to interpreting competence and training but are not in focus. It is simply recommended that the practice of these as well as other cognitive skills be the foundation of (interpreting) training instead of theoretical knowledge.

Danica Seleskovitch: Interpretation for International Conferences

Danica Seleskovitch's *Interpreting for International Conferences* (1985) provides some sort of an overview of and introduction to the profession by describing some problems that conference interpreter faces. While reading this book, though, one could get discouraged; Seleskovitch poses rather demanding competence requirements for an interpreter and makes it out to be a difficult, stressful and an ungrateful profession.

However, the book seems a little outdated, and my main research question regarding what it takes to be an interpreter or *competence for interpreters* is a question that deserves a closer look and a second opinion. I would argue that even though it is no doubt a demanding profession, simultaneous interpreting especially, it is not particularly ungrateful, and the stressfulness depends a lot on the interpreter's own mentality.

Seleskovitch (1985: 70) argues against direct translation, but it seems to me that in the example the client would have understood boil-off if it would have been translated directly. Seleskovitch's attitude towards direct translation almost seems to stem from the same source as the high competence demands she poses rather adamantly for interpreters; from a desire to increase respect for interpreters. When the book was written, there was perhaps more of a need for this than today. This is why I am interested in finding out some recent views on direct translating. Seleskovitch (1985: 114) at least admits that sometimes the interpreter should be literal and not eliminate cultural differences. From experience I have to admit that some things are inevitably lost in translation in interpreting much more so than in written translation. The interpreter should not dwell on this but just keep on interpreting and accepting the imperfection inherent in real time interpreting, while at the same time aim for as accurate interpreting as possible. Mutual understanding and solving matters are more important than how exact or literal the interpreting is.

2.4 Interpreter employment and education in Finland

If interpreter competence is linked to employment, it is also linked to education. Where the interpreter is working reflects to some extent what is considered competent, and often the source of this competence is at least perceived to be education. Furthermore, the competence categories produced by this study are intended for use in professional life and education. Therefore, a brief description of the fields of employment and education in Finland are presented here.

In what fields are interpreters employed? Is this matter dealt with in the literature? Should it? What should there be to improve the chances of employment? The interest to these questions is quite explicit: to increase the chances of finding employment. The study of competence is similarly motivated, and the definition of competence may even depend on the employing party.

Interpreters are generally employed in some of the following sectors: Conference Interpreting, Community interpreting, Court Interpreting, Media Interpreting, Liaison Interpreting and Sign Language Interpreting.

The classification is not meant as a taxonomy, these different areas of interpreting are not mutually exclusive. They are different areas where interpreters can work and can be overlapping. Especially a community interpreter can work in various sectors: Schools, hospitals, courts, even business conferences.

Pia Von Essen and Anna Mäntynen make a distinction between public service interpreting and conference interpreting. Public service interpreting is considered to be mainly consecutive and conference interpreting mainly simultaneous, although both forms of interpreting can be used in both domains (material from Centers of interpreters training cruise Tulkkikeskusten koulutusristeily 24.–26.11.2011).

This study uses the term public interpreter to define an interpreter who mainly works in the public sector, whose salary is paid by or who finds interpreting events through an agency in the public sector. As opposed to community interpreting which refers more

to the area of the interpreting work itself, although the meaning of these words is similar and perhaps even synonymous in other contexts.

As community interpreting refers to interpreting required in public institutions, it can be further divided into categories based on these institutions. Health care interpreters are needed to ensure that language minorities get the right treatment in hospitals. Legal interpreters ensure they get to be understood correctly in cases where they do not know the majority language in which court proceedings are conducted. However, there are not interpreters separately for these domains in Central Finland, but each interpreter may work in any domain, even though there may be some level of specialization.

Wadensjö (1998: 49) groups health care, mental health, educational, social service, and legal interpreting as subcategories under the more general concept community interpreting. This classification describes well our employment situation in Jyväskylä and Finland in general. What then, is the interpreter education situation in Finland?

Interpreter education in Finland

According to the Court interpreting report (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 14), “interpreter and translator education has been arranged in Finland for 40 years. Translators and spoken language interpreters are trained in Universities and sign language interpreters in polytechnics. Community interpreters are trained in many adult education centers. Here are some examples of interpretation degrees that I have attempted to translate into English (Oikeustulkkausraportti, 2008: 14-19)

Vocational Qualification for Community Interpreters (Asioimistulkin ammattitutkinto)

Court interpreter’s special vocational degree (Oikeustulkin erikoisammattitutkinto)

Spoken language interpreter (polytechnic) (puhuttujen kielten tulkki (AMK))

Community interpreter training in Finland

The National Board of Education has decided on the grounds of the Qualification for Community Interpreters (Asioimistulkin ammattitutkinto) which must be followed starting from 1.12.2006. The organizer of the education must draft the teaching plan

accordingly and include the proficiency tests in the education. Apart from the adult education centers and updating training center of universities community interpreters are trained also by interpreting companies. Some of this training is of good quality, aiming to increase the professional competence of the interpreters the companies use in their business, often on a free-lance basis. However, some of the entrepreneurs that give the training are unknown in the field and there is no way to monitor the training given by the companies (Oikeustulkkausraportti 2008: 14-20).

Interpreter employers have also given trainings, Monetra in particular. The good thing about the training given by the companies is that it tends to respond well to the actual needs in the field. It would be good if it could be better monitored and credited and possibly counted towards degrees.

Interpreters are also trained on courses funded by the employment authority. The target group is often immigrants, educated by different types of educational organizations and companies. In the best-case scenario, the teachers may be qualified professionals of the field, but not necessarily active interpreters (Oikeustulkkausraportti 2008: 14-20).

Interpreter education in Universities in Finland

There is also Interpreter education in Finland on the university level. The following are examples of universities that have taught interpreting in Finland in various amounts and languages: Tampere University (Tampere University n.d.), University of Helsinki (University of Helsinki 2020), University of Eastern Finland (University of Eastern Finland n.d.). There are also differences in specializations, for example, University of Helsinki has three study programs: translation and interpreting communication, translation technology and court interpreting while in the University of Eastern Finland, one can specialize in Translation Technology or Interpreting.

There is a registry of legal interpreters. The Court interpreter's special vocational degree is required to apply, or Specialization studies in Court interpreting (Diak n.d.) which was launched based on the O-ERKO-project. O-ERKO is an abbreviation for "Oikeustulkkauksen erikoistumiskoulutuksen kehittäminen" which means development of specialization education for court interpreting. The purpose of the project was to develop a nationwide specialization education for court interpreting for professional

interpreters and translators who had a higher education and that education would enable them to get into the registry of legal interpreters. This would at least theoretically increase the interpreter's chances of receiving court interpreting jobs and perhaps with a slightly higher salary per hour. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, the (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö) 2020).

This is an example of perceived competence versus actual competence because an interpreter who is in the registry would be perceived to be more competent than one who is not, while this may or may not be the case. The two most important factors in the competence are the language skills and the ability to stay neutral during court sessions and it is unclear whether the education would effectively increase these skills compared to meditative training and extensive language background.

As a suggestion to interpreter education, I believe that it should incorporate practice of both the profession but also of concentration and other awareness and mindfulness skills. If the education is too conceptual and theoretical, could this be a risk to interpreter's competence? If the interpreter is too focused on semantic conceptualizations of the interpreting situation rather than the actual interpreting situation itself, could this lead to getting lost in thought and other problems of focus?

Monetra: Centre of Interpreters

The interpreting service provider where I started working in 2011 was Central Finland Centre of Interpreters, which later became a part of Monetra. As far as I know, they are the only community interpreting agency for spoken languages located in Jyväskylä. There are a few interpreters with a monthly salary, but the vast majority, several hundreds, work as freelancers, getting paid by the hour.

Before taking on even a freelance interpreter, they test them. The test can include ad hoc translating by reading aloud while translating relevant texts from the field of public service, such as a health care and legal system, for instance child teeth care instruction, divorce proceedings etc.

In addition to the language skills, they may pay attention to the “touch” that the interpreter has on interpreting, how they cover for shortcomings in the vocabulary, clear speech, good pace, supporting gestures, eye contact and other non-verbal Communication. After the test, the aspiring interpreter follows interpreting situations before starting the work itself.

2.5 Research question: Competence for interpreters

The next step from the general interest in furthering one’s knowledge of issues important to a beginning interpreter is formulating research questions. According to Krippendorff it is the most important conceptual task for an analyst, and the key to a successful research design. It was, indeed, a conceptual challenge.

