The Interpreter as Intercultural Mediator

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Abstract

This thesis looks at the role of the Slovak-English interpreter working in the consecutive mode in the business environment especially with regard to rendering cultural references from source texts, whether these are (British) English or Slovak. Since culture in this thesis is taken in the broad sense of the whole way of life, cultural references can also be wide-ranging. The strategy an interpreter will opt for when interpreting cultural references depends on the circumstances under which he or she operates. Interpreting puts constraints on interpreters which make their activity distinct from translation of written texts, where in cases of unknown cultural references, translators can resort to the use of notes. Interpreters are engaged in mediating communication between (two) clients who do not share the same language and who come from differing cultural backgrounds. Due to differences between the (British) English and the Slovak cultures - in their material, spiritual and behavioural aspects - as well as due to lack of knowledge of cultural references which the clients of English-Slovak interpreting have and which was caused historically, some intercultural mediation is needed. Its particular forms are the outcome of the weighing of the circumstances under which the English-Slovak consecutive interpreter works. Moreover, business interpreting contains challenges in the form of the vocabulary of business, a relatively new area for Slovak interpreters. An interpreter, under all the above mentioned constraints, has to fulfil his or her role: to establish and maintain communication between the two parties. Therefore some of the strategies used will try to prevent miscommunication, while others will try to deal will miscommunication once it has occurred.
Introduction

This thesis will examine the role of the interpreter working between English and Slovak in the consecutive mode in a business environment, with special emphasis on the rendering of cultural references, either explicitly mentioned in source texts, hinted at, or implied within the source cultural context. Interpreting for business has been gaining in importance world-wide\(^1\). For Slovak interpreters, business interpreting represents a relatively new area which has grown out of the change from the command economy under communism\(^2\) to free market economy, in the wake of the democratic changes in Czechoslovakia since 1989. Business has confronted Slovak interpreters with new challenges in their work, and therefore research into this type of interpreting is needed, the findings of which might provide some guidance for the interpreters' professional activity as well as for interpreter training.

Translation Studies have turned increasingly towards the consideration of cultural issues, which is why, in this thesis, cultural references will become the central point, since they may represent a major stumbling block to communication. The present thesis attempts a detailed investigation into cultural references in the Slovak-English context. The thesis aims to present a picture of Slovak-English interpreting in the

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\(^1\) Cf. Margareta Bowen, 'What is a conference interpreter, anyway?', *The Jerome Quarterly*, vol. VII, issue 2 (1992), 5 - 7 (p. 7).

\(^2\) Officially, according to the Marxist-Leninist terminology, Central and East European countries, member states of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, including Czechoslovakia, were *socialist* countries. *Communism* was to be the next stage, with abolition of private property and money, with complete equality of all people, and with distribution of goods to individuals according to their
business environment and the range of problems encountered by interpreters working in the consecutive mode. Since until now other authors have researched partial problems of interpreting, the present thesis tries to bring together these miscellaneous aspects, because without considering them, the activity would not be described in a comprehensive manner. Cultural references in the English-Slovak context have mostly been studied in connection with written translation, mainly of fiction, and therefore need to be looked at in interpreting. The solutions resorted to by translators may not be a possibility open to interpreters due to the specificity of the environment in which they carry out their mediation. Business vocabulary has mostly only been compiled in the form of various English-Slovak glossaries, either published in journals or in paperback dictionaries, but it has not been extensively commented upon. The business environment and the factors comprising it have not been studied from the point of view of interpreting in Slovakia yet, due to its relative newness. Languages of limited diffusion, of which Slovak is an example, have not been researched sufficiently in connection with interpreting, since in the past, major Western European languages were used most often in interpreting and therefore provided material for the majority of theoretical or experimental studies. Since the democratic changes in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989, interpreting using Central and East European languages has appeared more widely and interest in their previously little known cultures has emerged. The impact of the link of language with culture on interpreted communication deserved to be considered.

needs. However, since short-cut terms communist, communism are common in Western Europe, they have been adopted throughout this thesis.

3 Cf. Laura Gran and John Dodds, 'Editorial', The Interpreters' Newsletter, No. 3 (1990), 1 - 3 (p. 1); cf. also Anna Giambagli, 'L'interprétation en relais: une perte d'information? Un essai expérimental', The Interpreters' Newsletter, No. 5 (1995), 81 - 93 (p. 82).
The present thesis will draw on literature on translation, interpreting and cultural studies. Theoretical assumptions and principles of interpreting will be applied to and demonstrated through specific Slovak-English examples, some of which will be drawn from a corpus of tapes prepared for another purpose, additional examples will come from previous English-Slovak interpreting assignments, from teaching sessions and some more from Slovak or English languages and cultures themselves. Where examples have not been available, mainly in connection with the confidentiality of business negotiations, the sections of the thesis will remain theoretical. For outlining the market situation of interpreting in new conditions in Slovakia, a questionnaire has been distributed to six Translation agencies, an analysis of which is also presented.

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4 The Know How Fund implemented a project Enterprise Education in Slovakia, starting in 1990 and running until 1995 with a production of a series of textbooks in Slovak as one of its results. Throughout the project, at the three pilot schools (Stredná priemyselná škola potravinárska v Nitre [Nitra Catering College], Stredná priemyselná škola textilná v Ružomberku [Ružomberok Textile Industry College], and Stredná priemyselná škola hutnícka a Gymnázium v Košiciach [Košice College of Metallurgy]), teachers of English were used as ad hoc interpreters. Some of them had had experience with interpreting from and into Russian, some had done informal English interpreting in tourist situations, others had not previously been engaged in interpreting. After the completion of the project, a series of interviews with the interpreters as well as the participating teachers who became trainers for the dissemination of the project was conducted by Jack Peffers, a member of the team of UK trainers. His questions reflect the expectations of a client from interpreting. I have been able to listen to some of the tapes where the interpreters were at work, as well as to all those where they were expressing their views about their activity. The fact that the interpreters in the recordings have not been professionally trained for their task does not make the findings invalid. A problem with using a corpus, however, lies in the density of usable material, which can be low, without implying that the problem studied is of low relevance generally.

5 An undertaking of the type of this thesis would benefit from a corpus of recorded instances of interpreting between English and Slovak, in business environment, to test its theoretical assumptions. However, as years since the idea of this research was born have been passing, it has become progressively more difficult to obtain such a corpus. This has been caused first of all by the fact that confidentiality issues in the business environment have come more to the forefront, making any recording impossible. Material for research therefore has to be kept in memory by the individual interpreter, since it often cannot even be written down during an interpreted event. This results in evidence more of anecdotal type than material of scholarly validity. However, interpreting is influenced by various factors, not least the anecdotal ones.

6 Similarly to other authors, for example, Daniel Gile in his Basic Concepts and Methods for Interpreter and Translator Training (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1995), the capitalised word Translation will be used in this thesis whenever reference is made both to written translation and oral interpreting. Lower case in translation applies to written translation only.
The main use of the present thesis is for training Slovak interpreters for their future task as business interpreters between English and Slovak.

The structure of the thesis is as follows: since the central topic is mediation between cultures, in order to explain the understanding of *culture* within which the thesis is framed, definitions of culture will be proposed (Chapter 1). These definitions are meant to be functional rather than purely philosophical - what interpreters actually need in carrying out their mediating task. Culture is shown as a dynamic construct, capable of, and actually, undergoing changes, whether dramatic or gradual.

Next, the circumstances under which interpreters work and which impose constraints differing from the constraints of written translation, will be considered (Chapter 2). The main differences may be said to lie in the time allocated for interpreting, the prevailing character of texts dealt with, the expectations of clients and the type of feedback available during interpreting. After pointing out the differences between translation and interpreting, the situational context within which interpreting unfolds will be described in more detail where much attention will be paid, for example, to audiences of interpreting (Chapter 3).

To explore whether interpreting has been satisfactorily explained by theorists, the *thèse du sens* will be studied closely (Chapter 4), especially because it was not sufficiently known in Czechoslovakia under communism, and an attempt will be made to discuss whether it can be used as a tool for training interpreters. Another question raised in connection with the *thèse du sens* is its applicability for

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7 When referring to the communist past, reference is made to all Czechoslovakia, unless otherwise indicated, because under communism the country used to form one republic. However, when describing the post-1989 situation, my concern is mostly specifically with Slovakia, since it now exists as a separate country and my information on it is more comprehensive and precise. This is not meant to neglect the fact that Czechoslovakia remained one republic until 1 January 1993.
approaching cultural references in source texts. This will be done notwithstanding the fact that the théorie du sens deals predominantly with conference interpreting (both in the simultaneous and the consecutive mode), which differs from business interpreting, the core interest of this thesis.

The fact that Slovak is a language of limited diffusion contributes some specific characteristics to the interpreting process, first of all a higher probability of its two-directedness, i.e. of interpreters working not only into, but also out of, their mother tongue. This is the reason for looking closely at the directionality of interpreting, the advantages and disadvantages of working exclusively into the interpreters’ mother tongue or also out of their mother tongue; commenting on the professional situation as well as the results of research on this issue so far (Chapter 5). The status of Slovak as a language of limited diffusion has implications for cultural transfer during the interpreting as well: less may be known internationally about a culture which expresses itself in an inaccessible language, more cultural references may remain unfamiliar and may represent a stumbling block to communication which a Slovak business interpreter is trying to establish and maintain.

Since the main interest of this thesis lies in consecutive interpreting in a business environment between English and Slovak, attention will next be concentrated on the consecutive mode of interpreting and its characteristic features distinguishing it from simultaneous interpreting (Chapter 6). The consecutive mode of interpreting, due to the advantages it offers to the participants, especially as a time-winning mechanism, tends to predominate over simultaneous interpreting during business transactions. That is why the focus on consecutive interpreting will pass on to the particularities of business negotiations, where certain textual elements (for example, proper names,
numbers, enumerations, etc.) gain prominence and thus impose specific constraints on the interpreter (Chapter 7). Similarly, some additional types of interpreting activity, for example, the translation at sight, may be more likely to occur during business negotiations, which may also make an interpreter's work in this environment distinct. In this milieu, differences between cultures in the non-verbal sphere may also become relevant and may represent a consideration for the interpreter carrying out intercultural mediation between clients speaking different languages and representing different cultural communities.

Since 1989, Slovak culture has been undergoing dynamic development, especially under the influence of externally induced changes connected with the fall of communism and the re-introduction, after over forty years, of capitalism. Slovaks have been exposed to a world of market economy, new for the majority of the population, for the designation of which a whole new vocabulary has had to be created, drawing on varying sources, indigenous or foreign. Both the clients of interpreting and the interpreters have to develop understanding of the underlying business concepts, for which interpreters have to use the appropriate terminology in the two languages which their clients, in turn, have to recognise, each in their own language.

However, business concepts are not the only stumbling block during interpreted interactions between (British) English and Slovak business partners. In the Slovak-English context, on which the attention will be focused next, some cultural differences will be highlighted and some cultural references listed, starting with the discussion of the issue what can constitute cultural references, what role they can play in source texts, and what solutions an interpreter can apply when rendering
them in the receptor\textsuperscript{8} language and culture (Chapter 8). This chapter will show how wide-ranging cultural references can be and in that it will represent a central point of the dissertation. When looking at potential strategies for dealing with cultural references, some hints will be taken from the approach to similar cases in written translation, especially translation of literary texts, i.e. rendering cultural references mentioned in written source texts into the receptor language and culture, since this area has been investigated in some detail by various translation scholars. The solutions applied in written translations, however, can in many cases only serve as illustrations, since the circumstances of interpreting differ from translation in a substantial way and so can the function played by cultural references in written source texts, as opposed to spoken source texts.

The situation where many (British) English cultural references remain unknown to Slovak clients of interpreting and many Slovak cultural references remain unknown to (British) English clients of interpreting, has been caused historically. That is why the background to the present will be described, by outlining a brief history of contacts between Britain (among other Western European countries) and Czechoslovakia in the communist past, with the aim of showing where the clients for whom the interpreter works come from, what has conditioned their behaviour and their knowledge of the other culture (Chapter 9). In some instances, similarities of development in other Central and East European countries will be pointed out. More will be said about Czechoslovakia in the past than about Britain, because of the

\textsuperscript{8} Since receptor language, a term used by Mildred L. Larson in her Meaning-Based Translation (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984), seems to imply better than target language a multiplicity of possible renderings, throughout this thesis references will be made to receptor text, receptor language, receptor community, receptor culture, etc. (except for direct quotes of authors who do use target language, target text).
relative isolation which used to prevail. The present state of British-Slovak contacts will also be discussed, especially in the light of the changes since 1989 and its impact on the familiarity of the general public in Slovakia with (British) English cultural references. Although the main emphasis understandably lies with Slovak material, some similarities and differences of (British) English and Czech culture will be pointed out in those cases where English-Slovak material was not readily available. Since the co-existence of Czechs and Slovaks in Czechoslovakia for seventy five years has made the Slovak culture close to the Czech culture in some aspects, quoting some English-Czech examples, as appropriate, will help make the picture more comprehensive.

The lack of contact between communist Czechoslovakia and Britain in the past, which differs from the present, formed the climate which conditioned not only the clients of interpreting, but also the English-Slovak interpreters. However, interpreters have been additionally influenced by their studies, which will be outlined in some detail, starting from the traditional pattern under communism, up to the present, demonstrated on the case of Comenius University in the capital Bratislava – the chief centre of interpreter training in Slovakia (Chapter 10). It will be demonstrated how Czechoslovak interpreter training used to be equivalence-based, according to the Russian models on which it was largely based. The preparation of Slovak-English interpreters at Comenius University will be compared to that of interpreters working with other language combinations. The review will include brief reference to the basic and secondary school background of candidates for university interpreter courses. The years since 1989 have brought some changes in this area, which will be indicated.
Since new interpreters are trained to work in the specific professional context in present-day Slovakia, this will be described, using data from organisations for translators and interpreters, from Translation agencies, Internet and other sources. The changes of types of topics most often interpreted will also be discussed. Part of this information was elicited through a brief questionnaire in Slovak which was distributed to six leading Translation agencies in Bratislava to map the perception of the translation and interpreting market by agencies who commission translation and interpreting work to freelances. A blank questionnaire can be found as Annex No. 1, with translation into English. The results of this questionnaire survey are presented as Annexes Nos. 2 - 7, while a commentary is contained in Chapter 11.

Out of these three strands, namely: the circumstances of an interpreter's work in the consecutive mode in the business environment; the historical situation in Czechoslovakia (and the present situation in Slovakia); and the university interpreter training which used to be (and at present is) in place at Comenius University as the main Slovak interpreter training institution, emerges the backdrop against which the activity of a Slovak interpreter working consecutively during business negotiations for a Slovak and a (British) English party evolves. Since the Slovak language and culture have recently been undergoing rapid development, in such a dynamic configuration, the meaning of source texts (and any cultural references contained, hinted at or implied in them) has to be negotiated. The interpreters aim at helping achieve communication between their clients, and doing so in an efficient way, which serves as their guiding principle whenever they may be looking for solutions of source text cultural references within the specific environment in which they are working - for example, during business negotiations. Sometimes source text cultural
references may be rendered directly by receptor culture cultural references, but not always, since these might have misleading connotations, maybe due to being too receptor-culture specific. Some other occasions may justify resorting to an explanation of the source text cultural reference.

Due to redundancy of spoken texts and the presence of multiple channels of which interpreting uses one, communication between people speaking English and Slovak may still be achieved, even if some cultural references remain unexplained, since partial information of the whole text will have been supplied by the interpreter, although full information may not have been provided, and although there may only have been zero information of a local problem represented by a cultural reference from the source text. It is, however, hoped that the context within which business transactions evolve will make the meaning of cultural references clearer once contacts between Britain and Slovakia become more intense, as has already been happening in some areas, and once business practices have been taken on board by the majority of Slovak clients of business interpreting.

Since Slovak interpreters, especially those whose foreign language is English, can often be expected to work in a business environment, all the above has implications for their future training. In order to prepare them well for their professional activity, relevant courses have to be put in place, including instruction in approaches to dealing with cultural references occurring in source texts, depending on the role they play and the feasibility of various strategies.

The role of the interpreter is to establish and maintain communication between two parties who do not share the same language and who come from differing cultural background. To achieve this, the interpreter applies either the techniques of
prevention of miscommunication – when the circumstances allow that – or the techniques of cure, i.e. trying to mend miscommunication which has occurred. Clients might get incapacitated not only by linguistic deficiencies of the interpreter but also by his or her cultural ineffectiveness. That makes it necessary for interpreters to be bilingual as well as bicultural, in order to fulfil their mission. To clarify the question of cultural competence, the following chapter will look at the understanding of the notion *culture*.
Chapter 1 What Is Meant by *Culture*

Men take their colours as the trees do from the native soil of their birth...
Derek Walcott

Culture, according to Raymond Williams, is one of the most complicated words in the English language\(^1\). In a sociological context, culture has been defined as:

The 'social heritage' of a community: the total body of material artifacts (tools, weapons, houses, places of work, worship, government, recreation, works of art, etc.), of collective mental and spiritual 'artifacts' (systems of symbols, ideas, beliefs, aesthetic perceptions, values, etc.), and of distinctive forms of behaviour (institutions, groupings, rituals, modes of organization, etc.) created by a people (sometimes deliberately, sometimes through unforeseen interconnections and consequences) in their ongoing activities within their particular life-conditions, and (though undergoing kinds and degrees of change) transmitted from generation to generation\(^2\).

This definition highlights the most relevant, the most constitutive aspects of culture, as understood in this thesis, namely its being *social*; comprising *material*, *spiritual*, but also *behavioural* components; representing something *distinctive* for a community; passed on through its *generations*, therefore containing a strong element of stability; yet susceptible to *change*.

Since the notion of culture in this thesis is taken in this broader sense, it also uses elements from a definition by Geert Hofstede, for whom:

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\(^1\) Cf. Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana/Croom Helm, 1976), p. 76.  
Culture includes systems of values: the language in which we express ourselves, the deference we show to our elders, the physical distance from other people we maintain in order to feel comfortable, the way we perceive general human activities like eating, making love, or defecating and the ceremonials surrounding them.

Central to the notion of culture is the existence of values, which are reflected in people's words, attitudes, perceptions, behaviour, etc. Culture as determining the language (i.e. specific words, expressions or idioms) which people use is directly relevant for the present argument, since interpreters work with verbal material, but they can only transfer the meaning of a source text into the receptor text, and the receptor context, if they base their activity on knowledge of/acquaintance with the source culture out of which the source text has grown. In Slovak, kultúra ('culture') is used in a much narrower sense, which can also exist in English, meaning 'arts, entertainment, events, etc.', information about which may follow the main news items in a television news bulletin, or to which a special review page may be devoted in a newspaper. Another meaning of Slovak kultúra is that of 'high standards, cultivation' as, for example, in kultúra reči, referring to 'high standards of language use' or 'cultivated language use'. Kultúra therefore cannot serve as a starting point of the argument in the present thesis.

The term culture in this thesis, similarly to the way some other authors refer to it, is used in its:

broad socio-anthropological sense, meaning all that is learned by the person after his (sic!) birth in the process of socialisation, i.e., language, customs and mores, beliefs, ways of communication, ways of life, fine

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arts, and all other products of a group of people, handed down from generation to generation⁴.

Kondo's understanding of culture is anchored on the ideas of early acquisition of a culture, its breadth encompassing language, customs, beliefs, etc., and its preservation across generations within a given community. Similarly to Kondo, whose definition is based on professional interpreting exposure, for Sergio Viaggio, culture, with relevance to an interpreter, represents "the system of habits, norms and expectations that filter and organise experience"⁵.

According to Hofstede again, culture comprises "a set of likely reactions of citizens with a common mental programming"⁶, a "collective programming of the mind which distinguishes members of one human group from another"⁷. By describing culture using the word 'collective', Hofstede points out the nature of culture as not individual, but shared by a community of people. Hofstede also observes that differences exist between groups possessing different cultures. The 'programming' may be understood in the sense of culture being necessarily present, similarly to a computer programme, before the computer becomes functional, i.e. before it can begin to be used. However, culture as programming may be meant in at least two senses - first, that people predominantly act and react in the sense in which their legacy

⁴ Masaomi Kondo, 'What Conference Interpreters Should not be Expected to Do', The Interpreters' Newsletter, No. 3 (1990), 59 - 65 (p. 62).

⁵ Note that the computer software used for producing this thesis (Czechoslovak Windows) allowed to put Czech and Slovak accents (diacritical signs) in the text, but since it overrode French and other European Union accents, these have been inserted in ink after printing, with the exception of those which coincide with Czech or Slovak vowel accents (French é, ë, German ä, Spanish í, ó, á). Instead of the Spanish tilde, the Czech/Slovak hook sign has been used, for example í.

⁶ Sergio Viaggio, 'Do Interpreters Have the Right to Improve Upon the Original? The Eternal Tug of War Between Expectancy and Professional Norms', in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 69 - 73 (p. 71).


⁸ Hofstede, Culture's Consequences, p. 25.
predisposes them to and so their control over their behaviour may be limited, while the second sense may be quite different: implying that people can change, can be re-programmed. In fact, in the area of computer programs as such, many software products keep being updated, with updates at first preserving a number of similarities to the original program, later limiting them to a few basic analogies, but gradually developing to the point of amounting to a completely new program.

Culture as programming, however, may have to be taken with some reservations, since cultures get created over time by a selective process which is also inherently hegemonic. Moreover, any culture comprises dominant, residual and emergent elements and cultures can develop. Hofstede’s understanding of culture may fit best the dominant elements, or, rather, elements dominant at a certain fixed point in time. However, accounting for changes of culture using Hofstede’s model may seem less straightforward. Moreover, Hofstede abstracts from influences of the culture of third countries, which can be seen as its shortcoming.

The question as to who may have wanted to programme people to react in a certain way, not being central to the present argument, will not be discussed, since some programming will be assumed to exist before an interpreter enters the scene, due to historical circumstances, the starting point being that people carry some cultural

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10 Williams, *Marxism and Literature*. Closely connected with culture is vocabulary of a language, where parallel situation holds: the co-existence of archaisms, standard (currently most widely used) expressions, and neologisms. This, in turn, can be said to apply both to a language/culture community as a whole and to an individual using the language of that community.
values. These cannot be completely disregarded, and in order to be shed they require either some (conscious) effort on the part of a person brought up within a certain cultural community. Alternatively, changes may be brought about by external influences, for example, historical events. This thesis argues the possibility of not only gradual, but also quite substantial changes of culture at certain historical junctures - for example, since 1989 the Slovak culture, although it was partly moulded under communism (between the years 1948 and 1989), has been growing into a developed democracy with thriving business, a free market economy.

A West European type of business has confronted Slovak interpreters with new situations (except for the few interpreters who used to practice their profession before 1948 or abroad) in which they have to deal with previously unfamiliar notions and practices, in the context of insufficient mutual knowledge of members of the (British) English and the Slovak cultural communities for whom they work. That is the underlying reason why some specific differences between (British) English and Slovak cultures will later be pointed out and the feasibility of rendering them which forms a part of the role of an interpreter mediating between representatives of the two communities, specifically in a business environment. Business interpreting represents a relatively new area of professional activity for Slovak interpreters working into and out of English - it confronts them with business references apart from cultural references, while any mistake in business interpreting may have financial consequences.

In a way similar to Hofstede is culture understood by Juliane House:

\[11\] Not neglecting the fact that various governments and power structures have tried to programme or re-programme people to their own liking.
By culture we here mean the anthropological concept of the overall way of life of a community, i.e., all those traditional, explicit, and implicit designs for living which act as potential guides for the behaviour of members of the culture. ... Culture in the anthropological sense of a group's dominant and learned sets of habits, as the totality of its non-biological inheritance involves presuppositions, values and preferences. These are, of course, hardly accessible.¹²

House's definition, concentrating on the behavioural aspects of culture, however, may not fully account for people belonging to one cultural community but living within a different cultural environment and still preserving their traditional values, since she mentions 'explicit designs for living'. For people living in a different cultural environment, their culture may remain only implicit (for example, they may stop wearing ethnic clothes to avoid looking conspicuous and they may use the language of their new country), but it may nevertheless predispose them to behave in a certain way. On the other hand, House can be said to be right in highlighting the inaccessibility of the cultural inheritance. She sees culture as a potential guide for the behaviour of a person belonging to a cultural group. Hofstede turns the question of non-transparency of values around and he points out that although cultural values cannot be observed directly by outsiders, they "can be inferred from the way people act under various circumstances"¹³, since people's verbal as well as non-verbal actions and reactions are conditioned by a set of underlying values which they have internalised. José Lambert characterises culture as "the entire network of socio-cultural norms"¹⁴. According to him, any cultural community has a shared body of

¹³ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, p. 8.
values (norms) and tries to institutionalise itself in political terms\textsuperscript{15}. Thus values of a cultural community are mirrored in that community's norms.

Michael Francis, writing within the Translation context, lists several dictionary definitions of culture, not only "the artistic and social pursuits, expression and tastes valued by a society or class"\textsuperscript{16}, but among others also "the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action."\textsuperscript{17} He thus shows that within a given cultural community, certain actions and reactions of people may be considered normal while others may be viewed as odd, going counter to its accepted values, beliefs or tastes. Francis's own definition of culture runs as follows: "the expression of ideas through words according to an inherited national thought pattern"\textsuperscript{18}. Here Francis observes a probability that members of the same culture may think along the same lines, and so they may resort to certain solutions to problems more readily than to others. Francis's highlighting the link between culture and language makes his understanding of culture particularly relevant for the present thesis, since interpreters, in their act of intercultural mediation, start from verbal material, the source text. To fulfil their role, interpreters should possess extensive knowledge of the two cultures between which they operate:

The interpreter's cultural competence must include not only knowledge of socio-economic circumstances, history, religion, language, art, literature and music, but also insight into the values and rules that govern people's

\textsuperscript{15} Lambert, 'The cultural component', p. 24.
\textsuperscript{17} Francis, 'Cultural and Pragmatic Aspects', p. 250.
\textsuperscript{18} Francis, 'Cultural and Pragmatic Aspects', p. 250.
actions in different cultures; how feelings are expressed, how conflicts and life's crises are handled, and so on.\textsuperscript{19}

Thus the range of knowledge expected of interpreters for carrying out the intercultural mediation in the communication includes subtle nuances of non-verbal nature, for example, the usual pattern of conflict resolution prevailing in a given cultural community. If an interpreter, when rendering the source text, applies an approach unusual for the receptor community, it may reflect badly on the author of the source text, since it may make his or her text unacceptable for the receptor community.

Ignoring the set of cultural values/norms on which the source text was built, but equally, ignoring the set of cultural values/norms of the receptor community, through the prism of which the receptor text will be perceived, may have negative consequences for the way in which the source text, the source text author, the receptor text and/or the translator - the author of the receptor text, will be accepted, or rejected by the receptor community. In his outline of the sources of prescription or norms of acceptability, Patrick Zabalbeascoa distinguishes eight levels of prescriptiveness, where level 1 represents "the weight of the historical tradition and cultural identity of a community, its values and habits."\textsuperscript{20} Pressure from the individual prescription levels has to be taken into account by a translator, who transfers a text originating in one culture into another cultural environment. Zabalbeascoa lists the elements comprising level 1 in the following way:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Patrick Zabalbeascoa, 'Levels of Prescriptiveness in Translation', in Pagnoulle and Mason (eds.), \textit{Cross-words: Issues and Debates in Literary and Non-literary Translating} (Liege: University of Liege, 1995), pp. 41 - 47 (p. 42).
\end{itemize}
The norms and patterns of behaviour of a community resulting from its religions, myths, traditions and taboos; its perception of the world; its prejudices and unscientific concepts that are given sacred, scientific or common-sense status. ... a translator who does not take into account the factors of identity (a community's history, nationalist feelings, etc.) that are involved in text production and perception will either fail to produce a TT that reflects the full semiotic and discursive value of the ST (source text) or produce a TT that is apparently meaningless or offensive (through not respecting or being aware of a community's pride, myths or taboos), or one that is only available to an expert or sympathetic readership. This level will often determine how the translator is to interpret and render appropriately such items as euphemisms, symbolic language.

Although Zabalbeascoa does not use the word culture here, what he means by this level of prescription overlaps with the above definitions of culture by Hofstede, House and Francis, which, apart from the fact that he applies the levels of prescriptiveness to Translation, makes it relevant for the present thesis. Culture, as Zabalbeascoa points out, does not transpire only as values, it also exists in the negative sense—that of taboos, which translators or interpreters have to take into consideration. For a given cultural community, taboos indicate sensitive points and therefore if, for example, a translator or interpreter mentions something which should have remained unexpressed in the receptor community, because of a taboo connected with it, he or she may thus lower the acceptability of the receptor text. Taboos may be connected, for example, with ethnic or sexual matters and as Sue Ellen Wright observes: “target language texts should in no way offend ethnic, sexual or other culture-related sensibilities”.

Similarly Dalila Lazarovová says that an interpreter has to select devices “correlated with the social, pragmatic and psychological context of the

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21 Zabalbeascoa, p. 42.
listeners"\textsuperscript{23}, i.e. he or she has to follow the norms of the receptor environment. Ewa Wegrzyn, aware that the receptor text has to be worded in a way as to make the reader understand what he or she is reading, points out that this can only be achieved if the author of a text or the translator "think, write and speak in the way that our readers or listeners are accustomed to"\textsuperscript{24}, or, put in other words, if the author (or translator) of the text thought not only about the correctness of the language itself but also about the rules and conventions of the market and the psychology of the potential buyer\textsuperscript{25}. Although Wegrzyn uses examples of commercial texts, like product names or advertisements, her approach is directly applicable to interpreting.

Culture of a nation, however, does not represent a monolith, but some "components of the mental programs of people are subcultural; shared only by others of the same educational level, socio-economic status, occupation, sex, or age group"\textsuperscript{26}. The non-homogeneity of cultures and societies has been argued also by José Lambert\textsuperscript{27}. Therefore the notion of culture may serve more like a general framework. Hofstede in his later work points out that almost everyone belongs to different groups and therefore carries different mental programming - he lists national, regional, ethnic, religious, gender, generation, social class and corporate levels\textsuperscript{28}. This makes it more complicated to tease apart and pinpoint specifically the direct or indirect reasons for a person's particular behaviour, which may not always be easily attributable to one


\textsuperscript{24} Ewa Wegrzyn, 'Translation and the socio-cultural context', in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), \textit{The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe} (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 61 – 66 (p. 66).

\textsuperscript{25} Wegrzyn, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{26} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 38.
cause, since in conditioning a person's reaction, several factors may conflate, although some may outweigh others. Ron and Suzanne Wong Scollon analyse discourse systems in a detailed way along the lines of corporate, professional or occupational, generation, gender, region and ethnicity membership\(^{29}\), thus pointing out the multidimensionality of human existence. According to their leading thesis, anyone is at any given moment a member of several discourse groups which are in interaction with each other and may be in conflict. If we apply their thesis, for example, a business woman may be saying, or doing, something in a certain way not necessarily because of being a woman, but because of being a business person. Such discourse may even be in opposition to what would in other situations be considered a typical female discourse\(^{30}\). By pointing out the interaction of discourses, the Scollons give a warning against stereotyping, "the process by which all members of a group are asserted to have the characteristics attributed to the whole group"\(^{31}\). Care therefore has to be taken not to be led to stereotyping when applying Hofstede's model to comparison of (British) English and Slovak culture, since such danger exists.

In spite of the plurality of culture (which may entail multiple membership of a human being in various groups), some patterns in people's behaviour and discourse, may, nevertheless, be discerned, since some characteristics may be more determinant than others. Although there exists heterogeneity within the culture of any nation, and

\(^{27}\) Lambert, 'The cultural component', p. 22.
\(^{28}\) Hofstede, Cultures and Organizations, p. 10.
\(^{30}\) A similar remark was made by a business woman on the BBC World Service, Every Woman, 2 January 1998.
\(^{31}\) Scollons, p. 155.
although a person's nationality may not be the most prominent feature influencing his or her behaviour, Hofstede put emphasis on the national characteristics. This may be connected with the environment within which he carried out his research - management science. Employees of a multinational corporation covered by his questionnaire survey may be expected to already display some homogenising features in areas other than nationality, so those may not need to be considered. Although Lambert, among others, has pointed out that culture cannot coincide with the principle of nation\textsuperscript{32}, nevertheless, since the present thesis attempts a comparison of (British) English and Slovak cultures and its implications for the role of interpreter mediating between representatives of these two cultural communities in a business environment, Hofstede's classification of cultures along national borders may provide a starting point, because the same professional (business) background of the two parties to the communication may eliminate some differentiating features (for example, belonging to a specific social class) and provide a better focus on the nationality traits. When applying Hofstede's model, however, room has to be allowed for the possibility of development of culture on both the (British) English and the Slovak side.

Hofstede postulated four dimensions of culture, calling them Power Distance\textsuperscript{33}, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism, and Masculinity\textsuperscript{34}. He sees Power Distance as

\textsuperscript{32} Lambert, 'The cultural component', p. 23.

\textsuperscript{33} Some authors distinguish power and distance as two entities, however, since this thesis uses Hofstede's model as a framework, 'power distance' has been retained as one notion. It is interesting to note, however, that its translation into Slovak causes serious problems, since in Slovak the conversion of nouns into adjectives by placing them before nouns does not exist, so the potential Slovak translation would be a multi-word construct, something like vzájomná vzdialenosť vzťahom na mocenské postavenie [mutual distance with regard to the power position], which to a certain extent also favours the separation of power from distance. Power is treated separately, for example, by Richard Brislin.
a "solution to human inequality in prestige, wealth, and power"\textsuperscript{35}, determined to a considerable extent by national culture. Power Distance deals with the issue of human inequality, which, inside organisations, "is usually formalized in hierarchical boss-subordinate relationships"\textsuperscript{36}, where "subordinates will try to reduce the power distance between themselves and their bosses and bosses will try to maintain or enlarge it."\textsuperscript{37} "Power Distance is a measure of the interpersonal power or influence between B and S as perceived by the least powerful of the two."\textsuperscript{38} "The PDI norm deals with the desirability or undesirability of inequality and of dependence versus interdependence in society."\textsuperscript{39}

Hofstede's second dimension, the Uncertainty Avoidance, has to do with the "ways of coping with the inherent uncertainty of our living"\textsuperscript{40}. It is "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations"\textsuperscript{41}, and is expressed in their "need for written and unwritten rules"\textsuperscript{42}. Uncertainty Avoidance is "related to anxiety, need for security and dependence upon experts"\textsuperscript{43}. A low Uncertainty Avoidance Index means "a greater willingness to take risks"\textsuperscript{44}, "greater tolerance of other opinions, less fear for tomorrow, and less fear of the unknown"\textsuperscript{45}.

Hofstede's third dimension of culture, Individualism, "describes the relationship between the individual and the collectivity which prevails in a given society. It is

\textsuperscript{34} Masculinity is a problematic name for the dimension, revealing as it does a sexist bias. A neutral term might be a better designation.
\textsuperscript{35} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{36} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{37} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{38} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 98. B stands for boss, S for subordinate.
\textsuperscript{39} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 120. PDI stands for Power Distance Index.
\textsuperscript{40} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 154.
\textsuperscript{41} Hofstede, \textit{Cultures and Organizations}, p. 113.
\textsuperscript{42} Hofstede, \textit{Cultures and Organizations}, p. 113.
\textsuperscript{43} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 153.
\textsuperscript{44} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 171.
reflected in the way people live together - for example, in nuclear families, extended families, or tribes; and it has all kinds of value implications. In some cultures, individualism is seen as a blessing and a source of well-being; in others, it is seen as alienating. Individualism “affects both people’s mental programming and the structure and functioning of many other types of institutions besides the family: educational, religious, political and utilitarian. Individualistic behaviour is opposed by Hofstede to collectivist behaviour.

Hofstede’s Masculinity Index “measures to what extent the HERMES respondents in a country (of both sexes) tend to endorse goals usually more popular among men (high MAS) or among women (low MAS). In countries with a high Masculinity Index, “the job takes a more central position in the respondents’ total life space than in the lower MAS countries.”

According to Hofstede, these four dimensions of culture reflect the values of the majority in the middle classes in a society. However, due to the plurality of voices in each culture, the values of the middle class may not reflect the set of values of the whole national community. Moreover, class divisions in societies may differ and some societies may not have a strong middle class. The values of the middle class might only represent minority values in a given cultural community. In fact, among the origins of the national differences in the Power Distance Index Hofstede

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45 Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences*, p. 173.
46 Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences*, p. 213.
47 Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences*, p. 214.
48 Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences*, p. 261. HERMES is the name Hofstede gave to the multinational corporation within which he carried out his research; MAS stands for Masculinity.
50 In Britain, the middle class represents over one third of the employed population at present and is likely to increase to about a half by the turn of the century, its attitudes and interests are therefore bound to be increasingly represented in social and political life - cf. *Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, p. 528, entry middle class compiled by Krishan Kumar.
mentions "less social mobility and weak development of middle class"\textsuperscript{51}. William Shawcross, commenting on the situation in Czechoslovakia, observes: "Bohemia and Moravia had produced a strong middle class which was quite capable of taking over the civil service and running the state after her independence. In Slovakia there was no such group."\textsuperscript{52} Thus the strength of the middle class may be an additional factor for consideration when carrying out comparative studies along the four dimensions of culture\textsuperscript{53}. At the moment the situation in Slovakia is quite dynamic, with fast growth of the middle class. For example, many private language schools have been founded in Slovakia, providing the increase in the number of teachers. Self-employed people, for example, various dealers or distributors, form the new entrepreneurial class. The more widespread use of computers has given rise to companies of computer programmers and systems analysts, and also various after-sale services to customers. Since Bratislava became the capital of the Slovak Republic, government offices, ministries, foreign embassies and consulates have been opened there and the number of civil servants in Bratislava has grown. Due to its proximity to Vienna, numerous overseas companies have opened their branches

\textsuperscript{51} Hofstede, Fig. 3. 8 Origins of National Power Distance Index Difference, in Culture's Consequences, p. 124.

\textsuperscript{52} William Shawcross, Dubček: Dubček and Czechoslovakia 1968 - 1990 (London: Hogarth, 1990), p. 12. The insufficient development of the Slovak middle class may have been the reason why after the First World War not only a number of civil servants, but also many teachers at schools in Slovakia were Czechs.

\textsuperscript{53} The only East European country from which Hofstede used data was Yugoslavia, which was not a typical communist country. Research along the same lines as Hofstede's, which may have been carried out in some communist countries in the past, would not be usable today because the results may have been distorted through government intervention. The historical changes in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 make it necessary to carry out new research of these cultures - cf. Nicholas Bowen, 'Managing Cultural Differences in Business', talk organised by the Institute of Linguists, London, 23 April 1994. Recently Hofstede's model has been applied to an analysis of the Ukrainian banking system - Jack Peffers, personal communication, 1996.
in Bratislava, employing Slovaks, who also represent the (new) middle class\textsuperscript{54}. This development can be seen reflected, for example, in a greater number of well-dressed people in the streets or from foreign makes of cars on the roads, not just the traditional Škoda-s - elegant clothes and executive cars may be considered the usual status symbols in Slovakia. However, the Slovak middle class is not sufficiently strong yet\textsuperscript{55}.

Hofstede points out that there may exist more dimensions along which cultures differ\textsuperscript{56}. The four dimensions which he established through his research he considers to be interrelated\textsuperscript{57}. At the same time they have to be seen as a continuum along which individual countries can be placed, with some features stronger in some countries, and, moreover, individuals oscillating around a country's mean. The dimensions may therefore only serve as indications of tendencies - as Hofstede puts it, "the mental programs of members of the same nation tend to contain a common component"\textsuperscript{58}. Connotations of the individual dimensions can be used for estimating a country's position along the continuum and for subsequent tentative comparisons of various cultures. The cultural situation in a country, however, may undergo gradual or radical changes and its dominant, residual and emergent elements may shift their mutual position.

\textsuperscript{54} In the past, the communist authorities tried to make Bratislava a working class city - by placing major industrial plants there and providing cheap housing for workers coming from anywhere in Slovakia, who were able to move in, bringing their whole families.

\textsuperscript{55} As pointed out by Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar - Čo vy na to, pán premiér [What Do You Say, Prime Minister], Slovak Television STV, 29 October 1997. Insufficient strength of middle class in Russia and the necessity of having it for economic growth was commented on by Boris Yeltsin in a radio speech which was mentioned during the BBC World Service news programme on 24 February 1998.

\textsuperscript{56} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 313.

\textsuperscript{57} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 196.

\textsuperscript{58} Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 38. Underlining added.
Culture has relevance for the present argument since it is reflected in the language of a cultural community, which provides the raw material for an interpreter. Language is intricately linked with the culture of the community which speaks it, in acquiring a foreign language, one therefore encounters a culture of the other community, too. Since the notion of culture in this thesis is taken in its broadest sense, cultural references also represent a wide range of phenomena, as will be shown in greater detail later.

People, belonging to various cultural communities, whose values condition how they behave and what they say, may, in building their discourses, mention with specific purpose in mind cultural references familiar to them and to other members of the same cultural community. Alternatively, these cultural references may only be hinted at, because in-group members may still easily identify them, since they form part of their common knowledge. If a cultural reference is mentioned or hinted at in a source text to be interpreted into another language, it may not be grasped by the receptor.

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59 Interconnectedness of language and culture demonstrates itself in everyday life. In the case of English and Slovak, the technical term 'bathroom scales', in Slovak: osobné váha ('personal scales') can serve as an example. Since majority of people in Great Britain live in houses, not in flats, they can put bathroom scales in bathrooms and weigh themselves undressed, to get the most precise reading. On the other hand, in Slovakia, a large proportion of people live in flats in towns or cities, and so they cannot put the scales in bathrooms because these are often too small for weighing oneself, and so scales are put wherever there is space, maybe in bedrooms under the bed. (Those Slovaks who live in villages in their own houses are often not interested in weighing themselves anyway.) The name for 'bathroom scales' in Slovak is based on the fact that they serve for weighing persons rather than, for example, for weighing ingredients for cooking.

Another example may be the car coat. In Britain the number of privately owned cars is high and there is a large proportion of women drivers. Shopping is often done weekly and mostly by car. It is more comfortable to drive a car in a car coat than it would be in a full-length coat. Therefore a car coat is a popular item of clothing, offered in fashion catalogues. As opposed to the above, a combination of a lower number of private cars in Slovakia, fewer women drivers, less shopping by car due to high price of petrol, and cold climate, make for the lack of car coat as a standard expression of everyday vocabulary. There exist trištvrťové kabáty ('three-quarter-length coats'), but these are slightly longer than car coats, and their designation just refers to their length, it does not show any connection with driving.

Being a land-locked country, Slovakia does not have a navigation vocabulary comparable in volume to Britain. This may make it more difficult, for example, to render a metaphorical expression in the wake of into Slovak.
audience. Its understanding may be achieved by various means, sometimes with the help of an explanation which an interpreter may have to add to the receptor text. Due to the broad understanding of culture in the present thesis, however, some cultural references can by their very nature be only implied, they may not be articulated verbally, but may still constitute the context within which the source text operates or the reasons for people's specific behaviour and may therefore have to be dealt with by the interpreter.

However, knowledge of one's own or someone else's culture may be a problematic notion to define, due to the difficulty of accessing a culture for both outsiders and insiders. The difficulty for insiders of grasping cultural components has been pointed out by Hofstede, according to whom differences of behaviour can better be discerned after a stay abroad or after mixing with other cultures."\textsuperscript{61}

Culture-bound elements, mainly in connection with literary translation in the English-Slovak context, have been studied by Ján Vilikovský\textsuperscript{62}, who looked at the role which they can play in source texts and on the basis of that produced a classification of source texts. What Vilikovský calls pro domo texts are texts with high density of cultural references aimed predominantly at the source language/culture\textsuperscript{63} community.

\textsuperscript{60} In Chapter 8.

\textsuperscript{61} Cf. Hofstede, \textit{Culture's Consequences}, p. 28. It is also interesting to note the background of writers on cultural differences and intercultural communication, which often reveals bilingual parentage, long-term immersion in another culture/other cultures, or mixed marriages, etc.


\textsuperscript{63} Numerous researchers and theorists of Translation Studies have pointed out how language and culture are inseparably, intricately bound together. Nils Erik Enkvist puts it in the form "language-cum-culture" - cf. ‘Discourse Type, Text Type, and Cross-Cultural Rhetoric’, in Tirkkonen-Condit (ed.), \textit{Empirical Research in Translation and Intercultural Studies} (Tübingen: Narr, 1991), pp. 5 - 16 (p. 14). Christina Schäffner, who has been systematically looking into intercultural problems, uses an expression 'languaculture' to show how language and culture have grown into each other - cf.
which do not lend themselves easily to Translation, since they were not produced with the intention to be translated. Members of the source community may be familiar with the particular cultural references mentioned, hinted at or implied in such texts and be aware of the potential connotations the author may have wanted to incite. For the receptor community both the denotations of cultural references and their connotations may be completely unknown, therefore it may lack the associations which the references were meant to bring to mind and as a result it may not be able to follow the author's argument.

A text (whether written or oral), may at the outset of its production be meant either for the source culture audience only (although written texts cannot be protected from the possibility of being translated at some later point in time), or for more audiences, i.e. several cultural communities. In interpreting, however, speeches may be meant for the receptor audience only - when speakers find themselves in an environment where only the interpreted version of their speeches is listened to. Such utterances may be less source-culture-bound, quite the opposite: they may either be built on universal/general notions or be adapted for the receptor audience. Thus they form

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the opposite end of the scale from *pro domo* texts in terms of the number of cultural references they may contain or the amount of knowledge of the source culture they may presuppose in the listeners.

Starting from a premise that interpreters are needed because the people for whom they work do not share a common language, the interpreters act as interlinguistic mediators. However, interpreters mediate between representatives of various cultural communities, and so following from the interdependency of language and culture, interpreters take on the task of intercultural mediators. A question then arises as to what exactly their terms of reference are, what role they are supposed to play in the interaction. Interpreters are present in a given interpreting situation to help achieve communication between the two parties, for the success of which they may in a way be seen as responsible. They may be expected to remove any obstacles standing in the way to smooth communication. If a source text is to be processed by an interpreter for members of another cultural community, one of the decisions the interpreter has to make is how to deal with cultural references contained, alluded to or implied in it. After a cultural reference has been recognised, its relevance (central or only peripheral) in the source text has to be ascertained, the degree to which it reflects culture-bound phenomena unique to the source culture, and the importance of these phenomena for an overall understanding of the discourse by the receptor party representing the receptor community with its own cultural background.

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Mastery of language and culture of both the source and the receptor linguistic and cultural communities ought to put interpreters in a better position than their clients to recognise cultural references, understand and maybe adapt, substitute or explain them, and thus fulfil their role as intercultural mediators. Although the need for this intercultural mediation may be felt, interpreters can only act as such mediators after they have considered the various factors which may make it easy or difficult to resort to adaptations, substitutions or add explanations in the receptor text. The most decisive factors may be those connected directly with the specific conditions under which interpreting, as opposed to written translation, is carried out. That is why the following chapter describes the circumstances influencing the decisions of the interpreter as to what strategy to use in order to deal with cultural references in source texts (or in the situational context of the source texts).
In order to make possible the investigation of differences between translation and interpreting, definitions of these two activities will first be looked at. As a basis in the following description will serve the definitions of translation, interpreting and the two modes of interpreting (consecutive, simultaneous) given by Heidemarie Salevsky, for whom:

Translation is a situation-related and function-oriented complex series of acts for the production of a target text, intended for addressees in another culture/language, on the basis of a given source text.

Here Salevsky points out the complexity of translation, observes its embeddedness in a particular situation, its purposefulness, its serial character (i.e. consisting of several steps) and its dependence on the source text. Similarly to other researchers in Translation Studies, she sees translation not as an activity happening between two languages, but between languages and cultures. In order to show the close link of culture and language, she resorts to an expression culture/language.

Salevsky defines the specific features which distinguish interpreting from translation in the following manner:

Interpreting is a class of translation characterized by the following features (setting it apart from translating):
- singular production and/or presentation of source-text segments in the interpreting situation itself;
- process-inherent temporal restrictions, including the parallelism of translational acts;

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1 Salevsky, p. 153.
singular realization of target-text segments involving a certain time lag in relation to the source-texts segments presented, and ruling out the correction of the target text as a whole\textsuperscript{2}.

The definition shows the comparison of translation and interpreting in sharp relief, highlighting the time restrictions, the single presentation of the source text alongside the single realisation of the receptor text, and the impossibility of editing the receptor text, which are all characteristic for interpreting. Thus the circumstances of interpreting differ from those under which a written translation is produced. The constraints under which an interpreter works have a major influence on the transfer process during interpreting. Moreover, quality criteria on the finished product of interpreting differ from those of a written translation, especially a written translation of a literary oeuvre.

Since a source text for interpreting is only presented once, and under severe time restrictions, an interpreter solves a situation in the here and now\textsuperscript{3}, applying short-term strategies, compared to long-term strategies of a translator of written texts, who may, for example, be aiming at consistency of chosen solutions to difficulties presented by a source text. As a consequence, in interpreting, considerations about standard language, correct grammar or polished style of the receptor text may be pushed into the background. The interpreters aim to achieve immediate communication, which may, for example, sometimes be served by a sociolect used

\textsuperscript{2} Salevsky, p. 153.
\textsuperscript{3} During The International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, in Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994, Sergio Viaggio likened interpreting to "performing a surgery on a jolting train cart".
by the participants of an event⁴ better than by official terminology which they might not accept or wish to use⁵.

Not only does the source text in its exact, verbatim form disappear for the interpreter, but also the receptor text in its exact, verbatim form disappears for the audience⁶. Aware of this volatility of interpreting, Marianne Lederer gave a warning about transcripts from spoken receptor texts pronounced by interpreters⁷. Transcripts may make an interpreter's rendering of the source text look like an inferior product, while in its context, the interpreted version may have served the purpose of communication sufficiently⁸. Reservations have been expressed as to whether spoken speech is a text at all, which has made some authors distinguish between a written text, and a spoken utterance⁹. Some authors use special systems of transcription so that the artificiality of the written construct based on the spoken source or receptor text becomes obvious¹⁰. Moreover, Carol Taylor Torcello points out that paragraphing a


⁵ In the Slovak context, a short-cut Czech term or expression may prove to be more efficient than a codified, yet obscure, or too long, indigenous Slovak term. Part of the reason may be that many Slovak specialists have read about their subject in Czech extensively. There also exist areas, for example, computer technology, where succinct original English terms may work when used in the Slovak receptor text. More about this will be said later.

⁶ Lederer, La traduction simultanée: expérience et théorie (Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard, 1981). Although she writes within the context of simultaneous interpreting, it does not make her observation less valid for interpreting as such since recordings can be made of consecutive interpreting too.


⁸ However, applying both the approach of seeing the input for interpreting and its output as text and at the same time seeing it as utterance may be fruitful for the analysis of interpreted discourse. Cecilia Wadensjö, personal communication, 1997. On the other hand, Said Faiq claims there is no source text and no target text in interpreting. Personal communication, 1997.

⁹ Cf. Franz Pöchhacker, who uses SMALL CAPITALS since long stretches of them are difficult to read and thus they do not create an impression of a text intended for smooth reading. (His corpus comes from a simultaneously interpreted event).
speech would be arbitrary, and so for her analysis of a speech by President Bill Clinton she uses numbered separate sentences\(^\text{11}\).

Since listeners only hear a given receptor text once, they also only hear any cultural references mentioned in it once, they do not have anything in front of their eyes for re-reading, as they would with written texts, and so may not even notice the interpreter's exact formulation. Moreover, if a speaker does not continue to build on the first mention of a cultural reference, it may not be missing in the receptor text even if the interpreter omitted it, i.e. only provided the audience with a zero information about that segment of the source text\(^\text{12}\). However, whenever the source text author takes up his or her initial mention of a cultural reference, or when other speakers do that, problems may emerge since such a repetition may increase the requirements on consistency (or at least a clear link) of each interpreter's rendering, which may approach the standards operating for written translation, depending on the frequency with which it has been repeatedly mentioned.

Another constitutive constraint of interpreting, not pinpointed in Salevsky's overall definition of interpreting, since it operates more strongly in the simultaneous mode of interpreting, is the Linearity Constraint\(^\text{13}\) - the fact that, as opposed to translators, interpreters do not receive a source text in its entirety, but work on incomplete parts of it. Some information needed for rendering the source speech in the receptor language may not have been disclosed by the time the interpreters have to start producing the receptor version. This may therefore put an additional pressure on

\(^{11}\) Carol Taylor Torcello, 'Theme as the Interpreter's Path Indicator through the Unfolding Text', *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, No. 7 (1996), 113 - 149 (p. 141).

\(^{12}\) About full, partial and zero information, see later.

them to try and minimise misinterpretations which might follow from an incomplete text, maybe by using a more general vocabulary, etc.

Interpreting may also be distinguished by the character of source texts which the interpreters tackle most often. Although occasionally literary quotes or excerpts from poems are included in speeches to be interpreted, for example in the United Nations Organisation or the European Parliament, conference interpreters mostly deal with informative\textsuperscript{14}, not literary texts. Therefore, with the bulk of source texts for interpreting what matters is transferring the sense of the source text to the receptor language, without aesthetic considerations coming into play in any significant way. Since a majority of source texts to be interpreted are of the factual type, the task of the interpreter consists mainly of conveying the informational content\textsuperscript{15}. Not only do interpreters themselves view their role in this way, but audiences also seem to understand it like that. According to the results of research by Andrzej Kopczynski, who distributed a questionnaire to users of interpreting services (both speakers and listeners) in Poland, clients see the transfer of content rather than form as the main function of interpreting\textsuperscript{16}. The fact that interpreters process informative texts is reflected in their coping tactics - they strive to maximise the information recovery\textsuperscript{17}. Since aesthetic concerns are less of an issue in interpreting - unlike translation, especially literary translation - the focus in interpreting may not be on keeping the implicit from the source text implicit in the receptor version, unless the source text to


\textsuperscript{15} Cf. Dam, 'Text condensing', p. 311.

be interpreted belongs to the type of texts comprising law court speeches or subtle political speeches, where it may be important not to explicitate anything during interpreting. This is due to the fact that legal texts, alongside with some administrative texts, are characterised by a specific style. However, since the interpreters have to understand what they are interpreting, their desire to clarify, i.e. explicitate in the receptor text whatever they comprehend in the source text, may be strong. Some colleagues among Slovak interpreters, especially those without professional university interpreter training, sometimes overdo their explanatory strategies, as though feeling happy when encountering a passage which they fully understand. However, when they thus take the situation in their hands and add extensive explanations of something which the listeners, experts in a given area, are probably familiar with, they may trivialise the text. They are contradicting the role of an interpreter, since, according to Cecilia Wadensjö: “the interpreter is supposed to make sense of, and make more or less explicit for the primary parties, what is said and what is heard.” Some interpreting based on the method of the théorie du sens (which will be discussed later) may produce receptor texts more explicit than the source texts, especially the type of interpreting used during scientific and technical discussions, editorial committees, etc., where interpreters aim at clarity of their output, in order to enable interlocutors speaking different languages and coming from different cultural backgrounds to communicate with each other. However, in some cases, explicitation may trivialise a point a speaker may be trying to make, since for

specialists in a given area, predictability of information contained in source texts is high, which countervails the need for explicitation.

The emphasis on retaining the implicit from the source text implicit also in the receptor text has been debated in literary translation. Gideon Toury's experimental findings show higher level of explicitation as a characteristic feature of any translation:

This factor might be termed *universal of translational behavior*. For instance, there is an almost general tendency - irrespective of the translator's identity, language, genre, period, and the like - to explicitate in the translation ... information that is only implicit in the original text\(^{21}\).

Similarly, Shoshana Blum-Kulka considers explicitation as a universal strategy of language learners, non-professional and professional translators alike\(^{22}\). Realisation of this made Jean-René Ladmiral incorporate questions of explicitation in the translator training: "Ainsi la formation des traducteurs devra-t-elle comporter: a) des informations 'civilisationnelles' ... qui permettront de décoder la dimension socio-culturelle du texte-source, voire de déchiffrer le non-dit de son contexte implicite (et, peut-être, de l'explicitier en langue-cible)..."\(^{23}\) If interpreters know what aim a speaker would like to achieve, this may give them a cue as to how much information to explicitate, i.e. how to cope with "the interpreter's complex task of giving just enough information but not more than required"\(^{24}\).

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In order to help compile criteria for the transfer of information in interpreting, the information contained in a source text may be seen as either primary or secondary. Secondary information, according to Daniel Gile\(^\text{25}\), consists of, on the one hand, framing information and, on the other, linguistically induced information. Moreover, any author producing a text adopts his or her personal style, which also forms part of secondary information. However, when an informative source text is transferred to another language, this is done by a translator or interpreter who is not the author of the source text, knowing what was primary and what secondary in it, neither is the translator or interpreter the addressee, the final receiver of it\(^\text{26}\), working in a given area and operating within relatively clear boundaries of probable meanings. Interpreters usually know (much) less about the subject treated than the parties for whom they work\(^\text{27}\), and the knowledge which they do have or which they acquire also tends to be fragmentary. The interpreters rarely achieve the awareness of synonymous

\(^{25}\) Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 55.


expressions, loose paraphrases of technical terms, etc., either, with which experts operate on a daily basis. Therefore the decision about what comprises the crucial, primary information and what only secondary (whether framing information, linguistically induced information or personal style) may not coincide between interpreters and clients. Moreover, since too much secondary information in the receptor text may be a burden\textsuperscript{21} detracting the attention of the listener(s) from information more central to the message, explanations (of cultural references) added by the interpreter may sound unwieldy in the receptor text and may overload it with information, not strictly relevant for understanding the source text message. Thus in the interpreting process, condensation of the contained information comes into play. This condensation may be based on source speech redundancies, which can manifest themselves in repetitions, reformulations, explicitations, etc., which the author of the source text may have resorted to\textsuperscript{29}. Even within an informative text, interpreters may apply their intuitive feeling of hierarchy of its constitutive elements, for example, Miriam Shlesinger found out - through her study on shifts in cohesion during simultaneous interpreting - that some of the interpreters were making omissions of dismissive, temporal and emphatic conjunctions. According to Shlesinger, this might have been caused by their attempting to focus on elements which they considered more informative while omitting those which to them seemed redundant\textsuperscript{30}.

\textsuperscript{28} Gile, 'Fidélité et littéralité dans la traduction: une approche pédagogique', babel, 28, No. 1 (1982), 34 - 36 (p. 36).
\textsuperscript{30} Shlesinger, 'Shifts in Cohesion'. The fact that this study looked at simultaneous interpreting does not make its findings immaterial for consecutive interpreting.
As a rule, interpreters have inferior knowledge of the subject, as opposed to the clients, who may be experts in the given area (with the possible exception of journalists, who usually also only have general knowledge of a subject they are reporting on, although they may have done some research on it). Although interpreters' knowledge may improve\(^3\) with the amount of time spent dealing with a given topic - during any one particular commission, as well as in the long run during their professional career - it may nevertheless still lag behind that of experts, keeping up-to-date with the latest developments in a specific area of knowledge on a regular basis. Participants of a conference or another interpreted event usually have better acquaintance with specialised literature on their subject, sometimes both in their mother tongue and in foreign language(s). Some experts may be able to read specialised literature on their subject in foreign language(s), without being able to speak those languages or without being able to pronounce foreign technical terms which they may recognise in the written form. Moreover, the knowledge of the area in question which specialists have is more systematic than that which may be acquired by an interpreter\(^2\). If speakers vary their vocabulary, interpreters, due to lack of knowledge of the subject and of the context (for example, speaker's membership in an organisation), may fail to recognise cohesive ties and may even reverse the meaning of an utterance\(^3\). The difference in the extent of knowledge between the clients and the interpreter is not limited to conference interpreting, it may be a


\(^2\) Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p. 65; cf. also Déjean Le Féal, 'Lectures et improvisations'.

\(^3\) Cf. Shlesinger, 'Simultaneous Interpretation', p. 153.
relevant consideration in business interpreting, too. Those interpreters who are also active as translators can do terminological preparatory work while translating - in fact, some Slovak translation and interpreting agencies demand that interpreters also engage in written translations on a regular basis because in that way they have an opportunity to acquire various terminologies systematically and at greater leisure, for later use when interpreting.

However, whereas in written translation the completeness of information transferred by the translator from the source text to the receptor text may be expected as a *sine qua non*, in interpreting, due to the circumstances under which it evolves, the outcome may be more diverse. An interpreter may provide the listeners with complete information, partial information, zero information of a segment of the source speech, or, when he or she fails, with misinformation. From the point of view of information transmission, it may be better to supply listeners with at least partial information, or even zero information of a small unit of the source text (maybe a specific cultural reference), if the opposite case would be to provide them with misinformation. Misinformation may be misleading, whereas partial information may make the listener(s) ask questions about the remainder of the information and as a result the audience may get full information. Interpreters may have an opportunity to insert previously unclear, missed or forgotten parts of information into the text.

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34 For example, once my English client said 'the price will rise'. Not having heard the verb properly and unable to check with the speaker, although the mode was consecutive, I said *cena sa zmení* ('the price will change'), thus providing my Slovak client, who did not understand any English, with partial information, rather than risking to say 'the price will fall', which, as it emerged in this particular case, would have been misinformation. My Slovak client immediately asked his English partner about the exact nature of the price change, and was able to find out.
later, at an appropriate moment\textsuperscript{35}, although this may put pressure on the capacity of their working memory. Alternatively, the audience of interpreting, by being present in the given place at the moment when the speaker talks, may ask for explanation or clarification. Moreover, when the audience consists of specialists, they may understand the message even from just partial information since the redundancy and/or predictability of texts within a narrow domain may be high. Similarly, this may be the case with, for example, inexact names of organisations - representatives of those institutions may recognise what is being referred to, since they have formed some expectations within the situation. Since texts may often be redundant, the missed part of information may reappear later, in the form of author's reformulations, repetitions, explicitations, categorising expressions, etc.\textsuperscript{36}

Elite Olshtain found out that in oral translation of noun compounds, the subjects participating in her study tended to paraphrase more often, due to a feeling of time pressure\textsuperscript{37}. Thus they can be said to have provided her as the listener with only partial information. They chose this strategy, since for terminologically precise translation of the noun compounds presented to them during the experiment they would have needed to analyse the relationships between the component parts of the noun phrases and maybe to start rendering from the final, modified noun. However, in professional situations, interpreters constantly work under time pressure, since they have larger amounts of texts to deal with, as opposed to translators, within a given amount of time.

\textsuperscript{35} Anna Giambagli quotes an example of interpreter including a forgotten piece of specific information at the earliest convenience after it has been remembered - cf. 'L'interprétation en relais', p. 90.

The question of how translation and interpreting differ has been dealt with at some length by Daniel Gile, according to whom in the area of terminology the differences are reflected in the choice of tactics by the interpreter, since “interpretation is made for real-time oral communication, in which accuracy in terminological usage is less critical than in translation”\(^{38}\). Terminology in any area of expertise, as Gile elaborates, consists of entities, links and attributes\(^{39}\). Entities, most specific for a given area of knowledge, are expressed mostly by nominal technical terms\(^{40}\), while links and attributes may draw on common vocabulary of a language. Specialists in a given area of expertise are more likely to know entities as well as links and attributes, while an interpreter is always in a position of knowing less than them. Nevertheless, clients may insist that an interpreter use precise terminology, or, in some cases, even a “house style”, and they may get irritated in the opposite case. This requirement may have repercussions on their trust towards the interpreter, which contributes to their perception of his or her performance. Gabriele Mack and Lorella Cattaruzza found out that clients using simultaneous interpreting most often complained about terminology\(^{41}\). However, the picture of the situation may change as soon as knowledge of technical terms which experts have in a foreign language is


\(^{38}\) Gile, *Basic Concepts*, p. 94.

\(^{39}\) Gile, ‘La communication’, pp. 64 - 66.

\(^{40}\) Nominal character of technical terms has been observed also by Khurshid Ahmad, and others, ‘What is a term? The semi-automatic extraction of terms from text’, in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), *Translation Studies: An Interdiscipline* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 267 - 278 (p. 270).

considered. According to the research by Magda Kouřilová\(^{42}\), in a foreign language, an expert may know or recognise the technical terms (entities), but may often be unsure about the links, which may be expressed by words drawn from common, non-specialised vocabulary of a language, and so in order to understand foreign texts, he or she may have to resort to Translation services. Thus there are areas of expertise where translators and interpreters know more than their clients, namely they possess extensive linguistic (and cultural) knowledge and transfer skills.

The acquisition of knowledge in interpreting, another point made by Gile, has for the most part to take place before the actual interpreting, whereas a translator of written texts can learn from the text itself\(^{43}\). Nevertheless, the interpreters may have a different approach to source texts at the beginning of a meeting at which they work, as compared to a point towards the end of it, when they have acquired more cognitive knowledge about the subject\(^{44}\). At the outset, some interpreting may proceed through transcoding, before a \textit{unit of meaning} is formed\(^{45}\). Although interpreters always have less extensive extralinguistic knowledge than the delegates of an international conference for whom they are working, Marianne Lederer and

\(^{42}\) Reported during the Summer School of Translation, Budmerice, Slovakia, 1993. She referred specifically to the knowledge of English medical terms by Slovak doctors.

\(^{43}\) Cf. Gile, \textit{Basic Concepts}, p. 112.

\(^{44}\) As has been shown, for example, by Marianne Lederer.

\(^{45}\) "Units of meaning are the synthesis of a number of words present in short term memory associating with previous cognitive experiences or recollections; this merging into sense leaves a cognitive trace in the memory while the short term memory is taking up and storing the ensuing words until a new synthesis occurs and a new cognitive unit adds up to those previously stored in the cognitive memory." - cf. Lederer, 'Simultaneous Interpretation: Units of Meaning and Other Features', in Gerver and Sinaiko (eds.), \textit{Language Interpretation and Communication} (New York: Plenum, 1978), pp. 323 - 332 (p. 330). "Chunks of sense appear in interpretation whenever the interpreter has a clear understanding of a speaker's intended meaning." - cf. Lederer, 'Simultaneous Interpretation: Units of Meaning', p. 330. It might, however, be preferable to render the French \textit{unité de sens} (to be found in other writings of the \textit{théorie du sens} - cf. "...des ensembles conceptuels que j'appellerai unités de sens" Lederer, \textit{La traduction simultanée: expérience et théorie}, p. 121) into English as \textit{sense unit}, and not 'unit of meaning', since the word \textit{meaning} may have linguistic connotations, contradicting the basic tenets of
Danica Seleskovitch point out a difference between passive and active knowledge. According to Lederer, interpreters only need enough knowledge to be able to understand, and reproduce what was said, they do not need the level of knowledge necessary for active independent speech or action. Seleskovitch says that only a limited number of new items has to be learned by an interpreter before a conference. Their claim applies both to simultaneous and consecutive interpreting happening in the conference environment and is based on the assumption that in any given area of knowledge there only exists a relatively small number of technical terms which are used by experts repetitively. Both Seleskovitch and Lederer emphasise the importance of thorough preparation of an interpreter for a conference, which may consist either in learning about the subject, i.e. trying to understand the basic underlying concepts, or in learning the technical terms. Seleskovitch and Lederer favour the conceptual preparation, which is contradicted by, for example, Mike Dillinger. Karla Déjean Le Féal suggests that interpreters learn by heart usual conference opening and closing phrases, expressions of thanks, etc. and thus incorporate an element of automatism in their work. Similarly, if interpreters know a substantial number of technical terms and understand the concepts these designate, they are able to speak faster and can also save time by avoiding the need of resorting to a paraphrase. Déjean Le Féal stresses she is talking about automatic expressions in the receptor language, not any translational automatisms. In order to

the théorie du sens, which will be studied in detail in Chapter 4. Unité de sens is distinct from proposition, which is a grammatical notion.

46 Cf. Langage, langues et mémoire: Etude de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive (Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard, 1975); cf. also L’interprète; or ‘Un interprète médiocre est inutile’, Terminologie et traduction, 3 (1997), 26 – 41 (p. 28).

47 In business interpreting, specific terms can also be expected to be used repetitively.

learn about various subjects and to acquire the pertinent vocabulary she recommends interpreters to read extensively. To be able to use the technolect of the listeners, an interpreter has to listen carefully. According to Déjean Le Féal, during interpreting, interpreters should only pay attention to the sense of what is being said in the source text, while when improving their skills, they should pay attention both to the sense and the form of the source texts. She also points out that knowing the aim which a speaker is trying to achieve helps the interpreters understand more nuances in what he or she is saying.

Conference preparation according to Seleskovitch and Lederer comprises acquiring as much background information, knowledge about the participants, and technical terms as possible. It consists in making prefabricated units for later use during an interpreted event. Seleskovitch claims that in order to be able to understand, and thus interpret properly, an interpreter only needs a dozen or several dozen technical terms for any conference, however, Gile disagrees about the number of new words and expressions to be learned before an interpreting commission. Similarly Milada Jankovičová, writing in the interpreter training context, puts the number of terms to be mastered beforehand at 1500 which she considers to be the basic specialised terminology for each domain. The interpreter’s preparation may depend on the type of event: while in the area of politics or social studies the personality of a speaker may be in the forefront, for conferences in general, interpreters may concentrate on

49 Déjean Le Féal, ‘L’enseignement’.
51 Cf. Milada Jankovičová, ‘Absolvent tlmočníckeho štúdia: len tlmočník alebo tlmočník – odborník?’ [Graduate of Interpreter Training: Generalist or Specialist?], in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third
acquiring knowledge about the subject and learning equivalents of technical terms. The more so that technical terms are the words any expert working in a given area uses every day, whereas for interpreters technical terms may be rare words. Interpreters have to improve their knowledge of the concepts covered by the technical terms in order to be able to follow the debates and interpret with sufficient understanding of what is going on. Preparation for conferences has also been dealt with by Ghelly Chernov, who has elaborated a system of predicting, which includes extralinguistic aspects. Gile recommends research into conference preparation as one of the topics for interpreting research, which he includes in a list of other issues for research. Although this issue may not have been thoroughly researched, a number of practical suggestions for the preparation of interpreters has been published, for example, Christopher Taylor suggests preparation through reading newspapers, which contain a high number of technical terms in an accessible form.


(Note that since there exist a number of systems of transcription from the Cyrillic alphabet into English, any Russian words in this thesis are transcribed according to the principles applied in Slavonic and East European Review. However, in the case of proper names of authors who published in English, the form in which they themselves chose their surnames to appear is used in this thesis, although it may contradict the principles of the Slavonic and East European Review system. This is notably the case with Leičik, whose name would be transcribed as Leichik.)


Christopher Taylor, 'Vocabulary acquisition for student interpreters: Recommendations on the judicious reading of newspapers', The Interpreters' Newsletter, No. 5 (1995), 72 - 76.
Making as much as possible of the interpreters' work automatic through preparation beforehand has been dealt with by several other authors as well\textsuperscript{55}.

Although, as opposed to their clients, interpreters may have less extensive knowledge of the subject dealt with, since they are professional listeners\textsuperscript{56}, used to maintaining high levels of concentration for prolonged periods of time\textsuperscript{57}, grasping a source text in its entirety for rendering it in the receptor language, this may work to their advantage. Interpreters do not, in fact, need global understanding of the source texts, it is sufficient for them to understand them on the "molecular" level\textsuperscript{58}. Moreover, there exists a point in understanding which allows interpreters to grasp the logic of the source texts\textsuperscript{59}. The redundancy of source texts for specialists to whom they are addressed enables them to get the message from the interpreters' rendering\textsuperscript{60}. Interpreters are also professional speakers, which sets them apart from some clients for whom they work\textsuperscript{61}. An additional point can be that since the knowledge of


\textsuperscript{57} Cf. Gile, \textit{Basic Concepts}, p. 189.

\textsuperscript{58} Cf. Gile, 'Les termes techniques en interprétation simultanée', in 'La formation', p. 19 of the paper.


\textsuperscript{60} Cf. Gile, 'La logique du japonais et la traduction: un exemple', in 'La formation', p. 10 of the paper.

\textsuperscript{61} Cf. Gile, \textit{Basic Concepts}, p. 215.
interpreters is limited, they usually have no personal opinions on matters mentioned in the source texts which could interfere with their rendering, and so they are able to provide their clients with the source text message in an unbiased form. And, finally, before an interpreting commission, and partly also while it is unfolding, interpreters can make use of research skills, parallel to specialised journalists, who are also non-specialists writing about specialised knowledge.

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The differences between translation and interpreting do not manifest themselves only in the time of the acquisition of necessary knowledge and the conditions for improving that knowledge during translation or interpreting, but also in the procedure of the transfer process itself, in the processing of the source text. Translation and interpreting are diametrically opposed to each other in that while translators could start translating a source text from anywhere (although they most probably start at the beginning), skip any problematic passages (maybe the title of the text, which can be inserted in the receptor script later), just mark any doubts in the text for a later look-up or additional checking, dictate a version to be typed by someone else and then polish it into its final version, use computer boilerplates, proceed from the easy to the more challenging - interpreters have to process a source text in the order in which they receive, i.e. hear it. Such difficult conditions for the interpreters’ activity may be compensated for by differing requirements on the interpreters’ output.

Translation involves “above all fidelity to the author’s stated text; while in interpretation it means above all fidelity to the speaker’s communicative intent.” Following this premise, Brian Harris has demonstrated how in interpreting, as opposed to translation, when, for example, the interpreter has not written down the exact figures pronounced by a speaker, the listeners may tolerate if he or she only conveys to them the order of magnitude. If interpreters have not heard or understood part of the source texts, they can improvise, aiming at giving the audience “the essence of what is being said”, thus being faithful to the

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communicative intent of the speaker. For example, when interpreters have not heard, understood or remembered precisely, they can give the audience rounded figures, approximate dates\(^67\), simplified names of institutions or organisations mentioned by the source text author, etc. They can refer to a participant of an interpreted situation as 'our colleague', 'the chairman', etc., when they do not at that moment remember the person's exact name. Robin Setton pointed out that interpreters may, for example, use the strategy of summarising calendar dates which have escaped them (because they have not heard them properly, have not managed to note them down exactly, or have not remembered them and have no documentation at hand), combined with the strategy of referring the delegates to available written materials where the missing dates can be found\(^68\).

Because of the emphasis on rendering the intention of the speaker in interpreting, less attention may be paid to the form of the source speech itself, although the interpreter has to have passive memory of original expressions or turns of phrase used, in order to be able to react, in case they are taken up by another speaker (for example, unusual expressions, idioms, proverbs, etc.). However, Allison Beeby has pointed out that audience expectations of formal textual perfection in interpreting may be lower than in written translation:

> There are cases of oral translation in which a less-than-perfect command of pronunciation, syntax and idiomatic expression is acceptable if it does not cause a breakdown in the communicative situation\(^69\).

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\(^67\) Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p. 143.

\(^68\) Robin Setton, Chair of one part of the afternoon session, 5 June 1993, discussion in the Section: Interpreting, The Second Language International Conference, Elsinore, Denmark.

\(^69\) Allison Beeby, 'Delimiting Difficulties and Establishing Progression in Teaching Professional Translation from Spanish (A-language) to English (B-language)', in Pagnoulle and Mason (eds.).
Interpreting, in contrast to translation, especially literary translation, has its relative advantages - translation of a literary text involves stylistic issues\textsuperscript{70}, while interpreters do not work under such constraint. The receptor text in the written translation of fiction, for example, may only tolerate information additions if they blend invisibly with the text\textsuperscript{71}. The receptor text in interpreting, on the other hand, is not judged for its artistic merit, but for its informational content. Nevertheless, interpreter’s additions which gel into the receptor text are less likely to be felt as disturbing by the audience, as interfering with the text, which may improve their acceptability\textsuperscript{72}.

Greater latitude in interpreting, in terms of lexical choices, grammar or style, as compared to written translation, is acknowledged by several authors\textsuperscript{73}. The approximative approach of an interpreter to the source text may be due mainly to the evanescence of the source text words, which makes it impossible for the interpreter to go back to them for checking, something that remains an option for a translator of written texts. The following may therefore serve as a motto for interpreters: “Interpreting is faster than translating, less linguistically perfect and elegant, BUT equally faithful”\textsuperscript{74}.

In some areas of interpreting, however, this latitude may be less justified - for example in court interpreting\textsuperscript{75}, since any component of the legal process, not least the exactness of formulation, may be pivotal for assessing a person’s innocence or...

\textsuperscript{70} Cf. all items by Vilikovský; cf. also Wolfram Wilss, \textit{Knowledge and Skills in Translator Behavior} (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1996).

\textsuperscript{71} According to several authors, among them, Vilikovský.


\textsuperscript{73} Cf. Gile, ‘La communication’, p. 68; cf. also Donovan-Cagigos, ‘La fidélité’, p. 27.

guilt, for granting immigration status, etc. Miriam Shlesinger points out that in courts
of law, attention to form of the source speech can come into play, since the incidence
of flow-monitoring devices and disfluences can be relevant for assessing the truth
value of the discourse.\(^76\)

In interpreting (other than during work in courts) it may not only be possible to
sacrifice detail, but some of the procedures like "omissions, ambiguities and vague
referents"\(^77\) represent "desirable economies"\(^78\) since interpreting forms part of a
multichannel communication situation\(^79\). Interpreting may benefit from other, non-
verbal, channels conveying anything which may be missing in the verbal receptor
text. Interpreters may take shortcuts and save time and effort on those parts of the
source text message which may be rendered by means other than verbal, for
example by visual material (like slides, photographs, pictures, diagrams, etc.),
through body language, gestures (although this may be culture-specific\(^80\)) or by other
means (for example, available written documentation)\(^81\).

\(^76\) Shlesinger, 'Simultaneous Interpretation', p. 68.
\(^77\) Harris, 'Prolegomenon', p. 160.
\(^78\) Harris, 'Prolegomenon', p. 160.
\(^79\) Cf. Ivana Čeňková, 'Le rôle de l'audiovisuel dans la formation des interprètes de conférence', in
Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), *Translation Studies: An interdiscipline* (Amsterdam/
déviances délibérées de la littéralité en interprétation de conférence' (unpublished PhD dissertation,
University of Paris, 1978); Donovan-Cagigos, 'La fidélité', pp. 28, and 52; Pöchhacker, 'From
knowledge to text', p. 90; Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous interpretation: "Cultural transfer" or "voice-over
text"?', in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), *Translation Studies: An interdiscipline*
(Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 169 - 178 (p. 170ff); or Chernov, 'Message
Redundancy'.
\(^80\) Cf. Loredana Polezzi, 'Non di sole parole: Italian gestures between language and culture', on
the differences between Italian and English body language, paper presented on 11 March 1994, Centre for
British and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Warwick; cf. also Jane Shackman, *The Right to
be Understood: A handbook on working with, employing and training community interpreters*
\(^81\) Some authors - cf. Donovan-Cagigos, 'La fidélité', p. 391, have pointed out similarities between
interpreting and drama, where the impact on the audience also has to be immediate, since there is no
possibility of re-playing again what has already been performed on the stage. If the viewers of a play
do not grasp the meaning intended by the playwright the first time, it may be irretrievably lost for them
The conditions under which interpreters work, differ considerably from those of translators - the time pressure forces the interpreters to process much larger quantities of source texts in a given time than translators do. While translators may find their way through the vocabulary of the source text at their leisure, for an interpreter, crucial qualities are quick reactions, flexibility and ready availability of vocabulary. Extensive vocabulary which would not at the same time be rapidly accessible to the interpreter, but would have to be mused over, might even become an obstacle - slowing down the choice of final wording for the receptor text. The interpreter's approach therefore includes fast switching between generic and specific vocabulary, hyponyms and hyperonyms, the use of synonyms or antonyms, resorting to paraphrase, etc.

Severe time constraints are the most prominent of the specific conditions and circumstances under which interpreting happens, since it is a real-time process. If

(although in some cases they can resort to a published text of the drama later, which, however, happens outside the framework of the performance itself). Another similarity between interpreting and theatre performance may consist in the complementarity of gesture, intonation and other non-verbal means of communication in both genres. There can also be found similarities of interpreting with voice-overs and subtitling, especially in the area of dealing with cultural references. First, similarly to interpreting, with voice-overs and subtitling there also applies the impossibility of using footnotes or endnotes in any of these genres; second, there operate time constraints (which in subtitling demonstrate themselves as spatial constraints, linked to the reading speed of the viewers), and third, the image and its accompanying commentary are synchronous (or nearly synchronous) which makes it difficult, for example, to carry out manipulations with the order of textual elements. However, compared to the immediacy of interpreting, voice-overs and subtitles stand out by the reproduced character of the situation referred to, which imposes a set of specific constraints, mainly lower predictability. Moreover, the person providing the voice-over and especially subtitling usually has some preparation time and access to reference materials or native informants, although this may not always apply in topical voice-overs, for example, news, where there may be little or no time for doing it.

In some cases of voice-overs, an interview is recorded with interpreting, but the interpreting is only used by the journalist as a raw translation, later this text is edited and read out by a professional commentator.

82 Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p. 68; cf. also Gile, Basic Concepts, pp. 37, 84, and 223; or Shlesinger, 'Shifts in Cohesion', p. 194.

83 Cf. Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous interpretation: "Cultural transfer" or "voice-over text"?', p. 172.
translation can never be finished, just abandoned\textsuperscript{84}, the impossibility of achieving a final or a definite receptor text applies even more to interpreting as a consequence of the speed with which all its constituent operations have to be carried out. No parts of the source text can be left for later processing, the interpreter has to deal with the text within the time span deemed appropriate by the clients, who impose the speed on the interpreter - both on the emitting and the receiving ends. In the simultaneous mode of interpreting the interpreter has no possibility of influencing the speed of the incoming text, other than asking the chairperson of a meeting beforehand to monitor the speed of individual speakers and to request those participants who exceed it to speak more slowly, otherwise a fast speaker may only slow down when listeners protest after interpreting has collapsed. In the consecutive mode of interpreting the speed itself of the speaker may be less relevant (unless an excessive number of words per minute hampers the interpreter's taking in or understanding of the source text, or jotting down any notes), however, clients of consecutive interpreting may impose the segmentation of the text on the interpreters, which these may not have the possibility to change during the event, although it may not coincide with their usual or preferred way of processing texts\textsuperscript{85}. However, consecutive interpreters may be able to agree beforehand the approximate size of segments of the source text a speaker will pronounce before making a pause for interpreting, which, however, does not guarantee that speakers may not get carried away once they start talking.


\textsuperscript{85} Once my English client kept making a pause after every two or three words and would not say a complete sentence or paragraph, in good faith that this was making my interpreting more precise, reflecting more faithfully in Slovak what he was trying to say in English.
Clients may also impose speed on the interpreter in a different sense - by expecting the interpreting to happen within certain time limits they feel comfortable with, to the extent of asking the interpreter in some cases to provide them only with summarised interpreting\textsuperscript{86}. Alternatively, a client whose turn comes next, may start talking before the interpreter has finished rendering the previous segment by the client’s counterpart, thus making the interpreter to split attention between listening to a new passage by another speaker and rendering the preceding one. In some cases, when several Slovaks are present, the next Slovak person starts talking as soon as the first Slovak speaker has finished, i. e. before the interpreter started rendering the first speech. Thus the interpreter has to wait for all the turns to be taken and then, while interpreting into English, also has to indicate, verbally or non-verbally, who was the author of a particular segment.

The simultaneous interpreter cannot stop the flow of interpreting, otherwise the incoming source text would not get processed and would be lost. Not only does the interpreter have to keep listening to the source speech, analysing it and producing a receptor text, as the source speech continues to come in, but listeners also have to pay constant attention to the interpreted text, because they cannot go back to what has already been said; they, too, have to understand, or react, on the spot. The impact in interpreting has to be immediate, in other words, both the interpreter and the audience have to “get it right” the first time. (With the exception of those listeners who do not want to get the whole message, because they may be listening with a specific purpose in mind\textsuperscript{87}.)

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\textsuperscript{86} As will be shown later, in the chapter on consecutive interpreting.
\textsuperscript{87} Cf. Déjean Le Féal, ‘Lectures et improvisations’, p. 103.
Apart from the time constraints, interpreting is also characterised by spatial constraints: it may be difficult for interpreters to consult dictionaries or reference works when encountering a problem in the source text. To a very limited extent it may be possible to use dictionaries or reference materials - for example, when interpreters work somewhere inside, seated, when sources are at hand, maybe because they themselves brought some. However, dictionaries usually only provide a clue to a solution, an inspiration, not the solution itself, and looking up a word or an expression might still necessitate some thinking and decision-making process. Moreover, even in a situation where interpreters might reach for a dictionary, frequent referral to it might undermine the clients' trust towards the interpreters.

Consulting a dictionary may also reinforce the belief of some clients that interpreting is just a mechanical substitution of words in one language by words in another. Additionally, it would interrupt the eye contact of the interpreter with clients.

88 Eye contact, which the interpreter is supposed to maintain with clients all the time, was stressed, for example, by the trainers during the Institute of Translation and Interpreting Workshop on Consecutive Interpreting in London in January 1994. It has also been one of the assessment criteria of interpreter-training institutions - cf. Leong Ko, 'Teaching dialogue interpreting', in Dollerup and Appel (eds.), *Teaching Translation and Interpreting* 3 (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1996), pp. 119 - 127. Eye contact is included in the list of communication and interpersonal skills indirectly related to successful interpreting - cf. Marsha Sanders, 'Training for community interpreters', in Picken (ed.), *ITI Conference 6* (London: Aslib, 1992), pp. 45 - 50 (p. 49). However, in Slovakia eye contact was never important in the communist past - the expression eye contact does not even exist in Slovak. It does not exist in Czech either, and according to my enquiries, Ukrainian, Russian, Slovenian and Croatian lack it too. However, it is interesting to note that kontakt wzrokowy ('eye contact') has existed in Polish for a long time. An expression visual contact has recently been adopted in Slovak, Czech, Ukrainian and Russian, for example, during various personnel development courses. Initial courses in the new democracies were taught by overseas instructors, who trained local trainers, so it may have been interpreters who coined this expression in the receptor languages. Vizuálny kontakt ('visual contact') was mentioned, for example, in a brief lunchtime programme in September 1995 on the Slovak national radio station. An expression kontakt s publikom ('contact with the public') has been introduced during courses for undergraduates studying Advertising at Comenius University in Bratislava. Students have been using this term when their practice videos were shot, where it may be more suitable to talk about 'public' than it may be in the case of bilateral communication in a small group. However, as a recent development in the Slovak interpreting market, many Slovak clients have been expecting the eye contact - in case the interpreter does not provide it from the beginning of the event, they tend to turn towards him or her.
Interpreting, as opposed to written translation, is also characterised by a difficulty for interpreters to discuss a particular problem with their colleagues, or alternatively, with specialists in a given area of knowledge, without exposing the interpreting process to the danger of collapsing, or without risking the loss of credibility by the listeners - in those situations where either other colleagues, or experts may be available for consultation. Moreover, in protocol configurations during official visits, only the interpreter whose turn has come, can talk, he or she cannot be helped by the colleague, although the other interpreter may know a better rendering.

Whereas nowadays translators have the option of making use of electronic communications, accessing terminology databanks, or posting unknown technical terms on specialised electronic bulletin boards, these are out of bounds for interpreters. Interpreters may rely only on themselves for finding solutions to problems occurring in the course of their work. On the other hand, an interpreter in the consecutive mode may, to a certain extent, use the option of asking the speaker on the spot about unknown expressions or notions, which a translator as a rule cannot do. A translator only rarely meets the author of the source text, who may live far away, may not be willing to help the translator with unclear passages, or (especially in the case of the translation of fiction) may already have died by the time a translation is being prepared. Authors of source speeches to be interpreted may be

89 If interpreters want to discuss any problems, they have to restrict themselves to breaks during interpreted events or the time before they start.
90 A substantial part of the annual conferences of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting is usually devoted to papers and presentations on these state-of-the-art facilities.
91 Although the European Union has been preparing terminological tools for interpreters - cf. Helen Campbell, 'DAI - What it is, what it does and for whom', Polygloss, vol. I, issue I, (1997), 1 - 2 (p. 1); cf. also other articles in the same issue.
92 Some authors, when asked for clarification of their texts, may be offended, especially those in high positions in a company's hierarchy. Similar experience is mentioned by Wright, 'The Inappropriateness', p. 78.
more motivated to make their meaning clear through the interpreter, because by the look on the faces of their listeners, or by inappropriate verbal reactions, they may see they have not been (fully) understood, and may therefore be more helpful when asked by the interpreter (or by the audience through the interpreter) for clarification or additional information. Listeners may also sometimes check the intended meaning of the speaker, if they are not sure they have grasped it\textsuperscript{93}. The same may be done by the speaker - to make sure the audience has understood\textsuperscript{94}. To mediate in this checking, the listeners or the speaker may use the services of the interpreter. In interpreting, as opposed to translation, getting the message across there and then is foregrounded in the interpreter's activity, since it may be oriented at more instant goals which may have to be achieved by the time the interpreted event is over.

Translators of written texts may only have a rough idea of the audience which will read their translations. Moreover, other people than those originally intended may read a translation, since it is produced in a lasting written form. Not only published translations, but also internal, for-information-only texts may be read by more people than initially planned. On the contrary, an interpreter, being in immediate contact with the clients, may stand a better chance of knowing them and, at least partly, adapting the receptor text to their needs and expectations.

Interpreters may make use of feedback from the audience as guidance on how to proceed if something in the interpreting goes wrong at the beginning, or to reinforce them to work in the same vein as before. Even if the interpreters may not know the listeners, they can see them and receive feedback from them. In interpreting, the

\textsuperscript{93} Cf. Gile, \textit{Basic Concepts}. 
immediate feedback may be non-verbal and/or verbal. The non-verbal (usually visual) feedback may be either positive: the listeners may look satisfied, may be nodding their heads, or, on the contrary, negative: they may look puzzled, may be, for example, shaking heads or raising eyebrows. An interpreter may also get verbal feedback from the audience, which may be positive: the listeners may ask apposite questions during the discussion, showing that they have grasped the intended meaning of the author of the source speech, as rendered by the interpreter. Alternatively, when the feedback is negative, they may ask inappropriate questions, indicating that they have not understood (either due to their own gaps in knowledge of the subject discussed, or to incorrect rendering by the interpreter); or they may explicitly say they have not got the meaning. Listeners may take the initiative and actively ask for explanations of anything that may have remained unclear to them. They may do so by interrupting the interpreter, or leave it until after he or she has finished talking, which may have repercussions for the credibility of the interpreter. When an interpreter gets interrupted for clarification, not only may the person asking, but also the other party to the mediated communication lose trust in his or her knowledge and skills.

As a result of audience feedback, interpreters may reiterate their earlier rendering (especially if they think they were just not heard properly), or rectify it if it seems unacceptable to the client(s), maybe by paraphrasing or explaining. Alternatively, the interpreters may not deal with such a situation, but may ask the speaker to be more specific, etc. This last approach may apply particularly in cases where the

94 Once (in 1987) my client used the term think tank and she herself asked me whether it was clear to me and whether I knew how to render it into Slovak, since she realised the novelty of the term and wanted to make sure that her message got through.
interpreters themselves are not sure of the meaning, or where, due to sensitivity of an issue, they want to remain neutral. Sometimes the feedback comes at the end of an event, when thanks are expressed to the interpreters, or after it has finished, when, for example, questionnaires evaluating the quality of interpreting are filled in by the participants. These, however, cannot influence the immediate performance of the interpreter, although, if taken seriously, they may contribute to improvements in the future. This kind of feedback resembles the feedback which translators of written texts may receive in the form of letters from their satisfied, or dissatisfied, readers.

Now that the main differences between translation and interpreting have been discussed, some individual components of the situation in which interpreting unfolds will be highlighted in the following chapter.
Chapter 3 Situational Context of Interpreting

Interpreting unfolds in a specific situation, in which physical and social aspects of the environment can be distinguished\(^1\). The situation is taken as one of the factors influencing a speaker’s style in an original speech, especially with regard to making elements of it explicit or keeping them implicit, whenever the information may be conveyed by other, non-verbal means\(^2\). Interpreters, as secondary speakers, also benefit from the situational context which may, on the one hand, provide them with clues to the meaning of the source texts, and on the other, help formulate their receptor versions in a more economical way. Not only do interpreters produce their output for flesh-and-blood people, they may be seen as interpreting people\(^3\), not texts, and so their decisions may best be taken on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with knowledge of the situation\(^4\).

Interpreting represents a decision making process under uncertainty\(^5\) - among the sources of which may be listed, for example, poorly constructed speeches\(^6\), authors

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\(^1\) Interpreting may not always form an important part of an event where it is used, for example, if most participants are fluent in the language of the speaker(s) and interpreting is provided in the simultaneous whispered mode for only some individuals.


\(^4\) Situation as a concern for interpreters has been highlighted by Thiéry - cf. ‘The Sense of Situation’; cf. also David Snelling, ‘A Typology of Interpretation for Teaching Purposes’, in Gran and Dodds (eds.), The theoretical and practical aspects of teaching conference interpretation (Udine: Campanotto, 1989), pp. 141 - 142.


\(^6\) Cf., for example, Ian F. Finlay, Language Services in Industry (London: Crosby Lockwood/Granada, 1973), p. 116; cf. also Stefan Ćirič, ‘Případ Lorándová aneb jednáme správně’ [The Lorándová Case or Acting in the Correct Manner], TOP, No. 2 (1990), 8; Arthur Lindsay, ‘How to discredit top-quality
using language other than their own, or resorting to neologisms, etc.\textsuperscript{7} Bad style may be found not only in “first-time speakers”, but also in professional authors of texts:

...les hommes politiques, les journalistes, les publicitaires et autres professionnels des relations publiques, les artistes de tout poil, les ecclésiastiques et, trop souvent aussi, les écrivains et les enseignants, tous ceux donc qui font métier de transmettre ... l’information et la culture, massacrent allègrement leur propre langue et se servent bien mal de leur voix.\textsuperscript{8}

It has been pointed out that individual people may differ in their rhetorical abilities, in their public speaking skills, some would need training to improve the effectiveness of what they want to say. Thus the material an interpreter has to deal with may not follow the best Ciceronian tradition. People not used to speaking in public may violate the Gricean conversational maxims, without being aware of that. Another case is an intentional violation of these maxims, as discussed on a sample of political speeches by Marco Lodi Rizzini\textsuperscript{9}, who demonstrated that vagueness and ambiguity form an integral part of the text type of political speeches. Vagueness according to Lodi Rizzini results from a voluntary decision of the speaker trying to make the

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products', in Translation - the vital link (London: ITI, 1993), vol. II, pp. 515 - 521; Wright, 'The Inappropriateness', p. 78; Mark Herman, 'Technical Translation Style: Clarity, Concision, Correctness', in S. and L. Wright (eds.), Scientific and Technical Translation (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1993), pp. 11 - 19 (p. 17); Giambagli, 'L'interprétation en relais', p. 92; Piotr Kuhwczak, 'Translation as cultural trade', in Pantaleoni and Salmon Kovarski (eds.), Sapere Linguistico e Sapere Enciclopedico (Bologna: Universitaria Editrice, 1995), pp. 233 - 240 (p. 234); Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 118; Lazarovová, p. 11; or Viaggio, 'Do Interpreters Have the Right', p. 71. Some of these deal with source texts for written translation, some for both translation and interpreting, while some exclusively for interpreting. However, they can all be relevant for interpreting for two reasons: first, written texts can become source texts for interpreting and, second, if authors of written source texts, who have time to prepare them, do not take enough care with written texts, less care can be expected to be taken with spoken texts, for the preparation of which less time is usually allocated.


content of a political speech as neutral as possible and keep an unlimited margin for manoeuvring, hide socially unacceptable behaviour, avoid taking positions on an embarrassing subject, trying not to displease. Ambiguity may also be intentional - utilised by a speaker to hide an unpopular or illegitimate intention, avoid responsibility, or refuse to give information.

Apart from the pressure caused by low-quality source texts (whether intended by the speakers, or unintentional), the difficulty of interpreting is aggravated by the inherent stress under which it evolves, which makes it necessary to put good training in place, for example, make the trainees realise that there may be more ways of expressing the same message, then they are bound to remember at least something once they start working professionally under pressure. On the other hand, too many ready-made solutions may sometimes cause confusion during the decision-making process since they may hinder the needed verbal ease. One of the aims of interpreter training is to make the trainees capable of working with texts in a flexible manner, without getting stopped by individual words or expressions from a source text which, due to differences between languages and cultures, may resist interpreting – an interpreter can work on a larger, syntactic unit.

One of the dimensions of the situation allowing such flexibility, or not, is the extent of interpreters' familiarity with the subject about which they are commissioned to interpret. When working for the same client for a longer period of time, interpreters

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10 Cf. Lodi Rizzini, p. 124.
12 In terms of stress, interpreting has been likened, for example, to the work of air traffic controllers - cf. Peter Moser, 'Survey on Expectations of Users of Conference Interpretation: Final Report' (Vienna: AIIC, 1995), p. B-10.
may get to know the client's preferred terminology. It is advisable to ask clients questions about technical terms before an event or during any breaks which occur, when terms, including their possible variations, jargon, can be picked up. However, terminology learned during one interpreting event may not always be usable for another interpreting commission because it may only be jargon, preferred by one particular audience. While individual technical terms may not be directly applicable to another interpreting situation, the knowledge of the underlying concepts stays with the interpreters, facilitating faster comprehension and greater flexibility during future commissions. Expectations of the audience comprise an element in a cost-benefit analysis which interpreters carry out within the framework of a given situation, trying to please whenever it does not represent excessively high cost, for example, in the form of additional demands on their working memory.

Another dimension of the situation is the stage of mutual contacts of the two parties at which a particular interpreter enters. An interpreter may be asked to work on a commission at a point when communication between the two parties has already started, or progressed quite far\(^1\). In such a case the interpreter may be less aware of the background of the interaction than the clients. Apart from that, interpreters may know more, or know less about the particular audience they are to work for on a given occasion. This type of knowledge, however, may be more important for spontaneous speeches than in situations where individual contributions are read by participants from written, pre-prepared materials, because ambiguities which such

\(^1\) Marika Székelyová, personal communication, 1992.

\(^2\) Pointed out also by Susan Bassnett, during a PhD seminar at the University of Warwick, 11 October 1995. Whereas a translator is expected to start translating a text from the beginning and translate all of it (except for co-ordinated group projects), an interpreter may be asked to come in at a quite late stage in the process of mutual communication between the two parties.
knowledge may help solve may occur mainly in the dialogic cases\textsuperscript{16}. Knowing the speakers and their background may provide interpreters with clues for rendering unclear passages in source speeches. Intentions of the speaker may more easily be discerned, and rendered, by an interpreter familiar with the speaker's background. Similarly, understanding non-native speakers may be easier on the basis of knowing the position of the speaker's country\textsuperscript{17}. Interpreters without this background information may, in any cases of doubt, take the easier way out - in order not to risk saying anything incorrect, they may smooth out any discrepancies from the source speech, or use more vague expressions, thus becoming imprecise as to the intention of the speaker, even to the extent of giving the opposite meaning in the receptor language\textsuperscript{18}. How much the interpreters may be aware of the planned outcome of a particular meeting may improve the predictability and make their performance less strenuous.

Information about the subject, the audience and the planned outcome of a meeting may be gathered from background material given to the interpreters beforehand, the availability and type of which may have an impact on the quality of their work. Such information may also be gained during a pre-conference/pre-event briefing\textsuperscript{19}.

\textsuperscript{18} Cf. the Danish delegate example mentioned by Seleskovitch.
\textsuperscript{19} Cf. Maria Cristina Palazzi Gubertini, 'De l'utilité du "briefing" pour l'interprétation simultanée', in Gran and Taylor (eds.), 	extit{Aspects of applied and experimental research on conference interpretation} (Udine: Campanotto, 1990), pp. 237 - 244.

In my experience as an interpreter, a pre-event briefing can range from a terminology "crash course", introductions of the most frequently mentioned names of persons or organisations, through summaries of speeches to be presented, to results hoped for in a meeting. Some organisers provide ample background material in written form, others allow the interpreter a pre-view of videos, films, slides or other visual material which will be used during the event. Sometimes the interpreter is able to meet not only the organiser(s), but speakers themselves and go through their scripts with them. In some cases, however, all the organisers do is show the interpreter the room where the event is going to happen.
Alternatively, interpreters may familiarise themselves with the subject, the audience and the planned outcome of a meeting through frequent mutual contacts with the clients - interpreters who have worked for the same clients before, may have learned more about these components of the situation. In-house interpreters for a given company may be in a better position to know various background details, which may help make their work easier, especially when solving cases of textual ambiguity, dealing with poor audibility or anticipating what may be said, or done, next.

Other dimensions of the situation are reflected in the following series of considerations: how relevant the area in which the interpreted event is happening may be for the life of the receptor community as a whole. For example, in the case of a business deal - business, joint ventures, foreign investment may, or may not, be in the forefront of the receptor community's attention. If the given area features prominently in the life of a community, more may be expected to have been written about it in press or mentioned in other mass media, so it may be easier for translators or interpreters to find the correct vocabulary, the usual, habitual, more appropriate technical terms to designate the underlying concepts. The general public may then also have better understanding of those concepts, knowledge of accompanying events, awareness of business practices, etc. Cultural references in those areas may therefore remain less obscure. As a result, the interpreter may be

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20 For example, Lance Hewson points out that since medically-oriented discourse occurs frequently in France, medical terms are familiar to the general public - cf. 'Detecting Cultural Shifts: Some Notes on Translation Assessment', in Pagnoulle and Mason (eds.), Cross-words: Issues and Debates in Literary and Non-literary Translating (Liege: University of Liege, 1995), pp. 101 - 108 (p. 104).

using more elliptical expressions, adding fewer explanations in the receptor text and
still getting the source text message across. All this saves time, a crucial commodity
for any interpreter, always in short supply.

If an interpreter applies the strategy of substituting source-text cultural references in
the receptor text or the strategy of adding detailed explanations of them, one of the
considerations emerging in this connection may be the point where to stop, which
does not seem defined. Another issue may be the lack of a guarantee that the
interpreter's substitutions or explanations are correct. Mona Baker provides an
example where a translator from French into English gave readers wrong information
by incorrectly explaining Arsen Lupin as ‘Boris Karloff’. Misinformation, however, is
less useful than partial information, or even zero information of a segment of the
source text. In the case of partial information, the receiver of a translated or
interpreted text may make an effort to find out about the missing parts of it, but once
a piece of information has been given, the receiver may not suspect it to be incorrect,
may just accept it as correct, and may thus be misled into wrong conclusions. If the
French-English translator had opted for transcoding Arsen Lupin into the receptor
text without adding any explanation, readers might have been provided with only
partial information, but it would have been less off the mark and would not have
introduced mistaken connotations as 'Boris Karloff' did.

Other issues may arise as well, for example, the authorisation of the interpreter to
supply the listeners with explanations of cultural references. The attitude of the

\[ \text{At present, PHARE programme, funded by the European Union, is supporting a public awareness}
\text{campaign in Slovakia to improve the understanding of bonds, shareholders economy, etc. From a}
\text{material of the Government Office, 1998.}
\]

\[ \text{Mona Baker, In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation (London/New York: Routledge, 1992), p.}
\text{231.} \]
audience itself to explanations added by interpreter may also vary. People using the services of an interpreter may, or may not, be interested in other cultures, they may, or may not, respect foreigners. The receptor environment may be more tolerant to people coming from certain specific countries, which may also change historically. Members of the receptor community may be willing to accept foreign ideas, or may insist on something with a real home-grown feel. They may be open to new ideas, or, on the contrary, may be apprehensive of anything novel. They may be more prepared to identify with new or foreign ideas if these are presented as traditional, home-like ideas, etc. So ethnocentricity and xenophobia of the members of the receptor culture on the one hand, versus their openness to the new, the unknown or the different may vary, and so may the extent of knowledge they have about the source culture.

Interpreters may not know what the listeners are unfamiliar with. In spontaneously spoken source texts, not available in written form beforehand, interpreters cannot anticipate what cultural reference an author may use, hint at or imply. Thus they cannot find out from the listeners how much they know about it. Even if the interpreters are aware of the clients' extent of general knowledge about the counterpart culture, some specific details may have remained unknown to them. Alternatively, even clients with virtually no knowledge of the counterpart culture may know about one small detail of it (perhaps a specific cultural reference) and as a consequence may not want explanations about it. Interpreters may be viewed as

24 For example, the government policy orientation in Czechoslovakia after 1989 turned away from the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc towards Western Europe and the USA. This has had a knock-on effect on publishing, arts, film, etc., which entails the access of the public to specific cultural references.
patronising if they provide those sufficiently aware of the source culture with what may be seen as over-explanations\textsuperscript{26}. By a condescending approach, the interpreters may antagonise their clients. Alternatively, if it was not clear that the additional explanatory information was supplied by the interpreter, the listeners may suspect the other party to the communication, the source text author, to be patronising, by providing explanations of phenomena with which they may be familiar.

Some audiences may insist on linguistic quality of the interpreter's output, they may prefer grammatical correctness, even if the source text message may have been slightly modified by the interpreter, or, the opposite may be the case: they may tolerate ungrammaticality, so long as the message has been rendered precisely. This attitude may motivate interpreters to pay heightened attention to either the form, or the content when producing the receptor text. For example, in Slovak, interpreters are usually expected (and required) by their clients to achieve agreement in the grammatical gender and number between nouns and their modifying adjectives, although it is irrelevant from the point of view of information transmission, since it is only a grammatical requirement - the lack of such agreement does not affect the meaning, the message itself. Sometimes interpreters may opt for a more general, or a more specific, noun in Slovak only because it agrees with the adjective in gender and number, if they have already pronounced an adjective (or a whole string of adjectives), since it (they) would have been put in the masculine, feminine or neuter.

\textsuperscript{25} Toury includes "resistance to interference", which may in a way be parallel to xenophobia, as a factor while formulating translations - cf. \textit{Descriptive}, p. 277.

\textsuperscript{26} Some Finnish and Hungarian delegates at the International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994, preferred an interpreter not providing the clients with any additional information, but assuming they are familiar with all cultural references, until they specifically ask for explanations. Personal communication, 1994.
gender. In this way the interpreters may not have to correct themselves by reiterating all adjectives and nouns in the right gender, which would be time-consuming and would also impact on their credibility in the eyes of the clients, but the message may have been slightly modified by the choice of the noun solely, or mostly, on the basis of its gender, if it was not a complete synonym of the noun which would correspond to the meaning of the source text expression. However, strong emphasis on the culture of speech, due to rich literary tradition in Slovakia, makes the Slovak clients of interpreting expect high quality of language in the interpreter's output, disregarding the challenging circumstances under which it has to be produced.

Listeners coming from other cultures may differ in their degree of tolerance to linguistic as opposed to factual errors: some may be prepared to make greater mental effort to understand an interpreted message than others. While Slovak clients tend to emphasise linguistic correctness of receptor texts in Slovak, English clients usually insist on factual correctness and remain mostly undisturbed by the interpreter's stylistic errors. The interpreter's renderings into English may always contain some grammatical and stylistic errors – since Slovak interpreters have to work not only into Slovak, but also into English, their foreign language, and since most of them have not been exposed to native English in a sufficient number of situations or during a prolonged period of time. So, in a way, English clients of Slovak-English interpreters have had to be satisfied with what they could realistically

27 Since in Slovak adjectives usually precede the noun in noun phrases, when interpreting from a language which distinguishes grammatical gender, the Slovak interpreter may apply the source-text gender to the adjective(s) initially, due to interference, although the Slovak gender may differ; while when interpreting from English, the interpreter would probably tend to apply masculine gender as unmarked, and the Slovak gender may differ in such a case too.
get. What clients require of interpreting may change with time – for example, with a higher number of experienced Slovak interpreters who have been immersed in the (British) English culture, better interpreting performance will become more and more current and will then be expected by the clients routinely. It may sometimes also depend on whether they have used interpreters before and what they expect from interpreting as such. Although Gabriele Mack and Lorella Cataruzza in their study concentrated on simultaneous interpreting, their findings may indicate the existence of differences in audience expectations, depending partly on their past history of interpreter usage. Research may also help establish to what extent clients have a different idea of the output of simultaneous as opposed to consecutive interpreting.

Maybe all users of interpreting services encounter both modes, or maybe congress organisers use only the simultaneous mode of interpreting, while protocol and government officials use only the consecutive mode, with its diplomacy dimension relatively prominent.

The expectations and requirements of the clients in a given situation may have impact on the way an interpreter works. For example, Jack Peffers wanted the interpreters for *Enterprise Education in Slovakia* to identify with the cause while they were interpreting, as is documented in his post-project interviews. The interpreters were expected to provide a range of services: "as interpreter, cultural counsellor, host, minder, link, translator, adviser, school co-ordinator, promoter, cajoler, pusher, ambassador, helping the UK team to avoid cultural mistakes, helping them along the
path - doing different things in each of those roles, each of which created a role conflict".

Knowing the clients may also have a psychological effect, putting the interpreter at ease, thus reducing the stress inherent in the situation. Moreover, in the case of an interpreter with a good reputation, some clients may be more predisposed to grant him or her more credibility even before the start of an interpreted event. When both the client and the interpreter know each other’s styles of working, both of them may feel more secure. On the other hand, some organisers of events where interpreting is used may only want an interpreter to be present in order to demonstrate their attention to detail or adherence to (diplomatic) protocol, although they may have passive knowledge of the language of their counterparts and might manage without interpreting. In some of these cases the interpreter may serve as a scapegoat, especially during political events: a party to negotiations may avoid commitment by blaming a problem on an interpreter’s mistake.

In a given situation the interpreter may know (or may sense) the level of formality required - this usually follows from situational factors like the distance of the counterparts to the communication (whether they have met for the first time, or have been meeting for years, are close friends knowing each other’s families, etc.), the conventions of formality operating within the given cultures, the level at which the given negotiations are happening, the power positions of the participants within their

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28 From the taped interviews with interpreters, 1995.
30 A translator may also serve as a scapegoat: I was once asked to translate into English a paper for a literary conference, although its author was a prominent translator of Shakespeare into Slovak - in this way he had someone else to blame in case his paper was not well received at the conference.
respective organisations, or individual penchants (some people may start using informal address very soon in mutual contacts, while others may stay more official for a long time), etc.\textsuperscript{32}

An intricate interplay of power relationships operates in a consecutive interpreting situation, with the interpreter possessing the expert power\textsuperscript{33}, especially when the parties to the communication do not speak any of each other's language. Most of the above considerations will have some impact on the dynamics of the power relationships in interpreting situations, affecting not only specifically the expert power, but also other types of power, for example: who hires the interpreters, at what stage they join the negotiation process, how many times they have worked for the same group of people, whether their reputation makes them known and respected, how much background material they were allowed to study beforehand, how much they identify with the cause\textsuperscript{35} and how much they are required to identify with it, whether they come from outside as independent individuals, whether they constitute part of the home, or of the overseas delegation, whether they are in-house


\textsuperscript{32} Note that this paragraph has digressed from the Hofstede's model, since it lists distance separately from power. Power will be treated separately also in the following paragraph, because it draws on Brislin's understanding of the concept.


\textsuperscript{34} On power, cf. also Brislin, 'Introduction', in Brislin (ed.), \textit{Translation: Applications and Research} (New York: Gardner, 1976), pp. 1 - 43. Azar Mahloujian writes that interpreter has "massive power" over the communication – cf. 'A discussion between an interpreter and a translator', in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), \textit{The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe} (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 82 – 83 (p. 82).

\textsuperscript{35} The Know How Fund interpreters in Slovakia identified with the project to a considerable degree, they were keen for the Slovak clients to understand questions of the UK trainers and give replies to them, sometimes the interpreters themselves suggested to the Slovaks how to answer. They wanted the activities to be carried out smoothly and efficiently, the planned results of the project to be achieved, etc.
employees, etc. If the interpreter is a person possessing the (expert) power, since
the Slovak and (British) English cultures may differ in terms of their Power Distance
Index, this may cause differing power distance configurations in each of the
environments, or in the representations that the Slovak and the (British) English
partner make in their minds of the environment.

The position of an interpreter coming from outside on a one-off basis, differs from an
in-house employee, since the insider may give briefings, explanations or warnings to
the clients beforehand as well as agree strategies with them. In a situation where the
speaker and the interpreter co-operate on a long-term basis, it may be possible for
the interpreter to provide the clients with briefing or consultation services. For
example, K. A. Bishop has been able to warn his English clients to be economical
with proverbs or Latin quotes in their speeches, since these might not get across to
Russian audiences. Historical-factual perspective on any cultural references,
allowing for their full comprehension and appreciation, may be relegated to
occasions when the interpreter acts as cultural advisor, consultant - then various
details, cultural "etymology" of phenomena may be elaborated on. Moreover, an
employee may engage in ritualised behaviour, parallel to the 'Hear, hear' of the
British parliamentary procedure, where all the participants know how they are
expected to react to such an instruction. Similarly, Palma Valverde has developed a
system of brief commands 'Repeat!' or 'Rephrase!', which streamlines the

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36 K. A. Bishop, 'Living Dangerously with a Notebook', talk organised by the Institute of Linguists,
37 Cf. Annemarie Leemput-Sauer, 'Pragmatics of Human Communications: A Basis for Reflections on
Interpreting', in Weber (ed.), Twentieth Anniversary Symposium: The Training of Teachers of
Translation and Interpretation (Monterey, CA: Monterey Institute of International Studies, 1989), pages
in the volume are not numbered consecutively, p. 2 of my numbering of this paper.
interpreting process and as a result improves its efficiency\textsuperscript{38}. If the interpreters have not heard properly what a doctor, a medical worker or a patient said, they use the 'Repeat' cue, while if they have difficulties finding a corresponding formulation in the receptor language, they request a synonymous variant of the segment of the source text by saying 'Rephrase'. In order for such a system to work, all the parties involved have to be informed how and when to use the commands as well as how to react to them. The need for such formalised instructions may have been generated by the environment in which interpreters trained during this programme work - in hospitals, where speed and efficiency may help save human lives.

For assessing other components of the situation, interpreters may reflect on some additional issues, for example, concerning the cultural background and "thought-world" of the speakers, the position of their government, or management, in the negotiations as well as their own personal views\textsuperscript{39}. What the speakers are saying may, or may not make sense, it may, or may not faithfully reflect what they really want to say. If it does not, the reasons may vary: a speaker's command of the language may be inadequate or he or she may be deliberately trying to remain vague. Offensive language may be caused by the speaker's getting carried away, but also by intending to provoke the opponent. Other important clues may be provided by intonation, facial expressions, or gestures\textsuperscript{40}.


\textsuperscript{39} Cf. Namy, p. 33.

\textsuperscript{40} Cf. Namy, p. 33.
Interpreters can also ask themselves questions with respect to listeners, who may be following the proceedings in either their own, or a foreign language. The interpreters might have to adapt their own formulations to the listeners, so as to be better understood. Since the listeners' knowledge of the subject at hand may vary, some of them may require explanatory comments. The interpreters, for instance, may be expected to explain various abbreviations, social positions, etc. The interpreters may have to remain very formal, or they can indulge in a certain familiarity. On the basis of similar reflections, a cost-benefit analysis can be carried out. The Law of Diminishing Returns, operating in all human activity, also applies to interpreting, therefore strategies demanding too much effort and achieving little effect may be unsuitable in interpreting, since an interpreter can only draw on a limited capacity of resources. Capacity as an issue is shown by Annelie Knapp-Potthoff and Karlfried Knapp, although the Turkish interpreter they used for their case study was not a professional.

In some situations, deflecting a listeners' question about a cultural reference, for example, an exact historical event, rather than providing the information or explanation, may save the interpreter embarrassment in cases where he or she does not know enough about it. By avoiding a direct answer and asking the speaker instead, the interpreter may preserve credibility in the eyes of the client, which may be crucial for his or her further performance. Questions of credibility and trust are

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41 Cf. Namy, p. 33.
42 Cf. Namy, p. 33.
44 An experiment (mentioned during an Intensive Course for Managing Directors Working in the Area of Arts, in Malacky, Slovakia, 1985) was carried out with a speaker who had made a thorough
dealt with in some detail by Daniel Gile, for example, in connection with an interpreter's Coping Tactics.45

Among the dimensions of the situation to be taken into account by the interpreter, the customer of interpreting (in the sense of the person who pays for the interpreting services) stands out prominently.46 After all, customers judge interpreters by their output, irrespective of their individual techniques of comprehension, note-taking, memory capacity, or anything else which may occur during the process of interpreting itself. Research into the production stage may so far have been neglected, although, as Jennifer Mackintosh pointed out, it is vital for the conference delegates who would not otherwise understand the message.47 Although expectations and requirements of customers may differ from those of interpreters

preparation for a lecture he was supposed to give, but came to the lecture theatre late, dressed in casual clothes, and said to the assembled audience that he did not know anything about the subject, only he had been asked five minutes earlier by a friend to take his place. After this introduction the speaker delivered a carefully researched and well structured lecture. The listeners, however, because of his introductory comments, were negatively predisposed against him, did not trust him and as a result a number of them complained to the organisers that his lecture was incompetent and of poor quality.

Aware of the above, on one occasion I preferred to interpret a Tunisian film from its French subtitles, without having studied French at the university, rather than admit to the audience that I had been told the subtitles would be in English, which is one of the languages from which I am authorised to interpret, but I would nevertheless try to do my best with my self-taught French. By admitting it, I may not have been trusted by the audience, although my interpreting would have been the same with, or without, this preliminary warning.

46 The need to produce what the customer wants has been emphasised by Ioannis Manganaras - cf. 'Quality as an unnecessary complication', in Mayorcas and Dennett (eds.), ITI Conference 8 (London: ITI, 1995), pp. 63 - 67 (p. 66). Customer orientation has been pointed out also by Deborah Fry - cf. 'Interesting times: the threats and opportunities facing staff translators', in Mayorcas and Dennett (eds.), ITI Conference 8 (London: ITI, 1995), pp. 48 - 52 (p. 50). What they say about translation can be applied also to interpreting.
47 A remark made by Jennifer Mackintosh, reported in 'General Debate and Closing Statements', in Gran and Dodds (eds.), The theoretical and practical aspects of teaching conference interpretation (Udine: Campanotto, 1989), pp. 264 - 268 (p. 268). The fact that she spoke specifically about conference interpreting does not make her comment less valid for business interpreting.
themselves as service providers\textsuperscript{48}, in the final analysis it is the customers who have to be satisfied.

A marked customer, or, in other words, receptor language/culture orientation characterises the Skopos theory, which stresses the purpose of the receptor text as a factor determining any textual adjustments - that may be why it has been applied to interpreting by some authors\textsuperscript{49}. The need to adapt a text to its audience has also been stressed by the théorie du sens\textsuperscript{50}, but since it exclusively deals with conference interpreting, it takes this audience as homogeneous. To an extent, participants of a conference do share common characteristics. Conferences, as Taida Nováková has pointed out, have their topic given beforehand and their agenda gets agreed in advance\textsuperscript{51}, which makes the audiences in conference settings more homogeneous.

According to Franz Pöchhacker, “persons attending international meetings have a certain familiarity with other languages or cultures or, at any rate, are ready and

\textsuperscript{48} Pointed out, for example, during the discussions at The International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994; cf. also questionnaire on user expectations in Kopczynski, ‘Quality’, in Lambert and Moser-Mercer (eds.); or in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.). Gile carried out a case study on quality expectations by interpreters and listeners - cf. ‘L’évaluation de la qualité du travail par les délégués: une étude de cas’, The Interpreters’ Newsletter, No. 3 (1990), 66 - 71. AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters, has also carried out a survey into user expectations - cf. P. Moser.

\textsuperscript{49} The functionalist Skopos theory was proposed by Hans J. Vermeer who explained it in detail in various German materials, although some articles in English or other languages exist by Vermeer himself, alongside with indirect sources in English - cf. Nord (she uses the term ‘translation’ to refer to both translation and interpreting); Pöchhacker; or Wilss, Knowledge and Skills, pp. 11, 32, 33 and 34. For application of Skopos theory to interpreting - cf., first of all, Pöchhacker, ‘Simultaneous Interpreting: A Functionalist Perspective’. In the Czech and Slovak contexts this theory is fairly well known, both from its original German sources and from frequent references made to it in TOP or other publications of the Union of Interpreters and Translators – cf. Zuzana Jettmarová, ‘Volba strategie a rozhodování na základě teorie skoposu: komplexní kritéria překladatelské analýzy textu/Strategy and Decision-making Based on the Theory of Skopos: All-round Criteria of Text Analysis in the Process of Translation’, in Hrdlička (ed.), 9x o překladu [Nine Times on Translation] (Prague: JTP, 1995), pp. 25 - 31; cf. also Milan Hrdlička, ‘Z translato logického slovníku’ [From the Translation Studies Dictionary]. TOP, No. 32 (1996), 8/692; or Jana Rakšániova, ‘O súčasnej teoretickej reflexii prekladu’ [On Contemporary Theoretical Thinking about Translation], in TOP, No. 38 (1997), Supplement Translatologická žalva, pp. XII – XIV (p. XIII).

\textsuperscript{50} Chapter 4 of this thesis is devoted to the théorie du sens.