Krippendorff associates the following 3 characteristics to research questions in content analysis (2004: 343):

- *They concern currently unobserved phenomena in the problematized context of available texts.* This first item is less than clear regarding my research question, as I hoped to find these phenomena observed in the texts. The initial competence categories were not unobserved as they came up in the study of Pyökkimies. However, hopefully some original competence categories and other information would arise from the analysis of the text and my own professional experience.
- *They entail several possible answers.* In the case of this study, they would entail several possible competence categories.
- *They provide for at least two ways of selecting from among these answers – if not in practice, then at least in principle.* The selections from the competence categories that arose from the study to the ones that would be suggested to the final competence category chart would be based on how (often) they appear in the text supported by my professional experience and theoretical background from other sources.

The preliminary research questions in this study finally crystallized into one: what is interpreter competence? This question includes: What are the key aptitudes, skills, and qualifications an interpreter should possess. In short, what makes a good interpreter?

Pyökkimies presented answers to this question in her thesis, in the form of the competence categories presented in the beginning of this chapter (3.1). The competence categories that arose in Pyökkimies' interviews form the main part of the theoretical framework of this thesis. However, they were based on interview data, and they would be put through literary analysis. In other words, how would the competence categories appear in two books used in interpreting education: Cecilia Wadensjö: *Interpreting as interaction* (1998) and *Tulkattu Tampere*. Furthermore, how is this reflected in my subjective work experience in public interpreting in Finland. This forms the analysis part of the thesis.

When this data is analyzed, the resulting competence category model will hopefully help to focalize what are the important factors of interpreter competence. For interpreters, being aware of this can help them develop their own key competence. For employers, or the service providers, this hopefully increases the possibility of hiring interpreters based on their actual competence rather than just perceived competence.

3 DATA AND METHODS

In *Doing Qualitative Research*, David Silverman (2005) distinguishes 3 types of student dissertations: theoretical, methodological, and empirical. Hopefully identifying the type of this dissertation would help to clarify the appropriate methodology. Although I extract knowledge from my own work experience, this thesis seemed more in the theoretical category, as I aimed to create some theoretical insight based on existing theory and my work as an interpreter. Therefore, this thesis can be identified as a Theoretical Dissertation.

1. From text-driven to problem-driven content analysis

According to Klaus Krippendorff (2004), a problem-driven analysis is an attempt to achieve new information through systematic reading of potentially available texts. They are often real-world problems such as an interpreter trying to investigate and improve professional competence.

This research is partly problem-driven, partly text-driven content analysis. Text driven because of the interest in the books used for interpreter education in Finland, partly because of interest in practical interpreting situations, which could be here viewed as texts. Then again, these practical interpreting situations and defining interpreter competence could also be viewed as problems, which I want to compare to issues discussed in aforementioned literature. What finally drives this thesis most is the question or problem of understanding interpreter competence.

My research started as more text-driven, studying the books to be analyzed to find out how competence was described in them. New research problems emerged along the way, although the main lines have remained more or less the same. Gradually the research became more and more problem-driven, especially when I started to work as an interpreter and wanted to deal with issues that came up in real interpretation events.

This step was simple on the other hand and defining on the other; I specifically wanted to study textbooks used in Finnish Universities to teach interpreting. This choice is practically efficient because the books have been pre-selected by the Universities.

The original idea was to compare study guides to actual work. However, locating relevant texts also turned out to be an ongoing process, as relevant texts were found even in relatively late stages of the thesis.

According to email correspondence with a lecturer in the University of Turku, and another from the University of Tampere, a general handbook for interpreter training has not been published (2013). My choice of the books to analyze was becoming more a matter of what is available. Wadensjö seemed to be relatively close to a handbook. *Tulkattu Tampere* by Kaisa Koskinen was, on the other hand very recent (2013) and focused on my work domain, governmental interpreting.

An unusual conundrum arrived with my unusual data structure; The data to be analyzed was partly the same as the basis of the theoretical background, as Wadensjö was also referred to for some theoretical background. Initially it was completely the same, as it is the very theoretical background, I aimed to compare with my working experiences. Then there were the interviews of my colleagues by Pyökkimies, which was a bit of both. In the end my professor suggested to use the interviews and the thesis of Pyökkimies as theoretical background and the two books as the data to be analyzed. More precisely, the interpreter competence categories found by Pyökkimies were to be used as the analytical tool for analyzing the textbooks.

3.1 Data: Two textbooks on interpretation

This section presents the two books that are analyzed based on the thesis by Irma Liisa Pyökkimies; Cecilia Wadensjö: *Interpreting as interaction* (1998) and *Tulkattu Tampere*, a collection of articles edited by Kaisa Koskinen (2013).

The method of reading for the theoretical background was selectively to find the key themes of interpreter competence because this was the only thing needed for the analysis. The method of reading for the books of analysis was systematically from the beginning to the end to spot all the of key themes and obtain an accurate appearance analysis.

Also, in the beginning I did not yet have enough theoretical background to make theme selections. However, as the study and my work progress, I hope to gain a better perspective of what themes are most central to interpreting competence in theory and practice i.e. appear most in real work and literature. I will also use my own discretion in evaluating which themes seem more practical for developing competence in Finnish governmental (public domain) interpreting profession, based on experience and training in that field.

From the theoretical background I have tried to get some practical advice on the actual interpreting work, and then compare the work back against the background; was the theory useful to interpreting work, did it present themes that also came up in the practical interpreting work. Did any vital themes regarding competence come up during work that were not dealt with in the literature and should be studied?

In my approach I want to avoid a historical review and focus on a practical approach, to better serve the needs of interpreters or interpreting teachers in terms of interpreting competence.

3.1.1 Cecilia Wadensjö: Interpreting as Interaction (1998)

Cecilia Wadensjö: *Interpreting as interaction* was first published in 1998 and is used in university level interpreting education, which was one reason it was chosen for primary data. It assumes a dialogic language stance (1998: 7), which was discussed in chapter 3.2.2 of this thesis. It has theoretical information, analyses of reports from other researchers and from Wadensjö's own interview data.

In the preface(xix), the general editor gives a list full of definitions of interpreter's discursive skill: accuracy, interpersonal sensitivity, intercultural nuance, and generic integrity. Accuracy undoubtedly refers to Language skills, interpersonal sensitivity is close enough to Context sensitivity (perhaps a broader term like Sensitivity might be in order), intercultural nuance perhaps to the same, or a category of intercultural skills, which is already under consideration, and generic integrity can be understood as ethics.

First it seems that the analyses leave the interpreters too uncriticized. This is somehow understandable, but I find it more useful to focus on what the interpreter could have done better than conceptualizing the type of interpreting done, for instance. The latter has its benefits but is not enough on its own for developing competence. Then finally some criticism is included; (Wadensjö 1998: 134) the interpreter is caught doing some rather free omissions, or ‘zero renditions’ as Wadensjö calls them. Some of the client’s arguments are not delivered to the police officer.

The client is being charged of theft. When the interpreter tells him he is been taken into custody because there is a risk of him hiding away, he replies that he does not intend to do this, all the more since he has a family. The reply is left out of the interpreter’s answer back to the officer. The omission is strange because it is a significant utterance from the “underdog”.

One of the reasons for the ‘zero renditions’ might be the additional question asked by the suspect about the meaning of hide away. When the client asks a question from the interpreter, it dislodges her from her original train of thought. This illustrates why interpretation should be analyzed as interaction. Interaction is the key difference between interpreting and translating texts. Interpretation happens in real time and is thus subject to a certain amount of unpredictability. This asks for a different level of concentration from the interpreter: to avoid sidetracking too much and keeping in mind all the key points that need to be delivered.

In (Wadensjö 1998: 144), another reduction is scrutinized. This time the interpreter, Ivana, wants to inquire about the word giardia from the doctor whose diagnosis she is interpreting. She asks if it is worms, but the doctor says it is protozoon, an intestinal infection. Ivana then translates the part which she asked about, that it is not worms but protozoon, but leaves out the words intestinal infection. Wadensjö points this out, but does not explore into a more detailed analysis of why this reduction occurred, how important it is and how such an overlook could be avoided in the future. A probable reason could be a lack in vocabulary, quite understandable regarding such words. A heavily structured original utterance is also prone to reductions. However, in medical terms, the more self-explicatory a term is, the more likely the client is to understand it.

Thus, the words intestinal infection would likely be more understandable than protozoon, which could be a more understandable reduction.

Wadensjö does, however, specify a list of conditions under which the coordination aspect tends to dominate before the translating aspect (1998: 149). Often the dominating of the coordinating aspect leads away from close renditions and towards overlooks in content.