\textsuperscript{51} Nováková, Ti močenie, p. 24.
willing to engage in some sort of cross-cultural contact\textsuperscript{52}. Moreover, conference participants are characterised by "the shared professional background, common technical expertise, and, of course, a history of interaction as members of [the professional body organising the conference]\textsuperscript{53}. This "expert culture transcends national-societal borderlines"\textsuperscript{54}. However, even conference audiences may differ, as has been observed by several authors\textsuperscript{55}. Since audiences are not uniform, various members of the audience may need, and expect, differing levels of explanation, adaptation or substitution of unknown cultural references from the interpreter. Moreover, some participants of conferences may be only interested in some aspects of the source speeches, or may only be listening to oppose a speaker\textsuperscript{56}. Such a motivation may influence their attitude to the source text and the effort they may be prepared to make to reach a full understanding of cultural references it may contain. However, not all interpreters work in the relatively sheltered world of international conferences where cultural differences may be negligible, where even participants coming from far-off countries share the conference culture as well as the knowledge of the subject, at least to a considerable extent, which makes the level of predictability relatively high\textsuperscript{57}, where most delegates may be used to public speaking, may know what to expect from interpreting since they may have been exposed to it before, etc. Conference interpreting represents only one type of interpreting and

\textsuperscript{52} Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous Interpreting: A Functionalist Perspective', p. 47.
\textsuperscript{53} Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous Interpreting: A Functionalist Perspective', p. 49.
\textsuperscript{54} Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous Interpreting: A Functionalist Perspective', p. 49.
\textsuperscript{56} Cf. Gile, Basic Concepts.
does not cover all possible situations where interpreters may be active. A
professional interpreter may, for example, work in community or court situations. One
of the reasons why relatively little was written in the past about community or court
interpreting may be that they have only become more widespread recently. An
explanation of a more frequent occurrence of court or community interpreting at
present may be on the one hand that people’s mobility, including permanent
immigration, has increased considerably and, on the other, that crime has become
more internationalised. In other words, court and community interpreting may be
new tasks brought about by new circumstances. The richest experience in
community interpreting has probably been gathered in Australia, where most of the
country’s interpreters (and, in fact, translators) work in the community area.
Recently, more attention has also been paid to court interpreting, its specific
features, the precise role of the court interpreter towards the parties involved in legal
proceedings, training for court interpreters, etc. More space has recently been
allocated to community and court interpreting during conferences and in various
publications, which may indicate that these two types of interpreting may be

57 Cf. also Palazzi Gubertini.
58 Cf. Van Slype and others; cf. also Georganne Weller, 'A Glimpse Into the Decade of the 90's:
Training of Teachers of Interpretation at The University of Hawaii', in Weber (ed.), Twentieth
Anniversary Symposium: The Training of Teachers of Translation and Interpretation (Monterey, CA: Monterey Institute of International Studies, 1989), pages in the volume are not numbered
consecutively, p. 8 of the author’s numbering of this paper.
60 The frequency of court interpreting in recent professional activity may have been the reason why its
mention was contained in several presentations during the Institute of Translation and Interpreting
ITI Conference 2 (London: Aslib, 1988), pp. 66 - 70; Lucy Collard-Abbas, ‘Training the trainers of
85; Niska, ‘A new breed of interpreter for immigrants'; Graham Clifford, 'The Use of Interpreters in the
becoming more current in several countries. The situation in this connection in Czech and Slovak contexts has been described, among others, by Andrej Rády, who points out the higher frequency of court interpreting as a result of the transition to market economy and intense international relations\textsuperscript{62}.

Community interpreter has been defined as follows:

A Community Interpreter is someone who facilitates access to public services for people whose first or preferred language is not that of the host country; they are, then, liaising between a professional service provider and a user, whose access to such services is more often than not hampered by a communication barrier that goes beyond language\textsuperscript{63}.

In community interpreting - in legal, health and social services settings - audiences may differ in a pronounced way as regards their background knowledge, expectations or needs. Cultural and educational disparities of the two parties to the communication may be quite sharp, requiring much cultural negotiation work from the interpreter, otherwise the message may not get across\textsuperscript{64}. In community interpreting, and often in court interpreting, cultural differences between the

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\textsuperscript{63} M. Sanders, p. 45.

\textsuperscript{64} Cf. Shackman.
participants of the exchange have to be taken into account by the interpreter, because they may represent a relatively prominent obstacle to smooth communication.

In Slovakia, the term community interpreting does not exist, since there has not been a special provision of, for example, interpreting for immigrants, as there used to be no immigrants. The only distinction made in Slovak is between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. On the other hand, court interpreting in Slovakia is strictly reglemented: for work in courts, candidates have to pass a special examination, although they may have graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation at a university.

The emergence of community and court interpreting has broadened the range of languages used for interpreting (and consequently mentioned in literature on interpreting or interpreter training). In community and court interpreting, languages of minorities (or, rather, languages of limited diffusion) are often used, while on the international conference scene, languages of majorities (or major world languages) may still predominate. In connection with this, some authors have expressed doubts about the term 'community interpreting', seeing it as derogatory and as simply applying to interpreting into and out of languages of limited diffusion.

Source texts in community and court interpreting operate within a framework different from conference texts, for example, the types of topics discussed may not be sufficiently covered in language courses or textbooks; mediation may be carried out between a standard form of a language and a dialect of another language. As

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65 However, in 1994, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees opened a liaison office in Slovakia, since there are now refugees in Slovakia – cf. UNICEF leaflet, 1998.
opposed to interpreting source texts produced by professional authors (for example, experts or journalists), in community and court interpreting an interpreter has to deal with people who may be unaccustomed to wording their utterances for interpreting into another language, who may be saying something without having a clear, premeditated intention in mind, who may be in a state of shock, or who may be very tense about their future (for example, during immigration interviews or court trials). Such source texts may be more challenging since they may, for example, contain a large number of ungrammatical or unfinished sentences.

Moreover, whereas conference interpreting - with the exception of group discussions - tends to be monologic, a one-to-many type of communication, in community and court interpreting, the source texts most usually represent a dialogue, a one-to-one communication. Community and court interpreters may therefore have to deal with different types of personalities and of personal styles, switching between them in quick succession. Being face to face with the client in this type of interpreting, an interpreter gets immediate feedback and also has an opportunity to ask for explanation or clarification. However, since it may be crucial to create an atmosphere of trust between the two clients and the interpreter (the more so that there may already be elements of tension or crisis inherently present in the situation), this option may be limited in its application.

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67 Cf. Collard-Abbas, p. 82.
The role of the interpreter in such situations may often be unclear to the parties involved. Marsha Sanders, for example, presents three models of the role of a community interpreter: the linguistic model, the professional team model and the advocacy model, pointing out that they may overlap or in a particular situation one of them may be contraindicated. The linguistic model treats the interpreter as a language transmitter, observing strict impartiality. The professional team model is service-oriented, with the interpreter accountable to the agency for which he or she works. The advocacy model presupposes identification of the interpreter with the client, his or her proactivity and accountability to the client.

Moreover, in the court and community interpreting situations, the power positions of the participants are unequal: the mediation happens between an individual, only representing him- or herself, and an organisation, an institution, for example, the State. Apart from the existing inequality of power, the two sides rarely share the same cultural values and background knowledge either. Community and court interpreters are sometimes expected to fulfil roles broader than just linguistic

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It may not only be the ordinary citizen, but sometimes even the service provider or the police officer who are not sure about this role either. In my own experience with police interpreting, my American colleague whose wallet was lost asked me to tell the officer at the Police Station what he had previously described to me about the loss, he was not going to repeat the case again to him. After I explained to my colleague I was only an interpreter, my American colleague whose wallet was lost asked me to tell the officer at the Police Station what he had previously described to me about the loss, he was not going to repeat the case again to him. After I explained to my colleague I was only an interpreter, he retold the story, which I interpreted from English into Slovak for the policeman. Similarly, at the end of the interview, the officer asked me to tell my colleague to sign the protocol, without reading it. (It was written in Slovak anyway.) I first insisted on sight translating what was written in the protocol, from Slovak into English, before my colleague signed it.

70 M. Sanders, p. 48.

71 Cf. M. Sanders, p. 48. The advocacy model is supported also by William Isham who believes that a sign language interpreter should be the advocate of the weaker person in the exchange, i. e. the one with hearing impairment. Personal communication, 1994.

72 'Power' seen here separately, not as 'power distance' in Hofstede's model.
mediation. Since dialogue interpreting is less structured than conference interpreting, its participants may not, for example, perceive the interpreter as a person with turn-allocating rights, as has been shown by research into turn-taking. Since the participants may not be used to having their contributions interpreted, they may all try to speak at the same time, thus not allowing the interpreter a slot for rendering what was said. Moreover, they may become emotional and consequently may, for example, use strong language. Direct transfer of swear words by the interpreter may, however, reflect badly on the client, although in the source culture it may not have been out of place to use such expressions under the circumstances.

In court interpreting, some specific forensic technical terms may have to be explained or simplified for clients with insufficient educational background and vice versa, some clients' replies may have to be made more sophisticated by rendering them through the conventionalised technical terms to which court officials are accustomed. Moreover, in court interpreting, deliberately coded or veiled speech may also occur.

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73 Cf., for example, the advocacy model in M. Sanders. The role of an interpreter was extensively discussed during the International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994; and during the First International Conference on Interpreting in Legal, Health and Social Services Settings, Orillia, Ontario, Canada, 1 - 4 June 1995, showing a broad range of opinions.

74 Dialogue interpreting is another term for community interpreting, used, for example, by Englund Dimitrova, Wadensjö, or Niska. Yet another term is public service interpreting - cf. Wadensjö, 'Community Interpreting', in Encyclopedia of Translation Studies (London: Routledge, forthcoming).


Even the choice between the first and the third person singular by the interpreter remains an open-ended problem in this area\textsuperscript{77}. This may be due to the fact that in some cases of court or community interpreting, untrained people act as \textit{ad hoc} interpreters, because they may be the only (native) speakers of a less well-known language available. Being non-professional, they may therefore be reproducing their clients' words in the third person singular.

Community and court interpreting have been reviewed extensively here for a number of reasons. First of all, literature on these types of interpreting points out most frequently that the cultural disparities of their participants can be quite prominent, the experience of dealing with which by the interpreter may be applied to business interpreting between English and Slovak, since cultural differences between these two national groups exist. Power\textsuperscript{78} differences are inherent to community and court interpreting, which in business negotiations between an English and a Slovak party may manifest themselves as differences between the richer and the poorer partner, which may put each of them in a different bargaining position. Moreover, the understanding of power distance can hardly be identical in the (British) English and Slovak environment. Similarly to community and court interpreting situations, the business interpreter is the agent to bridge this gap. Moreover, like in community and court interpreting, due to the relative newness of business for the Slovak clients of interpreting, they may not be used to working with interpreters, may be unclear about the role of the interpreter and may not be used to public speaking. During community and court interpreting, languages of limited diffusion are often used - as happens in

\textsuperscript{77} Cf. Audrey Parnell, 'Liaison Interpreting as a Language Teaching Technique', in Gran and Dodds (eds.), \textit{The theoretical and practical aspects of teaching conference interpretation} (Udine: Campanotto, 1989), pp. 253 - 256 (p. 255).
the case of Slovak-English business interpreting. Business interpreting, in parallel to community and court interpreting, is a question of rendering a dialogue, not a monologue. In business interpreting, as in court interpreting, much of the information taken down in the form of notes by the interpreter would be noncontextualised information\textsuperscript{79}. Wrong notes of the business interpreter could have financial consequences, similar to grave repercussions of imprecise notes during court interpreting. And finally, ethical issues in court interpreting find parallels in financial considerations in business environment.

The conditions under which interpreters work are in many ways specific, so is the activity in which they engage, attention will therefore now be focused on theoretical explanations of the process of interpreting itself. That is the reason why the next chapter is devoted to the \textit{théorie du sens}, which remained relatively unknown in Czechoslovakia in the communist past. The chapter will look closely at the \textit{théorie du sens} in order to find out to what extent it explains the activity of interpreting and can therefore serve as a basis of interpreter training. An attempt will also be made to investigate whether the \textit{théorie du sens} can be applied to rendering cultural references from source texts.

\textsuperscript{78} Note a use differing from Hofstede's model.

Chapter 4 The *Théorie du Sens* as a Theory of Interpreting

The *théorie du sens*\(^1\) applies phenomena occurring in monolingual communication to interpreting, although interpreting is a case of bilingual communication\(^2\). The basic tenets of the *théorie du sens*, which is based on the experience of conference interpreting, both simultaneous and consecutive, can be summarised as follows:

During the comprehension stage of interpreting, similarly to the comprehension stage of monolingual communication, an interpreter understands the speaker's *vouloir-dire*, his or her intended meaning. Since context is said to disambiguate any text, there can be no ambiguity of the source text message, the meaning of all its words and expressions is clear:

Pour celui qui entend, c'est le contexte et la situation dans lesquels le mot est prononcé qui impose un seul et unique sens et permet l'identification immédiate de la chose désignée par le mot entendu\(^3\).

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1. The *théorie du sens* was proposed as the theory of interpreting by Danica Seleskovitch in *L'interprète dans les conférences internationales: problèmes de langage et de communication* (Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard, 1968), and in *Langage, langues et mémoire: Etude de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive* (Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard, 1975). It remains the basis of teaching at ESIT (l'École Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs) in Paris - as evidenced by papers of its teachers and alumni. Marianne Lederer, Karla Déjean Le Féal, Mariano García-Landa, Christopher Thiéry and Jean Delisle belong to this school of thought. Seleskovitch specialises in consecutive interpreting, Lederer in simultaneous interpreting, Thiéry in bilingualism, and Delisle in discourse analysis. Scholars expressing views along the same lines include Clare Donovan-Cagigos and Eva Paneth.

2. It has to be borne in mind, however, that the *théorie de sens* was designed for conference interpreting, with its predominantly monologic character, whether it occurs in the simultaneous or the consecutive mode, whereas business interpreting - with which this thesis is mainly concerned - in most cases takes the form of a dialogue, sometimes very dynamic.

Thus the théorie du sens refers any polysemy to the sphere of langue, while in the sphere of parole, the use of language, where the interpreter gets his or her text, no polysemy occurs:

Language, such as described in grammars and dictionaries, yields many varied meanings to the scrutiny of the scholar, speech performance yields but one meaning to the initiated listener: the thing meant by the speaker⁴. In a normal verbal exchange there are no ambiguities⁵. There is no double meaning in words uttered in speeches - except when deliberate, as an act of volition on the part of a speaker⁶.

According to the théorie du sens, during interpreting, a deverbalised stage intervenes, when the source text message is stripped of its linguistic form, understood and stored in the semantic memory of the interpreter. This deverbalised sense will later serve the interpreter as the basis for rendering the source text message in the receptor language during the production stage of interpreting.

...sense is non-verbal, not only because the cognitive addition remains unvoiced, but also because sense as a whole is dissociated from any language form in cognitive memory as soon as it has been understood⁷.

The théorie du sens applies the deverbalised stage to bilingual communication as its compulsory component:

...l'interprétation ne procède pas par transcodage mais impose au passage d'une langue a une autre une etape intermédiaire pendant laquelle le signifiant disparait alors qu'interveiennent des mécanismes cérébraux non linguistiques⁸.
...que l'interprète répète non point les mots de l'orateur, mais ses idées et qu'il existe un stade intermédiaire entre la perception des mots et la

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⁵ Seleskovitch, 'Interpretation, A Psychological Approach', p. 102.
⁸ Seleskovitch, Langage, p. 7.
restitution du discours, stade qui correspond à l'intervention de l'interprète qui analyse et fait sienne la pensée d'autrui, en laissant délibérément disparaître la forme verbale entendue\(^9\).

To support her theory, Danica Seleskovitch brings examples in *L'interprète dans les conférences internationales*: according to her, one would rather explain the meaning of a gesture than describe the gesture itself to someone who does not see the gesticulating person, because one would be more interested in getting across to the listener the *sense* of the gesture than the *code* used to convey it. A similar analogue is given by Mariano García-Landa\(^10\), about the traffic sign for speed limit, where drivers perceive the number on the sign, telling them to slow down to a particular speed, regardless of the physical size of the sign itself\(^11\).

In the view of the *théorie du sens*, this deverbalised trace of what the speaker had said, the sense of the source text, is then during the production stage of interpreting expressed spontaneously by the interpreter in the receptor language, which is supposed to be his or her mother tongue.

Tous nos étudiants savent que, lorsqu'ils ne trouvent pas le mot qu'ils cherchent dans leur langue maternelle, il suffit de construire très rapidement une phrase à haute voix dans le champ sémantique de ce mot pour le faire apparaître spontanément...\(^12\)

Criticism has, however, been raised against the *théorie du sens* on several counts. Some of the reasons for questioning the *théorie du sens* are connected with

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\(^11\) It is interesting to note that in Slovakia the traffic signs (including the sign for speed limit) only exist in one standard size, while in Britain (and in Canada) their size may vary. Thus in rendering García’s simile into Slovak, a cultural difference would be encountered and would have to be overcome during Translation.

\(^12\) Seleskovitch, *Langage*, p. 59.
requirements of what a theory is or should be. Roger Bell succinctly lists the characteristics which an ideal theory should exhibit, namely empiricism (it should be testable), determinism (it should be able to predict), parsimony (it should be simple) and generality (it should be comprehensive). Barbara Moser-Mercer argues along similar lines, pointing out that a theory should be accurate (agreeing with results of observational and experimental research), consistent (internally, but also externally - with related theories), broad in scope (covering an area broader than its original observations), simple (replacing confusion by order) and fruitful (revealing new phenomena and new relationships among phenomena). Gideon Toury also studied the topic of theory-construction and listed the objects of a theory:

One of the main objects of a theory is obviously to enable systematic and exhaustive description and explanation of each and every phenomenon regarded as belonging to the sphere it covers...
Another major object of a theory is to make predictions possible as to the phenomena which are likely to occur in the terrain it covers under certain circumstances. Obviously, no theory which takes no heed of the entire network of factors which have (or even may have) a role to play in its domain will be in any real position to enable good and valid predictions.

Or, put in yet another way: "A theory explains, makes sense of what would otherwise be chaos." The théorie du sens does not fully conform to the above-mentioned requirements. Some of the objections against the théorie du sens have been raised because it fails to bring tangible, verifiable proof that it truly reflects the reality of interpreting. It has not been proven that phenomena of monolingual communication

do occur in bilingual communication. Seleskovitch mentions a case when interpreters inadvertently render the source text message in the same language as "compelling" proof\textsuperscript{17} of the deverbalised stage. She claims as another proof the fact that subjects during her note-taking experiment did not put down word equivalents of the source text. Some interpreters during the experiment took notes, but then used different words when interpreting - this is also supposed to show that deverbalisation has taken place. Note-taking according to Seleskovitch happens at the stage of assimilation of sense, so notes can be taken in any language\textsuperscript{18}. However, although deverbalisation may be happening during monolingual communication and it may apply to the final receiver of the message, interpreting is \textit{bilingual} communication, and the interpreter is \textit{not} the final addressee of a speech he or she is interpreting, as has already been mentioned. Shoshana Blum-Kulka points out that translation is contrary to natural discourse in that "what is \textit{said} might become obvious and clear, while what is \textit{meant} might become vague and obscure"\textsuperscript{19}. This observation contradicts the premise of the \textit{théorie du sens}, namely that phenomena of monolingual communication can be applied to all cases of bilingual communication - it seems that they cannot, since the conditions for interpreting differ from those of monolingual communication.

Moreover, Seleskovitch's research for \textit{Langage, langues et mémoire} was carried out with a limited number of subjects, only in the consecutive mode of interpreting and

\textsuperscript{16} Bell, 'Translation and translating', lecture given on 7 June 1994, annual PhD conference, Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Warwick, 6 - 7 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{17} Seleskovitch, 'Interpretation, A Psychological Approach', p. 110; cf. also Seleskovitch, \textit{Langage}, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{18} Cf. Seleskovitch, \textit{Langage}, p. 164.
\textsuperscript{19} Blum-Kulka, 'Shifts of Cohesion and Coherence in Translation', p. 32.
with a limited number of speeches\textsuperscript{20}. It therefore does not seem conclusive enough to be extrapolated to all interpreting. Research on interpreting has to be carried out with a larger number of professional interpreters than has been done so far\textsuperscript{21}. Gile sees research as the only way to arrive at a proof of any theory\textsuperscript{22}. So far research has not supported the findings of the \textit{théorie du sens}, which may also have to do with the fact that it "does not lend itself readily to verification"\textsuperscript{23}.

To a considerable extent the \textit{théorie du sens} has been conditioned by the time when it originated. It was first formulated as a reaction to linguistic approaches to translation\textsuperscript{24} which reached a dead end in debates on untranslatability and

\textsuperscript{20} As has been pointed out, for example, by Gile, 'Methodological Aspects of Interpretation and Translation Research', in Lambert and Moser-Mercer (eds.), \textit{Bridging the gap} (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 39 - 56 (p. 49); cf. also Gile, 'Methodological Aspects of Interpretation (and Translation) Research', \textit{Target}, 3:2 (1991), 153 - 174 (p. 165).

\textsuperscript{21} By various researchers, listed by Gile, 'Scientific research'.

\textsuperscript{22} However, if students are used as research subjects, the results may not furnish any proof because students may only be in the stage of their skill-building - cf. Gile, 'Methodological Aspects', in Lambert and Moser-Mercer (eds.), p. 44; cf. also Gile, 'Opening up in Interpretation Studies', in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), \textit{Translation Studies: An interdiscipline} (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 149 - 158 (p. 154); or Gile, 'Methodological Aspects', \textit{Target}, p. 160. If the results of research only conducted with students as subjects were then applied to interpreter training (which seems to be to a considerable extent the reason for carrying out the research on interpreting), this might produce distortions in the representation of the whole process of interpreting and might have negative consequences for the training. Some scholars do not see this as a problem, for example, Bistra Alexieva argued during the discussion at the International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994, that the classroom (or the language laboratory) is the best location for research. Alexieva claims that experiments with trainees "can be more revealing about the nature of the activity involved" - cf. 'Types of texts and intertextuality in simultaneous interpreting', in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), \textit{Translation Studies: An interdiscipline} (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 179 - 187 (p. 185). However, Nováková, \textit{Timočenie}, p. 12, expresses the same view as Gile. Research using students as subjects may be justified in the cases of comparison of performance by trainees and professionals - cf. Englund Dimitrova, 'Translational norms in professional and non-professional translating', paper presented on 10 June 1995 in the Section: Profession and situation, The Third \textit{Language International Conference}, Elsinore, Denmark; cf. also Gun-Viol Vik-Tuovinen, 'Progress in Simultaneous Interpreting: an Evaluation of the Development of Four Students', \textit{Hermes}, No. 14 (1995), 55 - 64. However, using experienced professional interpreters makes research more difficult because a sufficient number of subjects have to be found at a given geographical location and all the requirements of statistical methods regarding the sampling, etc., have to be met. For more detail, cf., for example, Gile, 'Scientific research'.

\textsuperscript{23} Moser-Mercer, 'Paradigms Gained', p. 20.

\textsuperscript{24} Cf. Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous Interpreting: A Functionalist Perspective', p. 32. Bell made a similar remark during the discussion on 6 June 1994 at the annual PhD conference, Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Warwick.
(non)equivalence between languages. Compared to such regressive theories, the *théorie du sens* represented a positive step forward. Since then it has, nevertheless, itself become old-fashioned, and at present it seems productive only in stimulating research, much of which only exists to disprove it.\(^{25}\)

Since the late sixties there has not only occurred development in various disciplines dealing with texts, but also the character of texts themselves has changed in several ways. First of all, there has been an increase in the number of non-native speakers participating in conferences or other events where interpreting is used who constitute both speakers and audience.\(^{26}\) This to a large extent applies to English, used increasingly by nationals of various countries for mutual communication. Compared to texts of native speakers, texts produced by non-native speakers display specific characteristics.\(^{27}\) These, depending on the level of their mastery of the foreign language, include phenomena like more or less heavy accent (and noises made in pronunciation), unusual vocabulary, non-typical syntax, different use of cohesive devices, or specific cultural references.\(^{28}\) Taida Nováková, in the context of simultaneous interpreting, highlights intonation and segmentation of a speech by a non-native speaker as a potential hindrance to identification of the meaning.\(^{29}\) People

\(^{27}\) Although the present thesis looks at interpreting between a Slovak and a British client, consideration about non-native status may still be valid – due to the multicultural and multiethnic society existing in the UK.
with little experience in speaking foreign languages may also speak low and fast\textsuperscript{30}. Moreover, non-native speakers may not be making their line of argument sufficiently clear, due to a different traditional pattern of reasoning in their own culture. Non-native speakers using English may not build in sufficient redundancy by, for example, not rephrasing their words, which native English speakers are used to. All the above may contribute to making the comprehension of such source texts more difficult both for the audience listening to them in the original, and for the interpreter who has to render them in the receptor language. In the conference environment, non-native status may frequently interact with the written-oral mode, when non-native speakers may be more likely to prepare their papers in writing and then just read them, often at high speed. English as a lingua franca in various areas of international life has brought non-native speakers not only into conferences, but also into business negotiations. The fact that English has become more widespread world-wide may lead to situations where interpreting is done both from and into non-native English. According to Stejskalová, even native, British or American, pronunciation of the English interpreter can be a barrier for non-native listeners\textsuperscript{31}.

A second change in the characteristics of source texts to be interpreted has been the increase, compared to the situation a few decades ago, in the number of people who have to speak in public - including individuals not used to being interpreted. They may therefore be less aware of how to structure a speech and may produce source texts characterised by lack of clarity and by potential ambiguity, or may not be sure


\textsuperscript{31} Cf. Stejskalová, p. 25.
what style to use, and as a result may mix registers. If an interpreter produced a receptor text equally drawing on varied registers, it might not be an adequate representation of the intention of the source text author who may just not be accustomed to public speaking, and may therefore not be aware of using an unacceptable style. In some such cases the interpreter may assume the role of an editor of the source text, smoothing out stylistic infelicities, or, rather, not allowing the receptor text to suffer from major stylistic flaws if they were not intentional but were just an outcome of the circumstances under which the source text was pronounced. This would happen in those cases where the interpreter knows the speaker's background.

A third factor contributing to the changing character of source texts for interpreting may be the mobility of people\textsuperscript{32} both within Europe and world-wide, as well as immigration\textsuperscript{33}, which have brought about a new need for language mediation: namely, community interpreting and court interpreting, which has already been discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis.

Another factor influencing source texts to be processed during interpreting may be the generation aspect: a first-stage interpreter often works with clients who are older, but as the time passes, the interpreter may become the oldest in the exchange. To the extent to which language may express one's belonging to a certain age group, this also has to be taken into consideration\textsuperscript{34}. Discursive strategies of the younger

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{32} Cf. Van Slype and others, p. 24.
\item\textsuperscript{33} Wadensjö highlights migration and linguistic heterogeneity of most nations as the reason for which community interpreting has become a profession - cf. 'Community Interpreting'.
\item\textsuperscript{34} R. Williams observes that in spite of continuities in grammar and vocabulary, each generation speaks its own language - cf. \textit{Marxism and Literature}, p. 131.
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generations may differ considerably from those of their parents. For example, work-related vocabulary of a more experienced person may be richer than that of a beginner, he or she may also insist more on precise terminology. On the other hand, because of many years of experience in a given field, an older person may recognise what is being referred to even from a slightly incorrect wording, which may be difficult for a novice in a given area. A novice may also be unwilling to make the intellectual effort to understand.

Apart from the changes of source texts to be interpreted, doubts have been expressed as to whether the deverbalised stage really occurs during interpreting as the théorie du sens claims. In this connection, Constantin Andronikof asks: “Une telle pensée, une telle abstraction interviennent-elles réellement?” A large part of the processes which take place during interpreting is automatic, according to David Gerver, who points out that experienced simultaneous interpreters choose frequent surface correspondences without carrying out deep analysis of the input, especially in conditions of high speed, noise, etc., which may indicate skipping the

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35 As an English language learner, I found it easier to communicate with middle-aged English people, who spoke in complete sentences and paid attention to rules of grammar and good style, whereas talking to young people, especially teenagers, was often distressing, because compared to the older generation, much less of what they were saying was comprehensible to me. These young people tended to abbreviate words, including proper names, much more than older people, they often neglected rules of grammar and correct usage, and left many of their sentences unfinished. Apart from that, they often peppered their utterances with slang expressions. Likewise, the language of young children or elderly people caused me more comprehension problems especially due to their particular lexical choices. My recommendation to Slovak students travelling to the UK for the first time has therefore been to start by talking to middle-aged people, for example, when asking for directions, in order to get a sense of achievement and positive encouragement.


deverbalised stage. Roger Bell has made a similar remark: "A great deal of what we do is largely automatised."39

Christopher Thiéry may have produced proof that the deverbalised stage occurs in bilinguals, to whom, as he says, words in either of their languages come to mind during conversation40. This, however, does not take into consideration that although interpreters may be bilinguals (professional bilinguals41), they work at an externally dictated pace. This time constraint may be a crucial factor in determining the occurrence or non-occurrence of the deverbalised stage during interpreting. As Sylvia Kalina has pointed out, interpreting happens under adverse conditions, as compared to monolingual communication42. Phenomena from monolingual communication therefore may not apply across the board in interpreting. Daniel Gile, among others, disagrees with considering the deverbalised stage during interpreting as an established fact until it has been proven to occur43. Akira Mizuno in his review of Japanese writing on interpreting44 mentions Hagiwara45, according to whom during listening comprehension of Japanese university students, which shares characteristics with simultaneous interpreting, "fusion (i.e. the concept or semantic representation shared by the source language and the target language)"46 does not...
occur. On this Mizuno comments that the claim about the impossibility of fusion is in contrast with Seleskovitch's deverbalisation.47

Bistra Alexieva has pointed out that during her experiments, the identification and recall of the source text in verbatim form have been quicker than the identification and recall in the case of paraphrase. This may indicate that the deverbalised stage may not be occurring during interpreting,48 because otherwise the subjects would not have remembered the exact form of the source text, but would have excelled in the paraphrase, which is based on the sense of the source text.

Some insight into the interpreting process may be offered by the current research with think-aloud protocols in interpreting.49 Research in cognitive psychology has already yielded some results: William Isham has published his preliminary findings, which indicate that although the deverbalised stage may occur during interpreting, it may not be its compulsory component. Isham asked the interpreters participating in his experiment to recall verbatim the final and the critical sentence of a source text they had interpreted for him. In one experimental condition, a clause was in the final sentence, in the other it was in the previous sentence. According to the recall of the interpreters, Isham divided them into Type I and Type II groups, characterised by using different approaches to the interpreting task:

Thus, the pattern of recall for the Type II interpreters does support the idea of "deverbalization", insofar as there does seem to be a strategy for simultaneous interpretation that leaves behind very little information about source-language sentences. However, it is also clear that this is not a mandatory stage through which all interpretation must pass. The strategy of the Type I interpreters resulted in improved verbatim recall for the critical clause, showing that if anything, these subjects had more

48 Alexieva, 'Types of texts', p. 186.
information about incoming sentences available than would normally be expected. Clearly, these subjects did not deverbalize any more than the listeners did, yet they too produced a fluent, comprehensible French rendition of the source-language input. It may well be true that one approach or the other results in a product of higher quality, in terms of fewer errors overall, but that does not change the fact that interpretation can transpire in these two modes.

The deverbalised stage may not really happen during interpreting because of the time constraints of this activity. In a situation where time is scarce, it may be a waste of the interpreter's resources to pursue the analysis to the depths of the underlying deverbalised sense of the source text, since, for example, much in certain text types may be predictable or pre-patterned. Moreover, much may also be predictable from the context in which interpreting enfolds, for example, during conferences. The deverbalised stage as a component of our understanding of what is being said about the world around us may occur during the acquisition of a foreign language. This may sound paradoxical, because the théorie du sens claims that interpreter training has to start after a foreign language has been mastered. It seems, however, that language acquisition and interpreter training cannot be completely divorced. A foreign language learner analyses a new word (or an expression) through the deverbalised stage to arrive at its meaning so that it then becomes a potential filler for a future slot. Seleskovitch herself says that the fact that interpreter training comes after a foreign language has been mastered, does not mean that the students do not learn any new words or expressions during the interpreter training, and Déjean Le

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50 Isham, 'Memory For Sentence Form After Simultaneous Interpretation: Evidence Both For And Against Deverbalization', in Lambert and Moser-Mercer (eds.), Bridging the gap (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 191 - 211 (p. 207).
Féal gives practical advice to interpreters to pay attention during their preparation both to the meaning and the form of texts\(^51\).

Without claiming systematic equivalence between languages, there may exist expressions in two languages which may be used by an interpreter as prefabricated units\(^52\). The better the interpreters have mastered their foreign language(s), the more such prefabricated corresponding matchings between the two (or several) languages they have at their disposal, provided they have studied the characteristics of the space to be filled and the features of the filler to be slotted in, i.e. provided they have passed through the deverbalised stage while learning the foreign language(s) (which would be a deverbalised stage in a monolingual situation) and so long as the similarities and differences of the matchings in the receptor language as compared to the source language are recognised\(^53\). Interpreting cannot be a mere transcoding of words in one language by words in another language without realising what they denote, however, due to the extreme time pressure during interpreting, the more the interpreters can draw on various prefabricated units, the easier for them the whole activity becomes, since they can concentrate on problem-solving of difficult passages in the source texts.

The théorie du sens assumes that the deverbalised stage does not occur in the case of transcodable elements from the source text, which according to Seleskovitch comprise proper names, numbers, technical terms and enumerations\(^54\). Names, numbers and other types of noncontextualised information have to be transferred by

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\(^{51}\) Déjean Le Féal, 'L'enseignement'.

\(^{52}\) Cf. Déjean Le Féal, 'Lectures et improvisations', p. 161.


\(^{54}\) Seleskovitch, *Langage*. 
the interpreters while still in their working memory, or have to be written down as a note if they are not to be lost\textsuperscript{55}.

Technical terms, which are, according to the \textit{théorie du sens}, transcoded, are seen as prominent in non-literary translation\textsuperscript{56}. However, there may be differences between the character and the use of terms in natural, abstract or technical sciences as opposed to social sciences. The use of terms in those two environments may be based on different premises: definitions of terms in social sciences may be less precise; there may be development and shifting of concepts on which the social sciences are based\textsuperscript{57}; more instances of individual, personal meanings ascribed to terms may occur; an old term may be used in a new sense more often, etc. Concepts in social sciences are more closely linked to their originating culture, thus terms coincide to a much lesser degree with terminological systems in other cultures than may be the case of terms in natural, abstract or technical sciences. Similar situation may obtain in legal language where, during Translation, the underlying concepts have to be transferred to the receptor language\textsuperscript{58}. Moreover, concepts in any type of science develop, while terms designating them may lag behind. Concepts are less stable than terms, therefore it is not enough to recognise terms (automatically), the

\textsuperscript{55} My own recommendation to students of consecutive interpreting has been to start a receptor sentence with the number, while they remember it at least roughly, and with any proper name, while they have the outline of its pronunciation in their echoic memory.

\textsuperscript{56} Terminology as playing an important role in specialised translation has been pointed out, for example, by Susan Šarčević, 'Translation and the law: An interdisciplinary approach', in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), \textit{Translation Studies: An interdiscipline} (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), 301 - 307 (p. 303).


\textsuperscript{58} Cf. Sara Garcia-Rangel, 'Training Judiciary Interpreters', in Weber (ed.), \textit{Twentieth Anniversary Symposium: The Training of Teachers of Translation and Interpretation} (Monterey, CA: Monterey Institute of International Studies, 1989), pages in the volume are not numbered consecutively, p. 5 of this paper.
The interpreter has to find out their meaning, i.e. the underlying concepts. Transcoding therefore may not apply to all terms.

Neither does transcoding in fact fully apply to proper names, because with names transphonation occurs: source text names are pronounced by the interpreter within the phonological system of the receptor language. Moreover, some morphological changes have to be made during the interpreting as well, for example to proper names from synthetic languages, like Slovak: in derived Slavonic names, the derivation endings are omitted in English. On the other hand, when interpreting from an analytical language, like English, endings may be added to names: for example in Slovak, -ová is appended to all female surnames, as is discussed in more detail later in this thesis. Apart from that, according to conventions in individual cultures, different value may be placed on a person's surname as opposed to his or her first name, so there may be an element of interpretation rather than just pure

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60 Term used by Chernov, Teoría i praktika.

61 Examples from Slovak include 1. the use in English of conversion in nouns rather than derivation to form adjectives: *Turčianske folklórne slávnosti* - Turiec Folklore Festivities, *Zemplínske slávnosti piesne a tanc* - Zemplin Festivities of Songs and Dances, *Zvolenské hry zámocké* - Zvolen Chateau Games, *Vranovská hudobná jaseň* - Vranov Music Autumn, *Zemplínske zborové slávnosti* - Zemplin Chorus Festivities, *Podpolianske slávnosti* - Pôfana Folklore Festivities; 2. the use of nominative rather than genitive forms: *Pádvivého Trenčín* - Pádvivý Trenčín Brass Festival, *Trnavská hudobná jarné M. Sch. Trnavského* - M. Sch. Trnavský Trnava Music Spring; 3. the use of nominative forms rather than possessive forms: *Jarnošikove dni* - Jánošík Days; 4. the use of nominative form for any other case form. Examples taken from *Slovakia* (Bratislava: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, 1996), available from the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in London. *Blatnická kultúra*, a technical term in history, has been rendered as the 'Blatnica Culture'. Example taken from Development of Slovak Culture (Bratislava: Slovak Information Agency, 1996), p. 1, available from the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in London. Examples from other languages include: *Adam Mickiewicz* University, from Polish; or *Klement Ohridsky* University, from Bulgarian; where the names in their Slavonic context would be in their inflected forms with appropriate case endings. Similarly, some personalities of Slavonic origin, after they, or their ancestors, moved to non-Slavonic speaking countries kept the underived, masculine form of their surnames - cf. Kinski, Salevsky, whereas in the Slavonic environment, the female forms would be Kinska(ia), Salevska(ia).
transcoding even in rendering proper names - when, for example, the order of the first name and the surname has to be reversed in interpreting\textsuperscript{62}.

Under transcodable elements of an utterance the théorie du sens also includes enumerations\textsuperscript{63}. However, while in principle an enumeration from the source text yields an enumeration in the receptor text, there may be exceptions, for example, in the case of a phenomenon which the source culture may express by two or several words, while, for designating it, the receptor culture may only use one word, and vice versa. If two languages, or, more broadly, cultures, segment reality in a different way, any enumerations would be the points susceptible to showing such differences. Enumerations in the source text and in the receptor text therefore may not contain the same number of items, may not coincide or overlap, and so we cannot speak of transcoding in the case of enumerations in the sense in which Seleskovitch and Lederer use the term, i. e. taking a segment of source text and without logical analysis transplanting it in the receptor text. Enumerations, as will be shown later, in the chapter on business interpreting, form an important part of business negotiations, presenting a burden on the interpreter's working memory.

Turning now to the opinion of the théorie du sens on the knowledge of the interpreter. The théorie du sens expects interpreters to have sufficient knowledge before they start interpreting. In that way, the source text to be interpreted poses no difficulties to them which might be caused by ambiguity. However, several authors

\textsuperscript{62} Differing status and varying use of first names and surnames have been pointed out among others by Nicholas Bowen; cf. also Pöchhacker, 'The role of theory in simultaneous interpreting'; Pöchhacker, 'Quality assurance in simultaneous interpreting', paper presented on 5 June 1993, in the Section: Interpreting, The Second Language International Conference, Elsinore, Denmark; later published in Dollerup and Lindegaard (eds.), Teaching Translation and Interpreting 2 (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp 233 - 242; names and surnames were also discussed after Pöchhacker's paper
writing on various aspects of Translation have pointed out that even in a context there may still occur ambiguities and these may even be deliberate on the part of the speaker. Alternatively, a speech may remain ambiguous for interpreters because of their insufficient knowledge. Two types of knowledge can be distinguished - factual and processing. Another terminology for designating this distinction is declarative and procedural knowledge. Factual/declarative knowledge is made up of linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the subject to be interpreted, i.e. world knowledge, otherwise designated as linguistic and subject-specific knowledge. According to the théorie du sens, future interpreters should possess the factual knowledge before the start of their training. During the interpreter training, they develop their processing knowledge - their analytical skills. They will need these types of knowledge for their professional work. To a certain extent one type of knowledge may successfully


Seleskovitch, Langage; Lederer, La traduction simultanée: expérience et théorie.


Cf., for example, Nováková, Tiempo génico, p. 133. Paneth says students have to be given material suitable for their age and experience to interpret, because the interpreting skill has to be separated from the content - cf. ‘Training in Note-Taking (For Interpreting)’, in Wilss and Thome (eds.), Translation Theory and its Implementation in the Teaching of Translating and Interpreting (Tübingen: Narr, 1984), pp. 326 - 332 (p. 331).


However, due to the close link between language and culture, they seem to merge: for example, Schäffner demonstrates that linguistic knowledge and world knowledge are not two distinct entities - cf. ‘Meaning and knowledge in translation’. Cf. also Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 79, who says that distinction between them is not always easy to make. Similarly Viktor Krupa says that perfect knowledge of language is strictly speaking encyclopedic – cf. ‘Preklad ako nedozorzenie’ [Translation as Misunderstanding], TOP, No. 38 (1997), Supplement Translatologická žatva, pp. I – III (p. I). However, the distinction can be made for explanatory and training purposes.


"...teaching interpreting is more a matter of passing on know-how than knowledge..." - cf. Thiéry, The Sense of Situation, p. 43.
compensate for the lack of the other\textsuperscript{70}, but a minimum threshold has to be reached in order for interpreting to be successful, i.e. comprehensible to the audience. With experience and with specialisation, factual knowledge of the interpreter increases, but it is generally low in students of interpreting and in novice interpreters. The question then poses itself how much the listeners may understand from the interpreter’s rendering, if he or she did not grasp the sense of the source text due to lack of knowledge since the sense, the message of a source text is directly linked with factual extra-linguistic knowledge. However, the interpreter’s factual knowledge of the subject may be worse than that of the participants of the interpreted event - both as far as technical terms, and the situation parameters (familiarity with proper names of persons or institutions, etc.) are concerned, which forces the interpreters to draw more heavily on their knowledge of language\textsuperscript{71}. Then, however, they cannot be guided by the overall sense of the source speech, but only by the linguistic meaning of the individual words and expressions composing it. While in monolingual communication, a speaker adapts the message for the receivers, in view of information presumed as shared with them, since the message is \textit{not} addressed to the interpreters, as has already been mentioned, it is not adapted for their level of knowledge of the subject. Therefore even starting from a premise that there is no ambiguity in contexts\textsuperscript{72}, if the interpreters only draw on their linguistic knowledge, this may not always provide them with sufficient context, and they may have to face


\textsuperscript{71} Cf. Ilg, 'L'interprétation'.

\textsuperscript{72} And there have been reservations expressed about that: for example, Bell mentions ambiguities in the source text as limiting factors in communication - cf. \textit{Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice}, p. 43; Alex Gross talks about "intrinsic ambiguity of most human speech and writing" - cf. "Selected Elements from a Theory of Fractal Linguistics: Possible Implications for Machine Translation,"
linguistic ambiguity. An interpreter may encounter ambiguity in source texts, although its degree may decrease, as they evolve, with the increasing knowledge of the interpreter. Insufficient knowledge of interpreters may make both the comprehension stage and the production stage of their activity more challenging: if interpreters were experts in a given area, they might find it easier to understand the sense of source texts, and at the same time might have at their disposal more automated, i. e. easily accessible, expressions for use during the production stage of interpreting.

In order that the interpreter may (fully) understand the original with all its implicit information, on the one hand the interpreter has to have sufficient knowledge to be able to process the source text, but on the other hand the source text has to make some sense. However, since these two conditions may not always be met, complete understanding may not always be achieved. Nevertheless, Seleskovitch (by the time of the publication of her second monograph) does not admit that there may occur a situation where a speaker may not be making any sense, neither does she admit that an interpreter sometimes may not understand the source text. However, Brian Harris points out that interpreters may not always hear or understand the speaker, but they still have to apply strategies to solve the situation when it occurs. Similarly, Karla Déjean Le Féal envisages a situation where an interpreter has misunderstood the speaker and has to find ways to cope with the challenge, although she remains...
optimistic about the pre-existing knowledge of the interpreter contributing to the solution of any such problem:

En effet, il arrive à l’interprète - comme à tout auditeur - d’entendre un mot pour un autre ou de se tromper sur le sens de telle ou telle remarque de l’orateur. La confrontation du contenu cognitif saisi avec ses connaissances préexistantes (que ses notions aient été acquises avant ou pendant la conférence, ou même par l’exposé qu’il est en train d’écouter) le renseigne aussitôt sur la probabilité d’une compréhension correcte.

Interpreting, in the view of the théorie du sens, is based on rendering the understood intention of the source text author. Claiming to be able to grasp the intention of authors from their source texts, as required by the théorie du sens, may seem speculative. For example, Juliane House observes that no one-to-one correspondence exists between a writer’s intention and a reader’s interpretation.

Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson argue along similar lines. In some types of texts it may be easier to speak about intention, but not all types of texts - for example, a scientific paper - may have a clear intention to guide the interpreter towards the sense of a proposition or of a unit of meaning. Moreover, there may not be a clearly definable intention behind every sentence in a speech or it may not be easily detectable even by a professional listener, the interpreter. It may be especially at the beginning of their work that interpreters have insufficient information about a

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76 Déjean Le Féal, 'L’enseignement', p. 78.
79 It may, in fact, be difficult to speak about sentences in interpreting, since it may not always be easy, or even possible, to isolate sentence boundaries in spoken texts, especially when they are spontaneous, although intonation and stress can (and do) provide some guidance (not necessarily, however, in non-native speakers - cf. above). Some researchers take an intonationally highlighted, off-set unit of speech as a sentence - cf. Taylor-Torcello.
speaker's intention. Speakers may not always show their intention explicitly in their speeches, or they may not always only have one intention in mind. Moreover, they may change their intention while speaking, especially in cases of spontaneous speech. Sylvia Kalina points out that a speaker does have the opportunity to change his or her intention. If the analytical powers of an interpreter allow for the discernment of the author's hidden intention in a speech, it may not be a duty, alternatively a right of the interpreter, to explicitate this intention for the listeners. The speaker may claim that his or her intention differed from what the interpreter has deciphered from the source text and rendered in the receptor text. If an interpreter reveals the speaker's intention to the audience, this may in some cases result in modifying the function of the source text, which may have been meant to remain ambiguous, for example, if it was a political speech. Answers to these considerations may be connected with the text type/text function, with whether the type of text communicates a message or draws attention to its stylistic features. For example, in a diplomatic speech, explicitation of the exact sense may be out of the question, and the interpreter may have to concentrate on the rhetorical use of words, on the nuances of form.

When talking, a speaker may be expressing meanings which may be either old (i.e. known) or new (i.e. unfamiliar) for the audience. If the interpreters are taken as the

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82 During the International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994, examples from European Parliament were mentioned: some members of the European Parliament mask their ambiguous, non-committal answers by using obscure ethnographic cultural references from their own countries. Although the interpreters recognise this as an evasive technique, they cannot say so to their listeners, but have to interpret the source texts as they stand.
primary audience of the source text, whenever old information is expressed, they can render it spontaneously, because they may know suitable forms in the receptor language (their mother tongue) and may do so automatically. This spontaneous expression may be, paradoxically, close to the use of inter-lingual equivalents (no matter what label may be attached to such prefabricated corresponding matchings between the two languages). The interpreter may render the source text in a way a native speaker of the receptor community might express such contents. However, if the meaning/sense of a source speech is completely new for the receptor community, of which the interpreter is a representative and the first listener, it may have to be expressed in terms of the source language, otherwise the information contained might get lost. This used to be the case with business concepts interpreted from English into Slovak immediately after the fall of communism in 1989. The distinction of old and new information also applies to the final audience of a speech, the listeners, who take the message from the rendering by the interpreter - what they hear may for them be old, or new information.

If during interpreting the meaning/sense of the source text has to be transferred to the receptor text, central to the argument becomes the concept of meaning. However, theories and opinions as to what may comprise meaning are too numerous to be integrated and discussed in this thesis. Meaning may be seen as something partly individual, with, nevertheless, a core shared by a language/culture community. There may be as many potential renderings of a source text as there may be many potential meanings/senses of it. Although a source text may not have

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83 The importance of style in diplomatic discourse has been pointed out, for example, by Kopczynski - cf. ‘Quality’, in Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker and Kaindl (eds.), p. 190.
one single, unique sense, there may exist quite strong and marked tendencies, preferences, or trends indicating the direction to be taken in order to approach this sense. Talking about meaning/sense having a hard core and fuzzy edges may therefore be close to reality. Since language may not be a perfect vehicle for expressing intentions and since the intentions of others can only be perceived through the language in which they express themselves, human beings have to deal with an imperfect medium of communication. Moreover, when trying to discern meaning, people also look through the prism of their own culture which implies values and value judgements, and makes them see things in their own way. To a certain extent, one sees or hears what he or she wants to see or hear.

Proponents of the *théorie du sens*\(^{85}\) studied characteristic features of spoken texts, reaching a conclusion that due to their relatively high level of redundancy, spontaneous speeches serve as the best input for interpreting. Déjean Le Féal has demonstrated that differences between spoken and written texts lie both in their formulation and presentation\(^{86}\). However, according to the findings by Taida Nováková, only 20 per cent of speeches interpreted during conferences (which is the domain of the *théorie du sens* first of all) are spontaneous\(^{87}\). It is the area of community and possibly court interpreting, where input may be mostly spontaneous. During conferences, instances more frequently occur where written papers, prepared in advance, are read out. Such cases, when copies of the texts are given to the

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\(^{85}\) Especially Lederer in her *La traduction simultanée: expérience et théorie*.

\(^{86}\) Déjean Le Féal, 'Lectures et improvisations'.

interpreters, represent 40 per cent, according to the study by Nováková.

Interpreting texts which have been prepared beforehand in writing seems to be a widespread practice. Similarly, at a conference, a participant may read a paper written by someone else, who has been unable to come in person. If written genres as source texts for interpreting predominate, criteria other than those of the théorie du sens may be more appropriate for rendering them, since, for example, the personality of the speaker may be less reflected in the text itself and the interpreters’ rendering in the receptor language may be less spontaneous.

Seleskovitch claims that interpreting between any two languages is equally difficult, and so is interpreting of any source text with whatever degree of information density or formulation complexity. This has been pointed out as problematic by Gile, who mentions as an example Japanese authors discussing challenges of interpreting from and into their language. Maurizio Viezzi’s research into recall indicates that different languages require different approaches to interpreting. The interpreters participating in his experimental study remembered less in those cases when they were interpreting between two widely differing languages, i.e., when more morphosyntactic transformation was needed during the interpreting process. This

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88 Nováková, Timocenie, p. 32.
92 Maurizio Viezzi, 'Sight translation, simultaneous interpretation and information retention', in Gran and Taylor (eds.), Aspects of applied and experimental research on conference interpretation (Udine: Campanotto, 1990), pp. 54 - 60.
was found to be the case both in the sight translation and the simultaneous interpreting paradigms. Information retention was better in cases of combinations of morphosyntactically similar languages. Taida Nováková also sees the fact that the théorie du sens does not take the factors of language pairs and text difficulty into account as its shortcoming. David Snelling has demonstrated, on the personal pronouns in English, French and Italian, how problems which the interpreters of films have to face differ according to the specific pair of languages they work with. Similarly, Muhammad Y Gamal, speaking from the Arabic-English perspective, observes that "typologically different languages have an added dimension of cross-cultural pragmatics which, although omnipresent in all translation work, affects cognate languages to a lesser degree". Thus Gamal broadens the view from language matters to cultural matters during mediation between differing pairs of languages and differing pairs of cultures which express themselves through those languages.

The overall picture of possible approaches to interpreting may be (much) less clear-cut than the théorie du sens claims, since matters in interpreting may not be anything definite, black-and-white. This has made Mary Snell-Hornby, who also has experience in interpreting, advocate an integrated approach to translation. By seeing general tendencies, rather than sharp divisions, Snell-Hornby in her

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94 David Snelling, 'Upon the Simultaneous Translation of Films', The Interpreters' Newsletter, No. 3 (1990), 14 - 16 (p. 15).
approach\textsuperscript{97} leaves space for ambiguities, polysemy, plays on words, or special uses by speakers who want to keep their utterances ambiguous. However, through its optimism about unambiguity of texts, the \textit{théorie du sens} contributes positively to building in trainees self-confidence, a quality important for a professional interpreter. Personality traits required in an interpreter can be developed through training, but their presence at the outset may be an advantage, as becomes apparent from literature on aptitude testing\textsuperscript{98}.

On the positive side, the \textit{théorie du sens} stresses the importance of good public speaking skills through its insistence on spontaneous expression, naturally sounding in the receptor language, which is supposed to be the interpreter's mother tongue. Another positive aspect of the \textit{théorie du sens} is its emphasis on clarity of the interpreter's output, especially in terms of making clear the relationships within an utterance, to be achieved among other procedures by explicitation. Therefore it can be said that in spite of shortcomings of the \textit{théorie du sens} as a general theory of interpreting, if interpreter trainers waited for an accurate, consistent, simple and comprehensive theory to explain all the phenomena of interpreting as they occur in


professional situations, they would not have had any workable method for training new interpreters. The approach the théorie du sens advocates to interpreting as such - namely rendering the sense of source texts, and not the words - can be applied to the specific cases of dealing with cultural references in source texts, where automatic processing cannot be used since cultural references represent local problems and necessitate decision-making on a case-by-case basis. An interpreter has to understand the source text cultural references and realise why the speaker used them. Brief recourse to the théorie du sens will therefore be made later in connection with strategies of consecutive English-Slovak business interpreters. However, since English-Slovak interpreters have to work with a language of limited diffusion, which represents a specific constraint on their mediating activity, attention in the next chapter will focus on languages of limited diffusion.

99 The fact that the théorie du sens can serve as a training tool has been acknowledged, for example, by Moser-Mercer, 'Paradigms Gained', p. 20; or Gile, 'Scientific research', p. 33.
Chapter 5 Interpreting in Languages of Limited Diffusion

This chapter will study interpreting in languages of limited diffusion, at first regardless of whether the mode is simultaneous or consecutive. The term language of limited diffusion can be defined from three angles, since the diffusion of a language can be measured according to “the number of speakers who use it as their mother tongue”, or “the number of speakers who use it as a foreign language”, but also according to “the number of readers of translated texts originally written in that language”\textsuperscript{1}.

The status of a language as a language of limited diffusion will later in the chapter be related more specifically to business interpreting. The findings for simultaneous interpreting in languages of limited diffusion are not to be neglected for business interpreting, since, for example, whispered simultaneous interpreting does occur in the Slovak business environment during presentations for small groups of counterparts, where it can be used in one direction, for example from Slovak into English, while consecutive interpreting is used in the other direction. Although conference interpreters (whether simultaneous or consecutive) can be expected to work in one direction only and thus the issue of interpreting into their mother tongue becomes prominent, it can be a consideration for business interpreting too. In spite of specific features of business interpreting, the directionality problem can

\textsuperscript{1} Cf. Ioannis Manganaras, ‘Polyglotism and Literary Translation in Greece’, in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 56 – 61 (p. 56).
nevertheless arise, since in some bilateral talks, two interpreters can be present, each of whom may only work in one direction.

As a consequence of Slovak being a language of limited diffusion conforming to the conditions of any and all of the three above approaches to the concept, Slovak interpreters are expected to do aller et retour: from a foreign language into Slovak as well as out of Slovak into a foreign language$. They therefore have two (sets of) clients to work for and two sets of cultural references to deal with. Given the specificity of pro domo texts, the interpreter may not have sufficient vocabulary for introducing cultural references briefly, as is imperative during interpreting. Source text cultural references which have to be dealt with may have to be discussed in a language/culture in which they may be completely unknown since either nothing, or only little, may have been said about them before, so the stumbling block may come in the form of missing receptor language vocabulary for an explanation. The situation may differ in cases where cultural references are mentioned in a language/culture in

2 Cf. Mária Vasová, 'Some Aspects of Simultaneous Interpreting' (unpublished diploma thesis, Comenius University, Bratislava, 1979), p. 3; on the Czech situation - cf. Čeňková, 'AIC v Praze' [AIC in Prague], TOP, No. 7 (1991), 1 and 4 (p. 4). Giambagli observes that in the cases of Russian, Hungarian, Polish, Czech and Slovak, native speakers of these languages, for whom Italian is a foreign language, have to be used for interpreting in Italy - cf. 'L'interprétation en relais', p. 82.

3 Cf. Vilikovský's definition; cf. also Chernov, 'Cognitive and Pragmatic Inferencing', p. 27.
which they have already been discussed. It may, for example, be easier to find names for Finnish institutions in both Finnish and Swedish, since:

Finland is an example of a country where the centuries-old necessity to use two languages about the same external reality has led to the emergence of a large number of institutionalized, semi-automatic translational correspondences - for instance in the designation of organisations, in the phrasing of laws and public notices and signs.

Referring to the same institutions in a bilingual country in either of its languages may become habitual through tradition. However, if, unlike the case with Finnish organisations, the reality referred to is not the same, translators may encounter difficulties. For example, in rendering legal terminology into other languages due to fundamental differences between legal systems which may be in individual countries based on a different set of premises. It has been pointed out that differing legal systems reflect socio-political differences between societies. Similarly, it has been demonstrated that Italian institutional terms do not lend themselves to transfer into English easily. Both legal technical terms and institutional terms may be expected to form part of conversations unfolding in a business environment, adding to the difficulty of mediating which the interpreters have to carry out. And as it has already been mentioned, interpreters working with languages of limited diffusion have to interpret in both directions which can increase the pressure on them even more. Interpreting into and from languages of limited diffusion may not have been theoretically discussed in sufficient detail in the past, however, more attention has

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6 Cf. Resta, 'Legal Language', p. 78. However, European Union dictionaries of legal terms represent an attempt at creating equivalents in this area.
been paid to this area recently\(^9\). Interpreters using languages of limited diffusion, not only work both into and out of their mother tongue\(^9\), but are often expected to fulfil supplementary roles like accompanying guests, providing them with tourist information about the place of their stay, etc. This may exacerbate the stress already put on them, especially in terms of the additional skills and knowledge expected of them. The dilemmas about the role of an interpreter in a situation where clients require interpreting even for the most basic communication acts have been mentioned also by Masaomi Kondō\(^{10}\) and Ruth Levy-Berlowitz. However, if languages of limited diffusion cease to be used, cultural heritage and intellectual variety may be lost\(^{11}\). Languages of Eastern Europe are not to be neglected just because they are not world languages\(^{12}\). Some Central and East European languages have only now started to be used for simultaneous interpreting - for example Estonian, since in the past the official language used during simultaneous interpreting in Estonia was Russian\(^{13}\). In Slovenia, professional university interpreter training institutes are only being formed\(^{14}\). With languages of limited diffusion, in the simultaneous mode, relay interpreting is frequently practised where one interpreter renders the source text into the language of limited diffusion serving as a pivot

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\(^7\) Cf. Stefano Marrone, 'Is It Possible to Translate Institutional Terms? A Pragmatic Approach', in *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, No. 3 (1990), 72 - 74.

\(^8\) For example, Ilona Zalka, Presentation during Workshop 6: Intercultural communication, negotiation and interpreting, 27 August 1994, *The International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?*, Turku, Finland.

\(^9\) Which also makes it more difficult for them to join *The International Association of Conference Interpreters* AIIC.

\(^10\) Kondō, 'An Experience of Conducting Intensive Refresher Courses for Junior Colleagues'.


\(^13\) Tämm, personal communication, 1997.
language, to be picked up by interpreters in the other booths and interpreted into
their respective languages. According to the languages of the source texts, various
interpreters become the lead booth at various times. Interpreting from the first
interpreter's rendering may be done either into an interpreter's foreign language, or
mother tongue\textsuperscript{15} - depending on the configuration of interpreter availability\textsuperscript{16}.

Since interpreters, including those who work with languages of limited diffusion, are
bilinguals by definition, some findings of research on bilingualism may be significant
for interpreting, the more so that within the work on bilingualism, the mother tongue
issue has been raised. Thiéry characterises the mother tongue in the following way:

> It is in the mother tongue(s) that the child produces phrases that he (sic!) has
never heard and complies with syntactic rules that no one ever taught
him (sic!). It is in the mother tongue that any speaker can detect a phrase
that is wrong, even if it is apparently grammatically correct. It is in one's
mother tongue that one can recognize garbled phrases over a faulty loud-
speaker, merely by their outline... The adult second-language learner
never achieves such an instructive, creative relationship with his (sic!) second
language, and the reason may be that his (sic!) painstaking
performance has not been built on the appropriate linguistic competence,
but on cognitive structures established for another language, his (sic!)
mother tongue\textsuperscript{17}.

If the mother tongue establishes one's cognitive structures in such a powerful
manner, the issue to be clarified for interpreting is whether better results can be
achieved when interpreting into the mother tongue. Research on bilingualism has
provided some arguments in favour of interpreting into the interpreter's mother

\textsuperscript{14} Mentioned during the Training of Interpreter Trainers Seminar, Prague, 28 – 31 January 1998.
\textsuperscript{15} Cf. Giambagli, 'L'Interprétation en relais'.
\textsuperscript{16} In Slovakia, the number of native speakers of other languages who can provide simultaneous
interpreting out of Slovak is relatively low - in most cases these interpreters are married to native
Slovak speakers. The number of foreigners able to provide consecutive interpreting may be higher.
\textsuperscript{17} Thiéry, 'True Bilingualism', p. 152.
tongue. In view of the findings by Stanislav Dornic\textsuperscript{18} that nonbalanced bilinguals, i. e. those for whom one language is dominant as opposed to their other language, represent a majority in the group of bilinguals, and that in situations of stress, the deficiencies of the bilingual’s weaker language may become more apparent, it may follow that an interpreter may achieve better results when working into his or her mother tongue:

Information overload, environmental, emotional or social stresses, fatigue, all these factors may unveil the hidden imbalance between the dominant and subordinate languages\textsuperscript{19}.