Wadensjö provides many real-to life situations but does not provide that much practical advice for improving the interpreter's performance. Perhaps the in-depth problematizing theory of this book could serve to alleviate guilt by making the interpreter understand that interpreting is not such a simple channel of language, where one language should be conveyed to another with the least possible amount of change. The book also did provide views into interpreter competence, which are discussed in more detail in the next chapter 5, analysis.

3.1.2 Tulkattu Tampere, edited by Kaisa Koskinen (2013).

Tulkattu Tampere is a collection of articles edited by Kaisa Koskinen. In the time it was chosen as primary data, it was quite recent (2013). It focused on my work domain, governmental interpreting in Finland. A certain article in it was also recommended by the teacher from the University of Tampere, and it was used there. These were the three reasons why it was chosen to be analyzed.

Interestingly, no instances of communication skills were found in Tulkattu Tampere. It is possible that a similar skill was mentioned, but it did not fit into the category of this study. However, this should not be the case since similar skills should have been counted as per the analysis method. Tulkattu Tampere is a collection of articles relating to specific themes around interpreting, rather than a general guidebook. This may cause that it does not have to address every common aspect of interpreting.

The fact that it consisted of many articles of various themes was useful in the sense that I could easily see which of them would pertain to interpreter competence and in what way. It was also in Finnish, which was useful, but also a challenge in the sense that I had to translate parts of it for this thesis. The fact that it was more "domestic" and maybe

practical, could perhaps be seen thematically as well; it had 3 references to the topic of logistics, whereas Wadensjö had none. It turned out to be a good source, all things considered.

3.2 The method, step by step

The method is to test some a priori competence categories found in literature (Pyökkimies) by first seeing how they appear in other literature and finally reflect on their usefulness in practical interpreting, and within this commentary, even to create new categories. The analytical tool for analyzing the books is based on the competence categories from Pyökkimies. They are put in a chart form to easily show the number of appearances of each category in both books. Sometimes the word might not appear directly but is close enough to a certain category to be counted into it. For example, accuracy is counted into language skills, because it refers to the accuracy of language. On the left we have the competence categories from Pyökkimies and on the column below the book title is the number of occurrences in that book.

Table 1. Competence chart version 1

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere	
Language skills	9	4	
Motivation for constant development	0	1	
Communication - and professional ethics	5	6	
Context sensitivity	4	6	
Experience from real interpreting events	1	2	

These five categories formed the core of the analytical tool. Before the actual analysis process, additional categories would arise from hypothesis and work experience:

Table 2. Additional competence categories (two more table parts to follow)

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere	
Logistics	0	3	
Participation framework		1	

As shown above, I started the analysis with two additional categories. The number would grow soon, though, as other qualities came up that demanded their own category. In case of lists where multiple categories were mentioned, I counted an instance to all of them, even if it was only mentioned.

I have jokingly said that getting to the right place at the right time is the most difficult part of interpreting. This has become more and more true in my experience. This is why I was going to include logistics in the chart. However, it appeared only thrice in the data, and in the end does not really describe interpreter competence if we focus on the actual interpreting event. Participation framework is an important theme in interpreting but was only mentioned once in connection to competence. It could be included in context sensitivity.

Communication - and professional ethics	5	6
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Communication - and professional ethics is a bit of a mouthful. It also contains two important and broad aspects of interpreter competence: Communication and ethics. Together they had the second most instances in the data. I decided to split this into two categories: communication skills and ethics.

This was also useful because communication skills could then contain many other categories, such as face to face communication, articulation and pleasant speech. During the analysis, these auxiliary communication skills had a separate category, but they had so few mentions in the books that it made sense to include them into the communication skills and separate that from ethics so that the category does not become too vast thematically. Especially considering how important both communication skills and Professional ethics are for the interpreter.

Context sensitivity	4	6
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This would form into a combined category of sensitivity in general. I considered including coordinating because of the way it could require sensitivity, but then regarded that coordinating can also be done in a more self-assured, confident, or mechanic manner where the interpreter dictates the lengths of speech and pauses to some extent.

Coordinating is seen as a separate skill, whereas Sensitivity is seen here as a somewhat passive quality, facilitated by the absence of disturbance in the mind. As an active skill, coordinating seemed to fit better into the category of communication skills. The same happened with Non-verbal communication, Articulation & pleasant speech and Maintaining an atmosphere.

It can be seen a little surprising then that I included confidence in sensitivity. Without going deeper into psychology, let us just imagine that confidence can be seen on the same scale as sensitivity, and they are seen here as balancing each other. Confidence can help to be more sensitive.

From the analysis of the books, additional categories arose. These are listed in the table below:

Table 4. Additional competence categories from analysis

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere
Non-verbal Communication	2	3
Articulation & pleasant speech	0	2
Maintaining and atmosphere	0	1
Stress resilience	0	1
Coordinating	1	1
Memory capacity	3	0
Simultaneous attentiveness, “special kind of concentration”	3	0
Confidence, “Self assured”	1	0
Cognitive competence	1	0
Neutrality, detachment	3	0

All these categories would not be included in the final competence chart. Some of these categories would be renamed, combined, or even omitted based on the results of the analysis and experience from the real work about what actually seems to matter in the everyday work of a community interpreter. The most obvious determining factor is how much these categories came up in the literature, and in what way. We will look at that in the fourth chapter: analysis.

4 ANALYSIS OF INTERPRETER COMPETENCE

The chapters so far have been discussing interpreter competence from different angles, and how it came up in the background material. Here is something of a nutshell: A competent interpreter must fulfill three central requirements of good interpreting, which are accurate content, confidentiality, and neutrality. Them and considering other special features of the work are central also in education and in the ethical instructions for the profession. (Oikeustulkkausraportti 2008: 9).

Pia Von Essen and Anna Mäntynen listed some qualities they saw important to all interpreters: working languages and cultures, knowledge of the field being interpreted, good speaking skills, excellent listening skills, high morale, knowledge of how to “be with people” in their own work cultures. (Tulkikeskusten koulutusristeily 24.–26.11.2011) (When talking about being, “knowledge” may not be the right word, although it is not easy to suggest a better one). This chapter goes into a more detailed analysis of how interpreter competence appeared in the data: Cecilia Wadensjö: *Interpreting as interaction* (1998) and *Tulkattu Tampere*, a collection of articles edited by Kaisa Koskinen (2013).

This analysis chapter starts the expanded competence chart (table 5), containing all the competence categories that have come up during all stages of this study from the theoretical background review to the following analysis. We will then present the findings of analysis through the five competence categories which were analyzed to be the most important ones, presenting them category by category and how they came up in the analyzed books. Then we will finish this chapter by looking at why some categories were dropped from the final competence chart.

Below is the expanded chart of competence (table 5) as it looked at the end of the initial analysis of the books. First five categories in the expanded chart are the original competence categories from Pyökkimies and the rest are categories that arose during the study and seemed important based on work experience. However, some of them were eliminated from the final competence chart for reasons explained in subchapter 5.6.

In the main analysis text, if the category is preexisting before analysis, then under that subheading is presented again the number of appearances in the data. But if the category is newly formulated, below is presented the appearance of the most relevant category or categories. These ‘minitable’ are not numbered as tables in this study, they could be rather considered as auxiliary subheadings, and the table formatting is there for ease of reading and reminding that they are parts of table 5.

In table 5 below under the two columns with the titles of the analyzed books are the numbers of mentions in both books. After the table, we will go through the analysis of the competence categories and their presence in the data, combining some categories and dropping others and even formulating new ones to create a more concise tool for looking at interpreter competence.

Table 5. All competence categories

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere
Language skills	9	4
Motivation for constant development	0	1
Communication - and professional ethics	5	6
Context sensitivity	4	6
Experience from real interpreting events	1	2
	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere
Logistics	0	3
Participation framework	0	1
Non-verbal Communication	2	3
Articulation & pleasant speech	0	2
Maintaining an atmosphere	0	1
Stress resilience	0	1
Coordinating	1	1
Memory capacity	3	0
Simultaneous attentiveness, “special kind of concentration ”	3	0
Confidence, “Self assured”	1	0
Cognitive competence	1	0
Neutrality, detachment	3	0

4.1 Language skills

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere	
Language skills	9	4	

Throughout this study, from the early hypotheses, the theoretical background (Pyökkimies 2013), through the data sources and their analysis, language skills have maintained its pole position as the most represented category of interpreter competence. It is the most obvious basis for successful Communication and interpretation. This study nominates it the most important competence category, but this rating does not need to be too prescriptive.