Since interpreting does involve a high degree of stress, the unequal status of the interpreter’s languages may show during interpreting, especially when exposed to more challenging circumstances:

Very high information load, the so-called task stress, can have various forms. Regardless of whether the load is characterized by high input rate, or by task complexity, performance for a nondominant language will deteriorate more than for the dominant one, sometimes quite dramatically. In spite of the usual strategies with which the man (sic!) will try to cope with the overload (omissions, delayed responses, less exact or selective processing, failure to correct one’s errors) a further increase in the load will lead to a breakdown of performance in the weaker language at a much earlier stage than in the dominant language\textsuperscript{20}.

However, the advantage of interpreting exclusively into the interpreter’s mother tongue has not been proven unequivocally, which Daniel Gile demonstrates through


\textsuperscript{19} Dornic, p. 259. The awareness of deterioration of a bilingual’s performance may have been the reason why the interviewing panel at the University of Warwick choosing resident tutors routinely examined also their linguistic abilities. Tutors in their job encounter situations of stress where non-native speakers tend to lose their ability to talk sooner than native speakers, sometimes non-native speakers fail to react in English at all, or they resort to less efficient ways of communication which slows down the process, in other cases what they say may sound funny to students who are native speakers, with ensuing loss of authority and credibility of the resident tutor.
the example of rendering technical terms during interpreting. Although AIIC insists that all interpreting be done into the interpreter’s mother tongue, the United Nations Organisation, contrary to this requirement, uses interpreting into foreign languages. In this way, individual countries seek to ensure the precision of the rendering of what was said by their representatives. However, if the second language which the interpreters have learned after acquiring their mother tongue is weaker than their mother tongue, then their output in the foreign language may be less precise, it may sound less stylistically polished, and the pronunciation may bear traces of a non-native accent. Such may be the outcome, although the production stage may in the case of interpreting out of their mother tongue be based on full understanding of the source text during the comprehension stage.

Interpreting starts with understanding the source text, which may best be achieved with source texts in the interpreter’s mother tongue. Russian scholars discussing the topic of directionality of interpreting most frequently argue with full grasp of the meaning of source texts since, parallel to written translations, official interpreting in their country has often been done either out of Russian, or both ways. Denissenko argues that the comprehension issue becomes the crux especially in simultaneous interpreting. Apart from full comprehension of the source text in the interpreter’s

\[20\] Dornic, p. 264.
\[23\] Cf. Jurij Denissenko; cf. also reports of discussions in the same volume; cf. also R. K. Minyar-Beloruchev, Metodika obucheniiuia perevodu na sluhi [Methods of Interpreter Training] (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Ministerstva oboroni, 1959); Minyar-Beloruchev, Posledovateľnuiu perevod [Consecutive Interpreting] (Moscow: Voennizdat, 1969); Chernov, ‘Kommunikativnaia situatsiia’; Chernov, Teorii i
mother tongue\textsuperscript{24}, further arguments in favour of interpreting into a foreign language include the relative ease of lexical choice in the interpreter's foreign language, as opposed to the slower speed of deciding, in his or her mother tongue, between a higher number of lexical possibilities distinguished from each other by a complex of consciously known, or subconsciously felt, nuances of denotation or connotations\textsuperscript{25}. This would indicate emphasis on rendering the source text message, its informational content, regardless of the stylistic appropriateness of the individual linguistic means used in the process.

On the other hand, other authors have pinpointed less verbal ease and less lexical richness as characteristic for interpreting into a foreign language\textsuperscript{26}, therefore in terms of the linguistic quality of the end product of interpreting, the requirement of working exclusively into the interpreter's mother tongue may be valid, since the style of the receptor text in the interpreter's foreign language may be expected to be less polished. However, if the requirement of interpreting only into the interpreter's mother tongue is connected with avoiding frequent switching between two languages (when interpreting into the interpreter's mother tongue is contrasted to situations of interpreting both ways), this argument may be invalidated by the fact that interpreters working (in the simultaneous mode) with major West European languages often have to switch between their various foreign languages from which they interpret into their mother tongue.

\textsuperscript{24} Giambagli also points out that Italian interpreters starting from an Italian source text do not have to make a great effort to understand it - cf. 'L'interprétation en relais', p. 92.

\textsuperscript{25} Cf. Denissenko, p. 157.

\textsuperscript{26} Giambagli, 'L'interprétation en relais', p. 87.
Regardless of whether the interpreters' receptor language is their mother tongue or not, if they work in one direction only, they are deprived of the opportunity of checking the accuracy or appropriateness of technical terms they may be using in their receptor language27. Thus they lack a vital source of feedback which they would otherwise be afforded if they worked both out of their mother tongue and into it. This issue is connected with on-going feedback mechanism, with the clients correcting any terminological mistakes of the interpreter as the interpreting unfolds. However, when an interpreter only works in one direction, he or she can only receive a delayed feedback, which can be insufficient especially in new areas, like business in Slovakia. Such uni-directional interpreting is made more difficult by its monologic character.

The issue of mother tongue is compounded by domain knowledge which may be uneven in various languages: people may have different level of knowledge in various domains, for example, about something which is their hobby, they can be expected to have a richer vocabulary. If they are interested in a topic, they may read about it more extensively, including literature in the foreign languages they know (at least passively). Moreover, more sources about a person's interest may exist in a foreign language, which would make that person's vocabulary about the topic in the foreign language richer. The same applies to an interpreter, whose knowledge in

27 Cf. Altman, 'What Helps Effective Communication?', p. 27. This was also mentioned by Per Fjellman, a Swedish interpreter at the European Commission, during the TAIEX workshop Terminology Tools for Interpreters on 27 October 1997 in Brussels, whose comment was based mostly on simultaneous interpreting in the European Union context.

In my own experience with business interpreting, during one meeting I was only asked to interpret from Slovak into English, since the Slovak banker claimed to have sufficient English to follow his overseas counterpart, but was hesitant to use English for active speaking. On another occasion the English client wanted me to only interpret for the others from English into Slovak, she herself did not require interpreting from Slovak into English since she had spent some years in Prague and passively understood Slovak.
some areas may be more extensive while in others can be relatively low. So since
the mother tongue can be seen as a whole consisting of variously developed parts,
not a monolithical entity, there can be no straightforward answer about whether it is
better for an interpreter to work exclusively into his or her mother tongue, or both
ways, or even exclusively into the foreign language. (For some topics, it may be.)
The mother tongue issue may have implications for note taking during consecutive
interpreting as well. For example, it has been claimed that notes should be taken in
the interpreter's mother tongue, since that is natural for the interpreter. This rule of
mother-tongue notation is to be applied regardless of the direction in which the
interpreting itself is carried out. However, if notes are taken in the interpreter's source
language, no cognitive processing happens at the time of taking the notes and all of
it is left for the production stage. More effort will therefore be required of the
interpreter later. This makes it preferable for the interpreter to try to take notes in the
receptor language, thus attempting to do much of the intellectual processing of the
source text already during the listening stage of interpreting. This finds its parallel in
the rejection of shorthand for interpreters since with shorthand, too much processing
would similarly be left to the interpreter for the production stage compounded by the
deciphering of the shorthand notes. Seleskovitch recommends note-taking in the
receptor language especially to beginners since it makes them realise that notes are
not transcripts, but just aids to memory. Since the ESIT school presupposes
interpreting into the interpreter's mother tongue, it would then be in the interpreter's
mother tongue that the notes would be taken. However, the note-taking issue can be

28 Cf. Minyar-Beloruchev.
29 Cf. Seleskovitch, Langage.
treated separately from the mother tongue issue – as a function of the source language/receptor language as such, which seems a more productive approach: where note-taking is recommended in the receptor language, unless, because of the speaker’s high speed the interpreter cannot manage to write notes in the receptor language, and consequently has to jot them down in the source language.

The mother tongue issue has not been resolved, as witnessed by the discussions during the International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, held in Turku in 1994. For example, Karla Déjean Le Féal strongly advocated the principle of interpreting into the mother tongue only, especially in connection with the resulting naturalness and richness of expression. Working exclusively into the interpreter’s mother tongue may reflect the Western European situation, where much interpreting has been done between the major languages. However, Anna Giambagli observes that outside the English- and French-speaking environment, interpreting out of the interpreter’s mother tongue is frequently resorted to31. In Central and Eastern Europe in the past, even instances of simultaneous interpreting between the interpreter’s second and third foreign languages used to occur32. Although the discussion on the use of the mother tongue in interpreting has been going on, in professional life, for example, according to the Code of conduct of the Institute of Linguists, interpreters only have a duty to make their clients aware beforehand that they will be interpreting into their foreign language - and then they can proceed with

32 Although I am Slovak, on several occasions I was asked to provide interpreting between Russian and English, working both ways, in the simultaneous as well as consecutive mode. Similar experience is reported in Giambagli, ‘L’interprétation en relais’, p. 82, who admits that the number of interpreters capable of interpreting between two foreign languages is low.
interpreting\textsuperscript{33}. Such situation, however, would probably occur less often with simultaneous conference interpreting and more often with community interpreting, where less usual languages, i.e. languages of limited diffusion, may be required for which there were not sufficient numbers of native speaking English interpreters.

The mother tongue issue has recently been researched applying scientific methods, for example, in terms of the difference in effort during interpreting into and out of the mother tongue, one such method being the EEG probability mapping\textsuperscript{34}. Various other research projects have included the possibility of testing differences during interpreting into and out of the interpreter’s mother tongue as a sideline. The prominence of the mother tongue issue may be corroborated by the fact that a separate conference was held on translation into non-mother tongues\textsuperscript{35}.

Another aspect of the mother tongue issue is the deterioration of the mastery of the mother tongue among translator and interpreter trainees as well as practicing translators and interpreters, which has been pointed out by several authors\textsuperscript{36}. Barbora Stejskalová, a professional Czech interpreter, says that a number of Czech interpreters realise that they need to update their knowledge of Czech and she thinks

\textsuperscript{33} According to a leaflet of the Institute of Linguists, London, 1995.


\textsuperscript{35} Cf. Translation into non-mother tongues, Ljubljana, May 29 – 30, 1997, Closing event of TEMPUS JEP-07740-94: Second Call for Papers and Registration Form. Circular sent by the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, in January 1997. (At the time of the first call for papers, in 1996, the conference bore a title: translation into non-primaty language.) Its scope covered both translation and interpreting.

that this might be the feeling of colleagues working with other languages\textsuperscript{37}. Producing receptor texts in the translator's or interpreter's mother tongue may in such cases mean translating or interpreting into their weaker language, which may not put them at an advantage of having a richer vocabulary and a more extensive stock of syntactic structures at their disposal for spontaneous use. More courses in the mother tongue for present or future translators and interpreters have been reported, which may serve as another indication that its command has been worsening in several countries and needs to be updated\textsuperscript{38}. Another reason for concentrating on improving the knowledge of and the flexibility in using the mother tongue may be its rapid development at certain points in history: for example, at present, Slovak is changing rapidly, both regarding its vocabulary and syntax. A number of Slovak words and expressions have been abandoned after 1989 because of their connection with the previous communist system, while the language is being enriched by new vocabulary from other languages (often to designate new concepts, many of them in the field of business), at the same time as the range of acceptable syntactic structures has been broadening. The dynamic development of Slovak at present has partly been caused by the major changes in the society and the influx of new concepts and terms corresponding to them, which are either taken over from other languages whose grammatical systems may be diametrically different from

\textsuperscript{37} Stejskalová, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{38} Cf. Miloslav Uličný, "Klub kultury překladu při Ústavu translatoologie FF UK" [Club of Translation Culture at the Translation Studies Institute of Faculty of Arts of Charles University], \textit{TOP}, No. 25 (1995), 7; cf. also Alena Vrbová, 'Budoucí překladatelé a třumočníci a výuka českého jazyka' [Future Translators and Interpreters and the Teaching of Czech Language], \textit{TOP}, No. 30 (1996), 48/620 – 49/621; the need for improvement of the mother tongue of translators and interpreters was stressed also by Jana Rejšková in her paper 'ELF – English as Lingua Franca or English as Language of
Slovak especially in lacking the conjugations and declensions, or are created anew.39 Since this process of vocabulary building and meaning attribution has been happening very fast, less attention has sometimes been paid to rules of traditionally correct Slovak usage. The present situation is that of catching up, familiarising oneself with new notions or new cultural references and naming them "on the trot". Slovak interpreters, as professional users of language, stand at the forefront of these changes, they are in many ways instrumental in adopting new terms into the language.

Although numerous changes may have been happening, Slovak may be likely to remain a language of limited diffusion, since any change of such status can be expected to represent a long process, taking decades. The status of a language as a language of limited diffusion may have a considerable impact on interpreters working with it, however, that is not the only constraint placed on them in the case of Slovak-English business interpreters. Since the primary mode of interpreting which is resorted to during business negotiations is the consecutive mode, attention in the next chapter will focus on this mode and the limitations brought by it into the mediating process.

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39 More details are contained in Chapters 7 and 8.
Chapter 6 Characteristic Features of the Consecutive Mode of Interpreting

This chapter studies the characteristics of the consecutive mode of interpreting, since it is the mode most likely used during business negotiations\(^1\). Consecutive interpreting is often taught as the first mode of interpreting at schools of translation and interpreting. Although some authors question its usefulness\(^2\), arguing that in professional situations the simultaneous mode prevails, consecutive interpreting as the mode used frequently during business negotiations makes it relevant for the present description. Salevsky defines it as follows:

Consecutive interpreting is a class of interpreting characterized by the following features (setting it apart from simultaneous interpreting):
- presentation of source text in segments, determined by the speaker;
- interruption of source-text presentation for the production and/or realization of the text segment in the target culture/language;
- production and/or realization of target-text segments on the basis of a logical-conceptual substrate of the presented source-text segment, recorded in parallel with reception by memorization or notation\(^3\).

As opposed to the simultaneous mode of interpreting, in the consecutive mode the interpreters have received a whole chunk of information, rather than continuously receiving a flow of its constituent parts, which puts them at an advantage - it makes it possible, for example, to restructure the original syntax and concentrate on the source text message itself. Thus the Linearity Constraint\(^4\) is less severe in

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\(^1\) The choice of the consecutive mode of interpreting for business negotiations is connected with the various advantages it affords to the negotiating parties - cf. Gile, 'La communication', pp. 31 - 32.

\(^2\) For example, Francis, 'Cultural and Pragmatic Aspects', p. 252.

\(^3\) Salevsky, p. 153.

\(^4\) Cf. Shlesinger, 'Shifts in Cohesion'.
consecutive interpreting, although it cannot be altogether neglected. Whereas in the simultaneous mode the interpreter's notes, if any, remain only fragmentary - maybe proper names or figures are jotted down (sometimes the off-line interpreter marks them for use by the on-line colleague), in the consecutive mode, interpreters may use written notation systematically, depending on their working memory capacity or the feasibility of taking notes, which, however, can be low especially during outdoor interpreting.

Since in the consecutive mode both the source speech, either in full, or a (substantial) part of it, and its rendering into the receptor language can be heard separately, the one closely following the other, this mode gives the parties to a communication a chance to check the exactness of interpreting. Thus even listeners with only passive knowledge of the source language may be able to monitor the completeness and/or correctness of interpreting and may exercise more control over the situation than they would if the simultaneous mode of interpreting were used. Some members of delegations may be specifically charged with the task of monitoring the interpreting, especially when it is provided by the other party. This checking may manifest itself in outright corrections when a particular word or expression is not heard at a place where the clients expected it. However, not all (British) English listeners may be able to assess the quality of interpreting in detail: while some Slovaks may be supposed to have at least a basic knowledge of English (since most secondary schools and universities in Slovakia at present teach English and numerous English courses are available outside the academic environment). English clients may be less likely to have sufficient knowledge of Slovak, either as a
consequence of their bilingual background or through university studies - the few departments of Slavonic Studies existing in Britain concentrate on more widespread Slavonic languages, for example Russian, and not all of them teach Slovak⁶. However, although it cannot be expected that the knowledge of Slovak will become more widespread in the UK itself, there have been changes happening in Slovakia: higher numbers of foreign clients than before 1989 understand at least some basics of Slovak, moreover, companies or institutions from abroad often tend to send such people on missions to Slovakia who have, for example, already been seconded in other Slavonic-speaking countries, whose family roots are Slavonic or whose


⁶ UK research universities with departments of Russian, Slavonic and East European Studies are: Nottingham, Queen Mary and Westfield College, Sheffield, Bristol, Cambridge, Oxford, Portsmouth, University of North Wales – Bangor, Keele, Leeds, St. Andrews. However, not all of them have Czech or Slovak. Czech is slightly more frequent in British Schools of Slavonic Studies than Slovak. For example, Sheffield used to have the same Czech lecturer as Oxford, and there was no Slovak. However, if the university studies are to prepare future interpreters, these have to have active knowledge of a language. Since Slovak and Czech are two distinct languages, a future interpreter has to master Slovak better than just by guessing at the meaning of Slovak words and expressions from their similarity to Czech. It is mostly during the stage of understanding Slovak source texts that a native English interpreter, fluent in Czech, might encounter problems. If he or she were interpreting from English into Czech, it may cause no difficulty because inhabitants of Slovakia are used to Czech language and understand it easily. On a recent occasion, a Czech and a Slovak interpreter made up the English booth team, working for a Slovak delegation. On another occasion a Slovak interpreter, working (consecutively) for a group of Czech clients, interpreted what they were saying from Czech into English, and what the English-speaking party was saying from English into Slovak - the Czech audience had no problems with understanding the Slovak. According to European Union officials - both at the European Commission and European Parliament – mixed Czech-Slovak booths are anticipated after the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic have joined the European Union. The EU professional interpreting examinations in June 1998 in Bratislava checked with Slovak candidates whether they would be prepared to interpret from Czech into English – since such use is planned at the European Commission. The similarity of Czech and Slovak is recognised by the BBC World Service - during its Slovak broadcast, which is focused on Central and Eastern Europe, Czech quotes are used without voice-overs. However, for covering Czech events, the Slovak Markíza television station uses reporters who speak Czech, while the STV station has its own Slovak-speaking correspondent seconded in Prague.

No undergraduates from Britain studying in Slovakia are given in the Statistical Yearbook list of 33 countries from which foreign students come to Slovak universities, although it includes some English-speaking countries – cf. Štatistická ročenka Slovenskej republiky 1997/Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 1997 (Bratislava: Veda, 1997). However, 6 students from the UK are given in the Institute of Information and Forecasts in Education statistical tables as studying in Slovakia by 31 October 1997, 4 of whom are at a “university faculty” – cf. Alžbetta Ferenčíčová (ed.), Separáti štastitickej ročenky školstva Slovenskej Republiky 1997: Vysoké školy [Extract from Education
spouses are of Slavonic origin. Similarity of individual Slavonic languages facilitates a substantial degree of passive comprehension, between speakers of different Slavonic languages, such people therefore either already know some of a Slavonic language, sometimes even Slovak, or are at least more motivated to follow the Slovak texts than if there existed no such connection. More intense business links may make counterparts able to speak some of each other's language better each time they meet, since the vocabulary during a business meeting tends to be limited and its acquisition may be supported by written materials such as reports, letters, faxes or E-mail correspondence which usually precede and prepare personal meetings. However, another matter, quite specific for the business environment, is the potential non-disclosure of such linguistic knowledge in order to gain advantage from following the proceedings without committing oneself and waiting for the full interpreting instead.

There exist other sources of knowledge of Slovak, for example, *Studia Academica Slovaca*, a summer seminar of the Slovak language and culture, has been organised at Comenius University in Bratislava, and a number of participants have either improved their knowledge of Slovak or gained some, if they did not have any at the outset. The SAS has welcomed participants from all over the world, and although originally these used to be mostly people with some family links with Slovakia, looking for their roots, more and more participants with purely academic interest have been coming in recent years.
Apart from this event with a broad outreach some business representatives from abroad have been taking courses in Slovak, usually on a one-to-one basis. Not only business people, however, but also diplomats, numbers of whom are now active directly in Slovakia, and not just - as in the past - in Prague, take intensive courses of Slovak. This means that during top-level business negotiations where such diplomats may be present, they are able to follow what is being said, before it has been interpreted into English, and can then check on the exactness of interpreting. Apart from that, more students from abroad have been registering at Slovak universities - they first learn Slovak and then study the subject of their choice, after their return home they can be involved in business links of their country with Slovakia and some can act as interpreters occasionally.

Whereas in the simultaneous mode, interpreters in an ideal case work in teams where each of them only works into his or her mother tongue, the probability that all interpreting, in both directions (into the mother tongue and out of it), will be done by just one interpreter may be higher in the consecutive mode, since it might strike some clients as wasteful if one of a pair of interpreters stayed idle whenever his or her partner was working. This, apart from the fact of a consecutive interpreter not being hidden inside a booth, but sitting or standing next to the speaker, in full view of the listeners, makes him or her more visible and may have the accompanying effect of feeling more under public scrutiny. Decisions of an interpreter about any problematic passages in source texts may thus be conditioned by a subconscious effort to project self-confidence. A consecutive interpreter may be making fewer

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7 A number of teachers from the Department of English and American Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava have been providing them.
attempts at checking unknown or missed pieces of information with the source text speaker, since that might lower the trust of the clients, although it may save the communication at a particular critical moment. On the other hand, by the very fact of the visibility of the interpreter, the clients may become more aware of being interpreted, and may as a consequence become more considerate.

Although interpreters are supposed to render the source text in more or less the same order in which it was originally structured by the speaker, they may change the order in enumerations. This gives consecutive interpreters more space in which to operate, assisting them, for example, in cases of a momentary black-out of memory or when deciphering badly legible notes. The consecutive mode also makes it easier to filter out secondary information from the source text - framing information or linguistically induced information, which might become a burden in the receptor text. Moreover, it helps prevent repetitions, false starts, or other typical features of improvised spoken texts, from getting into the receptor text, where they might reflect badly on the author of the source text. Although the majority of source texts for interpreting may be informative, there may exist cultural differences in the way information is expressed, for example, regarding its order, and so interpreters working in the consecutive mode may engage in intercultural mediation by, for example, changing the arrangement of individual pieces of information.

The problem with asking the clients for information during an interpreted event is, in my own experience, compounded by the clients' frequent inability to provide an explanation in a brief, succinct manner. Moreover, clients might expect a different passage of the source text to be problematic, than really is, for the given interpreter in the given situation, they also often just repeat the end of a sentence they have been asked about, while the interpreter may have misunderstood or missed the beginning of it, which makes the clarification of information a longer process, slowing down the proceedings.

Cf. Altman, 'What Helps Effective Communication?', p. 25.
Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p.144.
Terminology from Gile, Basic Concepts.
The consecutive mode of interpreting makes it easier for the interpreter to carry out logical analysis of the source text and arrive at a rendering which may sound natural in the receptor language. Sue Ellen Wright points out that translations “should speak ‘the language’ of the target audience and should resemble other texts produced within that particular language community and subject domain”\textsuperscript{13}. She thus highlights that there may exist two sets of expectations within the receptor cultural community: that of general members of the receptor community, but also that of members of a narrower, professional, grouping within it. This can serve as an example of overlapping discourses - similar to what the Scollons concluded - in this case, the interweaving of the national and the professional discourses. Even if the receptor text sounded right to the general public, but unusual to the professional group of its direct users, the overall impression it would make on them might be unnatural.

While during simultaneous interpreting there is no time for extensive changes to make the text conform to receptor culture conventions and so the receptor text is moulded more on the style of the source text, interpreters working in the consecutive mode may resort to their comparative knowledge of discourse types/text types to make their receptor texts conform to the expectations of the receptor audience. Different communities may have different conventions in connection with text types, the knowledge of which may serve as a useful tool for consecutive interpreters. From a classification of speeches into types, predictability of certain elements may follow\textsuperscript{14}.

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Cf. Gile, \textit{Basic Concepts}, p. 234.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Wright, 'The Inappropriateness', p. 70. Her claim about translations can be applied to consecutive interpreting, too.
Skilful application of the knowledge of text types and text conventions may increase predictability during interpreting, which may save the interpreters some effort both during the comprehension stage of interpreting, and later, during its production stage.

The division into text types, however, cannot be rigid, because elements of various text types may occur in any text, with some features usually predominating. Christopher Thiéry mentions different types of discourse and sudden switches from one type to another by a speaker, which an interpreter should be able to cope with.

Attention to text types does not imply a source-text orientation: text types are viewed comparatively between the two cultures concerned, with more prominence during the comprehension stage given to the source-culture perspective, while more attention during the production stage is focused on the receptor-culture perspective.

Although classification into text types may be partly artificial, it can serve didactic purposes, especially during interpreter training. According to one classification, text types can be "descriptif", "dialectique" and "affectif", to which three forms of interpreting correspond. Thus the interpreter's approach to rendering a source text and the kind of textual manipulations carried out may depend to a certain degree on the text type in question. Technical and scientific discussions, editorial committees,
procedural and other debates oriented at the contents and whose form is not emotionally charged can all be interpreted in an explanatory way - with the interpreters aiming at providing the listeners with full information, disregarding the formulation of the source text. On the other hand, in the case of political negotiations, law suits and discussions where positions of the participants are known from the outset, where it is not a matter of explaining facts, but of presenting arguments to defend them, the interpreting has to be scrupulously faithful to nuances of the terms used by the source text author. And finally, the exercise-in-oration type of texts, including, for example, the expression of thanks, or after-dinner speeches, aimed at impressing the audience, should be interpreted in such a manner as to evoke the same feelings (sadness, smile, pleasure, etc.) in the receptor audience as the source texts did in the source text audience.

Elsewhere the system is seen as comprising narrative, argumentative, emotional and descriptive types. Since emphasis in the argumentative text type is on the argument, the order of individual components cannot easily be rearranged by the interpreter without risking the collapse of the logic of the whole argument. Such a failure may reflect badly on the source text author, and may also put the interpreter under considerable stress, especially in terms of the working memory capacity. It may also take up too much processing capacity which the interpreter may need to use for the other efforts of interpreting. Different mnemonic aids may be applied by

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17 Cf. Seleskovitch, 'Principes et méthodes', p. 175.
18 Cf. Seleskovitch, 'Principes et méthodes', p. 175.
21 Lederer, 'How to Make', pages in the volume are not numbered consecutively, the division into text types - cf. p. 7 of my numbering of the paper.
22 On the three efforts of an interpreter - cf. Gile, Basic Concepts.
interpreters in different situations - with argumentative texts they can follow the line of the argument, while descriptive texts can be visualised more easily. Using historical or critical analysis for enhancing the interpreter's memory is recommended as well\textsuperscript{23}. If a source text author concentrates on style, which tends to happen in rhetorical texts, the interpreter has to pay heightened attention to the choice of words, too, in order to reflect this in the receptor version. With different types of texts, criteria for interpreter's performance may differ, which Henri Van Hoof puts succinctly: "On attend donc de l'interprète de conférences qu'il soit à l'aise dans la terminologie technique comme dans l'imprécision diplomatique, dans la rigueur scientifique comme dans le jargon des réunions internationales."\textsuperscript{24} Such flexibility with different types of source speeches may be expected also during business interpreting\textsuperscript{25}.

Apart from text types, another useful tool for an interpreter may be a classification of conferences\textsuperscript{26} and of negotiation styles, entailing predictability of certain elements which may occur during interpreting. In parallel to friends or family members using their own communication code based on shared assumptions\textsuperscript{27}, people who meet regularly develop a common communication code. Similar ideas have been expressed by Gile, who provides a classification of interpreted events, following which the level of explicitness of texts may differ according to the type of event and according to the relationships of the participants. Members of a working group\textsuperscript{28}, co-

\textsuperscript{23} Cf. Seleskovitch and Lederer, Interpréter pour traduire.
\textsuperscript{24} Henri van Hoof, Théorie et pratique de l'interprétation avec application particulière à l'anglais et au français (Munich: Huber, 1962), p. 32.
\textsuperscript{25} Details of business interpreting will be elaborated in the next chapter.
\textsuperscript{26} Cf. Namy.
\textsuperscript{27} Cf. Edwards.
\textsuperscript{28} Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p. 31.
operating on a long-term regular basis, may be more likely to use elliptical, less explicit formulations in their speeches, which may make it more difficult for a new interpreter, not familiar with the environment, to understand and consequently render all the implicit meanings correctly. Similarly to working groups, business negotiations may consist of a number of meetings, where their participants may gradually develop patterns of mutual communication which may be abstruse for the interpreter, especially a newcomer. Moreover, members of working groups or business partners are likely to communicate also in the written form and references to their mutual correspondence may by their incompleteness confront the interpreter with challenges.

The most constraining condition in interpreting - the time factor - limits what an interpreter can do with a source text and any cultural references contained in it, hinted at, or implied. While in the simultaneous mode of interpreting, cultural mediation, for example, in the form of added explanations may be out of the question, due to the time pressure\textsuperscript{29}, the consecutive mode may be more conducive to it. Moreover, in the consecutive mode, source texts may be more often spontaneous, characterised by inherent redundancies, which may allow, for example, the insertion of explanations of cultural references into the receptor version.

Although the time constraints in the consecutive mode of interpreting are less severe than in the simultaneous mode, they nevertheless remain relatively high, because hearing a given speech segment twice, in the source language and then in the receptor language, may create in the listeners a feeling of proceeding too slowly.
That is why according to some authors the interpreter is supposed not to take as much time rendering the source speech, as the speaker did when delivering it. Jean Herbert says the interpreter should take at most 75 per cent of the time the source text author took. However, Herbert himself and other authors mention summarising interpreting, required of interpreters in special cases, in order to save even more time. In the standard case, interpreters may take short-cuts based on speech redundancies, and still keep the whole informational content of the source text, while summarising interpreting entails inherent loss of information.

However, since in a business environment the consecutive mode of interpreting may be seen as giving the parties to communication more thinking time than the simultaneous mode would, summarising interpreting on a large scale in this area may be encountered less frequently. During business negotiations, full consecutive interpreting is viewed favourably by those involved as a mechanism for winning time which they can use for planning new strategies, observing or estimating their counterpart(s), gaining business advantage, and avoiding committing themselves without due deliberation. The time afforded by the consecutive mode can be used

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29 Cf. Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous interpretation: “Cultural transfer” or “voice-over text”?'
31 Herbert, The interpreter's handbook, p. 68; cf. also Seleskovicth, 'Interpretation, A Psychological Approach', p. 112; Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 29; or Shackman.
32 In all my ten years' experience as an interpreter, I was asked to provide summarising interpreting only three times. Once the speaker was talking too fast, and the organisers told us to interpret, in the simultaneous mode, only the most important of his ideas. The request was, however, impossible to comply with, due, on the one hand, to the Linearity Constraint, and, on the other, limited subject knowledge of the interpreters, i. e. the difficulty in assessing relevance of information, for which active subject knowledge would be necessary. The other occasion was when providing whispered interpreting for a single client, who was not interested in the whole content of the lecture but only wanted to have a rough idea, for his own orientation, which topics the speaker was touching on - thus he was only asking for partial information. The third time was during a lunch where most participants were able to follow the English conversation and no interpreting was provided, only a summarised version for one participant who asked for it specifically.
also by clients of court interpreting - for example, according to Marco Ucmar, although the Slovenian clients from the Trieste region understand Italian, they require interpreting, to win time before they have to reply to any queries during court hearings. Ruth Morris, writing within the European Communities context, observes that the consecutive mode is preferred in cases of highly technical debates where delegates want more time before they have to react - which may confirm the above claim for the business environment, where committing oneself without proper deliberation might have financial consequences.

Compared to practices on the Western European interpreting scene, in Slovakia the length of a part of the source text to be interpreted consecutively still remains relatively short. Some lecturers from Western European institutes for interpreter training would not call such interpreting consecutive interpreting, but would refer to it as liaison interpreting. This is connected with the training of the Slovak interpreters who can only cope with shorter passages comfortably, but above all with the expectations of the Slovak clients, some of whom do not understand the English source text well enough and may feel lost if nothing is relayed to them of the unfolding proceedings. They also feel they may be getting deprived of some contents if extensive passages are interpreted in long blocks. Similarly, foreign clients not knowing Slovak may lose concentration if there are long intervals during which they

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34 Marco Ucmar, paper presented (read by Maurizio Viezzi) on 27 August 1994, in Workshop 3: Quality in Media, Community, Court interpreting, at the International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland.
36 It has been frequently debated in mixed teams of Slovak interpreters and European Union or Council of Europe interpreters.
cannot follow what is going on. In other countries, for example, Austria or Germany, the listeners can often follow what the speaker is saying and may thus be less impatient to wait for the official interpreting. With the practice of interpreting long stretches of source texts, note-taking methods become of heightened importance. More attention is therefore paid at some interpreter training institutions to note-taking, for example, in Graz one whole term is devoted to instruction in note-taking, which all students, no matter what their language combination, receive together. In Slovakia, the problem may be exacerbated by the fact that speakers not used to public speaking sometimes have to be interpreted and so they make more restarts or digressions than may be comfortable for an interpreter to keep in the working memory or to take down as brief notes and then reproduce from them. Moreover, many Czech and Slovak speakers tend to express themselves in a way which displays little logic for the interpreter. If there was strong underlying logic in what was said, it would be easier to remember what a speaker has said without noting it down or to render it from brief notes. This would indicate that training Slovak interpreters in consecutive rendering of long stretches of text will have to go hand in hand with educating clients of interpreting.

Regardless of the length of individual passages to be rendered into the receptor language, consecutive interpreting in a business environment may also afford more opportunities for the display of politeness and for creating favourable interpersonal

38 Erich Prunch, personal communication, 1997.
39 Luba Fedorová, personal communication, 1998 - she was referring to Slovak speakers. About Czech speakers – cf. Stefan Čirič, Úvaha: Jak udělat ze špatných originálů dobré překlady? [Reflection: How to Produce Good Translations from Bad Originals?], TOP, No. 23 (1994), 36/348; or Jan Hájek, Šplechy naší inteligence (aneb Zkuste si zatlumočit) [Prate of Our Intellectuals: or Try to Interpret This], TOP, No. 27 (1995), 7/455.
contacts. However, different cultures may vary in, for example, the importance they attach to politeness, personal relationships, hospitality, etc. - and these differences may show more visibly in a consecutive interpreting situation.

This chapter described the specific constraints which the consecutive mode of interpreting puts on an interpreter. Keeping the restrictions of the consecutive mode in mind, in order to complete a picture of the circumstances of a Slovak-English business interpreter, the next chapter will turn to the business environment, study its characteristic features and their influence on the activity of a Slovak-English consecutive interpreter.
Business negotiations are carried out in a specific manner, and although their expected aims may be similar in most countries, their usual rituals may differ between individual cultures. In business situations, various textual elements may acquire distinct importance, for example, numbers and proper names (often product names) may be more prominent than in other types of interpreting. Since unlike other parts of the source texts which are processed through logical analysis¹, numbers and names are processed in a different way, it may be difficult for interpreters to remember them without writing them down, which makes note-taking techniques in business interpreting more important. The special nature of processing numbers during interpreting has been highlighted by Barbara Moser-Mercer:

From a language information processing point of view, the processing of numbers differs from that of continuous text in that numbers are largely unpredictable, i. e. one has to devote full attention to the incoming message, whereas ... continuous text allows and even requires hypothesizing on the input. Thus, when numbers appear in a continuous text, the interpreter has to switch his (sic!) processing procedures, this is akin to a sudden gear shift - something to which a car usually responds with grunts and groans. The interpreter responds in a similar fashion - hesitations, pauses, restarts, etc. Numbers have been a notorious problem for interpreters, experienced and unexperienced alike².


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Numbers as a stumbling block for interpreters have been pinpointed by Janet Altman in her experimental study of student errors. During the training the students are given guidance as to how to interpret numbers, which they can apply during their professional career.

One finding of immediate interest in connection with figures is related to the interpreter's lagging behind the speaker: whenever figures are rendered correctly although they are embedded in a complex argument, the interpreter abruptly catches up with the speaker and pronounces the figure almost immediately after hearing it. It seems that figures have to be repeated while still within the span of short term memory.

Although this observation is based on the reaction of a simultaneous interpreter to numbers in the source text, it is quoted here to demonstrate the difficulty which numbers pose in source texts and it shows the need for rendering any numbers fast, while they remain in the interpreter's working memory. That is why in the consecutive mode, interpreters are advised to start their rendering in the receptor language by saying the figures first. The specificity of processing numbers in source texts for interpreting is reflected, for example, in the attention paid to the training in rendering numbers at the Maurice Thorez Institute of Foreign Languages in Moscow, where drills in numbers take up one whole semester of the academic year. Minyar-Beloruchev has been more specific: he devoted a substantial part of his monograph on consecutive interpreting to exercises in aural recognition of French numbers, since recognising them correctly is a prerequisite for interpreting them successfully.

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6 R. K. Minyar-Beloruchev, Posledovatefnyi perevod.
Not only figures appear frequently during business negotiations, but proper names may often be used, too - these can be single or compound. Compound proper names may contain common nouns\(^7\), and thus their rendering in the receptor text may be more challenging, due to the combination of transcoding and logical analysis which their processing requires. Rendering complex proper names also increases the interpreter's Memory Effort\(^8\).

Efficient work with background material may help interpreters achieve better performance with numbers and proper names\(^9\). An interpreter with relatively good knowledge of the subject may be in a position to relate, for example, to expected sizes and measures usually associated with various aspects of the topic in the given area, and may more easily provide the listeners with rounded figures in case of need, or with summarised information, etc. Equally, an interpreter with good background knowledge of the subject may be in a better position to recognise more proper names and render them more successfully. At the same time, it helps if the interpreter is able to ascertain to what extent the audience requires precision in rendering numbers and proper names or is prepared to tolerate some degree of imprecision. In the business environment this tolerance may be very low, since names and numbers may be pivotal for the negotiations going on and mistakes can have financial consequences.

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\(^7\) Cf. Gile, 'Les noms propres en interprétation simultanée', in 'La formation', p. 13 of the paper.

\(^8\) Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p. 124.

\(^9\) On one occasion we had to interpret names of the winners of an international competition into our respective working languages, but no lists of those names were given to us - the organisers, when asked, told us that the printed results were put in expensive souvenir bags and were for the overseas participants of the closing ceremony only. However, since we felt we needed the printouts of the names to have some visual support of unfamiliar sounds coming in through our earphones, we asked for them without the bags and we got them, which made our task easier.
With numbers, in some cases the question of agreement on usage may also arise — for example, at present, Slovak source texts translated into English use billion to mean miliarda ('a thousand million'), which originally came from American usage. Since preparatory texts for business meetings adhere to this practice, Slovak interpreters have had to render 'miliarda' as billion, too.

A prominent place in business negotiations may be held by enumerations, which, according to the théorie du sens, as discussed earlier, are to be transcoded. Due to their essentially non-contextualised character, enumerations represent a considerable burden on the resources of an interpreter. Since the interpreter knows less than the business partners about their area of activity, if he or she writes individual items of an enumeration down, he or she can make sure not to forget and subsequently omit anything, since the individual items do not immediately lend themselves to logical linkage for the interpreter and thus the pressure on the working memory of the interpreter might lead to incompleteness of the rendering or to a break-down in interpreting. With the number of times an interpreter has worked for the same clients or with the number of times an interpreter has worked in the same area of knowledge, it becomes easier to create logical sequences of enumerated items and to render them in their completeness with ease.

Apart from containing a large proportion of exact figures, precise proper names, and frequent enumerations, business negotiations may comprise elements of legal language, meant, by its very nature, both for communication and non-communication\textsuperscript{10}. Business encounters may also contain textual passages where the

\textsuperscript{10} Cf. Resta, 'Legal Language', pp. 69, and 75. Christiane Nord says the text function of certain legal texts is the lack of (general) comprehensibility - cf. 'Translation as a process of linguistic and cultural
appellative function comes to the forefront\textsuperscript{11}. Since business in a country grows not only out of its economic situation, but also out of its political climate, and since political decisions may have economic implications, during business meetings there may also occur political speeches, characterised by their specific diplomatic style. Thus in business interpreting, interpreters may be dealing with a range of texts broader than just strictly informative.

Interpreters, aware that business rituals in different cultures may vary\textsuperscript{12}, may be in a position to fulfil the expectations of their clients coming from different cultural backgrounds. It may help interpreters to have background knowledge of the audience: for example, how much a person from Central and Eastern Europe is aware of Western European business culture and is prepared to take it on board, or vice versa, how much a person from Western Europe is aware of the legacy of command economy\textsuperscript{13} in Central and Eastern Europe and is prepared to make allowances for that. However, although according to some authors\textsuperscript{14}, differences between individual countries of Central and Eastern Europe may seem blurred, quite significant differences between them exist, while the similarities, in fact, may only originate from their legacy of communism. As Alexandr Krouglov, speaking about Russian language and culture, has pointed out, there are "pre-communist,

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\textsuperscript{12} According to David Katan, the cultural factor is the single most important factor in business communication - cf. his presentation on 27 August 1994, Workshop 6: Cross-cultural Communication, The International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland.

\textsuperscript{13} It is interesting to note that the designation used in Central and Eastern Europe was \textit{planned economy} (or \textit{central planning}), which carries positive associations, while the \textit{command economy} designation, usual in Western Europe, rings a distinctly negative note - cf. Lipizer, 'The Compatibility', p. 7.

\textsuperscript{14} For example, Philip Longworth, \textit{The Making of Eastern Europe} (New York: St. Martin's, 1994).
communist and contemporary aspects to the culture of Central and Eastern Europe, even though from the outside the communist aspects may be seen as dominating any others. The communist culture in Central and Eastern Europe may have been more or less homogeneous, but in the pre-communist and the post-communist periods the truly national cultural characteristics of the individual countries stand out more prominently. These are the features which have to be taken into consideration by the interpreter mediating between representatives of various communities in a business environment at present. In other words, a person from abroad may, for example, be familiar with situation maybe in Poland, but what he or she experiences in Slovakia only displays some identical cultural features, while most other characteristics may be uniquely Slovak.

In business negotiations between a (British) English and a Slovak party, cultural differences may emerge, with, or without the participants being aware of them immediately. Some may be due to the lack of Western business culture in Slovakia under communism. The influx of new concepts after the democratic changes in 1989 and the need to learn new vocabulary for referring to them have been pointed out by several Czech or Slovak authors. In order to achieve full communication, these new concepts have to be internalised both by interpreters and their clients.

After 1989, during interpreting about new topics, Czech and Slovak interpreters initially had problems with expressions like mission statement, letter of intent,

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feasibility study, memorandum of understanding, etc., vocabulary for which did not exist in their languages, because the concepts had not existed in the communist economy. However, some Slovak terms have since been created - in those cases where the concepts and practices have been taken over. Bilingual and multilingual lists of new technical terms in the area of business, finance and economics have been published for example in TOP, journal of the Union of Interpreters and Translators\textsuperscript{17}. Various Czech and Slovak publishers have also produced English-Czech/Slovak-English dictionaries of business, finance and economics\textsuperscript{18}. Some multilingual dictionaries have been published too\textsuperscript{19}.
and some specialised English monolingual dictionaries are available which can serve translators or interpreters for orientation\textsuperscript{20}.

In the area of accountancy, serious obstacles have had to be overcome in building Slovak-English (or Czech-English) terminological glossaries, since in the past, the accountancy systems which were used in Britain and in Czechoslovakia were framed within different concepts\textsuperscript{21}. Nevertheless, the accountancy terminology has recently been compiled and some glossaries have been published\textsuperscript{22}. In this field, the incompatibilities of the two systems seem to stand out in a sharp contrast. During the preparation of Slovak documentation for the Young Enterprise handbook within the Enterprise Education in Slovakia project, the UK experts found it challenging to reconcile indigenous Slovak and UK materials, because the underlying concepts were found to differ too much. The final solution was based on the UK system of balance sheets, sales purchase books, etc., exclusively. Accountancy may be less flexible than other areas of business, due to the bureaucratic dimension it contains.

In some cases the vocabulary of business may be less structured in Slovak than in English. For example, no lexical distinction is made in Slovak between enterprise

\textsuperscript{19} For example, 


\textsuperscript{21} In my experience the discrepancies in the accountancy systems caused some frustration in my foreign clients, when I was not getting the concepts through to them while sight translating documents, for example balance sheets, from Slovak into English.

\textsuperscript{22} Cf. Tůma, Vlasák, ‘Bankovní a účetní glosář’ [Banking and Accounting Glossary], TOP, No. 8 (1991), 5; Martonová and others, ‘Terminologie: Účty’ [Terminology: Accounts], TOP, No. 9 (1992), 11 - 13; Martonová and Kautský, ‘Účetní správa: Rozvaha/Výsledovka’ [Consolidated Balance Sheets], TOP, No. 9 (1992), 14, and 17; Martonová and Kautský, ‘Terminologie: Konsolidovaný výkaz cashflow, Konsolidovaný výkaz změn kapitálu’ [Consolidated Statements of Cashflows], TOP, No. 10 (1992), 7 -
and business, both of which are intermittently, depending on the context, rendered as either 'podnik' or 'podnikanie' - where 'podnik' has preserved a slight command-economy feel about it, while the verbal noun 'podnikanie', although carrying more free-market connotations, denotes a process rather than a company\textsuperscript{23}. Since business and enterprise, and sometimes also trade, merge in Slovak, sometimes the English word 'business' is taken over into Slovak and used in the form biznis\textsuperscript{24} - according to the way it is pronounced. When referring to specific businesses, the word firma can also be used in Slovak.

Slovak interpreters may have had problems with other expressions for which only old-fashioned vocabulary exists\textsuperscript{25} from the time of the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918 - 1939), examples of which may be terms like predstavenstvo ('board of directors') or živnostník ('a self-employed person'). While interpreting from Slovak into English in the early 1990's, corresponding English terms had to be picked up from the English-speaking party, because in most cases they could not be found in the existing Slovak-English, or Czech-English dictionaries, as these had been published under communism and therefore hardly contained any entries in the sphere of business, let alone old-fashioned ones. In the communist past in Czechoslovakia, literature in the field of economics used to be sparse and media


\textsuperscript{23} It is interesting to note that some early European Union directives use a term small and medium-sized undertakings, which is a part of their official introductory paragraphs, thus demonstrating the rise of "Euro-English", where a native English expression would have been small and medium-sized businesses, or alternatively, small and medium-sized enterprises.

\textsuperscript{24} Cf. Paul A. Samuelson and William D. Nordhaus, Ekonómia 2, trans. by Jan Iša, Oto Sobek, Daniela Svierčíková, Monika Šestáková and Anna Zatkalková (Bratislava: Bradlo, 1992), which may serve as a source of conceptual preparation for Slovak interpreters.

\textsuperscript{25} Cf. Rubková, p. 10.
coverage of business insufficient. Some traditional Slovak terms in the area of business can be found in fiction from the time of the first Czechoslovak Republic. Alternatively, some can be picked up from period films kept in archives.

After 1989, in Czechoslovakia, a certain tendency to choose old-fashioned vocabulary for designating various phenomena of public life, i.e. various cultural references, has manifested itself: many previous names of institutions with strongly felt communist flavour have been replaced by more “friendly-sounding” terms like Obecný úrad, spolok, or, an example from Czech: Překladatelská obec. This trend, similar for both Slovak and Czech cultures, may be seen as a kind of return to roots, as though the revived, traditionally-sounding, pre-communist terms implied something inherently genuine, honest and down-to-earth about the institutions they were chosen to name, as though they were adding to them a “community feel”. At the same time, in parallel to the above search for old-fashioned terms, there can be discerned a tendency to use foreign-sounding names (mostly of English origin), for example, for businesses - in a belief of increasing the prestige of the business itself in the eyes of the Slovak public. Thus a Slovak shop can be called market, a

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26 After 1989, numerous translations of literature on business, economics and management from English have been published and extensive time has been devoted in media to various business topics.
27 In novels like Demokraty [Democrats] by Janko Jesenský, or plays like Jožko Púčik a jeho kariéra [Jožko Púčik and His Career], or Čaj u pána senátora [Tea at the Senator’s] - both by Ivan Stodola, etc.
28 Some of which were film versions of novels, like the above.
29 Obecný is an old-fashioned adjective denoting ‘belonging/pertaining to a community’. Obecný úrad has replaced Národný výbor to designate a ‘local authority’.
30 Spolok is old-fashioned for ‘society’, ‘association’, ‘club’.
31 (Překladatelská) obec is old-fashioned for ‘Community’ (‘of translators’).
32 A similar fashion for English-based names has been reported in other Central and East European countries – cf. Wegrzyń, who observes that in Poland this may have to do with the liberation from the communist culture, p. 62.
company can be referred to as *firma*\textsuperscript{33}, a place where one can get their nails done can bear a sign *nail studio*, although Slovak has had the terms *pedikúra*, *manikúra*, etc.

The loan word *diler* (‘dealer’), which has only undergone a spelling change when passing from English into Slovak, has become part of everyday Slovak vocabulary. This may be connected with the fact that due to the lack of significant natural resources in Slovakia, there exists a limit to the development of indigenous processing industries, and so the transition of the country to a market economy has been happening actively in the sphere of distribution of both domestic and foreign products, for which a company can become its *dealer*, alternatively, its *authorised distributor* – in Slovak: ‘autorizovaný distribútor’.

Apart from the less-structured and the old-fashioned Slovak business vocabulary, there are the technical terms connected with new technologies, for example, stock exchange operations based on computer networks, which never existed in Slovak, because the technology out of which they have grown has only been a recent development, and so they have to be created. Slovak interpreters working in this area, for example employees of international banks or other financial institutions, are to a certain extent charged with terminology work. This may be quite specific in a computer-related field, because much of the computer terminology has been taken over into Slovak more or less in its original English form, which may be connected with the fact that many Slovak users of computer-related literature are able to read specialised materials in English. Usually there only occur slight modifications: in a

\textsuperscript{33} For a comment about this practice which seems to imply a “posh” expression - cf. Rády, ‘Poznámka k prekladaniu reklamných textov do slovenčiny’ [A Note on Translating Advertising Texts into Slovak].
noun, endings may be added to make its use in the various declension cases possible, for example, the trade name 'Windows' is often used with a Slovak plural ending -y as Windowsy\textsuperscript{34}; fonty is the Slovak version of 'fonts'; drivery corresponds to 'drivers'. Utility ('utilities' - sic!) is used as a plural in Slovak in this form, due to the similarity of the terminal '-y' of the English singular 'utility' to the Slovak plural ending -y, although the Slovak utility is used as a replacement of 'utilities' in English, which can be seen from its genitive form utilít (as in: 2800 programov a utilít\textsuperscript{35} - ‘2800 programs and utilities’). However, a noun can be taken over from English as immutable, and may remain so, for some time before developing into a fully flexible noun in Slovak. For example, notebook, which was at first used in Slovak texts in its original immutable English form, has in the meantime acquired the full set of Slovak declension endings. With adjectives, Slovak endings make the obligatory gender and number agreement possible, for example ‘Novell networks’ are rendered into Slovak as Novellové siete - the plural adjectival ending -ové was added to the English form of the adjective\textsuperscript{36}. With verbs, Slovak endings make a verb fit into a sentence better, for example sejvovat', 'to save'; kliknúť myšou, 'to click the mouse'. Although attempts were initially made to introduce a Slovak term znova nastaviť to render 'to reset', the term used by computer specialists and personal computer users at present is resetovať, because on the key of computer keyboards it says (from the

\textsuperscript{34} In areas other than computer technology, loan words from English sometimes occur in Slovak as jargon, for example, workers producing bathroom 'fittings' refer to them as fitingy, adding a Slovak plural ending -y to the English loan word. Similarly, tvisták ('twist-off lid' of a jar), derived by the colloquial -ák ending, is used by workers in tinning industry as a short-cut term. Names based on proper names, when taken over from English, can also have Slovak case endings added to them, for example, rodajlendky ('Rhode Island hens'), or hempširky ('Hampshire hens').

\textsuperscript{35} From a software company promotion leaflet, Bratislava, 1996.
manufacturer) ‘Reset’. In the process of borrowing from English into Slovak, some pronunciation and spelling changes can also occur, for example, ‘plotter’ has been simplified to ploter, ‘cursor’ has become kurzor, or ‘co-processor’ - koprocesor. Different versions of the same technical term may co-exist – sometimes one in the written mode and one in the spoken mode, where the modified forms conforming to the requirements of Slovak grammar tend to belong to the oral sphere, for example, fajly (‘files’), which in written materials can be referred to by the Slovak technical term súbory (‘files’). Slovak terms corresponding to ‘hardware’ (technické vybavenie počítača) and ‘software’ (programové vybavenie počítača) were created, however, to designate hardware and software specialists, slang expressions hardwarista, softwarista now exist, which are less clumsy than any name derived from the above three-word expressions would be, since such a name would be even longer, for example, the theoretically possible five-word expression odborník na technické vybavenie počítača.

Slovak computer specialists, while talking among themselves, tend to use more English terms taken over into Slovak and adjusted to the declension cases, for example, máme tu taký rikvest (‘we have a request here’), or [čank] and [čanky], which is used for ‘chunk’ and ‘chunks’ respectively; to si tam musíme [atačnúť] – we have to attach it there. However, it would sometimes be difficult to imagine how

38 An example from another area: strečové tričká (‘stretch T-shirts’) or strečové pančuchy (‘stretch tights’).
37 Teachers Involved with the Enterprise Education in Slovakia project used the word brifingy (a modified plural form of ‘briefings’) which only exists in this spoken form and sounds like slang. ‘Briefing’ is another concept which was non-existent before 1989 in Slovakia. Example from Jack Peffer’s tapes, 1995.
34 This remark sounded playful, when used by Comenius University computer support room staff, who claim to be bilingual – speakers of Slovak and Computer English.
such words would be spelt in a written Slovak text – that is why they are given here only as pronounced.

In the area of computer terminology, some English expressions have been taken over into Slovak, even consisting of two or more words, for example, *user-friendly*\(^39\), *desk top publishing*, although the immutability of their English form may create problems, since agreement between individual parts of a sentence in gender, number, case, etc., is a requirement of the Slovak grammar, due to an extensive system of declensions and conjugations\(^40\). Sometimes in the same article or paper, an English technical term may be used intermittently with a newly coined Slovak expression, denoting the same concept, for example, ‘spreadsheet’ or *tabulkový kalkulátor/tabulkový procesor*; ‘bubble jet’ or ‘desk jet printers’ may be referred to by their (partly) English name: *tláčiareň bubble jet, tláčiareň ink jet* (with a reversal of word order of the modifier and the modified noun in Slovak), or as *bublinková tláčiareň* and *atramentová tláčiareň*. Some abbreviations in the computer terminology have also been incorporated into Slovak, for example, *DTP program, CD ROM.*

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39 With English-origin terms of this metaphorical type, one might also look at the difference between what is considered appropriate in a scientific or scholarly text in Slovak and what in English. Native English frequently uses imagery even in specialised terminology – cf. *buyers and sellers market, bulls market, bears market, the bottom has fallen out of the market, we managed to put the bottom back in, financial health of a country, legacy equipment*, etc. Slovak only uses few metaphorical expressions if a text is to sound authoritative and creditable. Similar metaphorical expressions in English are *EMC hostile environment*, i.e. environment where it is difficult to achieve electromagnetic compatibility (EMC). In Slovak it is more usual to use intellectual vocabulary and talk, for example, about ‘prostredie exponované z hľadiska elektromagnetickej kompatibility’. From a psychological context: *emotional roller-coaster* would in Slovak be something like ‘emocionálna emočná krivka’ (*emotional curve*).

40 Loan words from English which were taken over into Slovak a long time ago, have often been modified to conform to the Slovak declension system and are spelt according to Slovak rules - for example *džús* (‘juice’), *tim* (‘team’), *vikend* (‘week-end’). Apart from the fairly new area of computer technology, numerous English terms have been taken over into Slovak in football, and also in music, especially jazz, pop and country. While English-based football terminology is widespread in Slovakia, the terminology of jazz, pop and country music may be more a question of specialised group interest, where using esoteric English terms may be a sign of snobbery or ostentatious in-group identification.
Not only in computer technology or financial operations carried out via computer networks have English terms been taken over into Slovak, but also in various other areas - these are numerous terms expressing new concepts, for example, image (of a company), manager, management, brainstorming, holding, leasing, clearing, rating, feasibility study - sometimes without undergoing any changes, sometimes written in Slovak according to their pronunciation, i.e. imidl, manažer, etc. The impact of English has manifested itself also in semantic modification of some Slovak terms: for example, the English 'project' has started to be rendered in Slovak by projekt, used in its English meaning, because the two words sound similar, although the original Slovak meaning of projekt used to be restricted to the area of civil engineering or architecture where it meant a specific part of the design documentation for buildings or other structures. However, under the influence of English, the meaning of this Slovak term has been broadened.

Menedžment podniku (‘management of a company’) is at present often used instead of vedenie podniku, however, it is more widespread, for example, on the Markíza television station than on the Slovak Television, STV. (Apart from lexical usage influenced by numerous English loan words, the marked American orientation of the Markíza station manifests itself in the reluctance to add the female -ová ending to English and other foreign names.) Since this station is considered to be the main outlet for the opposition opinion, a number of Slovaks watch both STV and Markíza stations to compare their news coverage. Therefore the fact that STV uses more Slovak-based words and expressions and fewer loan words may not be a guarantee against the spreading of the English-sounding loan word menedžment, used on Markíza, throughout Slovakia. There are faculties of management at some Slovak
universities — in the official list of the Slovak universities they are spelt as *manažment*[^1], which goes half way by adjusting the spelling of 'g' to its Slovak pronunciation ž, while keeping the spelling of both a’s, although their pronunciation should be written in Slovak as e.

Since conversion in English makes possible the forming of brief designations, which would sometimes have to be rendered into Slovak by long descriptive phrases, some cases of loans of converted adjectives from English into Slovak have also occurred, for example, it is now possible to say *fullservisová agentúra*, 'full-service agency', where such an advertising agency could also be referred to by a Slovak expression 'agentúra poskytujúca úplné/kompletné služby'.

*Benchmark* has entered the Slovak language and become current not only in the computer context, but also in finance and business. This may have been caused especially by its frequent use as a converted adjective in English, where the two-word translation of the noun *benchmark* into Slovak as 'porovnateľný parameter' would make it more difficult to use a descriptive expression when rendering, for example, expressions like *benchmark portfolio*, where benchmark plays the role of a modifier.

The authoritative, one-way system of teaching in Czechoslovakia in the past did not use modern tools like flipcharts. However, accompanying the new style of teaching which has reached Slovakia flipcharts have come too as an object frequently used also during business presentations and they are offered in various advertising newspapers as *flipcharty* — with the Slovak –y plural ending. It would be possible to

refer to this product as *papierová tabuľa* ('paper chart'), analogous to *tabuľa* (blackboard), but the Slovak producers and distributors have opted for the more English-sounding variant.

In some ways interpreting from English into Slovak may be becoming easier, since a relatively large number of English words have been taken over into Slovak and are used by many Slovak clients of interpreting. To an extent these English loan words are connected with taking over new notions and new culture. Eero Balk (writing in the Ukrainian-Russian literary context) points out that influence of foreign languages shows most intensely on the vocabulary of a language, where loan words enter\(^4\). He also points out that when foreign word-formation elements penetrate the receptor language, this is a deep influence which witnesses another stage of the change of the language\(^3\). The starting conversion in Slovak, under the influence of English, is an indication of such impact of English on Slovak – it is now possible to say, at least in colloquial style: *super cena* ('super prize/price'), *super ceny* ('super prizes/prices'), where the traditional agreement between the gender and the number of the modifying adjective and the modified noun has not been kept.

Another type of change of Slovak has been on the level of style demonstrated, for example, by the use of more figurative expressions, a feature which can be said to have come from English. *Soft loan* and *soft credit* have started being used by some Slovak speakers as 'mäkká pôžička', 'mäkký úver', although it would be possible to say *východná pôžička*, *východný úver* ('preferential', 'favourable'), but the influence of

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\(^3\) Balk, p. 28.
soft ('mäkký') from the English expression seems strong, especially to professionals who get English materials in the original and occasionally refer to them. More examples, mentioned on the Slovak radio, include 'soft assistance' and 'hard assistance' – where the distinction is similar to 'software' and 'hardware'. So far this new influx of imagery has only been researched on agency journalism.  

Another phenomenon which can be observed in Slovak is the general loss of sensitivity of Slovak users to hybrid formations – for example, a shop can be called Drinkland Diskont, showing a combined English and German influence. The name of a business Dance Centrum shows an English-Slovak combination. The use of loan words instead of indigenous Slovak expressions may be a question of snobbery – for example, insisting on importer and refusing dovozca ('importer'). In an advertisement which used autorizovaný importér ('authorised importer'), the text continued by claiming the company to be also autorizovaný predajca ('authorised dealer'), thus providing another example of hybridisation. It has to be admitted, however, that due to the influx of new notions, the hybridisation cannot always be avoided – for example, the only way to refer to off-shore companies probably is by calling them off-shore spoločnosti, as it was done in a newspaper advertisement.