In addition to vocabulary, exact translations were mentioned in the data, and are included here under language skills. Wadensjö (1998: 286) placed “vocabulary, syntax, grammar and other ‘linguistic’ matters” under “language proficiency”, which could be replaced by language skills. It might even be reasonable to divide this category into subcategories, such as vocabulary, exactness, fluency and so on. However, in this current competence evaluation suggestion, language skills are evaluated as a whole to keep the final competence table concise and following similar representation in the data and the theoretical background (Pyökkimies 2013).

Especially terminology or special vocabulary needs to be paid attention to. Wadensjö (1992: 221), for instance reports on interviews on school principals, who mention as the only possible challenge that they have encountered with working with interpreters to be the educational vocabulary, which the interpreter may not know sufficiently.

This is in accordance with my own experience. The officials often explain that they speak some English but may need help with special terminology. However, this can be the most challenging part for the public domain interpreter as well, as we work in varied situations and suddenly there might be an interpretation about something very specific like heart surgery, but there may not be enough time, material or prior information to learn specific vocabulary. Furthermore, it is often not needed, as most of the actual conversations often take place in everyday language. Even if the interpreter knows the special terminology, the client may not, and may need things to be explained open in

everyday language anyway, which is perhaps the most obvious strategy for when a specific term is not known. In this way, spending a lot of time learning special vocabulary may not always be viable, especially considering that interpreters are paid nothing for preparation, whereas lawyers for example are paid in full.

4.2 Communication skills

Communication skills (Non-verbal Communication, Articulation & pleasant speech, Maintaining an atmosphere, Coordinating)	3	7
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Communication skills may be considered the second most important competence category. It had the second most instances after language skills. This category managed to conveniently cover many of the other smaller categories that arose during the analysis. Small means that they did not have many hits in the data and that their meaning is close to Communication skills. Nonetheless, non-verbal communication and articulation could be considered important enough to have their own separate categories. Still, they fit very neatly into this broader category, keeping the final competence chart compact.

What is the difference between language skills and Communication skills? In this study, the size of vocabulary pertains to language skills, choice of words into Communication skills. Pronunciation would be language skills, but clear articulation and emphasis would be Communication skills. Communication skills describe how well a message is conveyed with a given set of language skills, or all other skills that affect communication that are not language skills. Communication skills could be considered a bridge between these in the sense that it transforms language skills into living language in the actual interpreting event.

‘Maintaining an atmosphere’ could be even seen as a further subcategory or sum of all the other Communication skills, while **‘Coordinating’** is perhaps the loosest fit, and could also be viewed as a close relative to **‘Context sensitivity’**. At least in the sense that sensitivity is important for coordinating. In a way, coordinating could be seen rather

as a task than a competence. If we talk about coordinating skills however, then they could include saying the right thing in the right time and in the right way to facilitate smooth conversation. As the interpreter is not really allowed original input, then coordinating skills become much dependent on non-verbal Communication skills: use of voice, gaze, gestures etc.

Even though Communication skills were separated from ethics, they do have some convergence, such as choosing the formality of register. Even though this will be dealt with more under ethics, it is worth mentioning here especially from the perspective of the skill of choosing and using different registers. A competent interpreter can use different register and switch between them fluently to promote trust and understanding. Communication skills also include skills like controlling volume and tempo of speech, but exclude vocabulary and other knowledge of language, since those are under language skills.

On page 135 of Tulkattu Tampere the following qualities were quoted and set apart from language skills (from Tulkin välityksellä 2004: 135): “An ideal interpreter should be trained in face to face Communication, clear articulation and pleasant speech and have better cultural and Communication skills than an average language user, in addition to language skills.”

Maintaining an atmosphere was mentioned by an interpreter (Tulkattu Tampere 2004: 136) as the most important requirement of an interpreter, so I considered giving it an extra category. However, there are no other mentions, and the opinion was rather singular. This study considers maintaining an atmosphere rather as some kind of a byproduct of good Communication skills than a separate skill or requirement. The interviewed interpreter further elaborates that the client should come out as a person, not only the core of the message. I am not sure to what extent I agree with this in practice in governmental interpretation, where the purpose is usually to handle some “rather important practical matters”. It is so much more important that a patient gets the right treatment or the witnesses’ testimony is understood as intended than that their personality comes through. Granted, that in court for example, the reliability of the witness should come through. Of course, much of it comes through directly from the client’s own non-verbal Communication.

There is an example (Koskinen; Vuori, 2013: 119) that fits perfectly under the category of Communication skills. It is suggested here that the DI should at least to some extent try to adapt to the Communication style of the customers, so that the interpreter's demeanor, use of voice and way of being are in harmony with the participants' direct perception of non-verbal Communication and the verbal message present in the rendition. The original sentence is a little complex and does not quite specify whether it refers to the perception of the DI's or the participants' non-verbal Communication. The word "direct" would indicate that it is the participants'.

So, to put it simply, it is desirable that the interpreter's demeanor resembles that of the customers' or at least is "in harmony" with the participants' perception of it. I have often noted that it tends to happen by itself, even without thinking about it too much. It is good to know that that is a favorable to interpreter competence. Still it remains vague what is the right extent and whether too much may be distracting.

Use of voice is categorized here as non-verbal communication and placed under Communication skills. Voice needs to be clear and loud enough for those who need to hear it, but in cases of simultaneous interpreting, it cannot be too loud. Without intention, it often takes after the customers' voices, because they are usually in a more vulnerable position and therefore seem to require that little bit of extra support in terms of non-verbal communication that still fits in the requirement of the interpreter impartiality.

Afterwards there was a mention (Vuori 2013) of an interpreter, who started to interpret before the end of the original utterance. This was experienced as stressful by the nurse. This example was selected because it seemed relevant in my experience. Sometimes an interpreter can start to interpret before the end of the original utterance because the utterance was too long, or they found a meaningful segment to relate. It can be a necessary tool for the interpreter to interrupt because some customers might not consider the length or coherence of their utterance. In this case it was said not to apply, but perhaps there can be other reasons for an interpreter to opt for this strategy. It is interesting to note, however, that it can cause stress or at least less fluent conversation.

Another tool for the interpreter to use when speakers do not give pauses is simultaneous interpreting, which can also disturb some participants. In another example, a daycare worker had said that she was disturbed by the English interpreter's simultaneous interpreting, even though the interpreter asked beforehand. This is something to be aware of because simultaneous interpreting is a good addition to interpreter competence especially when the source speakers do not pace their speech to give time to the interpreting.

In Tulkattu Tampere (Vuori 2013: 133) the interpreter reacts in a less than formal way to the clients' annoyance, by a little laughter and holding up two fingers to clarify the message. After this there is a reference to my other book of analysis, Wadensjö, that the interpreter is always performing two tasks: interpreting and coordinating. It also mentions the physical aspects of interpreting: body position, voice, gestures, and gazes (dialogic language view).

Wadensjö (1997: 193) quotes Roy (1993) in observations of what the interpreter can do when the primary parties talk in overlap:

1. The interpreter can stop one or both speakers and, in that way, halt the turn of one speaker, allowing the other speaker to continue.
2. The interpreter can momentarily ignore one speaker's overlapping talk, hold in memory the segment of talk from that speaker, continue interpreting the other speaker, and then produce the 'held' talk immediately following the end of the other speaker's turn.
3. The interpreter can ignore the overlapping talk completely.
4. The interpreter can momentarily ignore the overlapping talk, and upon finishing the interpretation of one speaker, offer a turn to the other primary speaker, or indicate in some way that a turn was attempted.

These actions indicate Communication skills apart from language skills. These are good examples of the coordinating aspect of the job, and quite practical options. I have probably had to resort to all of these at one point or another, but I wonder if it would be worth it to try to choose one and stick to it. This could reduce some mental stress in overlap situations, as there would be an almost mechanical go to response instead of having to decide between them. This could perhaps make the interpreter a little less flexible, but it might still be a good strategy especially for a beginning interpreter to inject some professionalism to their interpreting right from the start; to choose the first one, for example, and use it until it becomes automatic or effortless. Then perhaps in time, to further expand competence, the interpreter could learn the others as well. On one hand, being mindfully present and attentive in the interpretation event can help

these actions to arise spontaneously without separately thinking about them. On the other hand, conceptualizing them may be useful to interpreter training and competence assessment.

4.3 Professional ethics

Communication and professional ethics	5	6
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Professional ethics was considered important enough to be separated from Communication skills into its' own category even though their representation in the data was counted together under Communication and professional ethics. If the instance is leaning towards a communication skill or action, it was counted in the previous category. If it leans towards ethics, it comes under this category, which includes all aspects of ethics present in interpreting profession in addition to Communication - and professional ethics.