Using English loan terms may also be connected with an effort to avoid words or expressions which may have become politically or ideologically charged due to their occurrence under communism, for example, no reference is made at present to súbor opatrení ('a package of measures'), but balíček opatrení has been coined instead, with balíček, a diminutive of balík ('packet'), in a way unsuitable for a formal

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45 Trend: týždenník o hospodárstve a podnikaní (Economy and Business Weekly), 22 April 1998.
expression. However, súbor opatrení used to be an official document under communism and the expression already has connotations of that period.

Some cases exist in the area of business where an English loan term and an indigenous Slovak term coexist side by side, for example, an interpreter can say both monetámy and menový ('monetary'); or garancia, but also záruka ('guarantee'). Leasing has been gradually developing into its phonetic form lizing, at present both can appear in various written materials and advertisements. Similarly, there can coexist an old-fashioned term with a more modern term: obligácia, a term known from the times of the first Czechoslovak Republic, is understood by specialists as well as dlhopis, the more frequent term in Slovak legislation, both meaning 'bond' in English. The Slovak Act on Bonds refers to it by using dlhopis. However, some newspaper articles use bondy ('bonds'), with the Slovak -y plural ending. Similarly, some Slovak experts use futurity, other says [fjučrs] for 'futures', a third group may talk about termínové kontrakty. This usage they can then expect and require from interpreters working for them. Some Slovak specialists are satisfied with opcie, others refer to [opšnz] for 'options', yet others know opčné kontrakty.

Overseas companies in Slovakia headed by overseas managers and employing Slovaks have given rise to a mixed language which these Slovaks often use – with loan words from English inserted in the Slovak text: Máme celý equipment z Ameriky. ('We have all our equipment from America.'). In such a mixed environment, communication can be achieved using mixed means of communication, not wasting any resources on trying to find a Slovak expression for something which was originally named in English.
Experience with computer terminology may help interpreters find a more consistent rendering of stock-exchange technical terms or other terms from the field of business in Slovak, but they have to be aware that the specific audience for which they may be working on a given occasion may not tolerate English loan words, and may demand something more Slovak-sounding instead. Moreover, the discrepancy between pronunciation and spelling of English loan words may cause some problems, since Slovak is based of the principle of identity of spelling and pronunciation.

In a situation where much of the Slovak terminology of business has to be built into a complete system, by either borrowing from other languages (mostly English), reviving old-fashioned vocabulary, or creating new terms, the acceptability of terms becomes a major consideration. On the other hand, in systems which have already been established, the question in the forefront of attention is the reliability of terms. Both the question of acceptability and reliability of technical terms are relevant for a Slovak-English business interpreter, because when interpreting from Slovak into English, since the English system is relatively stable, reliable terms have to be

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46 American International Health Alliance head of office, 1998.

47 There was a lively debate regarding correct Slovak pronunciation during radio and television news coverage of the air disaster of TWA, as compared to its spelling in the newspapers - cf. Róbert Kotian, ‘Ak chceme učit řečit láske k jazyku, nedá sa to dosiahnuť represiami’, rozhovor s prof. Jánom Horeckým o jazyku, TWA, swap i jazykovom zákone’ [‘Teaching People to Love their Language Cannot Be Achieved by Legal Enforcement, an Interview with Professor Ján Horecký about Language, TWA, Swap and the Language Law’]. SME, 20 December 1996, p. 15. First, the pronunciation of individual letters of the alphabet in Slovak and in English differ, and, second, indigenous Slovak words do not contain the consonant w. The lack of the w in indigenous Slovak (or Czech) words is reflected in the lack of a word for spelling it over the phone as the only letter, while all the other letters of the alphabet have at least one word for spelling – cf. ČSN 01 1690, an extract of which was quoted in Stefan Čirič, ‘Tlumočení nejen na zemi: Hláškovací abecedy’ [Interpreting not Only on Earth: Spelling Alphabets], TOP, No. 5 (1991), 10. Latest Slovak rules require Slovak pronunciation of any abbreviation used in Slovak - cf. ‘AIDS’, no longer pronounced [eidz], the English way, but [a: i: de: es]; or ‘HIV’, no longer pronounced as [eɪtʃ ai vɪ:], the English way, but [haː iː veː:].
chosen. In written translation work, colour coding may be applied to mark the varying degrees of reliability of technical terms⁴⁸.

Although interpreters may have neither the time nor the conditions for doing such coding, they still have to keep in mind where they have heard a term, in order to know how reliable it may be considered for future use⁴⁹. Criteria like the following may apply: whether the interpreter picked up the word from a source speech, or only from another interpreted speech; whether it was heard from a native, or a non-native speaker; whether it was used by a specialist, or a lay person; whether it only belongs to jargon, which may make its use in other contexts problematic, etc. With technical terms in English, additional attention has to be paid to whether the term has been picked up in a British or an American context, or from other variants of English. A technical term may have better reliability if it were heard used by several native speakers, specialists in a given area, repeatedly within several English-speaking contexts, etc. Moreover, a term which the interpreters have encountered in written materials during their pre-event preparation as well may have enhanced reliability for similar contexts. Interpreters may also get the precise form of a term better from written sources, compared to a term they have only learned auditively, which may have been based on imitation of sounds. Since interpreters have to do preparation before each new commission, they may apply principles of reliability coding then, when they compile their own glossaries, whether they do it on computer or using index cards.

⁴⁹ Cf. Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 144.
Because of the dynamic situation in Slovakia in the business environment, where so many concepts and terms to denote them are new, flexibility of interpreters' reactions becomes important. Several options are open to them when referring to business concepts: they can take over English terms (with or without modification), they can draw on some old-fashioned Slovak (and, maybe, Czech) vocabulary, or they can invent neologisms. Since interpreters are not expected to be as consistent as translators, they may sometimes use even less reliable terms to render the source text terms—to solve a given problem under given circumstances.

During business negotiations, spontaneous spoken source texts may predominate: individual participants may prepare notes on the basis of which they may speak, but because of the group dynamics, they would not normally read their contributions. The technical terms which the business counterparts use can therefore often be taken up by other speakers and used repetitively. In any situation with high repetitiveness, an interpreter has a chance of learning more new technical terms. However, apart from spoken source texts, partners in business transactions may refer to written documents and ask interpreters to sight translate passages from them. Sight translation of documents brought into a meeting is another characteristic feature of business interpreting in Slovakia, which may occur frequently. Although

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50 Cf. Gile, 'La communication', p. 127.
51 Sight translation is a type of interpreting about which not enough has been written— as has been pointed out, for example, by Maurizio Viezzi, 'Sight', p. 54. Lordes Cardidad Bassue Webb also says this type of interpreting has not been as thoroughly and widely studied as other types—cf. 'The Psycholinguistic Nature of Sight Translation', in Posters: Abstracts: The International Conference on Interpretation: What do we know and how?, Turku, Finland, 25 - 27 August 1994. Herbert speaks about it as translation at sight, and lists it among the varieties of simultaneous interpreting—cf. The interpreter's handbook, p. 7. A passage on sight translation can be found in Karla Déjean Le Féal, 'L'enseignement', pp. 95 - 97. The lack of research into sight translation has been observed also by John Dodds—cf. 'On the Aptitude of Aptitude Testing', The Interpreters' Newsletter, No. 3 (1990), 17 - 22 (p. 19). Anne Martin has devoted a paper to methods of teaching sight translation, frequently used in Spain—cf. 'Teaching sight translation to future interpreters', in Translation - the vital link (London:
relatively little has been written about sight translation, in a business environment in Slovakia it may be expected to be used quite often. There may have been no time to translate a document beforehand, or no sufficient funds may have been available for written translation, or the client may not have had a translator at hand, or the document may not have originally been considered necessary for translation, or the clients may not have realised it would be more difficult for the interpreter to sight-translate the text, they believed it would save them time and money, or it may be a new document which may only just have become relevant. Whatever the reason for sight translation, it may occur during business meetings in Slovakia, forcing an interpreter to deal with a written text, with all its pertinent characteristics, without any preparation, when seeing it for the first time.

The interpreter has to be able to restructure the syntax of the source text, while continually producing receptor text without interruption, at a reasonable speed, comfortable for the listeners. The source text syntax usually has to be modified because the text passes from the written to the oral medium, each with its own characteristic syntactic features which, if left intact, might sound unnatural in the other medium. Without the visual support of the text itself, it may be more difficult for listeners to perceive the connections of individual clauses within complex sentences, which an interpreter has to take into account when sight translating - he or she has to make the structure of the argument clear. Since interpreters in Slovakia work both out of Slovak and into Slovak, sight translation may also be required from them in both directions. On the other hand, however, the existence of a written source text

*ITI, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 398 - 405. Edwards treats sight translation in some detail, since it may often be resorted to in courts of law. Sight translation is taught at Charles University, and forms part of the state*
may make it easier for the interpreter to render proper names or exact figures correctly, moreover, it enables him or her to resort to supplementary strategies for rendering them: in the worst case these can be pointed at in the script itself, although it may only be a back-up procedure, a last resort and one which can only be used in small-group configurations.

While part of a business meeting may involve sight translation, other source text modes may also occur, for example, presentation video recordings or films, where attention during the interpreting has to be paid to synchronisation of image and commentary. Some mass business events involve the work of large teams of interpreters in one space — when negotiation tables are set for a business presentation of a number of individual companies from a foreign country — for future contacts with Slovakia in various areas of goods and services. Such business interpreting may be happening in a noisier environment and may concern matters that may be less confidential.

Telephone interpreting of business conversations, using a special three-line system, may also be used in Slovakia in the future, although due to the confidentiality of business matters, more transactions may probably be concluded in closed meetings than over the phone. There can also occur interpreting in situ, during visits to factories or construction sites, with possible interference of external noise or adverse weather conditions. Business lunches or other business meals can also expose interpreters to external noise and by the very nature of the environment where they

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52 Lidia Meak stresses the importance of striving for synchronicity while interpreting films during medical conferences - cf. 'Interprétation simultanée et congrès médical: attentes et commentaires', *The Interpreters' Newsletter*, No. 3 (1990), 8 - 13 (p. 11).
unfold, they make it technically impossible to take notes. In some business situations interpreters may be frowned upon when taking notes anyway - clients may be imagining that through such notes from closed meetings, confidential information might get leaked.

Speakers in a business environment may tell their counterparts a joke - maybe to create a relaxed atmosphere. Interpreting jokes involves on the one hand cultural references mentioned in the jokes (culture-specific or language-specific elements, including plays on words) and on the other hand the circumstances connected with telling a joke - the cultural appropriateness of telling a joke at all in a certain situation (in some cultures it might make a speaker look less serious and less reliable as a business partner, in others it may create atmosphere of trust and friendliness), suitability of certain types of jokes, for example indecent jokes, double entendre, or jokes based on sexism, ageism, racism, etc. The culture may differ in Slovakia and in Britain: joke telling is an activity well developed in Slovakia, from which a rich classification of forms of jokes exists (for example, kameňák), however, jokes are mostly considered appropriate in an out-of-work environment, over lunch or dinner. Moreover, most Slovaks are not aware of inappropriateness of telling certain types of jokes in front of people they do not know well enough. In the English environment, speakers would in most cases mention stories, not jokes, which may then be less committing on the listener to laugh at the end, whereas if something is labelled as a joke from the very beginning, the listener in a way has to laugh, if only out of politeness. Moreover, different things are considered funny in Britain. Apart from

53 They make it equally technically impossible for an interpreter to eat.
54 Cases where the clients "confiscate" interpreter's notes after the negotiations have become current in Slovakia.
slapstick comedy, which seems popular in Britain, very sophisticated humour, stemming from the best Oscar Wilde tradition, based on puns, is considered witty. This may gets lost when transferred to the Slovak environment, less used to intertextual allusions.

A knowledge of rituals dominant in each culture may enhance communication during business negotiations. The interpreter, having been exposed to both cultures, may be in a position to contribute to successful mediation between them in spite of the existing differences. For example, varying levels of politeness may be current and acceptable in Slovakia and the United Kingdom. An English person may be struck by the much lower frequency of please in a passage interpreted from Slovak into English when compared to original (British) English discourse, unless an interpreter takes care to add please systematically. Since most requests in Slovak are sufficiently polite when formulated with the verb in the conditional mode, for an interpreter this means in most cases making sure to add please whenever interpreting from Slovak into English in order to prevent creating an impression that the Slovak party is aggressive or rude, and vice versa, omitting most cases of please when interpreting from English into Slovak, due to their redundancy.

Putting a prosim ('please') in the Slovak receptor text in all those places where there was a please in the (British) English source text may have interesting results: the interpreters for the Enterprise Education in Slovakia project kept all the instances of the (British) English please in the receptor Slovak texts. During one of the post-project interviews, a Slovak participant said: “Everyone always did what you asked -
you asked so politely!" This may have been a consequence of the more frequent than usual occurrence of prosím ('please') in the receptor texts in Slovak.\textsuperscript{55}

Similarly, the English understatement may, if not adapted to Slovak usage of stating things more explicitly, create a distorted impression as to the intended meaning of the speaker.\textsuperscript{56} This may, for example, be the case with a subtly phrased negative English reply I will think about it, since the Slovak 'Rozmyslim si to' (only literally I will think about it) implies 'I will decide', 'I will make up my mind', 'I may change my mind', 'I will consider it', which is more open-ended and, when properly handled by the interlocutor, can yield an agreement from the person concerned, while the English I will think about it as a rule cannot. Equally evasive may be the English We will stay in touch or Keep in touch.

As a legacy of over forty years of communism in Czechoslovakia, some Slovaks may have been more apprehensive about making decisions and taking responsibility.\textsuperscript{57} The communism-induced passive attitude was what various projects and

\textsuperscript{55} Another example, highlighting how essential the English please is: Chocolate Kinder eggs sold in Slovakia in December 1996 contained brief instructions in 25 world languages, where please only appeared in the English version: Please read and keep.

\textsuperscript{56} The English modal verb may in notices like 'Bags may be searched', does not mean that they may be searched but that they will be searched: for example, before entering Buckingham Palace, all bags are searched - body scans and special tables are installed in the visitors entrance permanently. Similarly 'There may be a charge for this service' on a British Telecom leaflet means that the service is not provided free. Or an advice note sent via E-mail from Counter Clerks of the Computer Services of the University of Warwick: 'After midnight tonight you may no longer be able to send output to hpps [Hewlett Packard printers].' A restriction on the access of the user to the laser printers was placed at 12 midnight.

Mary Todd Trimble and Louis Trimble found that in the welding manual they analysed may be even had the force of must - cf. 'Rhetorical-Grammatical Features of Scientific and Technical Texts as a Major Factor in Written ESP Communication', in Hoedt and others (eds.), 'Pragmatics and LSP' (Copenhagen: Copenhagen School of Economics, 1982), pp. 199 - 216 (p. 203). According to the Trimbles, non-native speakers suppose that the notion of must will be expressed by the use of specific modal verbs, and do not recognise the use of may be in the function of must.

\textsuperscript{57} For example, Janka Mašárová, a teacher of Slovak and English at a primary school in Trenčín in Western Slovakia, said in December 1995: "It is difficult now when one has to make decisions." She would have preferred the headmaster to decide all matters (as it used to be done) rather than empower the teachers. Cf. also: "An animal bred in a cage often returns to it, being afraid of freedom."
programmes originating in Western Europe have been trying to change. For example, the Know How Fund launched the Enterprise Education in Slovakia project, because instilling into people a "new culture of self-reliance and initiative" was seen as a way of creating more favourable conditions for the introduction of a West European free market economy. People have to be prepared to take responsibility for their own decisions, based on thorough consideration of all available information. If the attitudes of the general public are inclined towards enterprise and risk-taking, favourable circumstances are created for investment, needed to bring Central and East European countries to the level of development of Western Europe.

The reluctance to take responsibility for making decisions may be a difference relevant for interpreted discourse, because an evasive answer by a Slovak may be taken by the English business partner for something else, or it may be seen as incorrect rendering by the interpreter. Thus the English person may just reiterate a request for a decision on the spot, or paraphrase it. The interpreter, rendering the message with equal precision as before, cannot help the decision to be taken, if the Slovak counterpart is not prepared to do so, i.e. when it was not a question of linguistic misunderstanding, but of miscommunication based on a cultural difference.

However, the situation in Slovakia has been dynamic with gradual changes in people's attitudes and behaviour happening all the time under the exposure to Western business practices. The emerging Slovak entrepreneurial class has been demonstrating its ability of individual decision-making and responsibility-taking, and its preparedness for risks connected with business. With time, this attitude will

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probably become prevalent in the Slovak population, especially as business people become more numerous.

During a business interaction, for example, when introductions are made, proper names of persons are mentioned. Most people are usually able to recognise their own names even if incorporated in a text in a foreign language. Some female English clients may therefore feel confused when hearing their surnames in Slovak with an -ová ending added to them, for example, pani Smithová ('Mrs Smith'). This is caused by the rule of Slovak grammar, according to which any female surname has to take the -ová ending in Slovak. On the other hand, rendering Slovak names into English usually entails giving up the original palatalised pronunciation of d, t, ň, l, and pronouncing these consonants as [d], [t], [n], [l]; pronouncing the Slovak consonant ch like [kh], differently from the original Slovak; and moving the stress from its compulsory position on the first syllable of a Slovak word to the penultimate syllable in English. In this sense, proper names, if correctly rendered by the interpreter, undergo changes between English and Slovak, they, strictly speaking, do not stay the same. However, without such modifications, the intercultural mediation by the interpreter would not be complete.

In a business environment, the consecutive mode of interpreting is often chosen because it makes possible personal contacts between the two parties better than the simultaneous mode would. Part of these contacts consists in the display of politeness, which helps create positive atmosphere for a meeting. This may among

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59 This grammatical rule applies also to pen names, resulting in, for example, George Elliottová.
other things be achieved by using the right form of address\textsuperscript{60}, which may include, or not, using the counterpart's academic title.

The frequency of the use of academic titles and the importance assigned to them in Slovakia and in Britain may differ. Academic titles in Slovakia are mentioned when a person is first being introduced, and also in a wide range of other situations. The use of academic titles in the spoken sphere follows from their use in the written sphere. Titles are shown in full on the doors of people's offices and on their visiting cards. Annual reports of, for example, various investment funds in Slovakia publish full titles of members of boards of directors, including those who are from overseas and whose titles are either published in their original, often English, form, or in an adapted Slovak version. In programmes on Slovak television the titles of interviewees appear in full in the captions. In TOP, journal of the Union of Interpreters and Translators, published in Prague with articles in both Czech and Slovak (and occasional ones in foreign languages), contributors' names used to be given with their full academic titles\textsuperscript{61}. The traditional place of academic titles in Slovak public life may be seen, for example, from various application forms. Slovenská spoločnosť prekladateľov umelcej literatúry ("The Slovak Society of Literary Translators") sent its members a circular about a meeting of translators and friends of British poetry and prose, asking them to fill in their 'Surname, Name and Title' on the

\textsuperscript{60} The use of forms of address has been pointed out as an important area of comparative cultural research, for example, by Pöchhacker, 'Simultaneous Interpreting: A Functionalist Perspective', p. 41. The conventions of form of address in Polish as compared to English have been studied by Wegrzyn, p. 62.

\textsuperscript{61} Numbers 1 to 9 give full academic titles, then no titles are given in number 10, and just one is given in number 11, although many authors in numbers 10 and 11 are the same as in numbers 1 to 9. (Czechs and Slovaks lived in a common state for over seventy years [1918 – 1992] which has made their cultures very similar to each other and in the use of academic titles there is no difference between them.)
return slip. Preliminary registration forms for two conferences happening in Prague, one after the other, each asked for slightly different personal data from future participants. The one organised by the Charles University asked for 'Title, Name and Surname'. Not so the one for the Congress of the European Society for Translation Studies, which did not list 'title'.

In Britain, if an application form asks about a person's 'title', it may not be the academic title, but the distinction between 'Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms', since the gender may not be obvious from a surname in English. This differs from Slovak, where a surname indicates clearly whether a person is a man or a woman. Slovak female surnames end either in -ová (a great majority of cases), or in -á (if the corresponding man's surname still preserves its character of an adjective). There exist rare exceptions: old-fashioned names ending in -ejch, -ech, -ovie or Czech-origin names ending in ů or u, based on the notion of 'belonging to the family of', 'coming from the family of' - in these cases the gender is not obvious from the surname, but since in both Czech and Slovak only a limited range of first names can be given to newborn babies, the gender can already be seen unequivocally from a person's first name. However, some recent application forms in the UK have been asking for a

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64 European Society for Translation Studies Congress. Circular in English, sent in 1995.
65 It is interesting to note that the English word Title at the end of an agreement/contract does not refer to academic title, but to a person's position within a company, for example, managing director, etc.
66 There have traditionally been numbers of mixed Czech-Slovak marriages, which caused some originally Czech surnames to be used in Slovakia as well. For example, the Slovak tennis player Miloslav Mečíř (second best to Lendl for some time), whose surname is Czech, containing an exclusively Czech consonant ř.
distinction between Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Prof., Dr\textsuperscript{67}, which may be bringing the English and Slovak cultures closer together in the use of academic titles\textsuperscript{68}. Moreover, manipulations with honorary titles and distinctions in English may reflect a degree of respect for a person, or disrespect - when, for example, a lower title in a hierarchy is used or when an honorary title is ostentatiously omitted. So titles do play a role in the English culture, although not necessarily academic titles and although they may be felt as less prominent than in Slovakia.

Counterparts in business negotiations may be expected to exchange visiting cards. Slovak visiting cards are most likely to show all the person's academic titles, while the English ones may either show no titles, or may give abbreviations of professional associations of which the bearers may be members. The position of an abbreviation denoting someone's qualification in relation to his or her name may be another factor for quoting, or omitting, a title. Slovak qualification approximate to the English Masters degree is doktor filozofie ('doctor of philosophy'), written in an abbreviated form as PhDr. before a person's surname. Titles coming before the surname may be omitted less likely than those which come after a surname, like the English MA or MSc. The Slovak qualification approximate to the British PhD is somewhere between kandidát vied ('candidate of sciences/studies') and doktor vied ('doctor of sciences/studies'), written after a surname in an abbreviated form CSc. and DrSc., respectively. There are few 'doctors of sciences/studies' in Slovakia. Thus one of the

\textsuperscript{67} For example, Standard Application Form, © Careers Services Trust, 1994, asks for a choice from Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms.

\textsuperscript{68} The organisers of the 13th world congress of FIT (The International Federation of Translators) held in Brighton in 1993 asked participants for the distinction of their title between Mr/Mrs./M./Mme, etc. (the application forms were bilingual English/French), the replies to which varied: a whole range of Dr., Prof. appeared and in some cases found its way to the table of contents of the congress proceedings -
reasons for the importance of academic titles in Slovakia may be the fact that in the past, few Slovaks used to have university education, not to mention higher, postgraduate or research qualifications.

Being in a position for introducing innovations in a language, translators and interpreters may be instrumental in bringing about changes in the use of academic and similar titles. For example, the translators' team during Agrofilm, International Festival of Films and Video Recordings on Agriculture, which used to take place every August starting from 1984 in Nitra in Slovakia, had to discuss the question of how to translate into English the protocol of the international jury decisions on the award of prizes. The source Slovak materials contained surnames of all Slovak jury members with all their academic titles, whereas surnames of members from abroad, even from international organisations including the United Nations family, did not mention any titles. After the first two years, the translators (who worked as interpreters during daytime and translators after hours) reached a joint compromise solution, where the English version of the protocol did not contain any titles of any jury member. Thus the use of academic titles was adapted to the conventions of the receiver, English culture.

In the initial issues of the News from British Council Slovakia newsletter, published in English, academic titles of Slovak contributors and resource persons used to appear in full. This practice has, however, been discontinued - in the issue from May 1995 only surnames are printed. The use of titles has thus started to conform to the way


they may appear in (British) English contexts, and not the way they may have traditionally functioned in the local Slovak context. Gradual change in the general attitude of emphasising full academic titles in Slovak contexts may also be signalled by the new health insurance cards, which do not show titles\textsuperscript{70}, although one reason for omitting the title may be the small size of the card itself. There existed an option for insurees to refuse the issued card and insist on having the academic title put on it, but this had to be done individually at the headquarters of the insurance company. Similar development of moving away from stating the titles may be demonstrated on the recently published bibliography of monographs and papers on translation and interpreting by Czech and Slovak authors which does not list academic titles of the individual contributors, only the names of the two compilers bear their full academic titles – however, they are given inside, not on the top cover\textsuperscript{71}. This can be seen as another sign of change of a cultural practice.

Using the proper form of address of a person including the academic title, or not, contributes to setting the framework for an interaction. If academic titles are customarily used in one culture, and the counterparts fail to do so, they might be seen as impolite or non-co-operative, which may create a prejudice against them.

The issue of academic titles comes under Hofstede’s Power Distance Index\textsuperscript{72}. Hand in hand with the relatively orthodox usage of academic titles in Slovakia goes the fact

\textsuperscript{70} Všeobecná zdravotná poistovňa [‘General Health Insurance Company’], Bratislava. New cards, issued to 4 million 600 000 insurees, became valid on 1 January 1996.

\textsuperscript{71} Ivana Čeňková and Milan Hrdlička (eds.), Bibliografie českých a slovenských prací o překladu a tlumočení [Bibliography of Czech and Slovak Contributions on Translation and Interpreting] (Prague: JTP, 1995).

\textsuperscript{72} In connection with the Power Distance Index it may be interesting to note that the above mentioned circular of The Slovak Society of Literary Translators asked the Slovak literary translators to indicate whether they would consider delivering a ‘lecture’ (prednášku) during the meeting. Not a ‘talk’ or a ‘paper’. This shows how ingrained the idea of one-way teaching and hierarchical structures, a component of high Power Distance index, has been in Slovakia.
that it takes some time before people switch from 
\textit{pán doktor/pani doktorka} (‘doctor’, in one of its two gender forms, male or female, used - without the surname - to address all those who have the Slovak \textit{PhDr.} title, not just doctors of medicine, as in Britain, and to refer to them indirectly), ‘doktor Kováč’\textsuperscript{73} (used, together with the surname, to refer to a person with the \textit{PhDr.} title) or ‘profesor Kováč’ to ‘Peter’, which may again change the dynamics of an interaction. Contrast to this, the informality of, for example, the British academic environment makes it easy to start using first names even when addressing, or referring to, professors relatively early after the initial introduction.

However, apart from the intricacy of the system of academic titles and their hierarchy, due to a number of indigenous phonemes in Slovak, in interpreted situations there may occur cases when the two partners start using the first name address early in their mutual contacts simply because it may be easier for them to pronounce the other person’s first name\textsuperscript{74}. The first name form may be used not only in addressing one’s counterparts, but also when referring to them indirectly\textsuperscript{75}. This may entail the potential danger of assuming that their relationship has advanced to the point of the use of first names as it happens in authentic Slovak-speaking, contexts. It may, however, take a Slovak person much longer before switching to first names and resorting to the more familiar second person singular pronoun, the ritual

\textsuperscript{73} Kováč (meaning ‘Smith’) is a surname widespread both in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

\textsuperscript{74} Some Slovak surnames have clusters of consonants in them which also contributes to the speed with which first names start to be used – cf. Srncová. The Slovak ‘r’ stands somewhere between a consonant and a vowel and so it does not cause any pronunciation problems to native Slovak speakers when surrounded by consonants, however, English speakers have had difficulties pronouncing similar words.

\textsuperscript{75} In my experience, when interpreting for an Associate Professor from my own university, my English client referred to him by his first name, even in its diminutive, abbreviated form, since it was easy for him to pronounce. When rendering his comments into Slovak in front of an audience, I made sure to refer to the person as \textit{docent X} (‘Associate Professor X’), appropriate in the Slovak cultural context.
of which may often be carried out under special circumstances. An interpreter may engage in intercultural mediation by changing the way a person has been referred to by the source text author into a form accepted in the receptor culture, maybe going from *Hello, Peter*, to ‘Dobrý deň, pán doktor’.

To understand the issue of intercultural mediation in which a Slovak-English interpreter engages when interpreting consecutively in business environment, a range of cultural references will now be studied in detail, looking first at what can constitute cultural references, what role cultural references can play in source texts and what strategies an interpreter can apply when cultural references are contained in source texts.

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76 Normally, the older or the more senior person in the exchange suggests to his or her partner to start using the first names and the familiar second person singular pronoun by saying: *Potykaime si* (‘Let us start using the familiar form of address’), often during a public social event. After this suggestion a glass of wine is drunk with hands intertwined in a special way, sometimes followed, in the case of a man and a woman, by a kiss.

77 Recently, while interpreting for a group of Slovaks, not knowing all their surnames, I had to copy the English-speaking clients’ first name form of address. However, I could sense that most Slovaks in the group felt uncomfortable with the intimacy of address, since not all of them were on first name terms mutually. Had I known the full surnames, I would have used them, thus avoiding any embarrassment.
Chapter 8 Cultural References; Some Differences between English and Slovak Cultures

Part of the message, of the sense of a source text, may be carried by cultural references which are contained in it, hinted at or implied. A substantial number of texts for translation and interpreting can be said to be “culture-bound or culture-generated” and so “there is no necessary correspondence between the perception of extra-linguistic reality of the sender and that of the receiver”\(^1\). Since cultural references may thus pose a threat to the communication which the interpreter is trying to establish and maintain, they have to be dealt with. The mission of the interpreter is to help achieve “the relevant identity between sense as intended by the sender and sense as comprehended by the addressee”\(^2\). Strategies applied by the interpreter may differ according to circumstances, some of which have already been described, namely the differences between translation and interpreting, the situational context of interpreting, the status of a language as a language of limited diffusion, the consecutive mode of interpreting, and the particularities of the business environment, where certain components figure more prominently, for example, numbers, proper names, enumerations, levels of politeness, degree of directness, form of address, etc.

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\(^1\) Nigel Reeves, 'Translating and Interpreting as Cultural Intermediation - Some Theoretical Issues Reconsidered', in Seymour and Liu (eds.), *Translation and Interpreting: Bridging East and West* (Honolulu, Hi: College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, University of Hawaii and the East-West Center, 1994), 33 – 50 (p. 36).
\(^2\) Viaggio, 'Do Interpreters Have the Right,' p. 69.
Rendering cultural references from source texts may take several forms: an interpreter may opt for explaining the explicit or implied cultural references from the source text. In various cultural communities, a tradition of dealing with cultural references in source texts may exist, for example, the explanatory approach used to predominate in the former Soviet Union, both in interpreting, and in translation. However, if explanatory notes are added during interpreting, listeners have to take them in with the rest of the text. Moreover, since the receptor text in interpreting has to be produced within the time framework available, if interpreters make explanatory additions to a text, they then have a longer text to render in the receptor language, but in the same length of time. Shorter, briefer explanations, more to the point, may therefore improve the efficiency of getting the message across.

Detailed explanations which used to be added in publications, including translations, may have been linked with the fact that the Power Distance Index (as defined by Hofstede) used to be high in the former Soviet Union and other Central and East European countries. Among the origins of the High Power Distance Index Hofstede lists “Teachers are omniscient, teaching is one-way”, and “Less questioning of

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3 It manifested itself externally in long prefaces, introductions, afterwords and numerous explanatory notes which most publishers in the former Soviet Union used to put in original books as well as in translations. In written publications, however, the editor who adds the glosses has an opportunity of consulting encyclopaedic works or talking to native informants. The extent of explanatory notes may be agreed in advance and they may be compiled in any order, before the final editing. The readers, if always referring to the notes, may get distracted from reading the text itself – cf. Edita Gromová, 'Saving Expressive Values in Literary translation', in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 42 – 48 (p. 46). However, they may also opt to ignore the notes. Eero Balk writes that he hates explanations in footnotes of something he is familiar with – cf. p. 31.

4 They may even be expected to take less time than the source text speaker - if they are asked to provide summarising interpreting, as has already been discussed.

5 Ekaterina Dimcheva, a Bulgarian, keeps mentioning footnotes in her paper which to her seem a routine element of any translation – cf. 'Teaching Translators: TC as a Pedagogic Tool', in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 5 – 11.
authority in general"\(^6\). In Central and East European countries under communism, emphasis used to be put on one-way teaching, from the teacher to the students, where the teacher was seen as a "guru" and commanded absolute discipline in the class\(^7\). For the Know How Fund participants, interactive learning was a novelty\(^8\). Similarly, specialists in any area of knowledge used to be perceived as definite authority and what they said was not to be questioned by lay people who used results of their work – which is a component of the Uncertainty Avoidance Index. As a consequence of this belief in experts, people tended to avoid taking responsibility for decisions, preferring instead to wait before they were told what to do. The reluctance to taking responsibility seems to be common to all post-communist countries – as was written by Amy Lynn Barber, a US jazz musician and musicologist, who refers to it as "reluctance to accept responsibility"\(^9\) and talks about the need to "change the mentality and perspective that is a sad result of the previous regimes"\(^10\). That was one of the reasons why a material produced for the Know How Fund project *Enterprise Education in Slovakia*, which aimed at changing the traditional Central and East European approaches to teaching and learning, included a table contrasting learning *what* and learning *how*. The project was meant, among other things, to encourage a shift from learning *what* to learning *how*. Changing culture, however, may be an incremental, gradual process, taking some time and requiring conscious effort.

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\(^{6}\) Hofstede, Fig. 3. 8, Origins of National Power Distance Index Difference, in *Culture’s Consequences*, p. 124.

\(^{7}\) It may be interesting to note that the closest translation of the Slovak word for a 'PhD supervisor' (školitel) into English would be a 'PhD instructor'. PhD programmes in Czechoslovakia used to comprise taught courses and examinations in the *kandidátske minimum* ('PhD minimum').

\(^{8}\) Jack Peffers tapes, 1995.
The traditional Russian way of handling cultural references used to be to provide detailed background explanations, as demonstrated by Ghelly Chernov on the examples of *Baumanka*, the “Polytechnic of Moscow named after Nikolai E. Bauman, hero of the 1905 Revolution in Russia”, and *na kartoshke*, “harvesting potatoes in the fall, working as farm hands...” However, in order to find precise and detailed information on some cultural references, it might be necessary to refer to written materials, which may not be possible in a standard interpreting situation: interpreters do not bring along encyclopaedic works, moreover, interpreting may be happening outdoors where it may be difficult to consult volumes, especially heavy ones, etc. Sometimes bibliographies may have to be searched first - to locate a needed source of information. Moreover, reliability of sources may have to be confirmed by specialists working in a given area of knowledge. Apart from that, not all publications may be arranged for quick reference.

All this seems to represent substantial effort, while understanding all individual cultural references may in fact not be essential for an overall understanding of the interpreted interaction as a whole. Due to the limited time in interpreting, the attention of the interpreter is concentrated on the most relevant parts of the information contained in the source text, and anything not central will, as a consequence, be neglected. Moreover, the associations, connotations which the cultural references were meant to bring to mind have to be shown to the receptor audience by the interpreter - factual explanations may not be appropriate, since from factual

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10 Barber, p. 5.
information alone, identical understanding by the audience may not be guaranteed. That may be better achieved by giving the audience the "cultural value" of a cultural reference mentioned. Explanatory glosses may run the risk of standing out in the text, however, if they blend neatly with the rest of the text, audience may accept them more easily\(^\text{13}\) and any potential perception of the interpreter as patronising may thus be avoided\(^\text{14}\). This requirement has implications for interpreter training: the future interpreters/intercultural mediators have to be able to provide their clients with the connotations of unknown cultural references in a brief, succinct manner. Supplying lengthy or verbose explanations, although they might provide sufficient background information, might reduce the efficiency of interpreting. It might also take up too many interpreter's resources, with the possible danger of loss of factual information contained in the following section of the source text.

Matters may get further complicated if speakers start relying on the interpreters explaining, adopting, changing or modifying cultural references from their speeches, which the interpreters may not be able to do when an area is mentioned about which they do not know enough. If the interpreters sometimes explained cultural references unknown to the listeners (whenever they had sufficient knowledge), and at other times ignored cultural references, they might be seen as unreliable and might not be asked to interpret again. Moreover, if interpreters explained implicit cultural references unknown to the receptor community, the resulting receptor text might sound unnatural, since these phenomena may have been known, expected,

\(^{13}\) Cf. Marrone, 'Quality'.

\(^{14}\) It might, for example, be a better strategy to say 'sparsely-dressed Crawford', where the source text said Crawford, and let the listeners guess in what professions ladies wear few clothes, since the choice has already been narrowed down, rather than bluntly stating 'Crawford, the model', and risking that they already knew, and may become negatively predisposed towards the interpreter.
understood and shared by the source audience, and the explanations might therefore erode the structure of the text. Such explanatory glosses form secondary information, often of the framing kind. On the other hand, some cultural references may be more crucial for a given text and in a given situation, and, apart from that, interpreters are not expected to be as consistent as translators, who process written texts. By bringing the cultural references closer to the receptor audience in some passages from the source texts, although not in others, interpreters may facilitate communication in the most crucial places - where the cultural references may be pivotal for the understanding of the point a speaker may be trying to make.

Cultural references in source speeches usually do not stand alone, but may be mentioned in connection with something else - they may not represent the main point of a conversation (unless in a context of a specific talk on cultural references), and so one aspect of their meaning may prevail, they may be used to fulfil a particular function. Authors of source texts may only have one characteristic feature of a cultural reference (whether an object, fact, event, practice, etc.) which they mention predominantly in mind. This may be reflected in the wording of the explanation added, or in the choice of a receptor culture cultural reference used to substitute it, by the translator or interpreter in the receptor text. Concentrating on just one connotation or aspect of a cultural reference stems from the idea of relevance: only one particular aspect of a cultural reference may be preponderant for its

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15 For example, AA as explained in the French translation of The Diary of Adrian Mole - mentioned by Jean-Pierre Mailhan, CILT seminar, Aston University, 14 March 1997.
16 For example, in a text used by Dillinger (in The Interpreters' Newsletter, p. 56) for other purposes, a brain scanner is described as a donut-shaped machine. Donut was only used in the text to conjure up the image of a ring-shaped object. Since Slovak šišky ('donuts') lack the hole in the middle (they are usually filled with jam), an interpreter rendering this passage from English into Slovak may refer to any
understanding in a given context. Relevance of only one aspect of a cultural reference mentioned, hinted at or implied in a source text has parallels in naming itself, which, as Marianne Lederer has pointed out, is based on synecdoche, i.e. using a part for naming a whole, or vice versa\(^7\). Since it may be irrelevant to list all characteristics of a cultural reference, the authors of a dictionary of Finnish realia (i.e. cultural references) plan to provide future users (among others, translators and interpreters) with an option to either take all the definition, or just an appropriate part or parts of it for ready use as explanatory glosses\(^8\). Interpreters can learn from the approach of the compilers of this reference material how to select relevant parts of comprehensive information for immediate use.

Another factor influencing the type of strategy an interpreter may opt for to render cultural references from source texts is the specific type of cultural references to be dealt with\(^9\), what the cultural reference itself is, which may have an impact on the feasibility of explanation, substitution or adaptation under the given circumstances and which may make the choice of one of these strategies clearer.

Some associations of cultural references may be difficult to put succinctly. For example, during a debriefing session with Jack Peffers, the notion of conflict and its

of a wide range of *venčeky*, biscuits which have the needed round shape, the hole in the middle and come from the everyday food vocabulary.


interpretation from the point of view of various sociological and political theories, as contrasted to its understanding by Marxism emerged. Jack Peffers wanted his taped interviews to be checked for the exactness of the interpreters' renderings, which he thought may have been the cause of evasive reactions of Slovak teachers during the interviews to a question about what conflicts there occurred in connection with running the *Enterprise Education in Slovakia* project. The Marxist ideology, which was instilled in the Czech and Slovak people during the years of communism, was based on class struggle which was supposed to exist between the opposing classes of bourgeoisie and the working class. This was caused by their difference in ownership of means of production which gave them different economic power. Apart from being told about such quintessential internal conflict within a capitalist society, the people in communist countries were also brought up in an atmosphere of conflict between the communist system and imperialism, which was represented to them as irreconcilable. That might be the reason why now after the change of the regime from communism to democracy many Slovaks seem to expect all the relations to be smooth and free from any resemblance of conflict. ‘Conflict’ in the minds of many Slovaks may still represent something heavily confrontational, which cannot move matters forward. To bring in ‘conflict’ might also for many Slovaks bring in the notion of impossibility of reconciliation. For these Slovaks the workshops run during the project were such a novel form of instruction that they would subconsciously have wanted to separate them from any of their past experiences. This for Jack Peffers was strange behaviour, since due to being unaware of this communist background he saw it as a degree of alienation or secrecy on the part of the Slovak teachers. He could not fathom the Slovak secretiveness and unwillingness to cooperate on this
one point, since otherwise the UK team were enjoying high levels of hospitality and friendliness, and they were often on first name terms with many of the Slovak participants and organisers. Jack Peffers observed that the reluctance to consider any 'conflicts' during the project was not a case of just one of the pilot schools, the same blankness occurred in replies to this question in all three schools, which to him indicated a pattern and prompted his desire to discuss the notion of 'conflict'.

From the above historical Marxist explanation it may follow that in Slovakia, conflicts still cannot be viewed as a way forward, since the notion of 'agreeing to differ' may remain a difficult one to digest\textsuperscript{20}. Slovaks may find it difficult to accept that someone else might be of a different opinion, which may be connected with their high Uncertainty Avoidance Index. A situation where people close to us might hold differing political or ideological views is seen as representing a potential threat, the more so that in Slovakia - unlike Britain - talking about politics and religion are not among the topics avoided in social conversation. In fact, most Slovak conversations may sound like fact-finding missions, where people expect their interlocutor to definitely state his or her political conviction and his or her private opinion on as many matters as possible\textsuperscript{21}. It may be a burden to talk to a Slovak whom one only knows a little because such a heavy commitment is expected. The difficulty of holding a neutral conversation, small talk, makes many Slovaks highly selective when choosing a partner for interaction and many Slovaks hardly talk to strangers. A number of conversations in Slovakia may result in serious conflicts which cannot be averted once the exchange has started. Moreover, many Slovaks have deeply

\textsuperscript{20} This may be similar in other Central and East European countries, for example, in Poland. Roman Tuziak, personal communication, 1996.

\textsuperscript{21} Jozefa Červeňová, personal communication, 1997.
ingrained authoritarian feelings, with parents telling their children what to do and how to do it, and seniors telling juniors how to behave – which is another demonstration of high Power Distance Index and Uncertainty Avoidance Index. At the same time, a conviction that one is capable of doing things much better than others is widespread in Slovakia. Less tolerance may therefore exist for differing opinions and it may be relatively easy to dismiss someone as not normal in Slovakia, even for a slight degree of dissent. ‘Conflict’ therefore is not seen as a potential source of development, growth, as it may be in Britain. The constructive understanding of ‘conflict’ has still to be reached in Slovakia. According to Hofstede, “latent conflict between powerful and the powerless” is one component of High Power Distance societal norm.

The full explanation of possible historical reasons for the vague answers of Slovak participants of the Enterprise Education in Slovakia project took more than half a day, which an interpreter during a professional situation would not be able to provide. However, any shorter explanation would in this case fail to convey all the nuances requisite for the full comprehension of this notion. Therefore, while interpreting, it would seem as one option to just render conflict as ‘konflikt’ and let the interlocutors realise that a different meaning may have been represented. If an explanation is felt as necessary, it may have to happen outside the framework of the interpreted event, since it would take up a considerable amount of time.

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22 Hofstede, Fig. 3. 7 The Power Distance Societal Norm, in Culture’s Consequences, p. 122.
Similar cultural references, difficult to explain, may be based on ideologically different systems, which may make them distinct from the bryndzové halušky\textsuperscript{24} or haruľa\textsuperscript{25} type of cultural references, which denote, broadly speaking, material objects existing in a given culture. Material manifestations of a culture can be relatively briefly explained, which makes them distinct from a position on a positive-negative scale of values, for example, the associations with living in a town, as opposed to living in the countryside; being an amateur, or a professional, etc. Such associations are less easily rendered verbally, however, within the broad understanding of culture assumed in this thesis, they also represent cultural references. Since culture in this thesis is taken in the sense of lived life, the whole way of life, as Raymond Williams sees it, cultural references cover more or less every aspect of human existence. To arrange them in some order, they can be divided according to three broad areas, following the sociological definition of culture\textsuperscript{26}, namely: material, spiritual and behavioural. They can range from material objects, through abstract concepts (notions like fair\textsuperscript{27}, attitudes to old and new), to widespread practices (for example

\textsuperscript{24} A traditional Slovak dish: gnocchi made of potato dough and served with brinza (type of sheep) cheese and pork crackling. Usually washed down with sour milk afterwards.

\textsuperscript{25} A type of crispy fried potato pancakes with garlic and marjoram put in the dough, eaten hot. Similar in taste to hash browns.

\textsuperscript{26} Quoted in Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{27} A number of bilingual dictionaries give the translation for the notion of fair, fairness, in other languages as 'impartial', 'just' or a similar expression. Since much in the British system of thought seems based on the notion of fairness, which is not identical with impartiality or justice, the transfer of this notion to other languages may present challenges - cf. 'équitable', 'juste', 'imparzial(e)', Collins Reference French Dictionary: French-English, English-French (HarperCollins, 1992), p. 67; 'juste', 'équitable', Cassell's Compact French-English, English-French Dictionary (London: Cassell, 1975), p. 422; 'justo', 'imparcial', 'legal', etc., Cassell's Compact Spanish-English, English-Spanish Dictionary (London: Cassell, 1975), p. 278; 'giusto', 'equo', 'imparziale', Collins Italian Dictionary: English-Italian, Italian-English (HarperCollins, 1995), p. 219. For Czech and Slovak translations, similar to those suggested by the above French, Spanish or Italian sources, the following dictionaries have been consulted: Osička and Poldauf, Velký anglicko-český slovník (Prague: Neubert, 1948); Jung, Slovník anglicko-český: A Dictionary of the English and Bohemian Languages, 3rd edn (Prague: Tožička, 1949); Smejkalová, Smrčinová, Herrmannová and Hais, Anglicko-slovenský a slovensko-anglický vreckový slovník (Bratislava: SPN, 1963 and 1992); Šimko, Anglicko-slovenský slovník (Bratislava:
keeping pets). Sometimes a source culture cultural reference may be non-existent in the receptor culture, but in other cases something, for example, in a differing shape, but with an identical or at least similar function may exist, or, vice versa, something may exist in the same shape but be put to a different use, etc. This is the basic material on which an interpreter can draw when rendering source text cultural references in a new linguistic and cultural context.

A cultural reference may be a material object, which may sometimes lie in front of the clients and may be pointed at, or a picture of it may be available, or a drawing may be made and its function or use explained, etc. For example, a mug tree or a draft excluder. Mug trees are not used in Slovakia, since mugs are usually put away in kitchen cupboards, not to gather dust. But a generic word, for example, držiak, or stojan, denoting a 'holder', a 'stand', can be used, when further specified, for describing a mug tree: držiak na šálky ('a holder/stand for mugs'). When mug trees were mentioned on the list of products which can be made within Young Enterprise,

SPN, 1967); Poldauf, Caha, Kopecká and Krámský, Anglicko-český a česko-anglický slovník (Prague: SPN, 1971); Šimko, English-Slovak Dictionary (Senica: RESS, 1991); Password: Anglický výkladový slovník s českými ekvivalenty (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1991); Hais and Hodek, Velký anglicko-český slovník, 4 vols (Prague: Academia, 1992); Novákova, Anglicko-český slovník základní slovní zásoby: Frekvenční slovník (Prague: Interkontakt servis, 1992); Poldauf, Caha, Kopecká and Krámský, Anglicko-český, česko-anglický slovník (Prague: SPN, 1994). However, in some contexts, a whole expression containing the English word fair has been taken over into Czech and Slovak, for example, fair play now forms part of the Czech and Slovak vocabulary.

28 Translation into Slovak of the title of a poster Pets and Health has posed a similar culture-based difficulty, since the practice of keeping pets in Slovakia is less developed than in Britain, maybe because more people in Britain live in houses as opposed to the majority of Slovaks living in flats, where there is less space for keeping pets. The term zvieratá ('animals') is general, while domáce zvieratá ('domestic animals') - parallel to the suggested French translation of the poster title (les animaux domestiques) - implies any animals which might be kept near a house, i. e. not only cats or dogs, but also horses, cows, sheep, etc. It would therefore be misleading to a conference participant, reading the title of the poster in the conference documentation and deciding whether to see it. In order to avoid providing the receptor audience with misinformation, translation Zvieratá a zdravie ('Animals and Health'), supplying partial information, may be suggested. It is also interesting to note that in Slovakia the name for a 'Pet shop' (fewer of them exist than in the UK) is Chovateľské potreby ('All The Things a Breeder Needs') emphasising the person who keeps pets rather than the pets themselves.
the first translation of the manual into Slovak was incorrect since the translator was not aware of this English object.

Similarly, in Slovakia, draft excluders are not put on the bottom of doors, since all doorways are built with thresholds to stop drafts. There does, however, exist a type of draft excluders by function, called tesnenie, made of specially shaped metal strips nailed all along doors and windows to provide complete thermal insulation, which is necessary because of the sub-zero temperatures occurring in winter in Slovakia. (Since windows in Slovakia are double-glazed as a standard procedure, Slovak lacks a word for a single-glazed window.) The English draft excluder can therefore sometimes be rendered as tesnenie, with maybe an additional explanation - in those cases where it is fixed to a door or a window. It would, however, sound strange to render the English draft excluders made of felt, in the shape of snakes, crocodiles or other long animals, kicked against doors, as tesnenie, since the image of such English object would be difficult to conjure up from the Slovak word tesnenie. The information provided in such a case may be misleading to the listeners because of the radical difference in both the material and the shape, in spite of a similarity of function.

Culture comprises also names of products sold and advertised in a given country. These products may not be suitable for other countries because of their climate, religious practices, etc., and may therefore remain quite unknown outside their country of origin. Material objects may be referred to by their trade names, some of which may have in the source culture become household words and may even be used as common nouns, for example, 'hoover'. However, due to globalisation of the
world economy and due to the existence of visual communication networks, products can become widely known fast.

The material culture of a given community is represented by its monuments, sights or famous buildings, and may include the usual construction materials and traditional building styles. For example, in the mountains of northern Slovakia, houses in many villages are built of wooden beams (*drevenice*), while there are hardly any half-timbered houses of the English type to be found in Slovakia. On the other hand, *paneláky*, multi-storey pre-fabricated blocks of flats, erected during the communist era, form part of the Slovak townscape.

Cultural references may be types of traditional handiwork, for example, *patchwork* is common and popular in the UK (although it originated in the USA). When *patchwork* was used by a conference delegate as a simile for the appearance of the map of Europe, since this textile technique is only known to a closed circuit of specialists in Slovakia, the Slovak interpreter would have had to explain what *patchwork* was before she would be able to proceed with conveying its metaphorical dimension.

More usual for the general public in Slovakia are, for example, associations with *mosaic*, or, although not rendering the simile of patchwork very precisely, associations with *chess-boards*, since chess is a popular game in Slovakia. Recently also *puzzles* of the UK type have become widely known to Slovaks since they are now sold in most toy shops.

Growing of some plants may be widespread in a given culture - for example, in Britain, *honesuckle* may be planted in gardens near bedroom windows to provide
sweet scent during summer nights. Since the Slovak botanical term for honeysuckle is kozí list obyčajný ('ordinary goat's leaf'), it may be challenging to try to convey the positive associations of honeysuckle, since an instant image in Slovak would be one of a weed with big green leaves and probably intensely unpleasant smell. On the other hand, the Slavonic symbol of sweet-scented lipa may be only approximately rendered by the 'lime tree' or 'linden' in English, since it does not grow in so many places in the UK and is not ceremonially planted by politicians or other prominent personalities as often happens in Slovakia.

A cultural reference may be a specific meal or drink, not only as the physical food on the table, but also as the ritual surrounding it, including the circumstances under which it is appropriately served, for example, cream tea. In Slovakia, napolitánky (wafers, usually filled) are more popular than biscuits, while in Britain, biscuits appear on the table more often, with a traditional cup of tea. When tea is served in Slovakia, it usually comes with lemon and often with honey or sugar, but not milk. In the Slovak context there exist traditions connected with drinking burčák/burčiak (a type of young wine), borovička (juniper brandy) or hriato/hriatô (a hot drink prepared from a spirit, bacon and honey).

Cultural references can be names of films, plays, titles of radio and television programmes, quotes from poems, nursery rhymes, lyrics of songs, etc. This is a dynamic area, since all the time new films are shot, plays written, programmes designed, songs composed, all of which may become popular. Cultural references can be names of personalities, like film or television actors, politicians, singers,

29 As mentioned in a programme on garden cottages broadcast on 4 August 1993 on Radio 4, as part of the Woman's Hour.
writers, etc. Yesterday's celebrities may become today's nonentities, rising stars appear and claim attention of the public. Williams' idea of dominant, residual and emergent constituents of culture manifests itself strongly with these particular references, many of which only last for short, and so keeping up-to-date (through radio, television, reading and stays abroad) is the only way of survival for an interpreter. Names of personalities from political arena may also occur in stories or jokes which may be told at a business negotiation table. These names can sometimes be shortened, but still remain recognisable within the source culture\textsuperscript{30}. Past, present or anticipated domestic and international political events may represent cultural references imminently relevant to business negotiations because of the connection of business with the political situation in a country.

However, a cultural reference may be an abstract concept, either completely different in the two cultures, or similar, but viewed differently by members of the two cultural communities. The interpreter may have to go into nuances too subtle to be explained verbally in a brief, succinct manner, as demonstrated on the above-mentioned example of conflict which in many ways does not fully correspond to the Slovak 'konflikt', since their associations differ widely.

A cultural reference may be a specific function, institution, office, hierarchy or nomenclature - for example, steward in an Arts Centre. In Slovak cinemas and theatres, there are usherettes, who, however, do not sell ice-cream during the interval (it is not customary to eat ice-cream in cinemas during the interval and in fact many screenings run without intervals), the usherettes are not equipped with two-

\textsuperscript{30}For example, 'Miloš', 'Gustáv' for Miloš Jakeš and Gustáv Husák, top Czechoslovak communist representatives - cf. Rády, 'Opát zo súdov', p. 12.
way radios, and, as opposed to part-time employees, for example students in the
UK, they are most often middle-aged women, working full-time, etc. Nevertheless,
some “cultural unification” of Slovakia and Britain has been going on: many cinemas
in Slovakia now sell pop-corn (various flavours) to the spectators. Another example
may be steward in a Students Union - in Slovakia there are no Students Unions, just
some small student clubs attached to halls of residence which, however, unlike
Students Unions in the UK, do not offer events every night. Moreover, they have no
stewards or Security. Housekeeper of a hall of residence is a non-existent position in
Slovakia. Likewise Security, Resident Tutor, Subwarden, Deputy Warden or Warden
- such jobs do not exist in Slovakia since most universities do not have campuses
and students in halls of residence are left to their own devices. While in Britain
universities provide services of university counsellors, in Slovakia such support
system has not been established yet, and there are no Senior Tutors or financial
advisors either. The number of students from abroad at Slovak universities is lower
than in Britain, where the overseas students can benefit from the help of overseas
advisors in university International Offices.

Among expressions directly relevant for business interpreters can be included:
director, managing director, financial director, production director, etc. When such
terms were used during the Enterprise Education in Slovakia project, more
specifically in its Young Enterprise component, the Slovak interpreters encountered a
cultural difference in that the usual Slovak way would be to designate one person as
riaditeľ ('director') to whom námestníci ('deputies') would then be reporting. The
written translations of the Young Enterprise kit preserved the English notion of
directors who together form the board of directors, disregarding this cultural
difference. The fact that in Slovakia the nomenclature used to only have one director, in whose hands the power used to be centralised, indirectly indicates high position of Slovakia on the Power Distance Index.

In the past, the Slovak word predsedca ('chairman') used to apply in the past. Thus there seems to be a strong urge to have someone whose title implies unique concentration of power.

Institutions or organisations tend to be culture-specific, for example, a Health Farm; Environmental Health Office; National Trust; Community Action, Crisis, Shelter, Samaritans, Rape, or Nightline all operate in the UK. Some of these may have parallels in other cultures, for example, Nightline is similar to the Slovak Linka dövery telephone line, which, however, is run by professional psychologists, is not exclusively university-based and is not restricted to night time.

Different cultures may use different systems of awards, for example, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, or the Club Colours, which can either be full colours or half-colours, are well-known in the British context, but their associations would have to be conveyed by the interpreter to be understood by Slovaks. With many activities in the UK, for example, ballroom dancing, a possibility of getting one's medals is offered, while medaily ('medals') in Slovakia always associate with competitions, not with tests. This has caused some hesitation in Slovakia how to call 'medal courses', fashioned after the UK model, offered in some Slovak ballroom schools. On the

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31 Igor Jágerský, director of Jágermajster school, personal communication, 1997. The leaflet of this school lists medailové kurzy ('medal courses'), which in Slovak sounds as though after finishing such a course the dancers were likely to win medals at competitions.
other hand, in Slovakia, there exist *kvalifikačné triedy* ('qualification classes') for most sports, which seems to have a similar underlying idea as the UK medals.

Particular instances of life and institutions, what Christina Schöffner refers to as *realia*, tend to be culture-specific, therefore their role and place in a given culture may have to be explained in depth to be fully understood. Such explanations to be given by the interpreter may present a challenge, especially because of the limiting time framework within which they would have to be inserted into the receptor text.

Some practices may be culture-specific, for example, *reading week* at British universities or *half term* at British schools. In fact, while the British system comprises three *terms* at most universities (only some have introduced semesters), the Slovak academic year divides into two *semesters*. The dean of a faculty in Slovakia may decide to give the students a day (or a longer period) off, especially close to the time of various holidays, like Christmas or Easter, or for technical reasons - he or she can declare *dekanšté voľno*, which is a notion alien to the British and difficult to explain briefly. It may also reflect a higher supposed position of Slovakia on the Power Distance Index, where a dean of an individual faculty may make a decision about whether classes on a particular day will or will not take place.

When choosing a university, young people in Slovakia try to apply for the one which is closest to their home town so that they can live at home and thus save on the cost of accommodation, food and travel. They normally do not leave their parental home before getting married, and sometimes they stay at home even after they got married. Hofstede includes „Children dependent on parents and elders“ in his table

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32 Schöffner, 'Meaning and knowledge in translation', p. 158.
33 Such time off used to happen in the university system of East Germany. Lynn Guyver, personal communication, 1997.
on the origins of differences in the Power Distance Index\textsuperscript{34}. On the other hand, in Britain, the choice of a university usually involves moving away from home at a relatively early age, and is connected with a widespread system of lodgings as well as university on-campus accommodation.

In the area of legal practices cultural differences may exist, for example, settlement of someone's affairs may be done according to a will or uniformly, according to the law. While testaments may be standard practice in the UK, according to Slovak law there is entitlement of specific family members to a share in the property of a deceased person and it has been quite unusual for anyone to write a will. This may be the legacy of the communist past when the extent of what a Czech or a Slovak citizen was allowed to own was strictly limited and included personal belongings, but not real estate or investment portfolios. There only existed a possibility of buying shares in the co-operative chain-store Jednota, which were of nominal value and only available to a narrow circle of its direct employees. In fact, it was only after the democratic changes in 1989 that bonds, stocks and shares were widely introduced in Slovakia, which may mean that in the future more Slovaks may be writing a will.

A cultural reference may be an abstract notion, for example, associations with holidays in certain locations, knowledge of places at home or abroad, countries which are perceived as attractive, etc. In the UK this tends to vary according to a person's class, while in Slovakia viewing certain places as desirable holiday destinations may be more unified. The more distant a resort is, the more exotic it becomes; the more expensive it is to get there, the more attractive that makes it for

\textsuperscript{34} Cf. Hofstede, Fig. 3. 8 Origins of National Power Distance Index Difference, in Culture's Consequences, p. 124.
the general Slovak public. This may follow from the more or less unified income structure under communism when only minimal differences existed and so most people could afford more or less the same type of holiday, in most cases only within Czechoslovakia itself. While Spain or Greece may be routine sun holiday places for many Brits, they are distant for many Slovaks and coveted by them, although they can enjoy the same hot and sunny weather in Slovakia throughout the summer at no cost. However, development after 1989 has brought greater income differentials in Slovakia, making some foreign destinations within reach of some categories of people, and in the future, associations with holiday places may also become differentiated.

Certain residential addresses may have connotations varying across cultures - for example, in Slovakia there has existed less distinction between good or bad neighbourhoods, the very term *neighbourhood* being notoriously difficult to render succinctly in Slovak. Another relevant cultural difference for an interpreter is the order in which details of an address are given - in Slovak an address starts with the street name, and only then the number of the house follows, which is the opposite in English. This requires of the interpreter to concentrate at a different point in a source text containing an exact address in English than in Slovak. The source text is thus less conventionalised, moreover, rendering both parts of an address – the number and the proper name – belongs to non-routine tasks, since, as discussed earlier, they are processed during interpreting in a distinct manner. Moreover, the English practice of giving proper names to houses does not exist in Slovakia, which has implications for the anticipation of the interpreter and may put more pressure on his or her working memory in the consecutive mode.
The way an address is shortened, sounds different in English and Slovak, for example, the UK Prime Minister’s residence is often shortened to Number 10. In the past in Slovakia, the Central Committee of the Communist Party headquarters in Hluboká Street was often shortened to Hluboká. U dvoch levov (‘At the sign of two lions’) used to be the elliptic way of referring to the secret police building which had two sculptures of lions on its front\(^{35}\). When Pasienky was mentioned, it was clear to Slovak counterparts that reference was made not only to the sports hall in Bratislava, but also to the fact that political meetings take place there. The way ellipsis operates in different languages and cultures, not only in spoken discourse, but also, for example, on application forms, may vary, too. Although such ellipsis may be more a consideration for written translation, it may become relevant for interpreters during sight translation in business situations.

Cultural references may be specific public holidays, for example, \textit{bank holidays} in the UK; customs, like the \textit{Shrove Tuesday}; traditions, for example the distribution of \textit{Maundy money}, the \textit{pancake races}, or more recent \textit{Comic Relief}, \textit{National Red Nose Day}. In Slovakia, a whole ritual surrounds šibačka, \textit{oberačkové slávnosti} or \textit{dožinky}. On Easter Monday, young men go to see women at home to beat them (vyšišat) with special poles made of birch branches, sprinkle them with water or perfume and collect their reward for this “prevention of rheumatism”, which originated from pagan spring rites, in the form of food, drink, cash and Easter eggs (chocolate or decorated). Traditional decorated Easter eggs, \textit{kraslice}, are a sought after souvenir – material Slovak cultural reference. \textit{Oberačkové slávnosti} mark the end of the grape-

\(^{35}\) The secret police was officially designated \textit{štátna bezpečnosť} (‘state security’), to be distinguished from \textit{verejná bezpečnosť} (‘public security’) – the ordinary police.
picking season and are celebrated with drinking young wine (the above mentioned burčiak/burčák), singing and dancing in the open to the accompaniment of live music. They are organised in many locations, since the climate in Slovakia is conducive to vine-growing. Dožinky is the traditional harvest festival when a special decorative wreath is pleated from ears of corn, carried in a procession by young people dressed in national costumes and ceremonially donated to a mayor of the village or a similar representative of the local community. The fact that it seems to matter that there exist all the above-mentioned cultural differences between the Slovak and the (British) English environment and that the precision in rendering such cultural references in all their nuances when interpreting seems to be an important issue may serve as another indication of the supposed high Uncertainty Avoidance Index of the Slovak culture.

Cultural references may be concentrated, for example, in sayings, idioms or proverbs. A speaker may return to sayings, idioms or proverbs used once, and build on them later in his or her speech. Likewise, they may be followed up by other speakers, who may have found them striking or apposite, etc. The challenge of interpreting Russian proverbs into English has been mentioned by K. A. Bishop, especially when based on different types of cultural references, or, for example, a mention of different animals, thus evoking different images within the two cultural communities. Developed by the same speaker, or by other speakers, such cultural references may allude to areas which in the two cultures concerned may be quite distant. For example, the Slovak proverb líška je vždy líška, meaning approximately 'a leopard cannot change its spots', refers to a vixen ('líška'). When this proverb was
mentioned by a director of one of the Slovak pilot schools of the *Enterprise Education in Slovakia* project, the interpreter, not aware of the English proverb which could be used instead of it, made the UK client completely confused as to the meaning intended by the Slovak speaker\(^{37}\). The Englishman did not make the necessary extrapolation between the canine and feline predator and their associations and was especially confused because of the English view of a fox/vixen as cunning. In Slovak political discourse, the expression *Čierny Peter zostane nám* has been frequently used, meaning approximately 'and we will be left holding the baby', connected with a well-known and widespread card game *Čierny Peter*, in which it is a disadvantage to end the round with the card depicting the black (i. e. dirty, unwashed) Peter.

Under cultural references can be listed good manners, accepted behaviour, for example, interrupting someone while they speak, for what reasons, offering food (what type, what amount, at what time), showing hospitality, taking shoes off when coming to someone's house as a guest, turning up or having to make an appointment beforehand, type and amount of presents brought when coming to see someone, sending or bringing along birthday cards, celebrating birthdays or name days; attitude to certain practices, for example, getting drunk - seen as socially unacceptable or as widespread and normal, etc. For example, in Slovakia it is considered polite to take shoes off when coming to someone's flat or house, and so agents who engage in multilevel marketing, selling goods directly in people's households, which has become widespread in Slovakia, achieve better results if

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\(^{37}\) Example from Jack Peffer's tapes, 1995.
they take their shoes off or maybe bring their own slippers into which they change. When coming to see someone, even though turning up unexpectedly and maybe late in the evening, friends or family can usually expect to be offered a meal. This is because Slovaks have been known to show their hospitality and respect for guests, especially foreigners\(^{38}\), which may be seen more or less as a duty: a Slovak proverb says *Host' do domu, Boh do domu* ('A guest coming to a house is God coming to the house'). In Slovakia, birthday cards are only sent when it is impossible to attend a birthday party in person, and the most usual reason for a celebration with friends is not someone's birthday, but their name day, since names are listed in all calendars as falling on individual days of the year, while only the closest family members usually know when a person's birthday occurs. This has, however, been changing with the introduction of a network of McDonald's in Slovakia – they organise, and widely advertise, birthday parties for children. Nevertheless, the change at the moment only affects young children (and their parents, involved in the arrangements), since adults still tend not to celebrate their birthdays in large crowds of people unless they are to celebrate their fiftieth or sixtieth birthday, in which case they might organise a major celebration at their place of work as a one-off thing.

A given cultural community may differ in its attitude to time: punctuality may be seen as a value, or a relaxed attitude to time keeping may prevail. The ways time is indicated may be based on 24 hours in all contexts, as in Slovakia, or on the 12-hour system, as in Britain, with the 24-hour system applicable in certain domains, for

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example, train and flight timetables. Moreover, time considered normal for doing certain things may be culture-specific, for example, Slovak shops usually open as early as 6 a.m. and stay open until 6 p.m. on week-days, half-day opening hours apply on Saturdays, while on Sundays most shops remain closed. The usual time for office work in Slovakia is 7 a.m. until 3.30 p.m., for schools 8 a.m. until about 1 or 2 p.m. - classes do not continue in the afternoon, and so the children do not take packed lunch with them in lunch boxes, but desiata (a packed snack eaten during a break at about 10 a.m.) which is less than a packed lunch in quantity and fits into a small bag (which, however, is not referred to as a sandwich bag, since sandwiches in Slovakia are of the open type and thus could not easily be put in a bag - only filled rolls could be put in a bag. Slovak obložené chlebičky, 'open sandwiches', are mostly eaten from plates). The majority of Slovaks are therefore used to getting up early in the morning and going to bed earlier than is the habit in the UK. The usual office time in the UK, 9 till 5, has given a name to a magazine advertising jobs - which is another British cultural reference. However, development can be observed in the domain of time in Slovakia, especially in connection with office time of foreign branches and joint ventures. Due to late working hours in some branches of overseas companies (where work in the morning sometimes starts later than in all-Slovak companies) and due to irregular working hours of those people who are entrepreneurs, many more shops remain open until about eight or nine in the evening. This may be the cause why a large proportion of shops now have lunch breaks. All this may indicate that the traditional pattern of office hours, and consequently, or in connection with that, of shop opening hours has been changing. The usual office hours are relevant from two points of view: they have to be considered when planning business meetings,
making business phone calls – which has to happen at a convenient time. Another consideration may be the time which becomes prime time for television viewing or radio listening and is suitable for broadcasting feature programmes introducing cultural references from other countries. These documentaries are best shown at times when large numbers of people can watch them. The political orientation of a country also comes into play – programmes on the countries with which its political and economic ties are the most intense tend to be shown at a time when a higher number of recipients can be targeted.

Educational systems of different countries may comprise sets of cultural references, for example, British university degrees distinguish between First Class Honours, Second Class Honours (Upper or Lower Division), Third Class Honours and a Pass. Some UK institutions require applicants to have achieved a certain minimum class of a degree in order to be offered a job. A Slovak university degree can be either an ordinary degree or a červený diplom (‘a red diploma’, referred to according to the colour of the case for the certificate of university studies handed to a student during the graduation ceremony) bestowed upon students who have passed all their examinations throughout their (four to six) years of university studies with distinctions.

Phil Baker with Zahida Hussain and Jane Saunders, attempting a systematisation of cultural phenomena, have produced a table showing their classification of cultural differences. According to them, on the “Basic Human Level”, “Everyone needs” “Identity, Personal Worth, Self-respect”, which is reflected on the “Cultural Level” by,
among other things, "Forms of politeness". Under "Forms of politeness" may be included the use of the phrase ‘How are you?’ When the English pronounce this formula, they may not be asking a genuine question, but may just be signalling their positive predisposition towards the person to whom they are addressing it. ‘How are you?’ may thus amount to similar behaviour as smiling while saying ‘Hello’ to someone. Afterwards the English person may legitimately walk away and does not have to wait for an answer or a reaction. However, when Slovaks are asked how they are, they tend to reply in full, maybe by telling their interlocutor about the results of their latest medical test, or by complaining about their current ailments. But the English would not burden others, even friends, with their personal, private problems. The English ‘How are you?’ may just add three syllables to the greeting, whereas the corresponding *ako sa máš/máte* expression remains a full question in the Slovak culture.

The prevalence of using cash in Slovakia, based on the saying *Čo je doma, to sa počíta* (‘Whatever is at home, counts’) may be a cultural practice relevant in a business environment in Slovakia for the time being. It has no class implications as in Britain: with lower classes paying for goods and services in cash, and the middle classes using credit (or other) cards. However, Slovaks are increasingly getting used to carrying less cash on them, but withdrawing it, as needed, from automatic cash

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39 From the table on p. 60 in Baker with Hussain and Saunders.
41 The difference between *ako sa máš* and *ako sa máte* is one between the familiar (i.e. in the singular) and the deferential (i.e. in the plural) form of the verb.
42 The formulaic, phatic character of ‘How are you?’ in English may be indicated by the use of ‘Hiya’, derived from ‘How are you?’, current within certain classes and age groups in Britain instead of the greeting ‘Hello’, which conflates the greeting and the ‘How are you?’ phrase. There exist regional varieties of greetings in English, for example, the Midlands version ‘Are you all right?’, sometimes
machines, or making payments by cheques or credit cards, since they are becoming more widespread. However, there still exist limits of the amount for which a cheque can be written and it may be uncomfortable to have to write a number of cheques to purchase one larger item, which makes people still often pay with cash rather than cheques. This makes credit card an attractive option, coupled with the fact that, for example, PC systems used at Slovak travel agents require credit card guarantees for all hotel bookings whether for holiday, or, increasingly more often, business trips. Apart from branches of foreign financial institutions, several Slovak banks now also offer credit cards to their clients. However, the fact that salaries, which are paid out monthly, are still in the majority of cases paid out in cash (or at least partly paid out in cash, for example, the advance can be sent directly to a bank, and the final amount at the end of the month can be paid out in cash), means that at around the 12th day of each month, banks suffer a temporary shortage of cash, because whereas tax and other payments come in continually, i.e., any day of a month, the salaries are paid on more or less the same day in all companies. Most old age and disability pensions in Slovakia are also paid in cash, however, similarly to salaries there now exist some possibilities for arranging bank transfers of pensions avoiding cash. In Britain the bank transfers and a system of card payments makes it possible to distribute the burden on banks evenly, which contributes to the smooth running of its market economy.

With such a wide variety of cultural references, applying Hofstede's model has the advantage of grouping together some cultural references under a dimension of

shortened to 'You all right?' or even 'All right?', which may serve as another indication of merging the greeting and a modified 'How are you?' question.

43 Minister of Finance, Sergej Kozlík, on the TV news, 1 December 1997.
culture - for example, several types of behaviour can be included under the Power Distance Index, or the Uncertainty Avoidance Index, etc. An inscription Please be ready to give up this seat if someone needs it more than you do or Please offer this seat to an elderly or disabled passenger or Priority Seat: Please offer this seat to elderly or disabled people or those carrying children or Please give up this seat if a disabled person needs it says something about both the Power Distance Index and the Uncertainty Avoidance Index, as opposed to Vyhradené pre invalidov, the strictness of which evokes 'Disabled Only', making a person's conscious willingness to give up a seat into a strict rule to be observed under all circumstances.

In the area of public notices in Slovakia, the development of the situation may be worth noting. The traditional style often included information and a mention of possible sanctions - a number of such notices can be found on buildings: Štátna nivelácia – poškodenie sa trestá ('State triangulation: any damage will be punished'). Apart from that, neutral wording can be used, which politely asks for compliance without specifying sanctions: Prosíme dvere zatvárať ('Please close the door') - with the verb in the infinitive form and a plural form of prosíme (Slovak 'please'). Nástup a výstup s detským kočíkom hláste vodičovi ('Report boarding and alighting with a pram to the driver') – where the verb is in the imperative mode, but it sounds mild.

44 West Midlands buses, 1997.
48 Numerous places, for example, Továrenska Street, Bratislava, 1998.
50 MHD (municipal transport), Bratislava, 1998.
Some institutions, however, put up strict, unequivocal notices worded almost as commands where they anticipate no problems with compliance: *Legitimujte sa bez vyzvania*\(^51\) (‘Show your card without being asked’) or: *Zatvárajte dvere* (‘Close the door’) with the verb in the imperative and no ‘please’. Similar institutions word their notices strongly, claiming their ability to punish people for non-compliance: *Prísný zákaz vylepovania plagátov a inzerátov na sklo. Porušenie sa trestá!!*\(^52\) (‘Strict ban on poster and advertisement billing on the glass. Violation will be punished!!’ ) The three exclamation marks may have added to the authoritativeness of the notice, which has been effective – the glass walls have remained free from any notices. The mention of the sanctions and the exclamation marks seem to be adding strength and authority to the demand, based on the fear which Slovaks used to have of the authorities disposing of a repressive force\(^53\). Similarly, the notice *Z hygienických dôvodov prechod zakázaný!!*\(^54\) resorts to the use of two exclamation marks, attempting to add more weight to it than one exclamation mark would.

It is interesting that some smaller businesses, for example, clothes shops have moved back to similar authoritarian notices as though they were protecting their vulnerability from abuse. *Nebúchajte s dverami!* (‘Do not bang the door’) displays an exclamation mark – to add weight to the plea. Many notices no longer say that people should not enter with food, ice-cream, etc., but they say that it is forbidden, or strictly forbidden to do so, although some of these notices may only be hand-written


\(^{52}\) Subway, František Zupka Square, Bratislava, 1997.

\(^{53}\) Notices worded in a similarly directive manner can be found, for example, *Plakazkleben verboten*, in Erfurt, former Eastern Germany, 1997. An example from the Czech Republic, whose culture is even closer to Slovak culture: *Přísný zákaz vyvěšování plaketů a inzerátů!!* - Charles University, Prague, 1998.

\(^{54}\) Canteen, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, 1998.
on a scrap of paper. For example, in a small hair and beauty place in Bratislava the owners do allow their customers to use the phone, since a notice on it says: Za použitie 10 Sk (‘One use - 10 Slovak crowns’), but the text continues to warn them: Zákaz volat' na mobil (‘Forbidden to call mobile phone numbers’) – since such calls are more expensive and the cost would in the end have to be paid by the shop owner. It seems as though the shop owners felt that such wording added authority to the notice. Maybe such smaller shops tried to change their attitude to customers when they were first established, finding themselves, however, exposed to losses due to, for example, people handling their goods with greasy fingers or making expensive phone calls, so they changed their strategy. This again may be connected with the still prevailing high Uncertainty Avoidance Index in Slovakia. Maybe the shop owners want to make sure they have no losses, since their starting line may have been quite bad, and they can do so since they operate within the Slovak market where a degree of rudeness does not cause customers to stop coming to a place for their shopping, which would lead to a bankruptcy of that business.

Due to their conciseness, notices can be good indicators of a country’s position on the individual dimensions of culture. The comparison of notices typical for the Slovak and the (British) English environment and the awareness of differences between them will therefore put the interpreter in the right mind set for rendering cultural references so that they do not stand out in the receptor text.

However, in the avoidance of uncertainty, there seems to be a clear difference between older and younger generation of Slovaks. An explanation of the generation gap with regard to the Power Distance Index and the Uncertainty Avoidance Index might be that because the old Slovaks see no future, they have no perspective
thinking. At the same time, these old Slovaks are often afraid of any change and incredulently about possible positive outcomes. Many old Slovaks cannot imagine young people in responsible positions where they would yield power, and although these old people usually do not believe in change, they disagree when young people with modern progressive thinking get prominent, well paid jobs, where they might facilitate change, which in fact may be the only way for achieving a fully functioning market economy in Slovakia. This would confirm the supposed position of Slovakia on this dimension, since Hofstede has pointed out that in high Power Distance countries bosses tend to be older\textsuperscript{55}.

The rift between the older and the younger generations in Slovakia can be demonstrated also on the maximum allowed speed which has been moved up – to 130 kilometres per hour on motorways. Altogether Slovaks have been driving faster, which may be also connected with the fact that there are more powerful cars on Slovak roads. Hofstede looks at speed limits as one factor for consideration when charting his dimensions of culture.

In connection with age it may be interesting to point out that mentioning age is not avoided in public conversation in Slovakia. Many middle-aged Slovaks consider it a good joke to say they are already advanced in age, expecting that their interlocutor would be trying to persuade them they are not old. Age also often acts as an excuse for a person’s inability to fulfil tasks. Moreover, it is not considered embarrassing to ask an unknown person’s age in Slovakia either, where due to low respect for privacy the distinction between a polite and personal question is usually not made.

\textsuperscript{55} Cf. Hofstede, \textit{Cultures and Organizations}, p. 36.
The cultural differences between (British) English and Slovak cultures studied closely in the present thesis may operate on two levels: the more general, connected with the differing Eastern and Western traditions, of which Slovakia and Britain have been, respectively, parts; on the more specific level, there exist the particularly Slovak and the particularly (British) English aspects of culture. The positions along the four dimensions of culture as described by Hofstede may be expected to differ between Britain and Slovakia, although Hofstede’s research did not include Slovakia (or Czechoslovakia). According to the various symptoms through which the dimensions manifest themselves, in Slovakia the Power Distance Index and the Uncertainty Avoidance Index may be expected to be higher, while Individualism and Masculinity may be expected to be lower than in Britain. Connected with high Power Distance Index is whether obedience in children is considered important or not. This may be epitomised in Slovakia in the standard command of adult family members, friends, or even complete strangers to small children: Poslúchaj! (‘Obey!’), derived from which is a reproach Neposlúchaš! (‘You don’t obey!’) and a rhetoric question Prečo neposlúchaš? (‘Why don’t you obey?’) In parallel situations, the English expression would probably be You are/have been naughty, and a child may be admonished to Be good, both of which show high Individualism. This example also demonstrates the interconnectedness of Hofstede’s four dimensions of culture.

56 Cf. Hofstede, Fig. 3. 6 Summary of Connotations of Power Distance Differences found in Survey Research, in Culture’s Consequences, p. 119.
57 The contracted form has to be used in this tentative English translation, to show that the expression is spoken rather than written. Slovak stories about children tend to be didactic – i.e. small children in them do behave.
Available solutions

Not only do cultural references represent a wide range of possibilities, but also the role which a particular cultural reference may play in the source text may vary - it may be the main part of the discussion, for example, if a production of something is to be started for later export to the partner country, etc. However, a cultural reference may only be used to set the scene, to draw a parallel between various phenomena, it may be only peripheral, a reflection of the personal style of the speaker. The purpose which a cultural reference may be fulfilling in the source text may serve as a cue for the interpreter to what extent it has to be fully understood in all its implications and in its whole context by the listeners in order that the source text as such be comprehended. Interpreters then proceed accordingly, sometimes defying the time constraints.

The basic possible strategies may be threefold: first, keeping the cultural reference in its original form, i.e. using the source language name or wording; second, using a receptor culture notion which seems to be sufficiently close (in look, function, etc.); or, third, resorting to a neutral term, a definition, a generic name, a general explanation of the function. To illustrate the first strategy, an example can be found outside the area of interpreting: the title of the film Coming Out was retained in its English form when Slovak cinemas were showing it. The cultural reference

58 Janet Wilson mentioned various possibilities used when rendering Maori poetry, i.e. source texts rich in cultural references, into English - cf. 'Texts, Issues and Translation in Bi-cultural New Zealand', a lecture given on 12 February 1997, Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies. Cf. also the approach of publishers of African fiction in English translation to indigenous cultural references. Slovak publishers of fiction use a convention whereby, for example, an expression in a foreign language (if the language differs from the main language of the piece of work) or in a dialect of the source language, which stood out in the source text, is reproduced verbatim in the receptor text,
connected with homosexuality to which it alludes was unknown in Slovakia - the situation differs from Britain, where homosexuals are fully accepted. Since succinct titles operate better, a film title cannot be rendered in a verbose way - in this sense the circumstances of translation of film titles resemble those of interpreting, where impact might be lost if a rendering of a cultural reference was too long. The film serves as an explanation of its title: after seeing it, the viewers are able to decipher the title because they have grasped the essence of the cultural practice alluded to. The strategy of retaining the source language form of a cultural reference therefore relies on the context for making its meaning clear.

As another strategy, interpreters may keep the original wording in the source language, adding its “explained” translation in the receptor language immediately following, i.e. they may present two versions of a cultural reference to their audience. Nigel Reeves recommends such solution for organisation of government – retaining the source language term and adding a neutral, explanatory translation.

As another approach, interpreters may opt for a receptor culture cultural reference by which they render the cultural reference from the source text. John Hollander, in a slightly different connection, namely talking about individual words, recommends choosing a word with about the same frequency and area of occurrence, which may also serve as a useful guidance for interpreters faced with cultural references, i.e. to aim at replacing a source text cultural reference by a receptor culture cultural reference of approximately the same frequency and area of occurrence. Using a followed by its Slovak translation, usually after a comma. Typographical highlighting, for example using italics, can also sometimes be applied.

Reeves, p. 37.

receptor culture cultural reference which would be perceived as a didactic explanation of the source text cultural reference due to its rarity and uniqueness would transform the source audience "gut reaction" into receptor audience intellectual perception, i.e. would change the framework within which the cultural reference operated in the given source text, and thus misrepresent the intention of the source text author.

However, this strategy can work, if the frequency and area of occurrence criteria are met. For example, Jánošík, an important symbolic figure of Slovak history from the early eighteenth century onwards, an inspiration for much of Slovak poetry, music, paintings, and a frequent symbol on souvenirs from Slovakia, can be rendered as 'the Slovak Robin Hood', using an indigenous English cultural reference, with a qualification. Slovak Jánošík, a leader of a group of his male followers in northern Slovakia mountains, similar to Robin Hood’s merry men, was renowned for taking from the rich and giving to the poor. When giving the poor some cloth, he would 'measure its length from one beech tree to another' (mieral angliu od buka do buka). He was caught when an old woman spilled some peas on the floor of the cottage where he was meeting his loved one, he was sentenced to death as a deterrent to others who might similarly try to rebel against the lords, and hanged by his left rib in 1713 in the town of Liptovský Mikuláš. These details of Jánošík's life, however, may be less relevant than his similarity to Robin Hood as a popular hero. Any explanatory additions may therefore be redundant to clients of interpreting, although they do form part of the overall picture which the name Jánošík evokes in Slovaks. The rendering of Jánošík as ‘the Slovak Robin Hood’ is not unnecessarily intellectualised, since Robin Hood is a household concept in the UK.
However, the strategy of using local cultural references from the receptor culture may be fraught with problems, since everything, the very substance of the source text, might sometimes have to be changed, otherwise incongruity of local colour might be created. An example from drama can illustrate this thesis: *My Fair Lady* translated into a Berlin dialect cannot be happening in London61. Similarly, in opera, *Don Giovanni* in its new translation by Tony Britten and Nicholas Broadhurst, mentioned English place names like 'Kensington', 'Nottingham', etc., while retaining the original names of persons, thus creating a degree of inconsistency and illogicality62. These two examples have been taken from genres characterised by a number of similarities with interpreting, as already mentioned.

If a source text cultural reference is rendered by a receptor culture cultural reference with strong local associations, the result may be misleading, for example, if *rodné číslo* were rendered as 'Social Security Number'. *Rodné číslo* is a code number given to every Slovak at birth, which is a combination of the date of birth, a coefficient marking the person's sex and the number of the entry in the book of births. This has to be stated on all application forms and serves for easy identification of a person. It was originally introduced at a time when computer databases were insufficiently common, yet the system guaranteed that a person be easily identified. (The ID itself - *občiansky preukaz* - which every Slovak citizen has to carry at all times and produce to identify him- or herself, is a material cultural reference.) *Rodné číslo* does not have associations with employment only and so rendering it as 'Social Security Number' might transfer a discussion into a different area. A possible solution

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61 The example was mentioned by Hans Hö nig, CILT seminar, Aston University, 14 March 1997.
62 Presented by Music Theatre London at the Warwick University Arts Centre in October 1996.
may be to interpret *rodné číslo* as ‘birth code number’ which sounds sufficiently clear in describing the cultural reference, yet does not bring in specifically British associations. This demonstrates the third strategy of an interpreter – resorting to a neutral term.

The three above mentioned solutions which interpreters have at their disposal can be said to be broadly based on Popovič, according to whom challenges following from the differences in time and space between an original and its translation can be solved by three basic approaches: “exotization, i. e. the translator’s orientation to the foreign environment of the original, naturalization – the tendency to transpose the original into the target language environment, and creolization – seeking a compromise and balance between the foreign and native elements in the work translated”.

Sometimes to render the same cultural reference, when it is repeated, an interpreter may use more than one term, in order to convey several of its possible associations, i. e. he or she may use a different term each time, approaching the meaning of the cultural reference from several angles. All this is done, since “the translator has to make, as far as possible, the meaning and connotations of the culturally specific term clear and available to the intended readership”.

Sometimes interpreters can apply an approach used by translators, which can be a simple explanation, for example, the title of a book by Karel Čapek, *Hovory s TGM*,

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63 Gromová, ‘Saving Expressive Values in Literary translation’, p. 43.
65 Cf. C. Sanders, p. 143.
was translated into English as *Conversations with T. G. Masaryk*\(^{66}\). The abbreviation, a cultural reference, was written in full in the translation, since the receptor audience was not expected to share the knowledge of the familiar Czech abbreviation of the name of this statesman and philosopher. A similar strategy has been adopted by Czech translators of a leaflet for the Wax Museum in Prague, where the Czech source text has *s T. G. Masarykem*, the English translation explains: ‘the very first President of former Czechoslovakia T. G. Masaryk’\(^{67}\) Such operation may be possible when interpreting various abbreviations, although deciphering a cryptic abbreviation requires time, which is always in short supply during interpreting.

The *Slovak Spectator* may be another source of potential solutions for typically Slovak cultural references which interpreters can apply. This bimonthly, which deals with events in Slovakia, used to publish translations of Slovak articles into English, but it did not work and so the system was changed. At present, all articles are written already in English. Those *Slovak Spectator* journalists who do not speak Slovak get an interpreter who helps them carry out interviews and find their way through any background material which might be in Slovak. Then they write their article and the way a cultural reference appears in their texts is very close to interpreting - it aims at communicating the substance. An example can be *Matica slovenská*, which appears as ‘Matica slovenská, cultural heritage organisation’, thus making it clear what its main role is. Similarly, *Vodohospodárska výstavba*, often mentioned in connection with the Gabčíkovo dam, is put as ‘Vodohospodárska výstavba hydroelectric utility’.

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\(^{66}\) The English title is mentioned in *Czechoslovakia: Newspack* (Cyprus: BBC World Service and Middle East Media Operations, 1990).

\(^{67}\) Cf. Wax Museum leaflet, 1997.
Moreover, interpreters can also copy the way foreign correspondents of Slovak press and media handle cultural references of other countries\(^{68}\).

Interpreters can warn their clients beforehand that cultural differences exist and that they may have to explain them. Then they may be making a distinction between the exact words of the source text author and any commentaries added while interpreting\(^ {69}\). Intonation may serve as a tool for distinguishing the source text components from any additions in the receptor version\(^ {70}\). The difference in the use of the first or the third person singular may also be exploited for this purpose\(^ {71}\), where the speaker’s exact words would be rendered in the first person singular and any glosses in the third person singular, resorting to a formulation like, for example, “the interpreter would like to point out that”, “what the speaker here refers to is”, or “what the speaker means is”, etc.

However, another factor in the decision-making process when opting for explanations, may be the view of authors of source texts for interpreting. Andrzej Kopczynski, who carried out a questionnaire survey in Poland among authors of source language speeches, demonstrated that they prefer the interpreter in a “ghost role” rather than that of an “intruder”\(^ {72}\). Similarly, Ivana Čeňková in her survey of

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\(^{69}\) An interpreter may apply in a creative way potential solutions taken from other areas of human activity: for example, on the Slovak radio, a newscaster once said *Atlantída, pardón, Antarktída* (‘Atlantis, sorry, Antarctica’), correcting herself in a brief and efficient way, clearly marking off her mistake as non-part of the original text. (The exact date of the broadcast has been lost, but it happened sometimes in 1991, during the weather report after the main news on the national radio station.) It is easy to imagine how the mistake in announcing *Atlantis* instead of *Antarctica* originated: both words rhyme in Slovak (since most of traditional as well as much of modern Slovak poetry is rhymed, rhyme serves as a strong mnemonic aid), they share the last four letters -tida, and start with the same letter A-. This similarity of form may have been enhanced by the fact that they both denote, broadly speaking, geographical notions.

\(^{70}\) Cf. Donovan-Cagilos, ‘La fidélité’.


perception of quality in interpreting found out that clients do not like the interpreter adding anything – which also goes against the explanatory strategy. Another issue influencing the interpreter's choice of strategies may be the status of the source text and its author. In the sphere of written translation this has been demonstrated on the case of the Nobel Prize winner Paul Samuelson, whose text on economics was adapted in its German translation only as for the Information Packaging, on the microlevel (i.e. "regarding the precise way in which 'given' or 'new' source text information is presented in the target scientific and technical register"), while the Information Dynamics, the macrolevel (i.e. "regarding what type of 'given' or 'new' information in which logical arrangement is transferred from source to target text") was left intact - to show the features of Samuelson's personal style, as required by the publisher of the German translation. This example is not drawn from fiction, where an emphasis on the form of the source text might be expected, but from a predominantly informative text, indicating that even informative texts may, to a degree, be stylistically marked. It has been mentioned already that interpreters deal mainly with factual source texts, therefore, in parallel with the translation of the book by Samuelson and Nordhaus, a speech by a prominent personality may be expected to manifest characteristic features of his or her individual style even in its interpreted receptor version - for example, the interpreters may have to concentrate on consistency in rendering personal clichés.

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73 Ivana Čeňková, 'Co pro nás znamená kvalita tlumočení' [What Quality of Interpreting Means to Us], TOP, No. 31 (1996), 42/678 – 43/679 (p. 43/679).
pointed out his constant effort at interpreting favourite turns of phrase by top Russian politicians in a consistent manner from Russian into English and also applying their own usual formulations when interpreting for them from English into Russian.

In the case of a source text cultural reference kept in its source language form or in the case of a receptor culture cultural reference substituted for it, some background information in some guise usually has to be added in the receptor text somewhere else. If a neutral term is used, explanations need to be added less often, especially when the neutral expression is self-explanatory.

Jack Peffers says: "We never fully become part of another culture, but can be more aware of it." Although it may be difficult to list all aspects of the culture of a national community and to access it, members of the Slovak cultural community may be said to have insufficient knowledge of culture-bound phenomena of the (British) English community, and vice versa. Thus an interpreter working between (British) English and Slovak has to carry out cultural mediation, by providing, at least briefly, some of the necessary cultural background.

The situation where many (British) English cultural references remain unknown to Slovak clients of interpreting and many Slovak cultural references remain unknown to (British) English clients of interpreting, has been caused historically. That is why the following chapter will briefly outline this history.

77 Gerzymisch-Arbogast, 'Contrastive', p. 34.
Chapter 9 A Brief History of Mutual Relations between Britain and Czechoslovakia, Present Contacts of Britain and Slovakia

In this chapter, over forty years of communist rule in Czechoslovakia (1948 - 1989) will be described and compared to the present-day situation (with focus on Slovakia), namely: the level of mutual contacts between Britain and Czechoslovakia, possibilities of acquiring English in Czechoslovak primary and secondary schools or in the out-of-school environment. Under communism, foreign language teaching saw as its aim to train people able to spread information about life in Central and Eastern Europe¹ rather than to mediate a free and unhampered flow of information from Western Europe, or in both ways². This in a way may have provided Central and East European interpreters with good preparation for dealing with cultural references in source texts - often by adding explanatory glosses in the receptor texts in a foreign language³.

The changes which occurred after 1989 in Czechoslovakia will be pointed out, in order to show how access to information about the (British) English culture has been improving. At schools and universities in Slovakia, the introduction of authentic

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¹ For example, the Slovak Ministry of Culture published a series of glossaries of institutional terms in the area of arts (Slovak-English, Slovak-French, Slovak-German, Slovak-Russian, and Slovak-Spanish) which were distributed free to interpreters working with those languages. Cf. also Lívia Hrožičková, Čítanie z anglického jazyka [Texts for Reading in English] (Bratislava: SPN, 1980), approved by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Socialist Republic as a textbook for secondary schools.

² Cf. also Schäffner, 'Translation policy in the former German Democratic Republic', abstract of a paper for the Translation and Power conference, University of Warwick, 1997.

³ Disregarding the question of whether these were strictly relevant for understanding the communicated message as a whole.
English textbooks improved the acquisition of knowledge about the English culture, as did the presence of native speakers of English in Slovakia. Contacts between Britain and Slovakia in academia as well as outside it have intensified, among other factors thanks to the activity of the British Council, and Slovaks can now familiarise themselves with the English culture also through the radio, television, films, books in the original or in translations, during various events, as well as through individual or group travel.

Nevertheless, since some cultural references remain unknown to Slovak and (British) English audiences, and since there are the dominant, emergent and residual elements of culture at work, an interpreter, being in a better position to posses the knowledge about both cultures, acquires the role of an intercultural mediator. This mediation by an interpreter has to be carried out when interpreting for (British) English and Slovak clients because of the isolation of Czechoslovakia from Britain in the past. The role of the interpreter in a business environment is already made difficult because under communism the practice of Western type of business, and consequently, corresponding vocabulary of business, did not develop in Czech or Slovak.

The origins of the present day situation can be traced to a period long time ago: after the Second World War, as a result of the division of the world into two antagonistic blocs, economic contacts between Czechoslovakia, a communist country after February 1948, and Western Europe, including Great Britain, became sparse. Foreign trade contacts of Czechoslovakia became limited mostly to Central and
Eastern Europe and Third World countries⁴. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, of which Czechoslovakia became a member, served as an instrument for economic integration of its Central and East European member countries⁵. For Czechoslovakia the top of the list of countries for export and import was taken by the Soviet Union⁶. This economic isolation of Czechoslovakia from Western Europe until 1989 led to limited knowledge and awareness of the general public in Czechoslovakia of, for example, foreign product names, geographical locations, company names or trade marks, etc. These cultural references may not have had the same impact on Czech or Slovak audiences as they do in countries of Western Europe with lively contacts and wide availability of foreign goods across country boundaries. For example, even at present when Slovak shop assistants use English names of foreign products, they sometimes do not know how to pronounce them correctly, which they might, if the products had been on sale for a longer time and if advertisements for them, especially radio and television commercials, were familiar to the general public⁷.

In terms of mobility and travel of people from Czechoslovakia in the communist past, anyone who wanted to travel to countries outside the Eastern bloc had a choice of either joining a package tour, or applying for an allocation of hard currency for

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⁴ Cf. Jack Peffers, 'The Emergence of a State', p. 6. Another aspect of the isolation of Central and Eastern Europe is mentioned by Gile who points out that Translation Studies research conducted in Eastern Europe was not known in Western European countries due to the lack of exchanges - cf. Basic Concepts, p. 244.
⁵ The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance used to be referred to as Comecon in English-speaking contexts.
⁶ Cf. Vladimira Hudáková, 'L'interprète judiciaire en Slovaquie', in Translation - the vital link (London: ITI, 1993), vol. I, pp. 373 - 376 (p. 373). A number of consumer products in Czechoslovakia used to bear inscriptions in Cyrillic, since they were meant for export to the Soviet Union.
⁷ An indirect proof might be that because in Bratislava and its surroundings it has been possible to watch Viennese television, many Slovaks have become used to the German names of products advertised on Austrian television, and mostly know how to pronounce them correctly.
individual travel⁸. Package tours to Great Britain were less numerous than to countries of continental Western Europe and they were twice as expensive as trips to other Western European countries due to the cost of Channel crossing⁹. Those trips which were offered, often contained an English language course element and were

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⁸ Most of the package tours were organised by Čedok, the state-owned travel agency, some were organised by Tatratour, a smaller, co-operative agency, or CKM, a student agency. Very few tours were offered in any given year and in order to get a place, people who were interested in travelling, had to queue overnight at the beginning of December when the sale of tours for the next year was opening. The prices were prohibitive for most of the population: for example, a 14-day tour of Greece and Turkey in 1988 cost the equivalent of a 14-month salary of a university-educated publishing editor. After booking a place on a tour, people had to apply, at their place of work, on an official form for "seven signatures". These comprised the signature of their manager, allowing them to go on a holiday (paying with their own money and using their own holiday time). The trade union representative also had to give them a permission. The accountancy department had to confirm that they had no outstanding debts and were allowed to leave the country. The Communist Party had to give its approval - to non-members as well. The youth organisation had to confirm it did not object to the person's going abroad. These signatures were in most institutions given at a joint meeting of these representatives, which was usually only held once a month, making it impossible for anyone to be on stand-by for holidays, or to take last-minute offers for travel. The general manager of a company where the person worked gave his or her final signature. After this, the person was able to apply at the police for a travel permit. Although every citizen of Czechoslovakia above the age of 15 was entitled to a travel passport, it was only valid for travel to Central and Eastern Europe, even excluding a country like Yugoslavia, for which a special passport had to be issued. Granting the travel permit for travel to Western countries was at the discretion of the police. If it did not grant one, the applicant lost the money paid for the official stamp on the application form. Those who did get a travel permit, had to check if its number was identical with the passport number, because in case it did not tally, they would be stopped at the border and prevented from exiting the country. An individual who went through all this process could still be returned from the border, where strip-searches were carried out regularly, especially on people about whom tips had been received that they might be interested in leaving the country, "defecting to the West". (The border patrols stationed in their shelters along the Czechoslovak borders did not, in fact, look outside the country - the windows aimed inside - to make sure no one could get out unofficially.)

The other option for someone interested in travelling to a Western country was to apply for a devízový přísluš ('hard currency allocation'). The allocations were very restrictive: few people received them and a number of years had to elapse before a person could get another one. The funds were as a rule insufficient for hotel accommodation and were used by people with their own transport, staying at camping places. The amount of money was inadequate for restaurant meals either, which made people's holidays self-catering. There did exist another option, the so-called "humanitarian travel", for example, to funerals of relatives, or to weddings, but the travel permit was only granted for a restricted time, and although the people would only be allowed to purchase a limited amount of foreign currency, the maximum potential annual allocation of hard currency would be put on their record and they would have to wait for a number of years before their new application for a hard currency allocation would again be considered.

Some people were able to travel to conferences, especially if they were reading papers, but they had to find sponsors, mostly from abroad, since hard currency was in short supply in Czechoslovakia.

⁹ According to price lists in the Čedok, Tatratour and CKM catalogues.
usually taken up by future or current university students of English\(^\text{10}\). Thus for a majority of Czechs and Slovaks, the borders with the Western world remained hermetically sealed for most of their lives—they were prevented from experiencing Western cultures by administrative obstacles to travel as well as by its enormous cost. The impossibility of travel not only meant that Czechs and Slovaks were physically isolated from Western countries, but also that they did not get the motivation to learn languages spoken in these countries, which can often be the outcome of even short stays abroad.

The lack of contacts with Czechoslovakia also existed on the British side: few people from Britain travelled to Czechoslovakia. The majority of (British) English visitors did not speak Czech or Slovak and it was difficult for them to find someone in Czechoslovakia with fluent enough English to assist them if they needed to communicate. Moreover, there existed few textbooks of Slovak from which they would be able to acquire enough of the language to make themselves understood\(^\text{11}\), and few Slovak-English/English-Slovak dictionaries which would help them, for

\(^{10}\) Higher percentage of the places on those courses may have been taken by Czechs than by Slovaks, if only because the Czech Republic represented two thirds of what was, until 1993, Czechoslovakia, as opposed to only a third formed by Slovakia.

\(^{11}\) For example, Jozef Mistrik, Basic Slovak (Bratislava: SPN, 1980); or Ján Oravec and Jozef Prokop, Slovenčina pre krajanov hovoriačich po anglicky: A Slovak Textbook for English-Speaking Countrymen (Martin: Matica slovenská, 1986). At present, the range of textbooks of Slovak is wider and they are available outside Slovakia as well, for example, Oscar E. Swan and Sylvia Galová-Lörinc, Beginning Slovak (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1990); Peter Baláž, Miloslav Darovec and Heather Trebatická, Slovak for Slavicists (Bratislava: SPN, 1991); Klaudia Holíková, Dobrý deň, slovenčina [Good Morning, Slovak] (Bratislava: KON-PRESS, 1991); Louise B. Hammer, Manual for Intermediate Studies: Intermediate Slovak I, Intermediate Slovak II (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Foreign Language Publication, 1995); Klaudia Holíková and Mária Weisssová, Základy slovenčiny: Essential Slovak. Učebnica. Pracovný zošit [Textbook. Workbook] (Bratislava: Danubia print, 1995); Adela Bohmerová, Slovak for you: Slovenčina pre vás (Bratislava: Perfekt, 1996); Martin Votruba, Elementary and Intermediate Slovak (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, n. d.); Martin Votruba, Slovak from Scratch (University of Pittsburgh, unpublished, available from author, E-mail: Votruba+@pitt.edu); or James Naughton, Colloquial Slovak: The Complete Course for Beginners (London: Routledge, 1997).
example, decipher various street signs or solve emergencies\textsuperscript{12}. Since 1989, however, tourism has increased both ways - Slovaks can travel to Britain without any visa requirements and the British to Slovakia\textsuperscript{13}. Exchanges of pupils and students between Britain and Slovakia have also intensified\textsuperscript{14}. The interest of Czechs and Slovaks in travel to Western countries has been reflected in the high number of travel agents which started business in Czechoslovakia, amounting to some two thousand in 1990, in a country with fifteen million inhabitants.

Regarding the flow of information between Britain and Czechoslovakia under communism, it was difficult to listen to the BBC in Slovak or Czech, the broadcast of which used to be jammed. It was, however, possible to tune in to the BBC World Service on some radio receivers, maybe because only a limited number of people - those able to understand English - would have been influenced by it. The changes in Czechoslovakia since 1989 have been extensive, for example, a new transmitter for the BBC World Service has been put into operation in Bratislava, making it possible to tune in directly and enjoy clear reception. Apart from programmes in English,


\textsuperscript{13} The number of visitors from the United Kingdom to Slovakia rose from 13 495 in 1992 to 17 063 in 1996 – cf. \textit{Statistická ročenka Slovenskej republiky 1997/Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 1997} (Bratislava: Veda, 1997), section V.

\textsuperscript{14} Cf., for example, James Sutherland-Smith, 'A Minor Miracle', \textit{ASA Journal}, vol. I, No. 3 (1992), 16 - 18. The Bilingual English-Slovak School in Sučany has been organising visits to Britain for its students for three years now – cf. 'Bilingual English-Slovak Grammar School', \textit{News from British Council Slovakia}, June 1996, p. 1. Study visits to Britain as well as postdoctoral posts for various categories of specialists have been offered: 735 individuals, 515 from Slovakia and 220 from Britain, specialists in science, education, the arts, management and the environment have received British Council grants for short-term visits to Slovakia and to Britain - cf. Helena Le Sage, 'Programme of Exchanges', \textit{News from British Council Slovakia}, March 1996 (p. 2). At present the British Council is starting a programme
extensive hours of BBC broadcasts in Slovak and Czech, including courses of
English for Czech and Slovak listeners, are now also available all over Slovakia.

In terms of studying English language and culture under communism, there were few
English courses offered on Czechoslovak television or the radio. Bookshops in
Czechoslovakia did not sell English books, except for the special foreign languages
book shops, selling Russian editions of Easy Reading Series publications (mostly
fiction) in English, with simplified texts accompanied by extensive English-Russian
explanatory notes, or annotated editions published in Poland. (These foreign
languages bookshops concentrated on offering a wide range of literature in Russian,
and were popularly referred to as 'Russian book shops'.) Slovak public libraries did
not stock enough books in English either. For example, in Bratislava, some books in
English (mostly British Council donations) could be found in the University Library.

Although there existed a specialised Foreign Languages Public Library in Bratislava,
most of its stock was in Hungarian or German, the traditional languages of older

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15 In the 1980s there was an English course for beginners (Round the world with English) offered on
the Devín radio station, operating on a frequency not covering the whole territory of Slovakia, which
was only possible to tune in to on some radio receivers. This course was locally produced, co-
authored by Ladislav Kubiš. An English Club, aimed at intermediate language learners, was broadcast
once a month for half an hour after the beginners' course finished, but its parts were mostly repeated -
not many new ones were produced. The Club was dialogic, using a studio learner of English who was
making mistakes, not all of which were corrected on the air - cf. Miroslav Bážlik, 'Cudzie jazyky
rozhlasom' [Foreign Languages via Radio], Osvetová práca, No. 5 (1986), 14 - 17.

16 Only in Budapest it was possible to get unabridged editions of books in English, published, for
example, by Penguin or Pelican. However, the customs control focused on finding material in foreign
languages which people might have been bringing into Czechoslovakia, most of which was considered
suspicious, entailing problems for those who were carrying such items.

17 The name may be misleading, it is not a university library in the British sense, attached to a
particular university, but a public lending library in Bratislava restricted to readership over 15 years of
age and whose readers are mostly students and lecturers at universities in Bratislava or elsewhere in
Slovakia.
inhabitants of Bratislava. The situation has improved since 1989 and at present, fiction in English as well as reference or encyclopaedic works are available in most book shops throughout Slovakia and also from street book stalls, accompanied by books in English to be found in most library stocks.

In the communist past, if foreign texts contained references to culture-bound phenomena, these may have been completely unknown to the readers and may have needed explanations, since people in the former Soviet Union and other communist Central and East European countries used to have gaps in their knowledge about and awareness of Western cultures. To bridge this, some second-hand sources were provided, among them locally produced dictionaries of cultural references, brief encyclopaedic works or other lexicographic materials. One such reference work is An A to Z of British Life, listing alphabetically various aspects of life in Britain, containing a number of illustrations and photographs, which was originally compiled for Russian readers and existed in a bilingual English-Russian version: with the entries in English and explanations in Russian (and with fewer photographs). The book now exists in an all-English version and is widely available (for example, in Slovakia or in the UK) as a reference work for translators or students of English. It is understandable that in the former communist countries such brief lexicographic sources used to be produced, because it was possible to shorten the

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18 Bratislava, as a former part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the beginning of this century, sometimes used to be referred to as Pressburg in German and Possony in Hungarian. Its location on the border of three countries made it trilingual.

19 For example, A. I. Rybakin, A Dictionary of English Surnames/Slovary anglissikh familiii (Moscow: Russkii Iazyk, 1986), containing a list of English, American and Commonwealth surnames.


entries, thus eliminating ideological influences and restricting the information to a minimum.

Before 1989, the numbers of titles of scientific or scholarly journals from abroad subscribed to by various Czechoslovak public libraries, organisations or institutions were limited and it was not easy for specialists to keep up to date with the latest scientific or scholarly developments, unless mention of these was found in Russian or East German journals in translation. **Celoštátána evidencia zahraničnej literatúry** ('Central Register of Foreign Literature'), a department at the University Library in Bratislava, kept records of Western titles subscribed to by various institutions in Czechoslovakia, which were for restricted use only. It was normally only possible to obtain a photocopy of a particular article from a Western periodical, for payment, through the Interlibrary Loan System, not the whole journal. On the other hand, Russian or East German titles22, were available alongside the Czechoslovak items to any reader. This was because the East European sources were, on the one hand, considered ideologically reliable, and on the other, did not have to be purchased for hard currency, which was in short supply. Under communism it was similarly difficult for individuals to subscribe to foreign journals or magazines - in Slovakia there was only one subscription agency, **Ústredná správa zahraničnej tlače** ('Central Office for the Import and Distribution of Foreign Press') at the Central Post Office in Bratislava, with a limited hard currency budget, mostly used for fashion magazines with little text (for example, the German **Burda**). Only the “velvet revolution” of 1989 made it

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22 For example, **Fremdsprachen**, which might be of interest to language learners, translators or interpreters.
possible for Slovaks to subscribe to more educational journals and magazines, for example, the *National Geographic, Newsweek* or *Time*.

In the 1960s in Bratislava there were only two primary schools where English was taught as one of the subjects on the curriculum. These were very selective - admitting pupils only after rigorous entrance examinations which lasted a whole day. At these schools, British or Australian textbooks of English were used, but while all other textbooks for all other subjects used to be provided free of charge at all primary and secondary schools in Czechoslovakia, together with free stationery, at Bajkalská and Nedbalova parents had to buy the English textbooks for their children at a high cost. It took a few years before an accompanying English-Slovak dictionary was published, so until then it was more difficult for young children to use the textbooks for self-study at home. In this way their dependence on the omniscient teacher was preserved - reflecting the high Power Distance Index, as defined by Hofstede, among whose origins are non-interactive, one-way teaching, which was practised in Czechoslovakia under communism. In the 1970s, some other schools in Czechoslovakia started teaching English, the instruction of which was based on materials written by Czech or Slovak authors, with ensuing ideological bias. By providing locally written textbooks for Western foreign languages, the amount of knowledge the Czech or Slovak learners were able to acquire about Western

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23 There was one primary school in Bratislava teaching German.
cultures was limited and in this way any influences seen by the communist authorities as ideologically dangerous could be eliminated. The textbooks contained less photographic material than original English books usually do, especially those designated for beginners, thus suppressing the visual acquisition of some aspects of the English culture. Textbooks of English used at secondary schools, where English teaching was in fact introduced earlier than at basic schools (because the early age of fast language acquisition in children has already been missed), were also locally produced\(^\text{27}\). Adults interested in learning foreign languages were able to enrol at Language Schools (only a few existed and only in larger cities) which offered evening classes. The textbooks of English for these adult education establishments were designed in Czechoslovakia, and were looking at English through the communist Czech or Slovak eyes. Moreover, for many years, no adequate dictionaries of English were available in Czechoslovakia.

Before 1989, Russian used to be taught at all basic nine-year schools in Slovakia, starting from the fourth year, i.e. with children at about the age of ten\(^\text{28}\) when they can still learn a new language fast. Secondary schools continued teaching Russian

language and literature, and the school-leaving examination (*maturita*), at the age of eighteen, comprised a compulsory Russian component both in its written and oral part. Under communism, Comenius University students studying Russian in combination with another language or subject were officially attached to the Department of Russian Studies, since Russian was taken as their major subject. Similar situation prevailed at other Czech and Slovak universities all of which used to offer Russian Studies programmes. More literature for Russian Studies was available in libraries\(^{29}\), and for those who wanted to buy their own books, most of the prices were affordable. Russian was taught, and studied, in greater detail, and expected to be mastered better than the students’ other subject(s), moreover, the students were able to benefit from the linguistic proximity of Russian and Slovak. Russian Studies departments at Czech and Slovak universities used to be the strongest departments in terms of numbers of staff, facilities and funding. They offered free study periods in the Soviet Union for all their students in places like Moscow, Volgograd or laroslavf. Those students at Comenius University who were to become interpreters having Russian as one of their foreign languages, stayed at the Maurice Thorez Institute of Foreign Languages in Moscow for one semester, and were able to follow, among other courses, English-Russian and Russian-English interpreting, an intense, practically oriented course taught by Russian professional interpreters. However,

\(^{28}\) Compulsory school attendance in Slovakia starts at the age of six, subject to psychological tests, with possible exceptions for children born after 1 September of a given year at the discretion of their parents.

\(^{29}\) While the Department of Russian Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava was able to run its own independent library throughout the years of its existence, in the Department of English and American Studies the small and insufficient library of books in English was in 1980 relocated to the Central Library of Comenius University, open for use to all departments. Only in 1990 was the Department of English and American Studies able to retrieve its stocks from the Central Library and re-open for English Studies students exclusively.
students of English were not sent for study visits to an English-speaking country.\textsuperscript{30} The difficulties of arranging travel to Western Europe were aggravated by its high cost. Very few students from Czechoslovak universities under communism had the opportunity to visit West European or American translator and interpreter training institutes, unless they managed to arrange it through private channels, and it was mostly students from Prague, the then capital of Czechoslovakia, since better information infrastructure was in place there.\textsuperscript{31} In the past it was possible for Czechs and Slovaks to study at universities in the other communist Central and East European countries, with the largest numbers studying in the then Soviet Union. Graduates of these Central and East European universities, regardless of the subjects they studied, often became interpreters afterwards, if not full-time, then at least on an occasional basis.

Since 1989, in Slovakia, similarly to other countries both in Eastern and Western Europe, English has become the predominant foreign language.\textsuperscript{32} This is, for

\textsuperscript{30} For example, in 1979, of the 27 students who registered for English and Russian Studies at Comenius University to become translators and interpreters, only two were able to visit Britain - one for two weeks, the other for a month, but it was their parents who paid for their trip and covered their expenses. By the end of the four years of study, one more student of the 27 had an opportunity of using English while on holiday in Belgium. (The combination of English and Russian was the only combination with English which opened in 1979 at Comenius University as a two-subject study of foreign languages. The other language combinations offered that year were French with Romanian, and Russian with Italian.)

\textsuperscript{31} There were slightly better chances for places at French institutions due to the active policy of the French government at dissemination of the French language and culture. For example, some Slovak students from Comenius University in Bratislava and Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Prešov were able to make short summer stays at Dijon in 1981 and 1982, organised through official channels by the Ministry of Education.

The active support for French learners, some of whom may eventually become French interpreters, has been continuing – cf. the offers provided by the French Embassy in ‘Nabídka studijních pobytů ve Francii v oblasti jazykového vzdělávání’ [The Offer of Language Learning Study Stays in France], Doplň členu, No. 6 (1991), 8; cf. also ‘Bourses du gouvernement français 1998/1999’, Institut Français Bratislava, Janvier-Février 1998, pp. 24 – 25.

\textsuperscript{32} Cf. Valentina Šebestová and Juraj Šeba, ‘Umelecké prvky v neumeleckom preklade/Elements of Art in Non-literary Translation’, in Hrdlička (ed.), 9x o prekladu (Prague: JTP, 1995), pp. 12 - 19 (pp. 12 and 13); cf. also Miroslava Dulová, ‘Súčasný stav konferenčného timočenia na Slovensku’ [Present State of Conference Interpreting in Slovakia], in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of
example, reflected in the practice of publishing tables of contents in English which various journals have started, alongside with at least brief English summaries of articles appearing in them. Some collections of papers now also have titles in English in their tables of contents to provide better orientation during browsing.

Slovak cinemas at present show a high number of foreign films, often in English, sometimes with Slovak or Czech subtitles. The original English titles of films tend to be given on billboards and in programme listings in newspapers or in special cinema leaflets alongside their Slovak translations, however, sometimes only the English title exists. Apart from regular performances of films in English, various events have

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*Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe* (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 11 - 12 (p. 12); Kateřina Pošová, 'Tlumočení a překlad v oboru filmu' [Film Interpreting and Film Translation], *TOP*, No. 6 (1991), 14 - 15; or Anna Čapková, 'Potřebuji ste průjezdnost' na dialóg. [We Need a Chance for a Dialogue] an interview with Gillian M. Roche, the Director of British Council in Slovakia', *Národná obroda*, 17 March 1995, p. 18.

The survey by the *Jednota tlumočníků a překladatelů* ('Union of Interpreters and Translators') witnesses that at present English is a prominent foreign language both in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia: it is in the group of languages most frequently demanded for translation and interpreting - cf. Jiří Haluzá and Andrej Rády, 'Jste jsme: Výsledky ankyty členů JTP' [What Are We Like: Results of a JTP Membership Survey], *TOP*, Nos. 13-14 (1993), 18 - 19. (While there exist some other organisations of translators and interpreters, the *Jednota tlumočníků a překladatelů* has the most up-to-date information specifically concerning interpreting. The fact that interpreting is more prominent in JTP can also be deduced from the word order in its name.)

The prominence of English demonstrates itself not only in the frequency of English interpreting, but also in higher numbers of Czechs or Slovaks using English directly in unmediated contacts with foreigners, often also from Central and Eastern Europe.


33 For example, *TOP*, starting from No. 6 in 1991. (The situation was, in fact, similar in the late sixties, during the era of the campaign for "communism with a human face", in the aftermath of the Prague Spring 1968 - when English summaries also used to be put in Czech and Slovak publications.) The Yellow Pages have a bilingual Slovak-English section at the beginning, about sights in Bratislava and Western Slovakia; in the directory itself, the headings are given in Slovak, English and German – cf. *Zlaté stránky (obchodno-podnikateľský telefónny zoznam): Západné Slovensko a Bratislava 1989-99* [Yellow Pages (Trade and Business Telephone Directory) Western Slovakia and Bratislava 1989 - 99] (Bratislava: Mediatel, 1998).

focused attention on specifically British production\textsuperscript{35}. Slovak television has broadcast the previously unavailable \textit{Follow Me} course of English which introduces a wide range of British cultural references. Some television programmes in English are now transmitted in Slovakia in the original, sometimes with subtitles. BBC, CNN News and NBC Superchannel are broadcast on cable television with which most households in Slovakia have been equipped. More original television programmes in English are available for people with satellites, which have become quite common in Slovakia. While some editions of the Sky news used to be interpreted simultaneously into Slovak when it was broadcast on the TA3 channel, at present the news bulletins in English are shown in the original without interpreting.

In 1992 the British Council opened three resource centres in Slovakia (in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica and Košice) and started programmes of events comprising seminars, workshops, courses, exhibitions, summer or winter schools\textsuperscript{36}. In 1998 the British Council sponsored an international theatre festival in Bratislava. British Council in Slovakia organises the administration of various, previously unavailable, examinations, for example, the Cambridge English proficiency test, and publishes statistics of the results in its newsletter.

\textsuperscript{35} For example, the second British Film Festival was held in Bratislava, covering feature films, but also documentaries and animated cartoons - cf. Katka Martinková, 'Art Events', \textit{News from British Council Slovakia}, June 1996, p. 2. The Art Film Festival Trenčianske Teplice has since 1993 included British Day, which was in its first year attended by Peter Greenaway - cf. Helena Le Sage, 'Art Film Festival Trenčianske Teplice 1996', \textit{News from British Council Slovakia}, June 1996, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{36} Information about forthcoming British Council activities, reports of past events, as well as offers of scholarships or fellowships can be found in the British Council newsletter \textit{News from British Council Slovakia}, published in English and sent to subscribers free of charge. The British Council also disseminates information about teaching posts of Czech and Slovak in the departments of Slavonic Studies at British universities. According to Ester Hay, Senior Teacher of the English Language Teaching Centre in Banská Bystrica, co-operation between Britain and Slovakia has been growing - cf. 'The English Teaching Centre', \textit{News from British Council Slovakia}, December 1994, p. 4.
In 1992 a Management Resource Centre was opened at the British Council resource centre in Bratislava, running a programme of events including lectures, workshops (with distribution of free books to participants), international events for participants from Central and East European countries, especially in the area of arts management, training sessions for trainers, etc. Management issues have been an important facet of the British Council programme of co-operation. This was reflected in the opening, in 1995, of MAGIC (The Management and Information Centre) at the British Council resource centre in Bratislava. MAGIC now offers a range of services including enquiry service, lending services, CD-ROM retrieval, study area, organisation of special events, selection of British magazines and bibliographical services. It is the place where general information on the UK life and institutions, arts, media and sciences can be found. MAGIC has started receiving business book reviews on audio cassettes, which are available for loan to registered members. MAGIC thus provides opportunities for managers to gain access to previously unavailable literature in the area of business. Interpreters, preparing for a business commission, can enlarge their vocabulary by using the facilities of MAGIC or the whole British Council resource centre.

The British Council has welcomed Penguin, Cambridge and Oxford publishers at its summer school for basic-school teachers, where these publishers distributed books from their production to the participants free of charge. The Management Resource Centre (while it still existed under this name) used to receive Low Priced British Books - key British titles on management, finance, business and background English

38 Cf. MAGIC leaflet, 1996.
to be made available to selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe at thirty per cent of their cheapest standard UK paperback price⁴⁰.