As it can be vaguer and more abstract, ethics is in some ways a rather distinct type of competence from Communication skills, and all the other categories as well. Ethics can be based on one's moral backbone combined with understanding of the interpreters' Code of Conduct, not to forget basic empathy. This is deemed the third most important competence category. Not that it is less important, but it can be harder to assess and also practically it may not be so often tested to the limit in every day interpreting events, where ethics is often achieved by relaying messages in a way that communication is enabled.

Let us look at some examples of how Professional ethics was represented in the data. One of the ethical issues mentioned in both books was the choice of register. This presents the ethical language problem of choosing register. If the interpreter adapts the language to the more educated clients or Standard English, he might risk clarity for those of lower social classes. If he chooses a simpler way of speaking, he may risk his image as a professional language user. Vuori concludes that the interpreter's ethical commitment tips the scale in favor of a language understandable to as many as possible (Tulkattu Tampere 2004: 130).

This is one of the points that I have faced in my work, and I have concluded along the same lines as Vuori. This comes mostly to the forefront in court. After studying the

“official” counterpart for the words in the Finnish (technically unofficial) translation of the criminal code, it may sometimes be clearer to the immigrant client to use a simpler, more literal translation. My colleague told me she uses *illegal threat* for *laiton uhkaus* instead of *menace*, because it is more understandable. I have used *lawyer* for *attorney* because it seems more widely spread through TV, although I sometimes use both if there are slight differences in meaning, and nowadays often the term *legal counsel* as it is more general and perhaps the closest translation to the Finnish term *avustaja* that is often used. I would use “*judge*” for *chairperson* because it is domain-specific and shorter and *vice judge* for *Master of Laws trained on the bench*. Believe it or not, that is the ‘semi-official’ translation offered by Finlex, the website that has the translations of the Finnish laws. For individual terms and even for register, I try to prefer those used by the clients.

The practicality of simple vocabulary is true in any domain. Sometimes it even includes the use of well-known Finnish words such as KELA or TE - office rather than their English translations when these words are used by the clients themselves as they are more familiar with them. This may also help to further integration, as the client learns the names of Finnish institutions and it may be easier to search them on the internet or talk about them with other people.

Sometimes vocabulary can be simplified to bring out the part of the message which is most relevant to the client. Of course, deciding what is relevant is another responsible aspect of interpreters’ ethics, and it would be ethical to keep this to a minimum, even if it cannot be completely avoided because of restrictions such as time, interruption and diverging attention on the clients’ behalf. Of course, the clients themselves can also make these choices.

Actually, the Finnish - English interpreter can make two choices of register: for Finnish and English languages separately. Thus, the concern of sounding less professional in English to the Finnish official only concerns a transparent interpreting situation where the officials understand English to some extent. In Finnish language, register is perhaps less of an issue anyway.

Wadensjö (1998: 146) continues the discussion on ethics, about how it is a part of the interpreter’s work to forget what is said. This allows them not to dwell on the matters

and to remain neutral, and this also helps the client to get used to the interpreter's presence and not to wonder what the interpreter thinks of them or whether they talk about their matters outside. The interpreter is expected to specifically mention confidentiality and impartiality to new clients. The same goal can be assisted through appropriately neutral non-verbal Communication.

Impartiality in theory and reality

In this sub-section I will discuss some ethical juxtapositions of theory from the analyzed books and experience from interpreting work. This perspective should shed light on the practical aspect of this study by giving some practical advice to the interpreter. On the other hand, it might point to some problematic areas in the theory. Starting with impartiality, which is an important part of professional ethics (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 2), continuing to the requirement of translating everything.

Even though impartiality is very important to the community interpreter, even this credo of being impartial can occasionally be problematic in practice. If discrepant requests from both sides collide, the interpreters may be inclined to align with the action requested by the officer, for the following reasons.

According to my experience, the official is usually somehow part of or connected to the community, such as the municipality, which pays the interpreter's salary. The officer, whether a nurse, teacher, or a social worker, often also has a better grasp of the function of the situation, what needs to be done. They might even have a better grasp of what is best for the client (patient, customer in social office, parents of children, especially the child). Police might have better intentions considering the society as a whole, than the suspects they are interrogating.

So, if these officers request something not to be relayed, the interpreter is forced to take the request more seriously, even though this is not allowed in the Code of Conduct, the central source of interpreting ethics. Tenet 6 says that the interpreter should translate everything (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 2), and so did an interpreting provider representative in a training event. However, the police officer did not quite agree. As they are the ones who reserve the interpreter, we are sometimes left in a rather unclear position in between the theoretical ethics and the practical demands of the

clients and the complicated real-life situations. The choice of the interpreter is perhaps more readily influenced by the official who places the order, although the immigrant clients can have a say about it too, and I have heard that this does happen concerning the Arabic interpreters for example. Apparently public interpreting can be a rather different job for different cultures and instances, so we must be careful about generalizing. In practice, the choice of the interpreter depends a lot on the coordinator in the center of interpreters. Practically, in every day working situations, these problems do not normally arise, and the interpreter can almost always confidently keep interpreting everything equally according to the Code of Conduct (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 3) without jeopardizing their employment opportunities.

Translate all vs. reality (time saving, reduced renditions, sense of timing)

There is an official ethical norm for interpreters: “just translate and translate everything said” (Wadensjö. 1997: 284). Experienced interpreters, including Wadensjö argue that this is indisputably the best way to perform as an interpreter.

Yet, experienced interpreters are well aware that interpreting involves a complexity of activities. Just translating applies only from the monological, talk-as-text perspective. As noted in the data, there are many exceptions to this rule.

Perhaps the most basic instruction for a beginning interpreter would be to simply translate everything said. Yet for some reasons the actual interpreting by me, my colleagues and the interpreters in the books analyzed often seems to deviate from this. Let us now look at some of these possible reasons to consider if the deviations are justified or whether stricter adherence to this rule is necessary for improving interpreting competence.

It could be said that the most basic interpreting instruction is to translate all without adding or deducting anything. However, in practice there are many reasons this rule is not always followed. This can be because of human style or practical reasons. Sometimes this rule may need to be broken to ensure understanding (often expanded renditions) or promote an air of neutrality to ensure that matters get sorted in case where

one or more participants have become or are becoming too emotional to work towards the shared goal.

Saving time is very relevant in my real-life experience. It can have a protruding effect on the actual performance of the interpreter while partly conflicting with the “just translate everything” norm. It must be pointed out though, that this has sometimes also coincided with a lack of rendition, caused by a **transparent** interpreting situation of interpreting English to Finnish officials who understand English.

Empathic expressions such as “can you tell me” or even “do you remember” can be tempting targets for reductions to save time, to focus the question on the content rather than whether or not the client remembers. In this way the answer might be more direct as well, keeping the Communication more efficient, which is important because there is often limited time and also because sporadic conversations can become easily problematic in interpreted Communication. In police interrogations it is a bit more complicated; saying “do you remember may cue the interrogated to claim he does not remember, which may or may not be the intention of the interrogating officer. Saving time is usually in everyone’s best interests, but in police or court hearings it is even more important to get the message across correctly.

Small talk may also be moved to the end of the turn and the substance to the beginning to ensure that the key message gets through even if the interpreter gets interrupted or the message is long and parts get forgotten or omitted for other reasons.

Here are some examples from my own experience of factors can cause a lack of rendition:

1. **Irrelevant** stretch of speech, regarding the goal of the meeting (a father explaining to teachers why he feels education is important, a premise already more than established; a meeting with two officials and an interpreter have been called only to discuss the curriculum of one girl). This alone should not normally cause a lack of rendition, but that may become more necessary with the following reasons:

2. **Transparent interpreting** event, meaning that the officials understood enough of the speech (and signaled that either by making a sound or replying without waiting for the translation).

3. **Saving time.** Perhaps slightly more important to the officials than the immigrant client. Not really in the best interest of the DI with hourly pay, but I usually feel some pressure to save time, if there isn’t enough of it to help the client fully. This is ideally achieved by concise renditions and reduced renditions by the DI rather than a zero rendition (a lack of rendition).

4. **Diplomacy:** mitigating potential face threats. This includes the aforementioned situation where participants are becoming too emotional and so risking the continuation of Communication.