Not only through the British Council, but thanks to other distribution channels as well, foreign textbooks of English are now widely available in Slovakia. Many primary and secondary schools in Slovakia teach English as a subject of their curriculum, most often using foreign-produced textbooks, for example, the _Headway_ series⁴¹. These contain ample illustrative material and mention numerous cultural references. Thus by exposure to the English culture, the Slovak learners of English can realise the existence of cultural differences, and work out the intercultural, Slovak-English dimension for themselves. The next step would be commissioning Slovak authors to produce textbooks of English which would be intercultural, comparing the English and the Slovak cultures, where the intercultural awareness would be put on a conscious level. Some materials for British Studies are being prepared, which will also help increase the intercultural awareness that Slovak learners of English will be able to acquire.

In various parts of Slovakia, bilingual secondary grammar schools (dvójazyčné gymnáziá) have been opened⁴². A bilingual English-Slovak secondary grammar school has existed in Sučany since 1991 - most of the subjects are taught in English, and English textbooks and materials are used⁴³. Through learning English language from native speakers, the students gain access to English culture and stand a better

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⁴² Some teaching English, others French.
chance of providing cultural mediation in the future if they decide to continue studying English at a university and become translators/interpreters.

Many state and private schools as well as all the universities in Slovakia (in Bratislava, Prešov, Košice, etc.) and all the teacher training colleges (in Nitra, Banská Bystrica) now use native speakers as teachers of English. Departments of Foreign Languages at Slovak universities, which cater for undergraduates and postgraduates following taught courses or doing research in a range of subjects from journalism to electrical engineering (and which function similarly to Language Centres at British universities), now also use native speakers of English for teaching English. These are often graduates of subjects other than linguistics or philology, who can provide subject knowledge input for their teaching, apart from instruction in English. This also helps broaden the perspective from teaching the English language to mediating the English culture.

In the area of studying in English subjects other than English itself, developments have also been happening, for example, the City University, focusing on management, has opened a branch in Bratislava. Studies are fully conducted in English, using English textbooks and providing consultations with English-speaking tutors, to whom all essays and assignments have to be submitted in English. First City University graduates finished their studies in 1995. Moreover, at some universities in Slovakia it is now possible to attend lectures on various subjects given in English: for example, the Medical School of Comenius University in Bratislava or

44 Some come from Great Britain, others from Australia, Canada or the United States of America. For example, in the Department of English and American Studies of Comenius University, there are at the moment six native speakers of English, three of whom are British, three American. In the 1995/96 academic year there was also one Canadian native speaker.
the Medical School in Martin in northern Slovakia provide lectures both in Slovak and in English - thus trying, on the one hand, to attract overseas English-speaking students, and, on the other, to prepare Slovak students, future medical doctors, for their potential work abroad, in English-speaking countries.

Since 1989, newspapers in English have been on sale at newsagents in Czechoslovakia - not only international titles, but also the *Prague Post*, a newspaper specifically catering for English-speaking tourists, providing both news coverage and information about cultural events, happening mostly in Prague, and including a regular vocabulary section, with basic Czech for tourists. For some time its competitor, the bimonthly *Prognosis*, used to be published as well. At present, *Prague Post* no longer brings detailed coverage on Slovakia, although it continued reporting on Slovakia for some time after Czechoslovakia was divided into two republics in 1993. In Slovakia a bimonthly *Slovak Spectator*, in English, is produced, which starting from September 1998 will be published as a weekly. Apart from that, every two weeks *Slovakia Today* appears in English and *East European Business Weekly* is also widely available. Several Slovak dailies publish advertisements in English – if the positions or the events about which they are informing are connected with the UK or the USA, but also with the international environment as such. Moreover, the daily *SME* brings a regular page in English where all the main items of news are covered, so does *trend, týždenník o hospodárstve a podnikaní (Economy and Business Weekly)*.

The flow of information about (British) English language and culture into Slovakia makes the awareness of the (British) English culture more widespread, which has
changed the starting point of Slovak learners of English - it may now be approaching the situation prevailing in Western Europe. Slovaks can learn English and find information about the (British) English culture outside the academic environment, they can travel to Britain or meet people coming from English-speaking countries and later keep in touch with them through correspondence. Apart from that, a number of young Slovak girls have been taking up positions as au pair girls in the UK, bringing knowledge of their long-term exposure to (British) English culture back to Slovakia.

The Slovak currency, koruna, has become fully convertible and in 1995 the limits on purchase of hard currency were lifted, which has provided an opportunity for Slovaks to buy foreign currency for either travel or study abroad in any amounts. Slovaks can also obtain a work permit and find a job abroad – that they have been doing so may be also evidenced from an indirect source - court translators, who translate documents to accompany various official application forms, have had more such documents to process since 1989. Studying or working in the United Kingdom often requires the applicants to get their certificate of proficiency in English, and the rising number of Slovaks taking these examinations may be another indirect indication that study or work in the UK for Slovaks are on the increase. A higher number than in the past of students at Comenius University has applied for individual study plan, during which they sometimes stay abroad, often studying at least for a short time at universities abroad. Some other students take up jobs with foreign companies in Slovakia, where they can improve their English since they have to use it on a daily basis.

45 Published by Slovak Information Agency.
After some background information on the picture of the pre-1989 Czechoslovak situation has been provided, part of which was formed by the scarcity of teaching English (and prevalence of teaching Russian) at the primary and secondary school level or in adult education in the past, the focus in the following chapter will move to the way English, among other foreign languages, was taught at universities, with special reference to interpreter training. The system of university preparation of interpreters will be demonstrated on the case of Comenius University in Bratislava which offers specific interpreting courses, as opposed to other Slovak universities, where the foreign language studies, including the English Studies, are more general, not specifically interpreter oriented.
Chapter 10 The Training of English Interpreters at Comenius University

Traditional Principles of Interpreter Training in Czechoslovakia and a Comparison with the Théorie du Sens

Translator and interpreter training is directly linked with both practice and theory. Its link with practice consists in producing new players for the intercultural mediation arena, while its connection with theory consists in the study material which Translation researchers prepare for students of translation and interpreting.

Interpreter training in Czechoslovakia in the past was largely based on Russian models. Since Western literature used to be restricted under communism, and since locally produced materials, except for some highly pragmatically oriented textbooks, handbooks or manuals, were sparse, interpreter training in Czechoslovakia was based on principles outlined in Russian texts by authors like Minyar-Beloruchev or Ghelly Chernov. The only Czech or Slovak materials for English interpreting used at Comenius University, one of the interpreter training centres in former Czechoslovakia and the main one in Slovakia, comprised a textbook on the communicative theory of

interpreting\textsuperscript{2}, a multilingual glossary of the most commonly used terms from conference procedure\textsuperscript{3}, and a collection of texts for practical exercises in consecutive interpreting\textsuperscript{4}.

The training of interpreters, in the forms in which it existed in Czechoslovakia or other communist countries, grew out of an underlying philosophy. Much of this philosophy was taken over from the Soviet model, represented, for example, by Minyar-Beloruchev or Ghelly Chernov, which was traditionally based on the following set of premises. The students of interpreting were assumed not to have mastered their foreign language(s) well enough to understand what was being said when just listening to a source text, without seeing it written. This was connected with the fact that interpreter training was carried out at the same time as instruction in foreign languages, i. e. at the undergraduate level. Although students were expected to do some individual work at home, a substantial amount of work was carried out in the classroom under the supervision of a teacher, who was supposed to know the "correct" solutions. The multiplicity of potentially usable renderings was not acknowledged, which may have followed from high Uncertainty Avoidance Index. Equivalents between any two languages were assumed to exist and the students were supposed to learn them in order to be able to use them automatically when interpreting. Monographs or papers on interpreting by Russian authors often contained, and some recent ones still do, the word *drill*\textsuperscript{5}, which was the basic method

\begin{thebibliography}{5}
\item Alojz Kenič, *Úvod do komunikačnej teórie týmocenia* [Introduction to Communicative Theory of Interpreting] (Bratislava: Univerzita Komenského, 1980).
\item Cf. Denissenko.
\end{thebibliography}
of university preparation of future interpreters, because interpreting was seen first of all as a skill.

Since both foreign language teaching and interpreter training were carried out at the same time, the Soviet materials on interpreting and interpreter training were more language-pair specific than generally applicable to all interpreting, which may also be connected with viewing interpreting as a skill, not as an activity requiring intellectual processing (of texts). For example, while from the point of view of French learners, drills to improve their aural comprehension of French numbers may be useful, and while French interpreters may benefit from being able to recognise French numbers easily after having been exposed to such systematic drills, these exercises do not contain an interpreting dimension per se, which makes them irrelevant for learners of other languages or interpreters using other languages.

The Russian model for university interpreter training was adopted also in Czechoslovakia - it was taken over together with the communist political system. Attention during the interpreter training was paid to words (receptor language words as equivalents of the source language words), to the form of a speech - as something graspable, something which could be checked. The transfer of sense was deemed suspicious by the ruling communist authorities, because not easily verifiable. This suspicion may have been connected with the all-pervasive party

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6 For example, Minyar-Beloruchev's language combination is Russian and French; Chernov's - Russian and English.
7 Described in Minyar-Beloruchev in detail.
8 About former regimes requiring word-for-word interpretation - cf. Motas, Williams and Snell-Hornby, p. 432.
censorship. Moreover, what was said sometimes made no sense at all, but just represented empty words. For many of the communist speakers/leaders, words served as a device to cover that they were actually not saying much of substance. When rendering such source texts into another language, interpreters in a way had to adhere to words in order to say anything at all - it may have been unrealistic to wait for the déclic when a sense unit is formed. The technique whereby the interpreter provided a close reproduction of the words of the source text was similar to what Lederer mentioned about the initial strategy of an interpreter before a sense unit is formed, with the only difference that in the cases with these communist speeches, such transcoding continued throughout the speech and never passed


During my seven and a half year experience as a publishing editor in Czechoslovakia under communism it became known to me that not only were books for translation and publication chosen by a closed circuit of well-screened publisher readers and during the translation process any potentially objectionable passages were expurgated, but after any book was already printed, an advance copy was sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party to be read and officially approved of for distribution. Books prohibited by the censor at this advanced stage were put in safes and never reached the market. (In such cases, the translators did not get their full fee either.)

10 Cf. the observations of a person coming from another culture - an American university lecturer: “When I taught for a year in Czechoslovakia, I was confronted with papers by students who had learned the careful art of saying nothing, and learned it well. Life under Communism had taught them to avoid committing themselves to any ideas, even Marxist ones. You never knew when even the Party line might swerve and leave you stranded. So their papers were masterpieces of vague generalities and artful equivocations: ‘In certain situations, certain events can cause certain repercussions. In such circumstances, it is always best to choose the best solution to the given problem.”’ David R. Williams, Making it or Faking it (David R. Williams, English Department, George Mason University, USA, self-published, n. d.), p. 11.


11 Once I had to resort to the simultaneous whispering mode, because the speech by my Slovak client did not lend itself to logical analysis, and if I had left the interpreting until the end of a long passage of it, I would not have been able to interpret or summarise it in English at all – there would have been no cognitive trace of its meaning preserved in my memory. By resorting to interpreting in the simultaneous whispering mode it was possible to render the source text more or less literally into English. Thus my English-speaking client may have thought that the text sounded clumsy because of the mode of interpreting, rather than because the Slovak speaker was not saying much that made sense.
through the deverbalised stage of pure, non-linguistic understanding of the sense, the message.

Chapter 4 outlined the théorie du sens and its approach to interpreter training, the present chapter has been discussing the Soviet approach, as applied in former Czechoslovakia. In the search for a training method, these two philosophies have to be considered and compared.

While part of a source text to be interpreted into another language may be transferable through equivalents, i.e. words and expressions denoting identical or similar notions, referring to identical or similar phenomena and matching across languages and cultures, which interpreters have learned during their training and automated through repeated use – following the Soviet school approach, part of it may only be rendered on the basis of its sense in a given situation and in a given context – as in the théorie du sens approach. The question remains the balance between the two approaches. Seleskovitch and the théorie du sens group emphasise cognitive processing and looking for the vouloir-dire, the intention, of the speaker. The Soviet school of interpreter training has been drilling future adepts of interpreting in inter-lingual equivalents. Since the Soviet school is based on equivalence between the source and the receptor languages, it does not consider deverbalisation during interpreting. Seleskovitch herself admits that part of the processing during interpreting does happen on the level of equivalents, without passing through the deverbalised stage. Similarly, Gile argues that if a translator or an interpreter has understood the logic of a sentence, it is sufficient to produce a
Translation of it by using terminological equivalents\textsuperscript{12}. In view of the short time available for interpreting it may seem implausible to believe that the deverbalised stage always intervenes. Some authors, among them Taida Nováková, favour using equivalents between two languages which were analysed earlier, during language acquisition\textsuperscript{13}. At that time, the deverbalised stage is more likely to happen because various types of componential or semantic analyses are carried out, in order to find a corresponding expression in the other linguistic and cultural setting. The balance between what might be referred to as the “sense approach” (of the théorie du sens school) and the “equivalents approach” (of the Soviet school) may be somewhere in between the level of the words and the level of the sentence. Spontaneous expressions similar to examples given by Seleskovitch or Lederer\textsuperscript{14} may occur mostly when complete utterances are concerned, whereas the individual components of which they are constructed may to a considerable degree be prefabricated, which is what may make them in the end automatic. Thus spontaneous expression of the interpreter in the receptor language may be constructed of smaller pre-patterned, ready-made units.

Although the tenets of the théorie du sens have not been proved and although it has been critiqued, interpreting the sense of the source speech stays in various modified representations the basis of interpreting nowadays, although it may have been given different names by various authors\textsuperscript{15}. This is caused first of all by the evanescence of

\textsuperscript{12} Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 94.
\textsuperscript{13} Cf. Nováková, Timočenie, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{14} For example, Stand clear of the door in Seleskovitch and Lederer, Interpréter pour traduire.
\textsuperscript{15} “...conference interpreters whose activity is geared not to words, but to meaning.” - cf. Thiéry, ‘True Bilingualism’, p. 150. “In training interpreters much stress is placed on the need to get away from the words used in order to extract the essence of the message.” - cf. ‘True Bilingualism’, p. 151. Donovan-Cagigos talks about “fidélité non aux mots, mais aux idées” - cf. ‘La fidélité’, p. 224. Kalina lists various
the sounds of the source text words in interpreting, as opposed to the permanence of written symbols on a page of a source text for written translation. This would speak in favour of applying a higher dose of the théorie du sens in interpreter training than of the traditional Soviet approach, which has already been happening at Comenius University, especially due to the fact that so many new topics have been interpreted for which there existed no vocabulary in Slovak.

In the first issue of TOP, the journal published by the Jednota tlumočníku a překladatele ('Union of Interpreters and Translators'), where the draft statute of the emerging new Czechoslovak organisation for interpreters and translators was published, it was stated that a professional interpreter "transfers the sense of the message of the speaker from the source language to the receptor language".

Similarly, a professional translator transfers the sense, "in the written form". These formulations were kept in the final version of the statute and its supplement, the Code of Ethics. The emphasis on the transfer of sense of the source text into the receptor text is a considerable development compared to the communist past, when interpreter training in Czechoslovakia was based on interlingual equivalents, since Czech and Slovak interpreter trainers used to study their teaching methods from exercises geared towards making sure that the trainee interpreters do "semantic processing, and not 'word processing'" - cf. 'Discourse processing', p. 257; Gérard Francois sees la transmission des idées et non des mots as the basis of interpreting, p. 8. Cf. also Larson, Meaning-Based Translation; Gile, De l'idée à l'énoncé: une expérience et son exploitation, in 'La formation', p. 13 of the paper; Gile, Basic Concepts, pp. 167, 255, and 256; or Mohammed Farghal, 'Ideational Equivalence in Translation', in de Beaugrande, Shunnaq and Heliel (eds.), Language, Discourse and Translation in the West and Middle East (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1994), pp. 55 - 63.


The Union of Interpreters and Translators was founded in 1990 in Prague as an all-Czechoslovak organisation. In 1991 it opened a secretariat in Bratislava. After the division of Czechoslovakia into two republics in 1993, the Union remained as one organisation with one secretariat in Prague, and another one in Bratislava. The journal TOP, however, is only published in Prague, with contributions in both Czech and Slovak (and occasionally in foreign languages), for all members and is also available to non-members.
handbooks written by Soviet authors on interpreting. Developments in the approach to interpreting have, however, happened in the former Soviet Union as well, as witnessed by some recent conference papers. For example, Leonora Chernyakhovskaya and Irina Zubanova in their outline of the curriculum of the new private school for translators and interpreters which they have founded in Moscow, state clearly that in interpreting it is the sense of the source text which has to be transferred to the receptor language.

In spite of the scarcity of research into interpreting in Czechoslovakia and a limited number of publications on interpreting - indicated in the latest bibliography of papers and monographs by Czech and Slovak authors on translation and interpreting, where the part devoted to translation is longer than the part devoted to interpreting - some ground-breaking work was done on the theory of Translation, especially by the Slovak scholar Anton Popovič, whose work was used in translator training in Slovakia. Although Popovič concentrated on literary translation, he made an early attempt at a classification of various translational activities, making a brief mention of interpreting. He also provided a tentative classification of metatexts, i.e. texts based

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17 TOP, No. 2 (1990), 4 - 7; Code of Ethics, p. 7.
19 Pages 9 to 106 and 107 - 120 respectively - cf. Čefíková and Hrdlička (eds.).
on other texts (like literary criticism, Translation, etc.), so the coverage of his work was more comprehensive than the individual titles of his monographs or papers might suggest, although his main emphasis did remain on literary translation.

The pivotal element of Popović's theory of Translation is the transfer of the 'invariant of meaning' from the source text to the receptor text. Some parallels may be drawn between the 'invariant of meaning' of Popović on the one hand, and the 'sense' of the *théorie du sens* by Seleskovich on the other. According to Popović, it is the 'invariant of meaning' which should be transferred from the source text to the receptor text during Translation, not the words of the source text, and that is what the *théorie du sens* school says about the transfer of 'sense'. Popović designed a whole system of classification of shifts, i.e. changes occurring while transferring the

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21 Literary translation has been traditionally a lively activity in Slovakia. 65 per cent of fiction published in Slovakia in the 1980s were translations. (This figure was mentioned during the meetings of the management of the Tatran publisher in Bratislava and the situation was similar in other Slovak publishing houses at that time.) According to Alena Morávková, translated literature at present forms majority in the market - cf. 'Kritika překladu: neuralgický bod/Criticism of Translation: a Neuralgic Point', in Hrdlička (ed.), 9x o překladu (Prague: JTP, 1995), pp. 32 - 34 (p. 33).

The Slovak Union of Writers had a section for translators - Ústredie slovenských prekladateľov ('The Centre of Slovak Translators') which used to organise regular monthly seminars for translators from all Slovakia on various translation-related topics, for example: transcription of Russian geographical names from the Cyrillic alphabet, comparative analysis of variant translations of novels by Charles Dickens, translating song lyrics, translating Scandinavian literatures, rendering Cockney in Slovak, translating children's literature, translating titles of novels, etc. The Centre of Slovak Translators also provided scholarships enabling translators to work on their translations in various writers' retreats in Slovakia. In 1983 the Centre of Slovak Translators founded the Young Translators Association, whose members used to meet together for lectures by experienced translators and theorists of Translation, and for practical workshop activities according to individual foreign languages. There existed English, French, German, Italian and Russian groups, a group for translators into minority languages (Hungarian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian) and a group dedicated to the translation of poetry. Apart from these regular educational activities, each summer, for about thirty years, the Summer School of Translation has been organised, originally in Nitra, by the Department of Literary and Intercultural Communication of the Pedagogical Faculty, where Popović was lecturing. During its first years it lasted for three weeks and contained interpreting as one of its components. In 1983 the Centre of Slovak Translators took over organising the Summer School of Translation and moved it to a new location. During several years it was held for one week, comprising two sections: literary and non-literary translation, whose lectures and practical seminars were running parallel. Some selected papers presented at the Summer Schools have been published in the *Romboid* monthly in Bratislava or *TOP* in Prague. At present, The Summer School of Translation exists as an international event held in the Writers' Retreat in Budmerice.

22 Cf., for example, Popović, *Teória*, pp. 77 - 88.
‘invariant of meaning’ from the source text into the receptor text. His method for establishing the ‘invariant of meaning’ resembles propositionalisation. However, as opposed to the théorie du sens, Popovič pays attention not only to the sense of the source texts, but also to what he sees as invariant in their form, which follows from his starting point in literary translation, where the source texts exist as written documents, while the théorie du sens works with evanescent source texts for interpreting. (Primary Information, which Gile says has to be transferred from the source text to the receptor version23, serves to designate a concept similar to Popovič’s ‘invariant of meaning’.) However, the shifts whose classification Popovič elaborated were shifts from the source language and culture24.

Interpreter Training at Comenius University in the Period 1970 to 1987

Within Translation training in Slovakia, the training of interpreters has been carried out at Comenius University in Bratislava where translator and interpreter training has been combined with the study of foreign languages and literatures, i.e. philology. There was only a brief time (1968 - 1974) when a special Translation Studies Department existed in Bratislava, which was an institute separate from Comenius University, only using some of its facilities - it formed part of the University of the 17th of November, a branch of Prague University of the 17th of November25. Except for the short existence of the University of the 17th of November, when Translation into and out of all foreign languages was taught together, at the same department, the rest of the time interpreting has been taught at the various departments of foreign

languages at Comenius University. Thus the Department of English and American Studies has had a branching system into future teacher specialisation and future translator/interpreter specialisation\textsuperscript{26}.

There, however, used to be a difference in the requirements for admission of students to these various departments\textsuperscript{27}. In the case of Russian, English and German departments, the majority of students reached advanced level by the time of their secondary school leaving examination (*maturita*), since most secondary schools in Slovakia contained foreign languages as part of their curricula, teaching always Russian, often German or English, and sometimes French. During their entrance examinations at Comenius University the applicants were tested in their language proficiency. However, the pool of potential undergraduates to study, for example, Spanish or Italian used to be smaller, and therefore also candidates with only intermediate or beginner level proficiency stood a chance of being admitted to the university. Entrance examinations required the candidates to have some awareness of basic geography and literature of the countries where the respective languages


\textsuperscript{26} Language together with instruction in translation/interpreting has also been a feature of the Department of Russian Studies, the Department of German and Nordic Studies (teaching German, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Dutch), and the Romance Languages Department (teaching French, Italian, Spanish, Romanian and Portuguese) - cf. Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, Filozofická fakulta UK, *Študijný program: Školský rok 1995/96* [Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Arts, *Handbook: 1995/96 Academic Year*] (Bratislava: STIMUL, 1995). In the 1997/98 academic year, undergraduates studying Bulgarian, Croatian, Dutch, English, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish can opt for teacher specialisation, philology specialisation or translator/interpreter specialisation, while students of Arabic and French have translation as one of the courses, and those studying Hungarian have literary translation as one course - cf. Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, Filozofická fakulta UK, *Informatórium, Školský rok 1997/98* [Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Arts, *Handbook: 1997/98 Academic Year*] (Bratislava: STIMUL, 1997. However, according to *Informatórium*, Comenius University can teach all the above languages in the translator/interpreter specialisation, since it has the appropriate accreditation. Therefore, although such specialisation for each language is not opened each year, it potentially can be.

\textsuperscript{27} All applicants for university studies in Slovakia have to take entrance examinations, administered by individual universities. A small number of students are exempt from entrance examinations, if they
were spoken, but they were supposed to have acquired this knowledge from Czech or Slovak materials, general reading, everyday television or radio programmes and they were examined in Slovak. These departments therefore mostly offered *ab initio* courses to the candidates they took on. Less clear-cut division between the teacher or translator/interpreter specialisation was therefore made in these departments than in the “major” languages (i.e. Russian, German, English) departments. However, graduates from any of these departments might seek employment as translators and interpreters, either full-time or part-time.

Apart from the different starting point between the above-mentioned groups of foreign language departments, there was a difference in the availability of course instruction material such as textbooks, reading texts, audio tapes, videos, as well as television programmes or radio broadcasts in the original, which the students could follow at home. The availability in the past was best for Russian, good for German (mostly of East German origin) and, due to the active policy of the French government, quite good for French. However, before 1989, some of the courses at the Department of English and American Studies required students to use textbooks produced in the Soviet Union - this was, for example, the case with English.

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28 The entrance examinations at Comenius University now only consist of a written test, the oral part of the examination has since 1993 been discontinued. Information about the studies at Comenius University and requirements at the entrance examinations is published annually – cf. Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave, *Informácie o štúdiu a požiadavkách na prijímacie skúšky* [Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava, *Information about the Studies and Requirements for Entrance Examinations*] (Bratislava: STIMUL, 1996) - this information is not contained in the *Studijný program* or *Informatórium*, or on the Comenius University web site.
Thus the use of non-authentic textbooks of English continued even after the secondary school.

Students of foreign languages at Comenius University in Bratislava study, as a rule, two languages, unless they study one language in combination with another subject, for example, history or physical education. Slovak language (although not Slovak literature) is an important course for students in all foreign language combinations. There are lectures and seminars on Slovak language, and it is examined in partial examinations after each semester, as well as in the comprehensive examination at the end of the second year of study. Thus its importance as a future tool for translators and interpreters is recognised.

At Comenius University, students of English who opt for the translator/interpreter specialisation follow the *Theory of Interpreting* course, largely based on the textbook by Alojz Kenič, drawing on Popovič's communicative theory of Translation, in their second year, at the end of which they take an examination. In their second year, practical translation classes start too and the students have to spend ten days on an assessed translation placement, for which they have to get their zápočet ('credit'). In 1981 a comprehensive examination in each of the students' foreign

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29 The book used was: Irina V. Arnofd, *The English Word/Leksikologija sovremennogo angliiskogo iazyka* [Lexicology of the Contemporary English Language], 2nd edn (Moscow: Vyshshaia shkola, 1973).

30 The fact that translation classes precede interpreting is in keeping with what was said during the Colloque sur l'enseignement de l'interprétation held in Paris in 1965, as reported in AIIC, *Enseignement de l'interprétation*, pp. 59 and 60: it helps train precision in students and enriches their vocabulary. (Not that the AIIC volume would have served as a direct inspiration for the curriculum planners at Comenius University.)

31 All Slovak students have to collect a prescribed number of credits at the end of each semester (there are two semesters in each academic year) and they also have to pass a prescribed number of examinations. In the case of some courses, obtaining a credit first is a condition for being admitted to the examination – cf. *Informatórium*. Some credits and examinations can be deferred for up to two semesters (cf. *Študijný program* or *Informatórium*) and some students are allowed to follow an individual plan of study for medical, family or other reasons - some take up this option while they stay abroad, in the country where their foreign language is spoken.
languages and in the Slovak language was introduced at the end of the second year of studies, as a condition for continuation of the studies, sometimes referred to as 'the small state examination' (malá štátnica).

In their third year, students start with practical exercises in consecutive interpreting, separately for each of their foreign languages. They interpret both from their foreign language into Slovak, and from Slovak into their foreign language, to prepare for the professional situation in Slovakia in which they will have to work in both directions.

Since the numbers of native English applicants for the study of Slovak in combination with another subject at British Schools of Slavonic Studies is unlikely to rise substantially in the foreseeable future, there cannot be expected to be a sufficient number of native English speakers interpreting from Slovak into English, who would accompany British business delegations coming to Slovakia, and so interpreting in Slovakia will most probably continue to be done in both directions in the future as well, and thus it has to be covered during the training32.

In professional interpreting in Slovakia, the consecutive mode occurs equally often as the simultaneous mode, and universities have to cater for this need by producing sufficient numbers of graduates trained in the consecutive mode. The frequent occurrence of the consecutive mode in Slovakia may be explained by the more frequent occurrence of interpreting as such - few visitors to Slovakia have been able to communicate directly, without interpreters, in Slovak. Moreover, due to the relative isolation of Czechoslovakia in the communist past, even those Slovaks who may be able to read texts in foreign languages may not have the confidence to speak in

32 However, some native English speakers at Jaspex, a Slovak training institution, have indicated an interest in studying not only Slovak, but also translation from Slovak into English – Adriana Strýčková, personal communication, 1998. The next step can be expected to be interpreting.
contacts with foreigners, and so during communication with people from abroad interpreters are used instead. However, on some occasions, interpreters are brought in purely for protocol reasons. Since it is impossible to set up the simultaneous equipment everywhere where interpreting is needed, the consecutive mode is resorted to more often. As far as simultaneous whispered interpreting is concerned, this mode puts a greater strain on the interpreter and only finds its best use with one or two clients, which is not a standard case in English-Slovak exchanges, where an interpreter usually works for whole groups of clients. Even if the market situation was disregarded, training in consecutive interpreting can serve as positive reinforcement, since a direct plunge into simultaneous interpreting might discourage some potentially capable candidates of interpreting.

During initial interpreting classes, the students are given short passages to interpret, either spontaneous speeches or news items, which they render relying on their working memory only. Gradually longer source texts are introduced and the trainees are instructed in note-taking techniques. In the past, students had to learn by heart the symbols for note-taking from the textbook by Kenič, which were obligatory and formed part of the examination, since individual character of note-taking was not admitted. Similarly ignored was the fact that for some interpreters it may be easier to write down words or abbreviations than make miniature drawings of the “codified”, accepted symbols. The speed with which a word can be jotted down, compared to drawing pictures, which can be time-consuming, used to be disregarded. The limited number of signs was not felt as hampering the note-taking or, more importantly, the interpreting process itself, since standardisation of note-taking seemed an important goal to be achieved during the interpreter training.
At Comenius University, much attention has been and still is paid to the linguistic correctness of the receptor versions produced by students during the consecutive interpreting sessions, which, apart from providing training in interpreting, are seen as language enhancement sessions. Interpreting is in a way viewed not only as the result of training, but also as a way of mastering the foreign language(s). This may be caused by the fact that the combination of study of a foreign language and translation/interpreting techniques makes the study predominantly language-oriented, i.e. word-oriented.33

In their third year, students at Comenius University undertake another assessed translation placement.34 In the fourth year of English Studies at Comenius University, classes in simultaneous interpreting start, which means that consecutive interpreting classes precede the simultaneous interpreting.35 The fourth year students also follow optional lectures — among others a lecture on intercultural communication or a comprehensive explanation of interpreting. In their fifth year, the students attend few

33 As was pointed out, for example, during the East European workshop at the Vienna Translation Congress in 1992, the participants of which came from Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania, Austria and Germany - cf. the report by Motas, Williams and Snell-Hornby, p. 433.

34 Specifically interpreting placements were relatively rare, although in 1982 students from the Russian and English translator/interpreter group worked for three weeks on the site of a wood-and-pulp factory in Ružomberok, interpreting for Canadian construction workers. According to Študijný program, the placements were translation/interpreting placements - cf. p. 151. According to Informatórium, the placements no longer form part of the study of English. This may be on the one hand an outcome of the situation where most of the students have tried some professional interpreting already during their studies, but on the other hand it may be a reflection of the fact that outsiders are no longer welcome in the professional world of translation and interpreting, partly for the reason of keeping confidentiality in business or other negotiations.

35 Cf. Študijný program. At the time of my studies at the Department of English and American Studies and the Department of Russian Studies of Comenius University (1979 - 1983), consecutive and simultaneous interpreting sessions used to run parallel, from the third year. At present, they run parallel in the Department of Russian Studies and the Department of German and Nordic Studies - cf. Študijný program.
lectures or seminars and can thus concentrate on individual revision for the state final examination and on researching and writing their diploma theses. Some of the material used for interpreter training is authentic - from real conferences or other professional interpreting assignments, but the choice is mostly left to individual teachers. Some of them read the source texts to be interpreted themselves, others ask a student to do it, while they listen to the renderings by the rest of the class, still others use pre-recorded tapes. Some used to take students with them while they were interpreting - to let them observe a professional situation, however, this possibility does not exist any more - clients do not allow outsiders to be present. Some trainers insist on oral source texts, others do not shy away from written texts. There have been cases where authentic conference tapes which some teachers used were in fact interpreted versions, so students during the class did "back interpreting".

At the Department of English and American Studies, all those involved in interpreter training at the moment are professional interpreters. However, in the past, the non-professional teachers who were in charge of interpreter training, used to lay

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36 The diploma thesis represents an extensive piece of work writing which takes up much of the students' time during the last year of their studies. They have a choice of topics for diploma theses with different teachers, but can also suggest their own topic if they find a member of the academic staff to supervise them. Each project is carried out by an individual student, there are no group projects. It can be written either in a foreign language, or in Slovak, in which case it has to contain a detailed summary in the foreign language. Completed diploma theses are marked by two examiners.


38 However, after the only professional interpreter left in 1981, the next professional interpreter was only employed, on a part-time basis, in 1989, followed by another one, full-time, in 1990. In contrast to
emphasis on assigning the students long lists of words and expressions, as given in English conversation manuals\(^\text{39}\), to learn by heart, which they used to examine during the subsequent interpreting sessions, often in the form of a written test. The source texts they brought into the interpreting classes were not oral speeches, but mostly written articles, with their specific lexical and syntactic style, not intended for interpreting\(^\text{40}\). These non-professional teachers did not provide the future interpreters with adequate preparation for their professional life since they did not use optimal materials and were not teaching in a way which would reflect realistically the requirements of the market. They did not encourage in their students the flexibility much needed for interpreting. That is why professional interpreters with some inclinations towards teaching or with some talent for teaching, make better interpreter trainers, as can be seen from the present day instruction at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University.

The study of two foreign languages at Comenius University used to take five years, until 1981, when it was shortened to four years, and increased again to five years in 1990. According to Informatórium for 1997/98, bakalár ('bachelor') studies (which are not relevant for translator/interpreter training) take 3 years, magister ('master') studies take 4 years for the non-diploma subject and 5 years for the diploma subject.

\(^{39}\) For example, Jaroslav Peprník, Anglický jazyk pro filology 1 [English for Philologists 1] (Prague: SPN, 1984); Jaroslav Peprník, Anglický jazyk pro filology 2 [English for Philologists 2] (Prague: SPN, 1987); Dušková, Rejiharová, Bubeníková, Mluvená angličtina pro vědecké a odborné pracovníky [Spoken English for Scientists and Specialists] (Prague: Academia, 1981); or Till Gottheinerová, Sergej Trymil, A Handbook of English Conversation (Prague: SPN, 1970).

\(^{40}\) Written texts are sometimes interpreted, especially at conferences, however, conference papers are written with the intention of communicating them to listeners, who can be speakers of other languages. So it makes sense to give students conference papers or reports to interpret (or sight translate), whereas it makes little sense to ask them to interpret newspaper articles, where a journalist may lay emphasis on unusual expression, innovative use of language, literary style.
where the students chose - at the latest by the beginning of the eighth semester - which of their (usually two) subjects will be their diploma subject. The study of Chinese and Japanese are the only subjects taught in the Faculty of Arts which take 6 years – they are officially called ‘Chinese and Intercultural Communication’ and ‘Japanese and Intercultural Communication’. At the end of their studies, students are required to pass the state final examination (štátna záverečná skúška) in each of their foreign languages, one of which can now be taken at the end of their fourth year of study, and they also have to defend their diploma thesis.

The state final examination at the end of the studies comprises (apart from various linguistic disciplines, written translation and the defence of the diploma thesis) both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting - in all the student's foreign languages and all combinations from and into Slovak, sometimes also containing sight translation, important for an interpreter's professional life in Slovakia, especially during business negotiations.

The majority of diploma theses completed at the Department of English and American Studies since its inception41 dealt with English language, literature or written translation. There have been only three that dealt with interpreting42, but any student from the translator/interpreter specialisation can work on an interpreting topic. Some of the recent diploma theses in lexicology are applicable to interpreting

41 Although Comenius University was founded in 1919, the Faculty of Arts started classes only in the 1921/22 academic year. In the 1923/24 academic year, the Seminar of Germanic Languages and Literatures was created, and its Professor Josef Baudiš inaugurated English Studies. By 1936 the Seminar for English Philology was established, with its own professor. The Department of English and American Studies has existed as a separate department since 1966 - cf. Olexa.

42 In 1998 the catalogue of diploma theses completed at the Department of English and American Studies showed a thesis in English on memory training, another in Slovak on consecutive interpreting, and a third one in English on simultaneous interpreting. (The last one was supervised by a lecturer from the Department of German and Nordic Studies, a professional interpreter.) For comparison: in the
because they are devoted to compiling various bilingual glossaries or lists of technical terms, which can serve as tools for interpreters during their preparation for interpreting commissions.

In the past, undergraduates were not able to gain experience of professional interpreting while they were studying at Comenius University - they only started interpreting after they graduated, unless they did some informal interpreting for their families or friends43. Since 1989, with the numbers of foreigners coming into the new democracy44, the amount of interpreting needed in Czechoslovakia has risen45, providing opportunities even for undergraduates to try their skills. As a result, most students of interpreting at Comenius University in the 1990s, especially with English as one of their foreign languages, have by the time of their state final examination been exposed to professional interpreting situations, where the success of the communication depended solely on them, where they could not fall back on the teacher supplying the answers and where, unlike a class situation, the speakers and listeners were not bilinguals themselves. Moreover, the Department of German and Nordic Studies, together with the Department of English and American Studies, has started organising mock conferences for the fifth year students, with the participation of non-Slovak speaking personalities from abroad, experienced freelance

Department of Russian Studies, two diploma theses on interpreting were submitted, one theoretical, the other analysing a corpus of interpreted speeches.

43 With written translation they gained some experience during their two ten day placements. Some students in 1983 also worked on individual short-story translation projects, although it was difficult for them to have their translations published with the restrictive system of registration which existed at the time. Registered translators found it easier to publish pieces of their own choice. A translator could only be registered with the Centre of Slovak Translators if he or she has published a translation, but a person was only commissioned a translation by a publisher if he or she was already registered with the Centre of Slovak Translators.


45 Cf. Dulová, p. 12.
interpreters and representatives of Translation agencies as the audience. This provides a near-authentic environment in which the students have to interpret. After 1989, Russian language and literature ceased to be a compulsory subject at basic and secondary schools in Slovakia, therefore the large numbers of Russian teachers were no longer needed. On the contrary, teachers of English started to be sought after, because many schools introduced English as a subject on their curriculum, in accordance with English gaining prominence as a foreign language in Slovakia. To address the situation, in 1990, the Department of English and American Studies of Comenius University launched a retraining programme in which former Russian teachers from all over Slovakia have been able to retrain as English teachers, following a three-year part-time postgraduate course, which has become tuition-based. The first graduates from this retraining programme have already started working as English teachers in various basic and secondary schools all over Slovakia.

At Comenius University, students of foreign languages are now predominantly interested in studying English and most combinations of two foreign languages, or of a subject plus a foreign language, contain English. However, as it transpired during

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46 In the UK, mock conferences are a regular feature at the University of Bradford.

47 In the 1995/96 Handbook, 18 combinations of a subject with English were listed within the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University, apart from that, 5 other combinations were possible with other faculties of Comenius University, for example, chemistry, biology, physical education, etc. - cf. Študijný program, pp. 11 - 14. The numbers for 1997/98 were 26 and 3 respectively - cf. Informatórium, pp. 46 - 51. Differing numbers in different academic years are connected with introducing some new combinations and phasing out some which have been less asked for in the Slovak labour market.

The number of applicants for English Studies has risen since 1989, reaching the figure of 1100 in 1992 for the 1992/93 academic year, when the Department of English and American Studies was able to take approximately 100 new students, considering the numbers of staff and the facilities available.

The number of students registered at the Department of English and American Studies of Comenius University in the 1995/96 academic year was: 100 in the first year, 100 in the second year, 120 in the third year, 140 in the fourth year and about 50 in the fifth year - those who kept English as their diploma subject. This represented a total of about 500 students, plus there were the postgraduate retraining students studying on a part-time basis.
the 1991 and 1992 interviews (oral part) of the entrance examinations, some of these applicants may not have realised what they were looking for: many of them only needed proficiency in English, for which it would have been enough for them to enrol at a private language school, which have become numerous all over Slovakia. These applicants were not interested in philology, in pursuing a teacher or a translator/interpreter career, but only needed to speak English for international communication in their future jobs.

Interpreter Training in the 1997/98 Academic Year

Since the arrangements for admitting new students and for running the courses tend to differ slightly in each academic year, the following paragraphs will describe the specific situation during the 1997/98 academic year. The entrance examinations in 1998 (for the candidates to start studying in the 1998/99 academic year) at the Department of English and American Studies of Comenius University consisted of a multiple choice test concentrating on the candidates' knowledge of grammar, they also had to write forms of irregular verbs in the correct spelling, make transformations of sentences while preserving their meaning, answer questions from English and American literature, and complete a part testing their familiarity with English and American cultural references. Examination papers were bar-coded and anonymously marked by one examiner. The marks for each part of the examination

The number of applicants for the Department of English and American Studies at Comenius University stood at 1200 in 1996 for the 1996/97 academic year, in 1997 it reached 1750 for the 1997/98 academic year, and in 1998 it decreased to 1100, but since it is now possible for Slovak secondary school leavers to apply for a place at several universities, the number might have been slightly misleading: some of the applicants might not attend the entrance examinations at Comenius University, or may not register at Comenius University even after successful entrance examinations if
were of equal weight. The longest, most extensive part of the test was the one devoted to grammar. During the entrance examinations, arrangements are made for students with visual impairment – by providing examination scripts enlarged to A3 size or an examiner reads out the questions, and the candidate's oral replies are recorded on a tape and marked on the sheet. Since most students at Comenius University enter for two subjects, they have to reach a satisfactory number of points in each to be admitted to the university. They get some points for their secondary school leaving examination, the highest if they passed it with distinctions.

The entrance examinations used to comprise also an oral part, but the high numbers of applicants for English made it impracticable to keep it – in 1992 all 20 members of the Department of English and American Studies were examining the candidates for 12 full days, including two Saturdays. At the time when the oral examination still took place, it consisted of an unstructured conversation on various everyday topics, testing the ability of candidates to react to questions and talk freely.

During the summer semester of their first year of studies, all students in the translator/interpreter specialisation (i.e. all the relevant foreign language combinations) follow the lecture course *Introduction to Translation Studies*, which takes one hour a week and finishes with an examination. In their second year they have *Theory of interpreting*, and *Theory of Non-Literary Translation* in the form of one-hour lectures in the winter semester. For an hour a week during the summer semester they attend lectures on *Theory of Literary Translation*, in which they also have to take an examination. They have a number of other, linguistic and literary, courses they had been accepted elsewhere in the meantime. For the 1998/99 academic year the Department of English and American Studies will take on 93 new first year undergraduates.
courses, not specifically connected with Translation, which will not be mentioned at this point.

Apart from the above lectures which are targetted at all students of the translator/interpreter specialisation, disregarding the specific language combination, for the students of English, their interpreting seminar starts in their second year. They have one hour of this in the winter semester and two in the summer semester. In their third year, the future English translators and interpreters have a translation seminar, and consecutive interpreting. They are trained in interpreting for one hour in the winter semester and two in the summer semester. In the summer semester of the fourth year they have translation, simultaneous interpreting, and specialised interpreting. They have two hours of simultaneous interpreting and one hour of specialised interpreting, which according to the plans of the teacher can be consecutive or simultaneous in any week or any one session. In their last, fifth year, those students who kept English as their diploma subject have two hours of simultaneous interpreting in each of the semesters. These are the specifically translation disciplines which the English translator/interpreter specialisation undergraduates have as part of the 28 hours of contact classes a week which students at Comenius University have as a rule.

There are two parts of the state final examination at the Department of English and American Studies, namely a) Theory and Practice of Translation and Interpreting, and Linguistics of English and b) Literature, History and Realia of English-speaking Areas. It can be seen that each of the two parts can further be broken down into several components for which the students get their examination questions. The
state final examination takes place on one day and is accompanied by the defence of the diploma thesis.

The translator/interpreter specialisation was first opened at Comenius University in the 1970/71 academic year, offering five combinations of foreign languages to study, of which three contained English. The first graduates of this specialisation finished their studies in 1975. The numbers studying the specialisation have been changing each year, so have the combinations of foreign languages. The longest standing combinations have been English with Russian and English with German, which opened more or less every year since 1970. By July 1998, altogether 415 students have graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation with English as one of their languages.

A number of graduates in foreign languages now go on to study diplomacy either at the Law faculty of Comenius University or at Academia Istropolitana Nova in order to become career diplomats. Since they have a thorough grounding in foreign languages, during their one or two years of postgraduate studies they gain knowledge in law and foreign relations. At Academia Istropolitana Nova, four different postgraduate study programmes are offered, English is the teaching language, the academic year is organised in three terms and the study is tuition-based.

Main Changes in Interpreter Training After 1989

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48 Cf. Informatórium, p. 222.
49 Data from the Archives of Comenius University, 1998.
In the context of producing new English translators and interpreters, it is important to see what differences there have been in the education available at present compared to what used to be provided before 1989. First of all, there is now a wider range of specialised courses offered – for example, *Legal English*, *Business English*, *British Studies*, *Intercultural Communication*, etc. Some of these are optional lectures by those members of the teaching staff who specialise in those subjects – for example, a court translator leads the course in *Legal English*. These courses are also an outlet for research of the individual members of staff. In terms of linking the university and practical professional life, since teaching is done by professionals, the link has improved substantially since 1989. More of the knowledge gained at the university is soon practically applied by the graduates when they start interpreting. Better resources for teaching are now available, not only literature produced locally. The teachers at the Department of English and American Studies of Comenius University have improved their knowledge of English language and culture above all through greater exposure to the English-speaking environment. Most of them have made repeated stays abroad at universities and participated in various summer seminars or other forms of continuing education, therefore they have been able to offer greater variety to their students who have been requiring higher standards. In interpreter training at the Department of English and American Studies of Comenius University, the emphasis has after 1989 been placed on using authentic materials. However, since recordings can no longer be made during professional interpreting events and since the interpreters are often asked to hand in any notes they may have been taking, the authentic materials are either various hand-outs or press releases or the material is authentic in the sense that the teacher knows that
this is an area which occurs often in professional practice and he or she improves the students' knowledge about it by improvising speeches along the lines of the real speeches heard. Much time has also been devoted to interpreted speeches made by the students for their colleagues, which follows the method developed at ESIT in Paris. This also recognises the fact that there is a difference in the degree of difficulty of a written, as opposed to a spoken text. In those cases where students have brought a written text into the class, they experience that rendering it can be more complicated than speeches made just on a basis of brief notes jotted down beforehand, or speeches completely improvised after the speaker has been thinking about the topic.

Generally speaking, the students who come to study at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University now have good proficiency in English, which they often gained through direct exposure to either the United Kingdom or the USA, in some cases also other English-speaking countries. However, it has to be borne in mind that some future students may only have spent time abroad working as au pair, which may make them self-confident for everyday conversation in English and add to their feeling of independence, since in some cases their pronunciation is better and they speak with greater fluency, while the level of their knowledge of grammar may not always be satisfactory. With the possibility of travel and with better availability of information in mass media and on the Internet, the cultural knowledge of future students has been better than before 1989. It is now possible for those interested to do postgraduate research for a Masters or a PhD in English and American Studies at Comenius University. Since so much of (British and American) English culture surrounds everyone in Slovakia, students are more familiar with it. In many ways
they have a better knowledge of the culture than the language, which, due to its abstract nature, may require more mental effort.

For a number of years, foreign languages used to be studied almost exclusively by women, now there are some male undergraduates in the translator/interpreter specialisation too.

The majority of students of English at Comenius University work while they study – in many cases as translators/interpreters, especially in their fifth year when they have fewer classes at the Department.

Personal Qualities of an Interpreter

Since practicing the profession of an interpreter requires knowledge, education, continuing education, but also "un talent d'artiste, d'imitateur, d'orateur, de la présence, des nerfs d'acier, et une grande résistance physique et nerveuse"50, the training of interpreters has to reflect not only the intellectual dimension, but also the personality dimension. An interpreter is most often seen as an extrovert personality, capable of coping with pressures of the job and inciting trust in the listeners by confident behaviour in crisis situations. Moreover, an interpreter has to be ready to make quick decisions and to take risks51. The need for self-confidence may have a consequence that some interpreters may be trying to create an image of themselves as being omniscient. "An interpreter who is not assertive is usually unable to convince his (sic!) audience."52 Interpreters are generally believed to be extrovert, gregarious, outgoing, which distinguishes them from the rather lonely and introvert

50 Francois, p. 9.
51 Cf. Gile, Basic Concepts, p. 112.
translators. To be a translator or an interpreter may demand differing skills and require, or pre-suppose, differing personalities, but as quite a few professionals combine translations and interpreting (although they may not be equally successful in both), the case may be that during these two distinct activities different personal characteristics gain prominence. Some personality traits needed for a future adept of interpreting are mentioned in Karla Déjean Le Féal. The research into the personality of an interpreter is often connected with aptitude testing and the effort to improve the predictive force of aptitude tests, so that the right candidates be accepted into interpreting schools and thus the existing resources be put to optimal use. However, the discussion on whether an interpreter is "born" or may be "bred" has not been closed yet. The entrance examinations in Slovakia do not contain an aptitude component since they are oriented at testing the linguistic knowledge of the candidates. The tests are the same for candidates for English teacher, philology or translator/interpreter specialisation. Later, during the studies, interpreter trainers observe the personal characteristics of individual students and encourage those who seem assertive for interpreting as a future career, while those who seem systematic but slightly less sure of themselves are recommended to orientate themselves more on translation.

So far, three aspects of interpreting have been discussed: linguistic ability of the interpreters, their awareness of the two cultures and their personality. However, due to lack of contacts in the past between Czechoslovakia and Britain, and due to the

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54 Déjean Le Féal, 'L'enseignement'.
largely linguistically based training of Czech and Slovak interpreters under communism, even interpreters may not know the precise denotation or the various connotations of cultural references which authors of source texts may use. This makes the linguistic ability and cultural awareness subject to improvement through postgraduate training, intensive refresher courses or study stays abroad with total immersion in the (British) English culture. Moreover, keeping constantly up to date with the latest developments remains the only way of internalising not only the dominant, but also the emergent and residual elements of culture, to which interpreters have to have instant access in order to carry out their task – mediating communication to the customers’ satisfaction.

Since English-Slovak interpreters will often be asked to work in the area of business and since they will benefit from a thorough understanding of its underlying concepts, the more so that sometimes their clients may be using non-native English, it is important to include an element of business preparation in the university interpreter training. While linguistic correctness remains one of the goals to be fulfilled by the university study of foreign languages with which the interpreter training in Slovakia will probably be linked for some time before specifically postgraduate courses for interpreters are developed, the interpreter training has to aim at improving the trainees’ communicative skills, since the role of an interpreter is to help achieve communication between clients who do not share the same language and culture. The language component and the intercultural component must both be incorporated into the interpreter training process.56

Retraining, as one form of postgraduate (post experience) study at Comenius University, exists in English and German Studies, but to produce future teachers, although the retraining students can attend interpreting and translation courses. However, in most cases the retraining classes are held on Fridays and Saturdays, since these people usually work in full-time jobs, therefore they do not really have the time to attend other courses.

There are some plans for postgraduate translator and interpreter training. Some of the future courses will be concentrating on translation, for example, the planned postgraduate course set up in cooperation with Strasbourg at the German Studies Department of Comenius University.

This chapter has described in detail all the undergraduate and postgraduate opportunities of studying translation and interpreting at Comenius University. Since Comenius University is only one of a number of Slovak universities, the following chapter will put the interpreter training in Slovakia in perspective, before outlining the present day interpreting market in Slovakia.
Chapter 11 The Practice of Interpreting in Slovakia in the Context of Recent Socio-Economic Changes

According to the *Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 1997* (which is published as a bilingual Slovak-English edition), there were fourteen universities in Slovakia in the 1996/97 academic year, not including the schools of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior. The number of universities in the Slovak Republic stood at fourteen already in the 1992/93 academic year, however, the number of faculties rose from 59 in the 1992/93 academic year to 69 in the 1996/97 academic year. Altogether 79,770 students studied at all of them in the 1996/97 academic year. The *Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 1997* divides them into "university faculties", "technical faculties", "faculties of economics", "faculties specialised in agriculture", and "academies of arts". It is not possible to find out, according to these tables, which Slovak universities or which of their faculties teach English Studies, however, it would be those among the 30 "university faculties". These faculties have a total of 32,536 students. Comenius University has 20,148 students in its 12 faculties, the University of Pavel Jozef Šafárik in Košice has 7,797 students in its 7 faculties, the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica has 5,425 students in its 7 faculties, and the Trnava University has 1,750 students in its 5 faculties. Faculties of the other universities do not fall under the "university faculties".

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It is mostly people from the local area who register at various regional universities in Slovakia, not to have to travel to a distant university, maybe in the capital\textsuperscript{2}. If any students want to transfer from other universities to, for example, Comenius University, they cannot do that unless they pass replacement entrance examinations\textsuperscript{3}. This follows from the differences in the strictness of entrance examinations at individual universities, since they are the responsibility of a dean of a faculty. Some students might sit the entrance examinations or also their first year examinations at a university with less stringent standards, and then transfer to a more prestigious one - from this Comenius University has protected itself.

At most Slovak universities English is taught, but only as one of the foreign languages offered to students doing other subjects, usually lasting for up to two semesters, after which the students may either be required to get a credit or sit an examination. Moreover, PhD students at any Slovak university, whatever their area of research, have to have three semesters of a foreign language, which can be English. Apart from this English as one course, there are universities which specifically teach English Studies whose graduates are to become teachers of English at various types of schools – basic or secondary.

According to statistical data of the Ústav informácií a prognóz v školstve ('Institute of Information and Forecasts in Education') for 1997\textsuperscript{4}, at several universities in Slovakia English Studies are taught. The Faculty of Arts of the Prešov University lists English and American Studies, which lasts for five years, English Studies – either three or

\textsuperscript{2} Chapter 8 explained the cultural reasons behind this.
\textsuperscript{3} Cf. Informatórium, p. 238.
five years (for 'bachelor' or 'master'), and English Studies in combination with other subjects, lasting 5 years. In 1998, 51 graduated from English and American Studies and 7 got the bachelor's degree in English Studies. At the Faculty of Humanities and Natural Sciences of the Prešov University English Studies are taught, lasting five years, and English Studies in combination, also lasting five years. In 1998 there have been 27 graduates of English Studies and 29 of English Studies in combination. The requirements for entrance examinations at the individual faculties of the Prešov University change each year, they are sent in time to secondary schools for teachers to know on what to concentrate in preparing their students.

The Faculty of Arts of the Cyril and Methodius University in Trnava teaches English Studies in combination, taking five years. Trnava University in Trnava has English Studies for future teachers at its Pedagogical Faculty. The Trnava University teaches English Studies in combination, taking five years. The Faculty of Humanities of Constantine the Philosopher of the Nitra University teaches English Studies in combination, lasting for five years, and English Studies supported by the European Union Phare programme, taking four years. There are two faculties of the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica which have English Studies: the Faculty of Arts teaches English Studies in combination, which can also be studied at The Faculty of Humanities. Some of the English Studies, however, are meant to prepare teachers for the first five years of basic schools, i.e. not even for secondary schools.

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5 Data provided by Milan Turek, dean of Pedagogical Faculty.
6 Data provided by Milan Turek, dean of Pedagogical Faculty.
Altogether 185 students graduated from the various English Studies at the above listed the Slovak universities, either as a one-subject study or in combination, in 1996 and 260 in 1997\textsuperscript{7}.

Exact information on those universities which have translator/interpreter specialisation is not shown in Ferenčičová. According to the data from the Institute of Information and Forecasts in Education, translator/interpreter specialisation is studied at the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica\textsuperscript{8}. In Prešov, the translator/interpreter specialisation in English has been offered for two years now - before introducing this specialisation, Prešov only used to have English Studies\textsuperscript{9}. Since Matej Bel University is one of the new universities and since Prešov has only had the translator/interpreter specialisation for two years, they have not yet had any graduates and so the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University still remains the chief Slovak interpreter training centre.

According to the Comenius University Internet web site, English language and literature is also taught at the Pedagogical Faculty of Comenius University either as two-subject or one-subject study, for future teachers. The one-subject study is described as "one-subject intensive study of languages supported by the Phare programme". The two-subject study of English offers combinations with Slovak, German, French, music, arts, mathematics, biology, pedagogics, or psychology. Within the "Courses of wider professional, social and cultural orientation", Theory of Translation is offered, which any Pedagogical Faculty student in any year can follow. However, the Theory of Translation does not represent a full subject of study, it is

\textsuperscript{7} Data provided by Zdenka Chovancová, Institute of Information and Forecasts in Education, 1998.
\textsuperscript{8} Data provided by Zdenka Chovancová, 1998.
\textsuperscript{9} Information provided by Eva Tandlichová, 1998.
just one course. In the 1997/98 academic year no specialised courses in interpreting were offered at this faculty, since it concentrates on training future teachers as its main task.

According to an article by Edita Gromová¹⁰, in 1995 the Nitra University of Constantine the Philosopher introduced the study of written translation, building on the fact that Anton Popovič used to be active at this university while it was still a pedagogical faculty and some of his colleagues and students are now active as teachers there. Those interested in studying translation have to have finished successfully the first two years of their university studies. All foreign languages departments are involved in the study of translation, together with the Department of Slovak. Translation is usually studied with another subject and a foreign language. However, Nitra University does not have the facilities and staff for interpreter training, although introducing such specialisation is considered for the future.

At present there are some plans to make it also possible to study interpreting at the postgraduate level at the Economic University in Bratislava within the Phare programme, where experienced teachers of English will be employed and the students will be graduates of the Economic University. There has not, however, been interest from the side of the Economic University trainers to start co-operation with Comenius University in order to share interpreter training experience, or use the traditions of Comenius University gathered during almost thirty years of systematic interpreter training. Moreover, the teachers who are to start the postgraduate interpreting courses at the Economic University are not professional interpreters.

However, introduction of postgraduate interpreter training programmes seems just a matter of time at other Slovak universities.

At the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University a UNESCO Chair in Translation Studies was inaugurated in June 1998, which is an indirect indication that the Faculty of Arts at Comenius University is considered a centre of excellence for Translation Studies in Slovakia. Through the UNESCO Chair, Comenius University will be connected with a number of translator and interpreter training institutions in several countries and will be involved in conducting research and organising international conferences.

However, the teaching at Comenius University has to be seen in the context of the practice of interpreting in Slovakia. Questions to be asked in this connection are above all whether graduates of the translator/interpreter specialisation are more sought after than other graduates with knowledge of foreign languages, whether they do better in professional translating/interpreting, whether university education is always a condition for translating/interpreting, what criteria are applied by employers, including translation and interpreting agencies, etc.

In Slovakia, the practice of dealing directly with clients without the mediation of a Translation agency has not really become widespread, which can be said to be due to several reasons. Some institutions can only make payments to legal persons, therefore they have to use official mediators for translations and interpreting, especially the latter. Moreover, calling a Translation agency, the client can be sure someone will be sent to do the job. The client thus saves time and money on repeated phone calls in case a freelance is not at home. One reason why a majority of Western European interpreters work directly with clients may be that they can be
reached more easily, since they do not have to interpret every day, because they earn enough for each individual commission. Slovak interpreters do not get pay equal to European Union interpreters, so they have to work more often to keep up their standard of living and are therefore rarely at home at the time when a client might call about another interpreting commission. Working through a Translation agency suits some freelances since on the one hand it guarantees them a sufficient amount of work, and on the other regular pay. Some agencies improve their position on the market by charging their clients only a small commission on top of the price for the translator/interpreter. Addressing a Translation agency thus combines all the advantages for the clients: increased reliability for more or less the same price, since it puts the burden of finding a professional translator or interpreter on the service mediator, the agency.

In case a client does not contact a Translation agency, he or she can refer to professional lists of translators and interpreters. Jednota tluamočníků a překladatelů (‘The Union of Interpreters and Translators’), a member of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT), Slovak Association of Translators' and Interpreters' Organisations (Asociácia prekladateľských a tímocníckych organizácií Slovenska - APTOS) and Confederation of Arts and Culture (Konfederácia umenia a kultúry - KUK), regularly publishes its lists of members. The last issue of 1997 for Slovakia contains data about 145 full members working in 32 languages, including sign language, out of which 78 are English translators/interpreters11. The number of

11 Cf. Zoznam tluamočníkov a překladatelů, riadnych členov Jednoty tluamočníkov a překladatelov (pre Slovenskú republiku)/Directory of Full Members: Edition for the Slovak Republic, (Prague/Bratislava/ Magdeburg: JTP, 1997). The list exists in electronic form as well. The current list for the Czech Republic contains over 500 members. However, the Union plans to again publish a single list for both the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, not two, since the mobility of interpreters within the
present Slovak members of the Union of Interpreters and Translators given by Johana Hasonová, the Union's Bratislava secretary, is 100. In recent years it has been oscillating between 95 and 105, because some members cancel their membership, while new ones join. The discrepancy of the number of paid-up members according to the data of the secretariat and the number of translators/interpreters listed in the booklet can be explained by the fact that some of those listed live abroad, including the Czech Republic. For any full member there was a possibility of paying an extra fee to be included in the list for the other of the former two republics of Czechoslovakia. Modern means of transport and electronic communication make mobility and flexibility of translators and interpreters possible. Some of the Czech and foreign translators and interpreters may have wanted their names included also in the Slovak booklet since they might be sought after in Slovakia because of the language(s) they know. Thus combining the two markets they manage to make their living, while just operating in one country they might not get enough commissions. Moreover, since Czechoslovakia existed as one country for years, the connection has been preserved: some Czechs live in the Slovak Republic, while some Slovaks live in the Czech Republic. It would be possible to take the home address of a member as a criterion to distinguish between Czech and Slovak translators/interpreters on the Union list, another possible criterion might be the mother tongue, which is also stated. Since the Union of Interpreters and Translators still exists as only one Czecho-Slovak organisation, this means that for Czech Republic and Slovakia exists, and since clients - with some rare exceptions - do not mind interpreting into the other of these two languages.
the numerous events whether they are organised in Czechia or in Slovakia, both Czechs and Slovaks get membership discounts.