It is a delicate balance that a DI walks between saving time and interpreting all. Occasionally these things can be agreed upon at the start of the meeting, to some extent, at least regarding whether everything is translated to both directions or just when needed. It can happen that the official understands English, but prefers to speak Finnish, in which case the DI only interprets one way. Rarer perhaps is the case where the DI only listens and provides assistance when needed, though this too has happened occasionally in English language interpreting events, because of the apparently high level of English skills in Finland. According to my field experience, in most cases practical interpreter competence means delivering the meaning of messages of the parties clearly, whereas exact literal renditions may not be so necessary for successful interpreting.

Complexities of time saving

As a default I would assume that a DI should use very concise renditions and so use as little time as possible. However, when the DI takes time to utter his rendition, other PPs have time to formulate a more coherent following utterance. Could this save back the time used on the rendition?

Of course, the benefit of the concise rendition is not only to be short, but to deliver the meaning of the original message in a more structured and efficient manner. There are also those situations where the DI must refrain from such rephrasing, such as therapy, court or police interrogation. This is a very important distinction and brings a whole new dimension of challenge in addition to the emotional challenge in these domains.

There is also another risk involved in delivering concise renditions: Especially to Finnish which is a rather concise language, the customer may get the impression that the interpreter is not taking enough time and effort to translate all that was said, if the interpreter does it too concisely. In that sense it may be better to take the time necessary and carefully go over everything that the client has said, even if it is in a bit of a roundabout way. This is more a question of perceived competence than actual competence.

While audiovisual translators must fit their translations to the TV-screen, the interpreters need to fit their renditions into the live conversations, although they can opt to employ some control to the flow of the conversation.

Taking liberties: How creative can interpreting be?

Throughout *Interpreting for International Conferences* Danica Seleskovitch speaks against interpreting by directly replacing words in one language with words in another. She sees interpreting as a more creative activity, in which what the interpreter says is principally independent of the source language (1985: 98). While Wadensjö sees this as going quite far, she also presents text that support viewing interpreting as a creative activity (1998).

Wadensjö presents (1998: 69) a study by Blomqvist of local economy in Southern India (1996). In Blomqvist's view, the interpreters did much more than just translate. They acted as social intermediaries, making up for possible difficulties that Blomqvist might have otherwise had being a foreign woman talking mostly with men. Blomqvist asked an independent English-Tamil speaker to transcribe one of her tape recordings. While examining the transcription, she found that the interpreter corrected some of the informant's statements, added complementary information and dramatization and even omitted details. This would sound rather against the basic role of an interpreter as an invisible intermediate of unaltered information. Yet, to Blomqvist all this made the information more coherent, accessible, and understandable.

Many examples from my own work experience say the same thing: the interpreter has many possibilities to facilitate the meetings for everyone's best interest, and remaining an invisible intermediate of unaltered information could be a waste of human resources and simply take too much time considering the busy schedule of the officer clients. Instead, the interpreter could do everyone a favor by taking some responsibility of the flow of the conversation, and to stop it if necessary, to make sure everything is being understood. It seems that this is also appreciated or at least accepted in real life.

Parsons viewed that professionalism implies shared ethical norms to maintain proper conduct, and that it is further characterized by emotional neutrality (Wadensjö 1998: 58). In this way, neutrality could be seen as a part of this competence category of

professional ethics, but I deemed it important enough to have a separate competence category, following this one. To close this category, I would like to point out Wadensjö's words that the interpreter's allegiance is to both parties, or to the party whose utterance he or she is in the process of translating.

4.4 Equanimity

Neutrality, detachment	3	0
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The material talked about stress resilience as a requirement for a competent interpreter. While this study by no means disagrees with this, rather than stress resilience, it would choose equanimity as a broader competence category. If the interpreter can be equanimous or not to react emotionally, I argue that there is no or less need for stress resilience. In this context, equanimity refers to a non-judgmental, empty state of mind, where interpretation happens from one language to another with minimal friction, involvement, or judgement from the mind, (emotions, thoughts, personality, ego). This is accompanied by bodily factors such as straight spine, relaxed shoulders, face, neck, and voice organs and speaking with a relaxed voice. These factors in turn can yield a neutral, calm body language and hopefully interpreting renditions that promote trust and neutrality and on the other hand prevent stress and fatigue.

“Behind” this happening of the translation process is our witnessing awareness. This could be compared to the silent witness principle of ‘eastern spiritual domains’, such as yoga, meditation, or mindfulness, the ‘western adaptation’. When the interpreter learns this kind of approach, he does not necessarily need much stress resilience, for not experiencing things as stressfully. This implies not taking personal stake, just allowing interpretation to flow through like wind blowing through an empty house without doors or windows. In practical terms, this should lead to much more resilience, if that is even required anymore, when the interpreter takes no load upon himself and carries no emotional baggage but may still feel for the clients. That would be the goal suggested by this study to be the foundation of all (interpreter) education.

The concrete application of this equanimity is the other perspective of neutrality/impartiality that is very well represented in our working domain and the Code

of Conduct (asioimistulkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 2). We are expected to mention our impartiality (and confidentiality) to clients when we introduce ourselves. The situations are often personal and sensitive in nature, so all interpreters sign confidentiality agreements.

Some relevant findings were presented by Wadensjö (Interpreting as Interaction 1992: 54) about the image of the dialogue interpreter. In her interviews, teachers and administrators emphasized vocabulary and domain knowledge, ability to memorize and to translate everything said and neutrality as key points in preparation for good interpreting. The Dialogue Interpreter's (DI's) themselves added the importance to perform so as not to create a lack of confidence. Interrupting, for example, should be done with self-confidence but without bullying (55). "When encounters touched upon delicate matters, the DI should not appear too interested." On the other hand, some DI users considered interest in the subject matter as a basic condition for good interpreting. It was left unspecified whether they were referring to delicate subject matter as well. This ability to give the right kind of interest will be discussed in the next category, *sensitivity*.

Inspired partly by this need to be interested but not too interested, I began to construct the concept of *detached curiosity* as a part of the interpreter's mental toolbox. It would include full attention towards anyone who is speaking at any given moment, without too much interest to anyone or any matter in particular. The interest should then be 'expressed out' when relaying the message, which means that the interpreter gives himself fully to absorbing the source statement, but when relaying that statement into target language, fully relinquishes everything that goes with it, including the interest and all the external signs of that interest, such as posture and eye contact. Then the interpreter should revert to zero, trying to let go of even the residues of the message delivered. This has multiple merits: being in the moment should enable the interpreter best possible use of his language faculties and on the other hand not taking home emotional baggage, especially from some interpretation events with more challenging emotional content.

The mindset of an interpreter would seem to require a certain dichotomy of curiosity and detachment. An interpreter is a mediator, a middleman, and as Wadensjö puts it, sometimes genuinely an outsider (Interpretation as Interaction 1998: 53). In this

position, the interpreter comes across vast amounts of information that is not particularly intended for him. In feeling comfortable in this position, and to maintain attention to absorb the information effectively, a certain kind of curiosity may be helpful. Then again Wadensjö talks about the principle of neutrality and detachment (1998: 58). It would subsequently seem necessary for an interpreter to combine these two characteristics, in order to achieve an attitude of so-called detached curiosity.

The moral foundation of an intermediary position is that the intermediary has access to 'secrets' from both parties (Goffman 1990, as quoted by Wadensjö (1998: 65)). The interpreter needs to be curious to pay close enough attention to the message to pick up as much details and nuances as possible. Yet he needs to retain an impartial role, and remain unaffected by the content of the message, insofar as he is able to relay the message and nothing but the message without adding (own opinion) or omitting anything.

A fellow student asked me whether an interpreter could just complete the work without curiosity, with pure professionalism. Perhaps, but how is that professionalism achieved? This study would answer that detached curiosity, or *equanimity* combined with *sensitivity* is a tool to comprise the mindset necessary for such professionalism, or competence in the present work.

Wadensjö quotes Qian (1994: 218) to point to an interpreter's need to actually suppress impulses to interact with the participant. This constitutes their professional mode of listening and seem to require what Parsons called emotional neutrality (Wadensjö 1998: 58),

Admittedly this category of *equanimity* is somewhat abstract and hard to measure, to a point of even questioning if it could be called a competence category. Yet it is a fundamental part of interpreter competence on which more practical skills can be founded.

4.5 Sensitivity

Sensitivity	5	6
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(Context sensitivity, , confidence, flexibility, emphatic competence)		
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As the previous category of equanimity, this was another category difficult to narrow down, to name. In addition to the subcategories that came up in the text which are mentioned in the box, perhaps it could be broadened up a little, and use the term accepting awareness, or presence, mindfulness, or simply being attentive. This gives the word sensitivity a little different meaning, sensitivity to the situation, and to its communication needs. How the category would be defined would depend on the perspective; an employer or educator trying to assess the interpreter's competence (and probably have a particularly hard time with this category) or the interpreter trying to find or develop that right state of mind, a balance between sensitivity and equanimity. The challenge is to find the balance to be open and receptive to what is said (sensitivity) without being swept away by emotion (equanimity) but without being too aloof either. In this way, these two last categories complement each other.

“The outcome of institutional encounters depends on the intermediary's ability, time and willingness to see the other's perspectives” (Agar (1985) as quoted by Wadensjö (1998: 68)). Wadensjö offers as one criterion of professionalism emphatic competence, ability to handle situations involving embarrassment.

Wadensjö's research contains some points that proved to be vital in the actual interpreting situation. One of the most interesting findings was the importance of self-confidence. With enough self-confidence, the interpreter could, in this type of interactional framework, control the amount of simultaneity. Meanwhile, lack of self-confidence might let the amount increase uncontrollably. The interpreter needs to interrupt actively and confidently by asking permission to interpret. Reversely, with enough confidence in his own skills, the interpreter might choose to interpret simultaneously if pressed with time, or even allow longer stretches of talk (in which case note taking technique is important).

Confidence can be best found in the desire to do your best to help others. This thought can help to behave in a way that I might otherwise feel to be over assertive but that can ultimately be helpful in interpreting.

This study included context sensitivity in the same category with flexibility, because of how they relate to each other. It can be that context sensitivity facilitates flexibility; when the interpreter has the sensitivity to read different situations, they can work in more differing ways, which means being more flexible. This also requires confidence.

Vuori talks about how sometimes the interpreter chooses to help the client beyond the call of duty, to accompany them in a pharmacy for example. “Context sensitivity/flexibility can be a part of the interpreter’s competence instead of lack of professionalism as the strict written interpreters’ guidelines suggest” (Tulkattu Tampere, Vuori 2013: 148).

The interpreter is not encouraged to talk with the clients outside of the interpreting event, and should even exit through a different door, it has been said. Following these rules too strictly may sometimes be impractical, if the interpreter wants to maintain a good rapport and trust with the customer. Instead, some (context) sensitivity and equanimity may be required.

Carmen Valero-Garcés (Vuori 2013: 199) is quoted about qualities required in the interpreter’s role, that are largely outside our categories here. One that comes perhaps the closest is the knowledge of field-specific vocabulary (language skills) and the ability to change register and text according to the recipient (context sensitivity).

The mention of intercultural skills again begged the question of a new category. However, this study takes the stance that if the interpreter is well versed in the categories presented here, they do not necessarily need cultural knowledge. To the extent that you know yourself, you know human nature. When you know human mind, you do not need to know culture. Thus, this competence model focuses on these cognitive and emotional sensitivities as a universal replacement to specific knowledge on cultures. We all have the capacity to know direct experience without theoretical cultural knowledge, and we may or may not be able to express it. The communication and language skills expected of a competent interpreter entail heightened ability to express it.

These were the competence categories suggested by this study as a starting point or core of interpreter competence. More may be required. The following chapter presents some more. That they were not included in these categories does not suggest that they are not important or that they do not merit attention. However, five categories was deemed as a compact number to keep the competence chart simple enough. Why then, where these other categories not included in the core five of this study, will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.6 Dropped competence categories

Some competence categories that arouse from the theoretical framework or initial data analysis were not included in the final chart for various reasons. The reasons are specified together with some discussion, under each category below, in this last chapter of the analysis.

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere	
Logistics	0	3	

I have jokingly said that sometimes getting to the right place at the right time is the most difficult part of interpreting. As surprising as it may sound, this is based on my working experience. This is why I was going to include logistics in the chart. However, it appeared only thrice in the data, and in the end does not really describe interpreter competence if we focus on the actual interpreting event. Furthermore, it might not be a very widely accepted consensus of the hierarchy of challenges in interpreting work.

In Tulkattu Tampere (2004: 116) there is some discussion on logistics. Here is a mention that the interpreting locations may be in different sides of town, and that it can be difficult to reach them in time, and that the closer they were to each other, the more effective the interpreters' day. It is not specified that sometimes finding a location can be more challenging than the interpretation itself. It might be necessary to consider compensating the interpreter for travelling time within municipal borders as well. The compensation should depend on the time spent or distance, not on borders. For health and environmental reasons, it is also worth considering encouraging interpreters to walk to work, for instance by paying a small compensation for it. To make an even greater

favor to the wellbeing of both individuals and the environment, interpreters and other workers should always be paid the bus fare, regardless of how they finally choose to commute. This would be a small but important incentive to commute cycling or walking.

Logistics is an important practical challenge for the interpreter. However, it did not make the cut to the final version of the suggested competence chart. For the one trying to assess the competence of an interpreter, it may not be such a crucial factor, as long as the interpreter makes it to the right place at the right time.

Participation framework (concrete viewpoint)	0	1
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Participation framework was an interesting theoretical category that arose from Wadensjö about the roles of the participants in relation to each other. Participation framework is an important theme in interpreting but was only mentioned once in Tulkattu Tampere, and even that was more about the sitting arrangements, that could be seen as a physical aspect of participation framework, which is the concrete, practical viewpoint taken in this thesis, but which did not yield instances in Wadensjö.

Jaana Vuori (2013: 131) reports, that the interpreter usually sat at the end of the table, in between the customer and the worker to follow the speech of both but at the same time avoid a situation where they would direct their speech to the interpreter instead of each other. While it is sometimes impossible to avoid this, this method is indeed one that I at least attempt. It is a good thing to bring up in a book, because it is an important, yet simple practical matter that every interpreter has to consider in the beginning of every interpretation.

I was interpreting a family mediation between a Finnish woman and an English-speaking man. First, I sat between them at the end of the table, and the mediators were sitting next to them. However, when they started speaking to each other in English, I went to sit between the English-speaking client and the Finnish mediator, so as not to disturb the conversation between the couple and to be able to interpret to the mediator.

Setting the environment to ease the conversation can be seen as a part of interpreter competence as it affects the quality of Communication. It is also mentioned in the Interpreter's Code of Conduct Code of Conduct (asioimistulkkin ammattisäännöstö 2013: 1) that the interpreter makes sure that the working conditions are suitable for interpreting.

Setting up the seating arrangement in the most communication conducive fashion should be taught to every interpreter. Usually the best place for the interpreter is at the end of the table, although sometimes the interpreter may have to use some discretion, like in the example above. Still, would a competence reviewer be that interested in this skill? Is it even a skill, or just a short protocol, arrangement, or agreement? Participation framework as a theoretical category on the other hand does not really answer to interpreters' working competence. For these two reasons, this category did not make the final competence chart.

Stress resilience	0	1
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Is interpreting a stressful job? Interpreter goes to a variety of situations that could be considered socially challenging, especially if there are many people and delicate subject matter. Police interrogations, trials, family mediations, illnesses etc. On the other hand, an interpreter's responsibility is limited to the actual situation, and possibly preparation. After the event is over, the interpreter can forget about it, and does not have to take work home. This may be easier said than done, however, and perhaps could be considered an important "skill" for the interpreter's stress resilience.

There was only one mention of stress resilience in the data (Tulkattu Tampere 2004: 172), which I decided to pick out as a preliminary category anyway, because it is so present in the profession where there are many unique cases without routine. At the end of analyzing the data, the perspective is that it is one of those categories, like logistics, which will remain as the responsibility of the interpreter. At least I will not include it in this competence chart for competence assessors in order to keep it compact. Instead, I included the attitude of equanimity and detached curiosity, which can reduce the

experience of stress hopefully replacing stress resilience and even produce other good qualities to the interpreting, as discussed in the respective chapters.

Motivation for constant development	0	1
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Even though it is mentioned in the interpreter's professional code, Motivation for constant development was dropped from the list of suggested competence measurement areas because it seems to be more accurately indicating the interpreters motivation for competence development over time than the competence itself at any given moment. Motivation for constant development was only mentioned once in the data. Perhaps it is more important to one's own meaningfulness than as a measure of actual competence for an employer or a customer. For interpreter training, its meaning should be assessed separately.

Experience from real interpreting events	1	2
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I left out experience in my suggested list of ways to evaluate interpreter competence. This is because experience is not a constituent of competence, it is something that is presumed to imply competence. If someone is experienced, we assume that they have competence. This is a reasonable assumption, but the goal of this research is to go deeper and try to analyze competence itself, to reduce the need for assumption. The direction is from likely to actually. An interpreter of less experience can perform more competently (at a given moment) than a more experienced one. One important reason of finding ways to study competence is so that we do not have to rely on experience or formal qualifications as a hint of probable competence but so that we can measure actual competence. This, of course, is not very simple either, and at least work experience is a more reliable indicator of competence than education and formal qualification, (based on real life experience).