From the Union of Interpreters and Translators list for Slovakia, 67 translators/interpreters live in Bratislava, the second largest concentration is in Prague, where 16 members live (according to the symbol for their mother tongue, some of these are Czechs, some Slovaks), then 6 in Trenčín and 5 in Žilina, while all others live in 26 different places in the Slovak and the Czech Republic, or are dispersed abroad – in 10 different countries.

Members are marked either as freelance, i.e. available for commissions at any time, or as also working in stable jobs which may prevent them from being always free for translations or interpreting. Freelances tend to have a richer experience with a wider range of topics, while translators/interpreters who also have full-time jobs may specialise in one specific area or a couple of areas. Members entering their data for the publication can enumerate any areas as their preferred ones. As a rule, freelances do not give any such specifications, since translations and interpreting are their main source of income and they cannot really specialise too narrowly in Slovakia.

Since, according to Johana Hasonová, in most cases translators and interpreters deal with specialised, often technical subjects, most of the Union members have not graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation, but come from specific technical subjects, having acquired the knowledge of a foreign language at some point in their lives. However, precise records about the type of studies the members have done is not kept at the Union and such information cannot be traced easily. To an extent it can be guessed roughly, because different universities bestow different
titles on their graduates – since the list is official, it gives the academic titles. However, there is no specific title for the translator/interpreter specialisation graduates, so it would only be possible to distinguish (and eliminate) doctors of medicine, veterinary doctors, lawyers, graduates of various branches of engineering, architects, those who studied natural sciences from the group comprising all graduates of faculties of arts where foreign languages are studied. There would still remain some undistinguished cases: first of all those who studied at two universities, one of which may have been a faculty of arts, then those who only entered an abbreviated form of their title, and finally those who did not complete the blank for "academic title" in the application form.

The Union of Interpreters and Translators provides its members with a whole range of services: it gives them discounts for educational events, for literature it sells – often dictionaries or encyclopaedias, it regularly publishes its journal TOP and distributes a newsletter, it has its own library open to members, also a collection of various typical documents in various languages which can be consulted for free, it offers discounted holidays, etc. Apart from the education fund, it has a social fund, helping its members in crises.

After 1989, most Slovak translators and interpreters joined the Union of Interpreters and Translators, most Slovak literary translators joined the Slovak Society of Literary Translators and a number of Slovak translators joined the Slovak Society of Translators of Non-Literary Texts - almost on a trade union principle. Interpreters – unlike translators - had no specialised professional organisation before 1990 of which they could be members. However, with the amount of relatively well-paid work,
many translators and interpreters lost interest in being organised\(^\text{12}\), and have been less interested in continuing professional education – since they either already have ample experience, or those who still lack it, have little time for attending courses or meetings. An additional reason for leaving the Union of Interpreters and Translators may be that the tariff fight has been won, the availability of background written material before an interpreted event has improved and better physical working conditions (for example, the size and ventilation of booths) have been achieved through the efforts of the Union of Interpreters and Translators during its initial years of existence. The fact that not every single translator/interpreter in Slovakia is organised means that the exact number of Slovak translators/interpreters cannot be established.

The list of the Union of Interpreters and Translators uses a symbol by the name of those of its members who are also registered as court translators and interpreters. Court translators translate official documents and attach their seal to them about the fidelity of the texts, while court interpreters can interpret during wedding ceremonies, at police stations or in courts. Of the English translators/interpreters, 10 are marked as court translators/interpreters. Only 3 of them live in Bratislava, one more lives on its outskirts. This may be caused both by the fact that not all court translators/interpreters are members of the Union of Interpreters and Translators, and also by the fact that translators/interpreters in the provinces need to have the certificate of a

\(^{12}\) Diabová has pointed out the low numbers of organised Czech and Slovak translators and interpreters – cf. ‘K čemu je nám dobré RCE aneb V čem může být Regionální centrum pro Evropu při Mezinárodní federaci překladatelů užitečné zemím střední a východní Evropy’ [What Good Is RCE for Us or In What Can the Regional Centre Europe of the International Federation of Translators Be Useful for Central and East European Countries], in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 77 – 79 (p. 77).
court translator/interpreter to make sure they get enough work, since court translations are a reliable source of income. The court translators/interpreters probably do little interpreting outside Bratislava.

All the Slovak court translators and interpreters are registered at regional courts. At present their number in Slovakia stands at 800, in the Bratislava region 160, “which is more than the number of members of the Union of Interpreters and Translators in the whole Slovak Republic”\(^\text{13}\). 160 out of the total number of 800 court translators and interpreters have English, however, only 30 of these are based in Bratislava\(^\text{14}\) – the rest are registered at regional courts in the eight regions of the Slovak Republic, according to the new territorial administration. The study of the translator/interpreter specialisation is not required for court work, while background in law is considered an advantage. There does not at present exist a system of training Slovak legal translators/interpreters, as happens in some countries, for example, the Netherlands, although some plans have been made in cooperation with the Faculty of Law of Comenius University\(^\text{15}\). The examinations to become a legal translator/interpreter are held two or three times a year\(^\text{16}\), the examinations are court translators/interpreters with many years of court Translation practice.

Clients looking for translators or interpreters may turn not only to the above Union of Interpreters and Translators booklet, but also to other lists. Slovenská spoločnosť prekladateľov odbornej literatúry (‘Slovak Society of Translators of Non-Literary Texts’), another professional organisation in Slovakia, some of whose members are

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\(^\text{13}\) Cf. Vladimíra Hudáková, ‘Postavenie súdneho tlmočníka na Slovensku’ [The Status of Court Interpreter in Slovakia], in Rády and Rádyová (eds.), The Third Meeting of Interpreters and Translators from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Prague: JTP, 1997), pp. 79 – 82 (p. 81).  
\(^\text{14}\) Data provided by Regional Court, Bratislava, 1998.  
\(^\text{15}\) Cf. Hudáková, ‘Postavenie’, pp. 81 and 82.
interpreters, although that word does not appear in its title, publishes a list to which potential clients can refer. In 1997 the Slovak Society of Translators of Non-Literary Texts had 479 members working with 27 mostly European, but also some Asian languages, out of which 97 had English, 90 Russian, 84 German, 76 Czech, while all the other languages were represented by fewer than 32 translators. The reason for the number of English translators of non-literary texts being almost equalled by Russian and Czech translators has to be explained. Many translators who have Russian as one of their languages state it as such although they may not be using it actively since there may not be such a high demand for it as there used to be before 1989. Moreover, a number of them are older people, unwilling or unable to retrain for languages more sought after in Slovakia. The emergence of a high number of Czech translators is linked to the division of Czechoslovakia into two countries, which brought with it especially the need for translating official documents. Moreover, at present, products sold in the Slovak Republic bear bilingual, if not multilingual markings, so there have to be translators providing the required versions for the industries. Technical standards in various areas, which are usually very specific, have had to be provided in Slovak versions for the new Slovak Republic too.

Membership in the Slovak Society of Translators of Non-Literary Texts is voluntary and does not give advantages to members other than information about occasional educational events. The study of the translator/interpreter specialisation is not a condition for membership.

In 1997, Slovenská spoločnosť prekladateľov umeleckej literatúry ("The Slovak Society of Literary Translators") had 674 members working with 42 living and dead languages. Of these languages, five reached the highest figures: English 117, Russian 112, German 79, French 72, and Czech 5818. For some languages, just one translator is given. Many of the members have already been active in translation for years. The number of Czech translators of fiction is not as high as that of Czech translators of non-literary texts who are members of the above mentioned Slovak Society of Translators of Non-Literary Texts, since only few literary oeuvres are translated between Czech and Slovak. Similarly to the Slovak Society of Translators of Non-Literary Texts, the study of the translator/interpreter specialisation at a university is not a condition for membership in the Slovak Society of Literary Translators, since it is not a condition for practising the profession of translator/interpreter in Slovakia.

Sometimes clients look for translators/interpreters by contacting the departments of foreign languages at universities or they reach for a trade telephone directory. In the latest issue of Yellow Pages for Western Slovakia and Bratislava, seven and a half columns, i.e. almost two full pages, are listed under the heading Translation and Interpreting - individuals as well as agencies plus companies providing technical equipment for interpreting19. This is one of the three directories which cover the whole territory of Slovakia, the other two being for Central and Eastern Slovakia respectively. In the volume for Western Slovakia and Bratislava, 106

18 Cf. Zoznam prekladateľov umeleckej literatúry s výberovou bibliografinou preložených diel [List of Literary Translators with a Select Bibliography of Translated Work] (Bratislava: APTOS, 1997).
translators/interpreters are given, 16 agencies and 2 technical companies. The addresses are not only from Western Slovakia, but also from Central and Eastern Slovakia. While the individual translators/interpreters come from various parts of Slovakia, of all the agencies, only 2 are based outside Bratislava. This might be caused by an insufficient amount of work outside Bratislava - an agency might not make large enough profits on a regular basis. And this explanation may be supported by the fact that provincial translators and interpreters feel the need to advertise their services widely in order to get enough commissions and that may be the reason why they put their names also in the directory for another region of Slovakia. In the Yellow Pages, those translators/interpreters who are registered as court translators/interpreters, clearly state that, thus again boosting their chances to get a regular supply of work. For registering as a self-employed translator/interpreter in Slovakia, either a university graduation diploma is required by the local authority issuing the self-employment certificate, but the rules do not specify whether it has to be from the translator/interpreter specialisation or just a foreign language study. Another possibility is a certificate about a pass in a state final examination for the given language – these are issued by foreign language departments of universities or by language schools. Such state final examination is a linguistic examination, without any link to translation or interpreting.

Some international organisations which opened branches in Slovakia are only allowed by their head offices abroad to use translators/interpreters who are on their permanent lists. An example may be the American International Health Alliance, which employs about twenty translators/interpreters on an irregular basis and puts new people on its list if they have good translator and interpreter credentials. These
are only informally checked - discussion about them forms part of the interview. Similarly, Andersen Consulting uses translators/interpreters who are its part-timers from the ranks of freelances - it requires them to file a curriculum vitae. However, a number of foreign branches employ staff translators/interpreters. Some do it on a project basis - employing staff translators/interpreters during the running of projects, for example, at Všeobecná úverová banka ('General Credit Bank'), downsizing its translation/interpreting staff after the projects have been accomplished. In some cases the quality of staff performance, as opposed to that of random novices in the area at issue is recognised to the extent that more new staff interpreters are to be hired, one such case may be, for example, Univerzálna banková poisťovňa ('Universal Bank Insurance Company').

From the above it would follow that although Comenius University has been the main university interpreter training centre in Slovakia, not all interpreters who have been or who start working in the Slovak market have graduated from it. To get a clearer picture, a questionnaire in Slovak has been distributed to six largest agencies\(^\text{20}\) which mediate translation and interpreting in Bratislava, which has the largest number of interpreted events happening. For events taking place outside Bratislava, interpreters from the capital are often commissioned to work, and the comment of some clients from the regions has been that the Bratislava interpreters are better quality than local interpreters\(^\text{21}\). One explanation could be that they have more interpreting experience, get greater exposure to native speakers, have easier access

\(^{20}\) The questionnaire was presented to VKM, personally, on the 19 June 1998 and to all the remaining agencies, also personally, on 26 June 1998. They all took some time before returning the completed questionnaire and all of them commented on the individual questions both at the time of getting the questionnaire and at the time of giving it up.

\(^{21}\) Andrej Kmet, owner of Lexika, personal communication, 1998.
to resource centres and may have better television and radio coverage by various English channels. The Union of Interpreters and Translators has members in various parts of Slovakia, with the largest number concentrated in Bratislava or near it, within commuting distance. It can, however, be supposed that there are many more non-affiliated interpreters working in Bratislava, since the province translators/interpreters tend to remain organised, to have an argument when communicating with clients about the fees they charge – they can refer to the Union of Interpreters and Translators tariff tables published each year. While none of the Slovak Translation agencies are interested in the individual translator/interpreter membership in the Union of Interpreters and Translators, some similarly use the Union tables when communicating with clients about the fees they invoice them.

The questionnaire was simple, not to deter any of the agencies and not to make an impression of trying to elicit commercially sensitive information. It consisted of twelve questions in five cases - its first version contained only 10 questions, but it turned out they had to be expanded. The staff of the agencies addressed was instructed to either reply by providing exact numbers or percentages, or to feel free to comment – either on the questionnaire itself or on a separate sheet. They were also instructed to skip any questions they might find uncomfortable. This was meant to ensure at least some answers, otherwise the questionnaire as a whole might be rejected. In all the cases the agencies spent some time commenting on the questions and elaborating on the translation and interpreting market in Slovakia. Some questions concerned Translation, others specifically asked about either translation or interpreting, with the main emphasis on the questions connected with interpreting.
KPT Heuréka is an agency situated in the very centre of the city, where it is easily found even by random customers. It mediates translation and interpreting services, choosing from 110 freelances on its lists. All of its translators/interpreters have university education. 50 per cent of them have English as one of their languages\textsuperscript{22}. 40 per cent of them studied English at the university. About 80 per cent graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation at the university. The owner was unable to provide any data about the number of new recruits each year. The requirements of KPT Heuréka for new translators and interpreters differ – in case of translators, knowledge of a foreign language plus professional knowledge of a subject is required. In the case of interpreters – knowledge of language is required plus practice. More of the newly recruited freelances tend to be graduates of the translator/interpreter speciality. However, in this particular agency, English is not the most frequent language of the new recruits. Similarly, English no longer is the language most often requested by clients – neither for translations, nor for interpreting. In the group of most frequently required languages it keeps level with German, Russian, then come Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, Serbian, Croatian and Swedish.

The questionnaire did not consider those present translators and interpreters who did their university studies abroad, which became a possibility after the changes in 1989. However, about 25 per cent of the freelances working through KPT Heuréka studied abroad, usually a specialisation different from foreign languages. Although the free mobility of people makes study abroad possible, since there still does not exist free

\textsuperscript{22} The question may have been worded so as to imply that all Slovak translators/interpreters use two foreign languages, which does not have to be true - some only have one foreign language.
mobility of employment, even though some Slovaks graduated from universities abroad, they cannot find jobs abroad, but have to return to Slovakia. Working in the profession which they studied might earn them a relatively low salary compared to translators'interpreters' fees, so they often opt for freelancing, using their foreign languages, plus offering their professional knowledge of a subject.

KPT Heuréka has noticed that a person who studied translation and interpreting is often asked for more in cases of interpreting, except for highly specialised subjects, where the main emphasis is on the precision of the terminology. If an interpreter did not get the technical terms right, clients might see no reason for his or her presence. Specialists seem to be more tolerant of stylistically clumsy sentences which people with professional backgrounds can produce, while rendering the message correctly.

The owner of KPT Heuréka agency, who also works as a translator and interpreter, comes from a technical background herself - she studied nuclear physics. She is convinced that it is no longer enough for a graduate of the translator/interpreter specialisation to have English, but considers it important to offer an exotic language - she specifically mentioned Japanese and Korean. According to her, this is connected with more intense contacts with the Asian countries, where direct interpreting without the mediation of English seems to be the unique selling proposition for a novice, since in the Slovak market, which at the moment she sees as saturated with experienced interpreters, any new interpreters could not make their living on just new clients, but they have to win over some clients from other, already established, interpreters23. The owner also considers it more feasible to embark on

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23 Danica Seleskovitch also says that the most important combinations for interpreting in the future will contain Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Arabic - cf. 'Un interprète médiocre est inutile', p.26.
studies of a new, distant foreign language at the university, since exposure to a
country where the language is spoken she sees as inevitable and it can be
organised in the form of student or staff exchange, while it becomes impossible to
arrange for people already working. She also commented that clients do not take into
account that someone may be a beginner, they want the work done perfectly.

Another agency, Lexika, which offers its services to clients non-stop, 24 hours a day,
seven days a week, works with 30 translators and 40 interpreters. 20 of them have
English as one of their languages. All of the translators and interpreters have a
university education. The owner of the agency said that according to his experience
from the past, people without university education have no social feeling, that is why
they are no longer put on the Lexika lists. 12 of the translators and interpreters
studied English at the university. 20 translators and interpreters graduated from the
translator/interpreter specialisation, which means that it was also studied in
connection with some foreign languages other than English. About two or three new
translators and interpreters are recruited each year. The requirements concern
mainly technical abilities and equipment, which is more of an issue for translators,
since if someone only wants to do interpreting for Lexika, they do not need E-mail,
computer or Microsoft application products. No special conditions were mentioned
for new interpreters. This agency does not set any examination texts for new recruits,
it gives them commissions straight away and judges them according to the reaction
of the clients. The new recruits are more often graduates from the
translator/interpreter specialisation. English is the most frequent language of the new
recruits. The languages currently most often required for interpreting are English,
German, Russian and French, while for translations English, German, Russian,
Hungarian and Polish are asked for most frequently, which puts English in a prominent position among the languages needed. However, it is the feeling of the owner of this agency that people who studied subjects other than English and who stayed abroad for long periods of time make the best interpreters.

*PT servis* agency uses the services of 150 translators and interpreters, of which 50 per cent have English as one of their languages. 30 per cent of the total number of their freelances have a university education. The agency does not keep records on the type of studies people have done, so they do not know who studied English or who graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation. They get 20 new recruits each year. Their requirement is practice of the profession. The new ones have not graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation more often than those who have already been working for *PT servis*. The new recruits most often offer English. The languages most frequently demanded both for interpreting and translation by clients of this agency are English and German. People who studied other subjects make, in the opinion of this agency, better interpreters. During the discussion, the agency staff mentioned that interpreters need stamina which some translator/interpreter specialisation graduates lack – the agency has recently had a case when such an interpreter collapsed after an hour’s interpreting. The agency believes that training in physical and psychological endurance should form part of the studies in the translator/interpreter specialisation.

*VKM*, an agency which was formed by the staff of the former monopoly organisation *Videopres*, has 2100 translators/interpreters on its database, but only works with part
of them actively\textsuperscript{24}. The staff, being too busy with orders for translation and interpreting, found it unfeasible to take the time for checking all the names on the database in order to eliminate those people who had not been contacted for some years or who stopped translating and interpreting. About 980 of the total number of freelances on the database have English as one of their foreign languages - the staff found this number by counting the number of screenfulls while scrolling through the English section of the database. The agency thinks that about 80 per cent of its freelances have university education, however, it has no data on who studied English at the university, or who graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation. The agency is approached by a number of people, from whom it choses about 20 new freelances each year to work with. Since no records of the education background form part of the database, \textit{VKM} does not know whether the new recruits studied the translator/interpreter specialisation. English is the most frequent language that the new recruits offer. English is also the most often required language for both translations and interpreting.

At present, new translators/interpreters get on the agency's database by providing a translation of a text of their own choice, which is subsequently read by a professional translator with many years of experience, often with teaching experience as well, who is obliged by contract to submit a written report to \textit{VKM}\textsuperscript{25}. For interpreting, candidates are examined by a professional interpreter who is in a contractual relation

\textsuperscript{24} This agency, which was the first one to be given the questionnaire since it is the largest in Bratislava, was replying to ten questions only – cf. Annex No. 5. However, from the interview at \textit{VKM} when presenting the questionnaire it became clear that two more questions were appropriate and so they were added. (What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters? Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?)
to the agency. Usually the candidates for interpreting for VKM are people who have already been working for the agency for some time as translators. It is not a condition to have studied the translator/interpreter specialisation. When filling in the application form, candidates can list which subjects they would like to work in – so subject knowledge can be an advantage.

*Bratislavská informačná služba* ('Bratislava Information Service') which provides tourist information mostly about Bratislava, but also about other parts of Slovakia and which trains and provides guides to tourists speaking various languages, also has a department for translations and interpreting. 147 translators and interpreters are contacted for work through BIS, 41 of these have English as one of their languages. 130 of the whole number studied at a university. 41 of these studied English at the university – so all those who use English studied it at a university. Of these, 20 studied the translator/interpreter specialisation. Each year, BIS takes on 25 new translators/interpreters. They require the applicants to have practiced a subject and to have several years of experience in translation and interpreting. The new recruits are not graduates of the translator/interpreter specialisation more often. English is not the most frequent language of the new recruits. However, the language most often needed for both translation and interpreting is English. BIS has the best experience with those interpreters who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation. This may be connected with the usual areas in which translations and interpreting are required at BIS – culture, history, arts, and in this sense the perception of BIS seems the same as agencies who prefer technicians and subject

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25 Since VKM only replied to ten questions, the information contained in this paragraph was learned during the subsequent interview, when collecting the completed questionnaire.
specialists, since those may be commissioning more specialised translations and interpreting.

*Simulta*, the secretariat of interpreters and translators, which has contracts for work for the Centre of the Slovak Government, the Office of the President of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, providing high-level translations and interpreting, cooperates with 35 translators/interpreters, out of whom 25 have English. All have a university education. The selection for full-time staff was done in 1992, at the time of establishing this limited liability company, on a personal basis. For English, *Simulta* has four permanent translators/interpreters. 16 of the permanent staff and freelances studied English at a university, 13 graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation, some with English, some with other combinations of languages. New translators are given a test translation of a text chosen by Simulta and assessed by its permanent staff, who write a brief report. Although the study of the translator/interpreter specialisation is not a condition for cooperation with Simulta, since its permanent English-speaking staff all graduated from this specialisation, the secretariat has been maintaining close links with various departments of foreign languages at Comenius University and has been providing support for university interpreter training activities as well as for the European Union professional examination. The language most frequently needed for translations and interpreting is English – for other languages (German, French, Italian, Russian) *Simulta* has a much lower number of permanent staff and freelances.

Since *Simulta* gets a regular supply of interpreting, many of its interpreters do not do any written translations, while there are two freelances who only do written translations into English and do not engage in any interpreting. With written
translations Simulta only commissions translations into English to 10 of its translators/interpreters, while all can work from English into Slovak.

*KPT Heuréka, Lexika, PT servis, VKM and Simulta* usually turn to translators/interpreters with some experience - most of these interpreters had worked for Videopres, the only pre-1989 agency, where they passed the professional examination. The written part of the examination, which was usually held once a year, enabled a successful candidate to start working as a translator. In order to work as interpreters, applicants had to attend a week-end session during which their consecutive and simultaneous skills were tested by experienced professional interpreters. Candidates could pass for usually one but sometimes two languages, either only for the consecutive mode, or also for simultaneous. Examinations were open next year for the previous year's unsuccessful candidates for the simultaneous mode and also for those interpreters who wanted to add a new language to the ones they had already worked with.

Since the uniform system of professional examinations has been discontinued after 1989, at present it is left to the discretion of a Translation agency whether they send a person with no simultaneous experience to work in a booth and at what point they decide to do that. The question of the progression from the consecutive to the simultaneous mode was not addressed in the questionnaire, however, beginners in most Slovak Translation agencies usually get consecutive commissions for some time before they are given a simultaneous assignment.

Some Slovak translators/interpreters work for several agencies, or with agencies and the secretariat *Simulta*, so the numbers of translators and interpreters which the individual agencies report to be collaborating with may to an extent overlap.
In some institutions in Slovakia, any new staff taken on for whatever position have to have English as their foreign language, which may in the long run eliminate the need for interpreting. However, as has been pointed out by Francois, the advantage of interpreters is twofold – they are needed for protocol reasons, but also because of the cultural knowledge they possess. In most cases the English-speaking Slovak members of staff are familiar with specialised technical terms in their area, but they often have less knowledge of polite formulations and their grammar can be poor. In fact, already today situations occur, where the Slovak delegation to the negotiations is mixed, and some members speak to their foreign partners directly in English. For the sake of the other Slovaks, an interpreter may have to reproduce in Slovak what has been said by a Slovak person in English. This may entail some correction from such a bilingual speaker. Sometimes, for lack of time, an interpreter is forced to provide only the information minimum to the other Slovaks, if the person directly using English has started a quick, dynamic exchange with the English partner. Similarly, there may occur situations where a Slovak interpreter interprets back into English a speech by an English speaker, maybe a diplomat, who for reasons of politeness spoke in Slovak. Since the English audience may be mixed, in the sense that not all of them can follow speeches in Slovak, even simple ones, some interpreting into English becomes inevitable. Such exposed situations put greater pressure on the interpreters, coupled with terminologisation of most areas where interpreting is required, more difficult topics, and pro domo texts becoming the order of the day for Slovak interpreters.

*Cf. Francois, p. 13.*
The audience of interpreting has been changing and a number of clients in the capital of Slovakia are at least partly conversant in English, which, especially in cases of consecutive interpreting, may make them relatively informed listeners, capable of checking on the exactness of the interpreting. Some clients may understand all that has been said but they may wait for the full interpreting in order to win time before they have to answer. The role of a Slovak interpreter as a scapegoat has thus also become more significant than in the past.

Not only have interpreters in Slovakia been working for clients whose characteristics have changed since 1989, but also the types of events organised and topics discussed have undergone substantial development. Much more technical work has become predominant. New topics have firmly established themselves on the interpreting scene, including business, banking, finance, economics, while much less proportion falls on topics connected with culture or arts. Legal topics, dominant in written translation, have also become relevant for interpreting. There have been more translations from Slovak into foreign languages, so new areas are covered in translations and interpreting. Information about most events happening on the domestic political stage is translated for countries abroad and provided as press releases. This can generate interest, for example, on the part of foreign journalists, who then come to Slovakia and use the services of interpreters.

In spite of Slovakia only being included in the second wave for accession to the European Union, interpreters have had to be able to cope with the vocabulary of the European Union, for example, the approximation of law. In this connection,

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27 This is in a way parallel to the prevailing work in the bodies of the European Union, as mentioned during the Terminological Tools for Interpreters workshop held in Brussels in October 1997.
challenges are represented by differing legal concepts. More political topics have been interpreted and the direction of information is often from Slovak into foreign languages, mainly English.

Major interpreted events, multilingual and stretching over several days, have become more or less a thing of the past in Slovakia. Events tend to be smaller in scale and cover a lower number of languages, however, English still occurs frequently. In an increasing number of cases, however, it is non-native English with its added difficulty of accented pronunciation, incorrect lexical use, unusual syntax and deep logic derived from the speaker's original language and culture. Such source texts may represent more of a strain on the English-Slovak interpreter. There are fewer events in Slovakia with several booths of simultaneous interpreting teams. This can sometimes make it more difficult to negotiate realistic prices for the work so demanding on the endurance of an interpreter. Sometimes a single interpreter is engaged, which saves the institution or company ordering the interpreting services some money, but may impair the quality through exposing the interpreter to worse wear and tear.

Interpreting in Slovakia has become much more closely linked with the current political development in the country, so that without following all the news in great detail, an interpreter risks facing situations where imprecisions may result. This also has to do with the interpreter entering the process at a stage when relations between the counterparts have been going on for some time and where other interpreters may have worked for the same clients before. The knowledge of cultural references becomes the key non-linguistic knowledge facilitating the task of the interpreter. Proper names, which are transferred from the source text to the receptor text instead
of being subjected to logical analysis, as the rest of the text, have come more to the forefront. These developments add another argument for applying the théorie du sens for interpreter training, since it has always emphasised the need for following the news, which used to be less relevant in Slovakia in the past. Exact numbers, in connection with business deals, have made an invasion into source texts and they are an additional strain on the interpreter.

Another feature is the explosive growth of the Slovak vocabulary connected with new areas. This has led to an influx of loan words, mostly from English, and has had profound influence on Slovak syntax. Interpreters have to keep on the pulse of the day and speak the language of their clients who have a large pool of interpreters to choose from in case they feel dissatisfied with a particular person.

Slovak translators have been creating a tradition in ways of rendering some cultural references specific for Slovakia, which can be followed by interpreters, the more so that there are some organisations which use native speakers of English as checkers of the final texts and so the variants they suggest may display a high degree of reliability. Translation and interpreting have become much more interlinked in Slovakia than they used to be in the past – by translating it is possible to build up one's vocabulary for future interpreting commissions. Moreover, written materials accompany interpreted events to a much greater extent than used to happen in the past, where few, if any, background materials used to be available to interpreters. More preparation has been going into meetings than used to be possible before 1989. More is translated about the economic and political situation in Slovakia which is also the subject of much interpreting. Typical for recent interpreting in Slovakia has

28 With the stipulations enumerated in Chapter 4.
become the considerable extent of what could be referred to as terminologisation, i.e. high measure of use of technical terms in discourse to be interpreted. Such prevalence of multi-word terms makes preparation for interpreters more demanding. A growing number of specialists, having been exposed to literature about their subject in English, require precision in rendering such complex terms. If a discourse is made up for the most part of multi-word technical terms, it becomes more difficult for an interpreter relatively unfamilair with the topic to discern the sense of what is being said and express it either by using corresponding terms in the receptor language or by resorting to self-explanatory paraphrase.

Slovak interpreters have had to think about the practical side of doing business, too. They have had to become self-employed, have had to study business law, get to grips with invoicing, grasp accounting and tax rules. In some cases this has led to pooling of resources, to establishment of limited liability companies, joint stock companies or partnerships of translators/interpreters.

Another characteristic of the environment in which Slovak interpreters operate has been the shift from long-term to short-term planning, since frequent cancellations of events happen, while flexibility has become crucial for a freelance – commissions can be announced to an interpreter at very short notice.

Since 1989, the environment in Slovakia has been more demanding and challenging on interpreters, however, it has also been more stimulating. This chapter has discussed the changes directly concerning the working conditions of Slovak translators/interpreters which have accompanied the socio-economic development in Slovakia during the last nine years. Its aim has been to complete the picture which the dissertation has been drawing of Slovak interpreters.
Conclusions

The decision of an interpreter about a strategy to be applied to solve problems with cultural references in source texts is the outcome of the situation in which he or she works. When making decisions about the approach to cultural references in source texts, an interpreter has to weigh his or her priorities: in some situations, speed may be crucial, so little time can be spent on dealing at length specifically with cultural references, and they have to be mediated to the receptor audience in a brief manner. Speed will be a prominent consideration in most cases, since interpreting unfolds under constant time pressure. Sometimes the completeness of the rendering becomes more prominent than concentration on essentials. In business environment, the rendering of numbers and proper names may be crucial, while some specific cultural references may be almost negligible, unless the cultural references are themselves represented by proper names, when they may become more central in the interpreting process under the circumstances. On the other hand, any specifically business references must be dealt with since they are important in business discourse. In the specialised field of business in the Slovak context, much remains relatively new to Slovak audiences. In deciding about strategies to approach cultural references, the choice may depend on the text type: in business environment the source text style can be similar to political speeches, where the speakers may be trying to remain vague, not to commit themselves. Applying non-committal style in the

\[1\text{ Cf. P. Moser.}\]
receptor version may therefore be a priority for the interpreter, taking up most of his or her resources.

It has been demonstrated that Slovak and (British) English cultures differ considerably and that cultural references are numerous, which makes intercultural mediation vital. The question therefore is the form of intercultural mediation that an interpreter is able to carry out in the circumstances. The basic groups of strategies at an interpreter's disposal include what may be, broadly speaking, designated as substitution, adaptation or explanation. There can, however, be no one definite answer how to interpret explicit, hinted at or implied source text cultural references, since there operates a case-by-case approach. This is due to the specific conditions under which an interpreter works, to the role a specific cultural reference may be meant to play in the source text and the prominence of other elements in texts typical for the business environment. The interpreter's solutions cannot be uniform even for one speaker and within one source text, because different cultural references may be mentioned, alluded to or implied in source texts and they may play varying roles.

Cultural references can represent either primary or secondary information - intercultural mediation becomes more crucial in case of a cultural reference comprising primary information. Since framing information (a type of secondary information) serves as a guide and facilitator to interpret correctly the message, it only needs to be rendered to the extent to which the source text message would not be communicated without it, because the interpreter has to aim at communication efficiency. Cultural references may also be secondary information in the sense of linguistically induced information, for example, in some cases of idioms, proverbs, plays on words, etc. They may be the sign of personal style of the source text author,
in which case more attention may have to be paid to them, especially in a prominent personality. The starting point for an interpreter is to understand a cultural reference explicitly mentioned, hinted at in the source text or implied in the source text cultural context and its role within the source text. Some conclusions which the théorie du sens has drawn about interpreting in general can be applied to the particular problem of rendering cultural references: the interpreter has to understand and convey "the intellectual and emotional content" of the reference. The théorie du sens can be applied to dealing with cultural references in source texts, since these are problematic passages, which cannot be processed routinely. If the interpreters followed the "equivalents approach" when processing cultural references, i.e. if they replaced a source text cultural reference by a receptor culture cultural reference (for example, if they rendered the Slovak maturita as 'A-levels') they might bring the text too close to the receptor culture. If, however, the interpreters are led by the sense, they can render cultural references by a generic term or a neutral explanation. An interpreter may opt for a reduction of a specific cultural reference from the source text to a common, neutral, generic level - an example of which may be 'cow state', the main idea of which is an expression of contempt for a backward area and that can be expressed in any culture. Another example may be interpreting club colours as a 'reward for active work or successful representation in a sports club', if the time allows such an extensive rendering, otherwise using a briefer 'sports award'.

3 One of the Slovak ministers used to frequently pepper his speeches with idioms containing specifically Slovak cultural references, often connected with rural life, in order to remain vague. If they had not been rendered in the receptor language, there would hardly have been anything left to interpret.
similar solution has been suggested in the case of rendering *rodné číslo* as ‘birth code number’. However, using a neutral term or a receptor culture cultural reference to render a source text cultural reference may depend on the degree of specificity of the conversation in which it was used: rendering *maturita* as ‘secondary school leaving examination’ or as ‘A-levels’ might fit some contexts, but in the context of comparison of the educational systems in Britain and Slovakia it may be insufficiently precise, because there the cultural reference plays a more central role and more of its facets can be expected to be discussed in detail, so any misinformation, due to either too general rendering or one too specific for the receptor culture, has to be avoided. A solution in the form of a foreign quote accompanied by an explanation of the background might be preferable in such specialised contexts.

In most cases interpreters can apply solutions from written translation only as hints, they cannot always take them on board fully, since the conditions under which they work are specific. Rakšányiová believes that a translation should create an illusion that there is no barrier, which can be achieved by solving linguistic and sociocultural problems. In written translations, the translators have the option of adding notes or commentaries to the text, i.e. translators make themselves visible, or they make any added explanations blend invisibly with the rest of the text, which is more often done in the translation of fiction. By adding explanations of cultural references, these are made less of a presumed knowledge, they become exoticised. Explanations in written translations may come in the form of notes or commentaries, which may be felt by the readers as disruptive, emphasising the interference by the translator.

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7 Cf. the above mentioned AA example.
Notes also serve as a constant reminder to readers that a given cultural reference is something foreign and thus put an obstacle to the process of receptor audience identification with the text. Parallel to notes in written translations would be explanations added by the interpreter.

On the other hand, leaving a source text cultural reference standing alone, in its original, source text version in the receptor text, not explaining anything about it might result in its impact getting lost on the receptor cultural community. Moreover, in Slovak it may be difficult to incorporate a foreign word into the receptor text in an inflected language, although it has been done, for example, in the case of the Tower of London, referred to as 'Tower' in Slovak. However, if the decipherment of a cultural reference is left to the listeners, sometimes they can work its meaning out, especially as more facts about the source culture become known to them through literature in translation or through media.

The strategy of using local cultural references from the receptor culture may also be fraught with problems, since everything, the very substance of the source text, would have to be changed, otherwise incongruity of local colour might be created.

It has to be kept in mind that some strategies may reinforce prejudices and stereotypes which members of one cultural community may have about members of another community. Any decisions by the interpreter therefore have to be made on a case-by-case basis. Supplying the listeners with sufficient information becomes crucial. If by ignoring a cultural reference, leaving it uncomprehended in a given situation by a given audience, the interpreter might cause a potential threat to communication, he or she has to either add explanations or deal with the cultural

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8 An analogue with dramatic texts would be putting explanations in the programme booklet.

reference in another way to bring it closer to the receptor audience. Intercultural mediation becomes crucial when otherwise negative image of a person or an institution would be formed. If, on the other hand, the resulting text would be overburdened with redundant information, then explanations by the interpreter are not to be attempted, but shorter, more succinct forms of intercultural mediation have to be implemented. This is because such briefer methods, more to the point, may improve the efficiency of getting the source text message across during interpreting.

If an explanation of a cultural reference cannot be provided within the given situation and time framework, cultural briefing before the interpreted event or debriefing afterwards may be offered to the clients. In the specific case of community interpreters, briefing forms a part of their role and it happens before the interpreting commission itself. An interpreted event in community interpreting is supposed to be followed by debriefing. Consultation services may be offered to clients - outside the interpreting situation, in the area of business interpreting this may be part of their long-term preparation for commercial activity in new markets. This tallies with what Nigel Reeves says about the issue: to achieve equivalent effect on the listeners necessitates cultural briefing on, for example, source culture negotiation styles, use of signals, subtexts, non-verbal gestures. Interpreter then ceases to be a neutral channel, a conduit, and becomes a cultural advisor. But since briefing the clients may not always be feasible within the framework in which interpreting is happening, compounded by the fact that an interpreter is paid by one of the parties, creating a

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10 For example, according to an Australian training video on community interpreting shown by Marta Gondos during the 8th Annual Conference of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting in Edinburgh, in April 1995. Similar views have been expressed by Shackman, M. Sanders, Niska, and also Bishop, who talks about diplomatic interpreting.

11 As has been shown on the above mentioned video and pointed out by the above authors.

conflict of loyalties, one solution may be to formally separate the function of the
cultural intermediary. Various Czech and Slovak Translation agencies have since
1989 been offering a range of services, in a majority of cases not only translation and
interpreting, but also various intercultural mediation services\textsuperscript{14}. Since these agencies
commission work to either their employees or to freelances, these additional cultural
services are provided by Czech or Slovak translators and interpreters\textsuperscript{15}.

However, if the intercultural mediation necessitates too much effort on the part of the
interpreter who might then be unable to cope with the rest of the incoming source text
in the given situation, it is not to be attempted extensively, even though some local
miscommunication may result. The degree of intercultural mediation carried out by
the interpreter may vary. An interpreter only carries out full intercultural mediation,
providing ample background information about cultural references, when it is not too
difficult, because the circumstances allow it, i. e. the interpreter has enough time and
sufficient processing capacity, it is positive in cost-benefit terms\textsuperscript{16}. Since some
notions/concepts may be too elusive, as has been demonstrated on the example of
\textit{conflict}, an interpreter could only attempt an explanation if it enhanced the
communication at the given point. Moreover, there exists a danger that explanations
may distract attention of the client(s) from the main message of the source text.

An interpreter carries out explanatory cultural mediation if it is expected, because
some listeners need explicit information, depending on how much they already know
about the topic and how much they need to know about it, i. e. how relevant the

\textsuperscript{13} Reeves, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{14} As advertised in \textit{TOP}, for example, Nos. 3 - 4 (1990), p. 11; or No. 6 (1991), p. 17.
\textsuperscript{15} Although not all of them, just some, since the advertisements reflect the situation of agencies rather
than of self-employed individuals. Self-employed persons registering their business, on the basis of
their formal qualifications, at \textit{Národný výbor Obecný úrad} (Local Authority), can only get a registration
as a Translator.
\textsuperscript{16} Cf. Gile's Efforts Model in \textit{Basic Concepts}, p. 162.
information is for them. On the other hand, without the situation itself granting it, some interpreters may sometimes apply extensive explanatory strategies for cultural references in the source speeches because of who they are: they may want to demonstrate their knowledgeability about the source culture, which they may consider superior to their clients. However, interpreters may put the responsibility for understanding a speech on their clients and let them ask questions about anything that may have escaped them - similarly to written texts of a literary nature, where the responsibility for understanding contained cultural references, allusions, etc. is often left on the readers who are compelled to make an intellectual effort to comprehend the message. The decision of an interpreter also depends on text type expectations, which may differ in the source and the receptor cultures. Due to the specific conditions of reception of the receptor text, which the listeners only perceive once, more streamlined, more conventionalised texts may entail higher probability of the message getting across. More conventionalised texts may also help achieve higher degree of identification of the audience with the intention of the source text author.

17 Marianna Sunnari brings a critique of the Saying-it-all approach in interpreting, especially for source-language specific (i.e. what Vilikovský calls pro domo) texts - cf. 'Observations on the development of strategies in simultaneous interpreting', paper presented on 26 February 1994 in the Section: Interpreting, First International Congress on Translation and Interpreting: Present Trends, Las Palmas; cf. also 'Processing Strategies in Simultaneous Interpreting', paper presented at the III Seminar of Translation Teaching, University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil, 23 - 28 May 1994. Once, attached as an interpreter to a UK specialist in textile conservation, we visited several castles in Czechoslovakia where historical tapestries were displayed. My client was only interested in tapestries and textiles before or after conservation. She was not interested in other objects of art she was shown in these places, and since she did not know enough about Austro-Hungarian history, she did not pay attention to details about, for example, a precise name of an exact member of the Pálffy family, whose portrait was being pointed out to her, etc. It was enough for her to be told that it was a member of a local aristocratic family.

18 Christine Raguet-Bouvart observes that the translator's job is not "to produce easy-to-read-and-understand text in the target language" - cf. Vladimir Nabokov: The Translator's Perplexity in a Maze of Languages, in Pagnouille and Mason (eds.), Cross-words: Issues and Debates in Literary and Non-literary Translating (Liege: University of Liege, 1995), pp. 121 - 138 (p. 121).
If interpreters act as intercultural mediators, this may involve taking responsibility for this mediation, which has been treated in some detail by Nigel Reeves. In a situation where the two counterparts to the discussion do not understand anything of each other's language, the interpreter may become the focus of attention, possessing power\(^{19}\), although it may not be officially admitted and although the interpreter may not wish it. The question of responsibility for neutral rendering which may blunt or distort the points a speaker may be trying to make, remains open. Who is responsible for misunderstanding which a distorted message can cause? “Yet whose business it is to understand the culturally different negotiating partner?”\(^{20}\) In this connection Reeves points out that negotiations comprise not only informative, but also apellative and expressive components. The interpreter's role as an intercultural mediator requires him or her to mediate communication of information contained in the source text to the receptor audience and to do it in an efficient way.

An interpreter's strategy towards cultural references mentioned, alluded to or implied in source texts can be preventive or curative, since the interpreter has to either prevent or repair breakdown in communication\(^{21}\). If the interpreter has sufficient resources, he or she can concentrate on preventing miscommunication. However, sometimes the interpreter finds out from the feedback from the listeners that they have not understood a particular source text cultural reference or that they have completely misunderstood the speaker due to an unfamiliar cultural reference at a crucial point in the source text, and some remedial action has to be taken.

\(^{19}\) Not a question of Power Distance here.
\(^{20}\) Reeves, p. 47.
Although the overall aim of the interpreter is to create optimum text for processing by receivers\textsuperscript{22}, potential solutions to which he or she can have recourse in individual interpreting situations may be multifarious. There seem to be no simple and clear-cut recipes, no hard and fast rules, there prevails a negotiation of meaning, a trade-off. That is the reason why in order to solve a specific case of cultural reference, an interpreter (similarly to a translator) also needs to be a creative personality\textsuperscript{23}. Moreover, in order to deal with cultural references in a satisfactory manner, interpreters have to keep up through total immersion in the source culture - then they can interpret cultural references guided by their sense. They also benefit from keeping up with their receptor culture, particularly if they are expected to work in both directions.

The interpreter's task in the business environment seems to include the smoothing out of the differences in the accepted level of politeness and the equating of the (British) English understatement with more direct Slovak expression. Since Slovak discourse in general tends to be more direct than the (British) English way of expressing views and opinions, if the interpreter failed to apply the (British) English softer style, a Slovak speaker might look rude to his or her (British) English counterpart. In the cases of Slovaks who are rude and impolite, standing out against the general Slovak background, if the interpreter preserves the Slovak level of directness, it stands out sufficiently in the (British) English context to convey the mood to the listeners\textsuperscript{24}. This has to do with the high Power Distance and Uncertainty

\textsuperscript{24} These matters were discussed at a meeting of all English-Slovak interpreters working for the Simulta secretariat, Bratislava, 1 April 1998.
Avoidance Indexes in the Slovak culture, where authoritarian forms of expression abound. For example, when the Slovak party said v texte boli hlúposti ('the text contained stupid things'), it did not sound too strong in Slovak, since he could have said somariny, hovadiny ('bullshit'), whereas in English 'inaccuracies' seems to render the message best.

In time, dealing with cultural references from source texts may become a question of the two cultures meeting in the middle. Such a meeting in the middle may be said to have already been happening, for example, in the case of academic titles in the English-Slovak context, which may confirm the idea that more intense contacts may bring about change in the cultures concerned, while more intercultural mediation has to be carried out in new and specialised fields due to their novelty. However, once exchanges between two cultures are more frequent and more intense, it may become easier to find solutions to culture-specific phenomena mentioned, hinted at or implied in source texts.

While research on the impact of repeated personal relationships between representatives of two cultures in the spoken, i.e. non-recorded sphere, may best be carried out within the social studies, research into frequent contacts in the written sphere, for example, through the translation of fiction, has already yielded some findings. The closer the links between two cultures are, the more literature may be published in translation, and the better the awareness of the general public of the counterpart culture may become. This may modify the way in which translators and interpreters deal with cultural references in source texts. A similar idea has been expressed by Cay Dollerup:

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25 Cf. Toury, Descriptive, p. 126, who says that with more translations from English into Hebrew it became easier to translate features of Shakespearean sonnet. With more numerous translations, the target culture develops a model - cf. p. 178.
As the world of interlingual transfers is widening, messages will increasingly come to convey the distant, the unfamiliar and the alien, rather than the well-known, familiar and not so distant. Problems, clusters of common areas of concern and areas of similar difficulties, cutting across the divides between language families, will become evident and turn out to be common occurrences and concerns between languages widely apart in terms of origin, history and geography. 

Knowledge which people living in one European country have of cultures in other European countries has been growing, which may have been caused by increased group and individual mobility of people, by information made available in the media, etc. Parallel to people learning more about other cultures through television, radio, translations of literature (since, for example, evidence of some typical national characteristics can be found in novels written in the language of a given cultural community) or other channels runs the learning process during interpreted situations.

František Koli, writing in the context of literary translation from Czech into Slovak and vice versa, comes to a conclusion that once cultures are closer to each other, which may be a result of their intense contact, naturalisation prevails as an approach to source texts. Also within the literary translation context, Edita Gromová says that once cultures get closer to each other, fewer notes are needed in translation, since the cultural gap has already been eliminated. In this connection, Manganaras points out the close link of translations of literature to the economic, cultural, political situation as well as power factors in a given country. With more intense contacts, representatives of different communities may grow to understand each other's culture.

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29 Cf. Gromová, 'Saving Expressive Values in Literary translation', p. 43.
better. Explaining unknown cultural references in detail may therefore be just temporary - in the links between, for example, English and French cultures, explanations do not figure prominently any more. As a result of a long tradition of mutual contacts between the English and the French, fewer explanations of linguistic and cultural problems are required\textsuperscript{30}. That something similar may already be happening in the case of Britain and Slovakia may be demonstrated through the specific case of the interpreters for the Know How Fund project \textit{Enterprise Education in Slovakia}, who told Jack Peffers that with time since the start of the project, the need for explanations of new, unfamiliar notions had been diminishing and in the later stages of the project they had been able to concentrate on interlingual transfer without having to explain the notions referred to by the UK trainers. This gradual change concerned the relatively limited audience of those participating in the project, but similar development can be expected on a wider, national level, too. Since 1989, when Czechoslovakia stopped being a communist country and renewed its contacts with Western countries, the level of knowledge about the (British) English culture in Slovakia has been improving, especially since 1992 with the activity of the British Council. With increased interest in learning English and with open borders of Slovakia, not only has the knowledge of English as a language of international communication been growing, but also the specific knowledge of (British) English cultural references. This development may have implications for the role of the interpreter between (British) English and Slovak clients in the sphere of business.

However, what has to be borne in mind during discussions about rendering cultural references is the possibility that cultural references of third countries can be mentioned. In some cases these might be from the linguistic area close to the country

\textsuperscript{30} Cf. Manganaras, 'Polyglotism', p. 60.
of the speaker, or from a country with similar cultural characteristics, with similar position on the dimensions of culture, as defined by Hofstede.

Further research of Slovak-English business interpreting may analyse a corpus of interpreted source texts in order to describe the range of solutions to which English-Slovak interpreters resort in professional situations. However, since the majority of business negotiations are confidential, no recording of business interpreting between a (British) English and a Slovak party has been feasible so far. The situation has in fact changed in the recent years from one where an interpreter was able to bring students or friends to sit in on a meeting, listen and learn, to a situation where that would for such a person mean the end of an interpreting career. Neither is it possible at present to borrow recorded tapes from events which have been interpreted simultaneously – these are for internal use of clients only, who sometimes save money on written translation after an event by simply transcribing the tapes with recorded interpreted versions of speeches. Similar situation prevails in written business translation where court translators are routinely given only inside pages of a contract or an agreement to translate, without the front and the final pages, since these contain the exact names of enterprises and names of their representatives. Translators only get the body of the text from which they would not be able to identify their clients and in most cases finished translations are handed in on floppy disks so the commissioners of a piece of translation can easily add the initial and the final page data as well as any commercially sensitive information which had been blanked out from the source text before handing it over to the translator.\(^\text{32}\)

\(^{31}\) Cf. Janet Altman, 'What Helps Effective Communication?', p. 25; cf. also Toury, Descriptive.

\(^{32}\) Ľubo Lipták, personal communication, 1997.
Nevertheless, since it has been reported that some telephone business calls in the Danish environment have been taped and analysed\textsuperscript{33}, this may indicate that business telephone conversations may be one avenue of access to material for analysis. Alternatively, an analysis of advertising styles current in the (British) English and Slovak cultures may be attempted, although that would focus on the cultural and business dimensions, while leaving out interpreting as such, unless English commercials using Slovak voice-overs were studied. Simulated situations could also be created with sight translation of authentic business texts, however, taken out of their immediate, commercially sensitive context. Another option would be a simulated business meeting where professional interpreters would carry out their task as intercultural mediators and which could be recorded for research purposes.

Annex No. 1

DOTAZNÍK k výskumu o úlohe štúdia odboru prekladateľstva – tlmočníctva (OPT) v praxi tlmočenia na Slovensku

Questionnaire for research into the role of the study of translator/interpreter specialisation in the practice of interpreting in Slovakia

1. S koľkými prekladateľmi a tlmočníkmi spolupracujete?
How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?

2. Koľko z nich má ako jeden z jazykov angličtinu?
How many of them have English as one of their languages?

3. Koľko z nich majú vysokoškolské vzdelanie?
How many of them graduated from a university?

4. Koľko z nich vyšľadovali angličtinu?
How many of them studied English at the university?

5. Koľko z nich vyšľadovali tlmočníctvo – prekladateľstvo?
How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?

6. Koľko nových prijímate každý rok?
How many new people do you put on your list each year?

7. Aké máte požiadavky na nových prekladateľov a tlmočníkov?
What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters?

8. Sú noví častejšie absolventmi OPT?
Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?

9. Je medzi novoprijímanými najčastejšia angličtina?
Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?

10. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na tlmočenie?
Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?

11. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na preklad?
Which are the languages most often required for translation?

12. Myslíte si, že lepší sú tlmočníci, ktorí vyšľadovali OPT, alebo tí, ktorí študovali iné odbory?
Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?

Ďakujem za vyplnenie dotazníka.
Thank you for completing the questionnaire.
Annex No. 2

DOTAZNÍK k výskumu o úlohe štúdia odboru prekladateľstva – tlmočníctva (OPT) v praxi tlmočenia na Slovensku

Questionnaire for research into the role of the study of translator/interpreter specialisation in the practice of interpreting in Slovakia

KPT Heuréka

1. S koľkými prekladateľmi a tlmočníkmi spolupracujete?
   How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?
   110

2. Koľko z nich má ako jeden z jazykov anglickú?
   How many of them have English as one of their languages?
   50

3. Koľko z nich majú vysokoškolské vzdelanie?
   How many of them graduated from a university?
   100%

4. Koľko z nich vyštudovali angličtinu?
   How many of them studied English at the university?
   40%

5. Koľko z nich vyštudovali tlmočníctvo – prekladateľstvo?
   How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   80%

6. Koľko nových prijímate každý rok?
   How many new people do you put on your list each year?

7. Aké máte požiadavky na nových prekladateľov a tlmočníkov?
   What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters?
   language + subject – translator / language + practice - interpreter

8. Sú noví častejšie absolventmi OPT?
   Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   Yes

9. Je medzi novoprijímanými najčastejšia angličtina?
   Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?
   No

10. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na tlmočenie?
    Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?
    English, German, Russian, then Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, French, Serbian, Croatian, Swedish

11. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na preklad?
    Which are the languages most often required for translation?
    See above

12. Myslíte si, že lepší sú tlmočníci, ktorí vyštudovali OPT, alebo tý, ktorí študovali iné odbory?
    Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?
    It depends what for. OPT graduates are more demanded for interpreting, but not everywhere

Ďakujem za vyplnenie dotazníka.
Thank you for completing the questionnaire.
Annex No. 3

DOTAZNÍK k výskumu o úlohe štúdia odboru prekladateľstva – tlmočníctva (OPT) v praxi tlmočení na Slovensku

Questionnaire for research into the role of the study of translator/interpreter specialisation in the practice of interpreting in Slovakia

Lexika

1. S kolkými prekladateľmi a tlmočníkmi spolupracujete?
   How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?
   30 - 40

2. Kolko z nich má ako jeden z jazykov angličtinu?
   How many of them have English as one of their languages?
   20

3. Kolko z nich majú vysokoškolské vzdelanie?
   How many of them graduated from a university?
   All

4. Kolko z nich vyštudovali angličtinu?
   How many of them studied English at the university?
   12

5. Kolko z nich vyštudovali tlmočníctvo – prekladateľstvo?
   How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   20

6. Kolko nových prijímate každý rok?
   How many new people do you put on your list each year?
   About 2 to 3

7. Aké máte požiadavky na nových prekladateľov a tlmočníkov?
   What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters?
   Above all technical equipment: fax, E-mail, PC, Word for Windows

8. Sú noví častejšie absolventmi OPT?
   Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   Yes

9. Je medzi novoprijmánymi najčastejšia angličtina?
   Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?
   Yes

10. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na tlmočenie?
    Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?
    E, G, R, F

11. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na preklad?
    Which are the languages most often required for translation?
    E, G, R, H, Pol

12. Myslíte si, že lepší sú tlmočníci, ktorí vyštudovali OPT, alebo tí, ktorí študovali iné odbory?
    Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?
    Other subjects + long term stay abroad

Ďakujem za vyplnenie dotazníka.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire.
DOTAZNÍK k výskumu o úlohe štúdia odboru prekladateľstva – tlmočníctva (OPT) v praxi tlmočenia na Slovensku

Questionnaire for research into the role of the study of translator/interpreter specialisation in the practice of interpreting in Slovakia

1. S kokými prekladateľmi a tlmočníkmi spolupracujete?
   How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?
   150

2. Kolko z nich má ako jeden z jazykov anglicky?
   How many of them have English as one of their languages?
   50 %

3. Kolko z nich majú vysokoškolské vzdelanie?
   How many of them graduated from a university?
   30 %

4. Kolko z nich vyšťudovali angličtinu?
   How many of them studied English at the university?

5. Kolko z nich vyšťudovali tlmočníctvo – prekladateľstvo?
   How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?

6. Kolko nových prijímate každý rok?
   How many new people do you put on your list each year?
   20

7. Aké máte požiadavky na nových prekladateľov a tlmočníkov?
   What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters?
   professional practice

8. Sú noví častejšie absolventmi OPT?
   Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   No

9. Je medzi novoprijímanými najčastejšia angličtina?
   Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?
   Yes

10. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na tlmočenie?
    Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?
    E, G

11. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na preklad?
    Which are the languages most often required for translation?
    E, G

12. Myslíte si, že lepší sú tlmočníci, ktorí vyšťudovali OPT, alebo tí, ktorí študovali iné odbory?
    Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?

    Šakujem za vyplnenie dotazníka.
    Thank you for completing the questionnaire.

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1 The staff underlined this part as a reply to the question.
DOTAZNÍK k výskumu o úlohe štúdia odboru prekladateľstva - tlmočníctva (OPT) v praxi tlmočenia na Slovensku

Questionnaire for research into the role of the study of translator/interpreter specialisation in the practice of interpreting in Slovakia

VKM

1. S kôkými prekladateľmi a tlmočníkmi spolupracujete?
How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?
   c. 2 100

2. Kôko z nich má ako jeden z jazykov angličtinu?
How many of them have English as one of their languages?
   c. 980

3. Kôki z nich vyšľadovali angličtinu?
How many of them studied English at the university?
   ?

4. Kôki z nich vyšľadovali tlmočníctvo – prekladateľstvo?
How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   ?

5. Kôki z nich majú vysokoškolské vzdelanie?
How many of them graduated from a university?
   ? c. 80 %

6. Kôko nových prijímate každý rok?
How many new people do you put on your list each year?
   c. 20

7. Sú noví častejšie absolventmi OPT?
Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   ?

8. Je medzi novoprijímanými najčastejšia angličtina?
Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?
   Yes

9. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na preklad?
Which are the languages most often required for translation?
   English

10. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na tlmočenie?
Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?
   English

Ďakujem za vyplnenie dotazníka.
Thank you for completing the questionnaire.
DOTAZNIK k vyskumu o ulohe studia odboru prekladateľstva – tlmočníctva (OPT) v praxi tlmočenia na Slovensku
Questionnaire for research into the role of the study of translator/interpreter specialisation in the practice of interpreting in Slovakia

Bratislavská informačná služba

1. S kolika prekladateľmi a tlmočníkmi spolupracujete?
   How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?
   147

2. Kolko z nich má ako jeden z jazykov angličtinu?
   How many of them have English as one of their languages?
   41

3. Kolko z nich majú vysokoškolské vzdelanie?
   How many of them graduated from a university?
   130

4. Kolko z nich vyšli slovenčinu?
   How many of them studied Czech at the university?
   41

5. Kolko z nich vyšli tlmočníctvo – prekladateľstvo?
   How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   20

6. Kolko nových prijímate každý rok?
   How many new people do you put on your list each year?
   25

7. Aké máte požiadavky na nových prekladateľov a tlmočníkov?
   What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters?
   Practice in a subject, experience of at least several years in translation and interpreting.

8. Sú noví častejšie absolventmi OPT?
   Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   No

9. Je medzi novoprijímanými najčastejšia angličtina?
   Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?
   No

10. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na tlmočenie?
    Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?
    English

11. Ktoré jazyky sú najžiadanejšie na preklad?
    Which are the languages most often required for translation?
    English

12. Myslíte si, že lepší sú tlmočníci, ktorí vyšli opt, alebo ti, ktorí študovali iné odbory?
    Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?
    We have the best experience with those who graduated from the translator/interpreter specialisation.

6 July 1998

Ďakujem za vyplnenie dotazníka.
Thank you for completing the questionnaire.
1. How many translators and interpreters do you cooperate with?
   - 35

2. How many of them have English as one of their languages?
   - 25

3. How many of them graduated from a university?
   - All

4. How many of them studied English at the university?
   - 16

5. How many of them studied the translator/interpreter specialisation?
   - 13

6. How many new people do you put on your list each year?

7. What are your requirements for new translators and interpreters?
   - Pass the written test for translators

8. Are the new people more often graduates from the translator/interpreter specialisation?

9. Is English the most frequent with the new recruits?

10. Which are the languages most often required for interpreting?
    - English

11. Which are the languages most often required for translation?
    - English

12. Do you think that those who studied the translator/interpreter specialisation make better interpreters, or those who studied other subjects?

Thank you for completing the questionnaire.
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1 Note that since there exist a number of systems of transcription from the Cyrillic alphabet into English, any Russian words in this thesis are transcribed according to the principles applied in *Slavonic and East European Review*. However, in the case of proper names of authors who published in English, I use the form in which they themselves chose to publish their names, which may contradict the principles of the *Slavonic and East European Review* system. This is, among some others, the case with Leidik, whose name would be transcribed as Leichik.


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