Intercultural skills	0	0
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This category entails intercultural skills and knowledge. I have a minor in intercultural skills and knowledge about the interpreter's working culture has been mentioned as a requirement by our interpreting center, which coordinates our work. The (English language) interpreter comes across people from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. So many, in fact that I propose that keeping up with (superficial) information about those cultures and the events in them may not be the most effective way of keeping up intercultural skills. Of course, it is recommendable, especially regarding terminology.

However, regarding intercultural sensitivity, I propose that a better ratio of expended time versus ability to make people from different cultures feel comfortable can be achieved through equanimity and accepting awareness or sensitivity, the two last competence categories of this study. As mentioned, in practice this can mean maintaining an intent but relaxed eye contact, body posture and tone of voice. This can even be extended to regard the content of the interpretation, that it is in some way neutral but accurate. An overall balance relaxation and concentration should be the core of interpreter competence and training, as it has significant impact on the ability to respectfully deal with people from different cultures and accurately relay their messages. If these 'skills' are already strong then the interpreter may benefit more from studying cultural matters.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study set out to study the research question of interpreter competence by comparing pre-existing competence categories to data and interpreting field experience. The result was five competence categories: Language skills, communication skills, professional ethics equanimity, and sensitivity. Language skills remained the first one as in the preexisting categories whereas communication skills and professional ethics were divided into their own separate categories. Equanimity and sensitivity are perhaps the most original categories of this study as they are inspired by mindfulness skills, which based on real life experience is so important that it needed to be included in this study. Find the complete final competence table with further information below.

Interpreter competence briefly

It is hard to define good interpreting and even harder a good interpreter. Wadensjö admits that in practice there are no absolute and unambiguous criteria for defining an all-around good mode of interpreting. The demands vary according to activity types, goal structures, concerns, needs and commitments of primary parties. The competence categories chosen for the final chart aim to be as close to the core of competence as possible. This means competence categories that serve regardless of activity types, goal structures, concerns, needs and commitments of primary parties or other circumstances.

Cecilia Wadensjö presents “three basic demands normally posed on interpreters :1. Make themselves understood by the current listeners, 2. To present themselves as trustworthy witnesses and 3. To present themselves as impartial. “(Wadensjö. 1997: 284). The first demand is basically covered by the two first competence categories of the final chart: Language skills and communication skills. Demands 2 and 3 correspond in some ways with all the remaining competence categories.

On the other hand, the following norm requires all these competence categories 1, 2 and 3. Wadensjö (1992: 23) quotes Brian Harris defining the “true interpreter” norm as requiring that “people who speak on behalf of others, interpreters among them, re-express the original speakers’ ideas and the manner of expressing them as accurately as

possible and without significant omissions, and not mix them up with their own ideas and expressions”.

Harris argues this norm to be obvious and basic to professional interpreting. And seems also to make an argument for relaying by replaying, as Wadensjö calls it. He says that together with the original idea, the interpreter should also re-express the manner in which the original speaker expresses the idea. This requirement is not considered core competence in this study, at least in the domain of public service interpreting. Rather, it could be summarized that the interpreter needs to be able to make it possible for the participants without a shared language to understand each other and create enough trust that they are willing to do so. The first requirement is most directly based on the primary competence category, Language skills, while the second seem more based on categories 3-5: Professional ethics, Equanimity and Sensitivity. Category 2, Communication skills could be considered a bridge between these in the sense that it is transforms language skills into living language in the actual interpreting event. When the interpreters remain in the state of neutral awareness combining categories 4 and 5, they are able to fully utilize their language and communications skills. According to my field experience, in most cases this means delivering clear messages of the parties, whereas exact literal renditions may not be so necessary. In professional life it may be sometimes difficult to know what is enough. For public service interpreting, perhaps it is enough to deliver the messages between parties accurately enough that they can conduct their affairs with the same results than those who do not need interpreting services.

5.1 Competence table, final version

Here is the final version of the competence chart, the product of this thesis. It is meant to be used to as a tool to understand and perhaps assess the competence of interpreters by interpreters or employers, for instance. It could be used in job interviews or for reviewing the performance of working interpreters. Perhaps with a tool like this the assessment of competence could be fairer and more factual and less based on formal qualifications, experience, face, or personality.

This competence chart could be also be useful for aspiring and working interpreters and their potential and current employers. In the beginning of the study, competence

assessment was named as an important function for the chart; ultimately, it may be better suited for competence development, especially regarding the two last competence categories that can be difficult to assess but developing them can yield wide benefits.

Table 6. Final competence chart

	Wadensjö	Tulkattu Tampere
Language skills -Vocabulary -Exact translations	10	4
Communication skills - non-verbal com. - managing the communication event -timing	9 3	0
Ethics	5	6
Sensitivity/Flexibility	4	6
Equanimity	1	2

So how does a profile of a competent interpreter look like based on this study? It comes as no surprise that language skills survived through the entire study as the first and foremost requirement. The interpreter needs to be able to understand and produce the working languages fluently. There is no substitute for this, and it could be even enough to work as an interpreter, while the other competence categories could be seen as more or less auxiliary, depending on the situation. Language skills is also the category that is most easily measured, especially since formal education in it is so well established and rated; Therefore, this may be the category that an employer would have the least need to measure. Language skills may also require less attention in interpreter training if they have already been studied and used by the interpreter in training.

Communication skills may not be studied as extensively in most levels of education, and they are harder to assess than language skills. Of course, the interpreter needs to have the social or communication skills to be able to work with all those different people in all those different kinds of social situations. Some of them are sensitive in nature, which is why the interpreter cannot become embarrassed easily. This is where equanimity and sensitivity come in to play, as well as professional ethics, since the interpreter may be dealing with sensitive and confidential information.

In one sentence we could say that the combination of language/communication skills and awareness skills form the core foundation of a competent interpreter. Other, more contextual skills such as knowledge on specific cultures and vocabulary can always be built upon that foundation.

5.2 Challenges of this study

A lack of a theoretical overview was one of the main challenges of this study, as it was for 11 interviewed Translation & Interpretation studies PhD candidates (Gile 2001: 57), as mentioned in the theoretical background. There are no interpretation courses in the University of Jyväskylä, and just a couple of classes on translation. Translation is still a rather common topic for theses at the University, but interpretation is not. Even of the 11 students at the University of Saarland, there were only two with the topic of interpretation. Yet, this was my area of interest.

It was only after well over a year and 40 pages into the thesis that I discovered the thesis of Pyökkimies and incorporated it into my thesis. This in itself was not a problem since the biggest structural change was done after that, during 2012, producing a second version of my thesis, as I hesitated to do such a major change without saving the first version as well. The thesis of Pyökkimies was released only in fall 2011, but it did overlap significantly with my topic and I had to reconsider my focus.

Another shared lack of expertise concerns methodology. I have attended a course on qualitative and quantitative research methodology, mainly to realize how qualitative this study would be. I could not really apply any specific method from that course. Content analysis was specified as methodology for this study with the assistance of an instructor after much of text had been written.

“While research projects conducted in the field of interpreting are driven by research problems, an MA thesis primarily aims at fulfilling academic competence”. (Gile et al. 2001: 12). To counter this, I decided to choose my topic very carefully so that it would somehow relate to professional life issues: to find meaningful employment. The closest

point of convergence that I found between the topical field of my major and my professional interests was interpreting.

5.3 Suggestions for further study

These suggestions were further discussed as parts of interpreter competence in 2.2.9 and are only mentioned here. Because of the known common features of music and language discussed before, (like the perception of acoustic material with rhythm and intonation) it would be well grounded to study the correlation between aptitude in music and proficiency in interpreting. Perhaps music could also be utilized in interpreter training. Even more importantly cognitive skills such as concentration and mindful awareness should be incorporated into training and their effectiveness studied. Further study is called for about how meditation practice especially could be used to improve interpretation competence in addition to general wellbeing.

Sometimes native speakers are assumed to be more competent whether in teaching a language or interpreting it. This is something that should not be taken for granted but put under scrutiny. Natives do of course usually have the advantage of experience regarding their own language and the very early acquisition of it but at the same time they may be more blind to it. This is especially important in teaching a language where a native might have difficulty knowing why something is difficult to understand for a non-native learner, but it is also possible that in lingua franca interpreting a non-native speaker may be more flexible.

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