

SURVEYING THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING IN HAWAI‘I

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I review the legal framework underpinning language access in Hawai‘i, and describe the development and deployment of a survey of spoken language interpreters in the state. Survey results indicate that most interpretation services are performed by L2 speakers of English, and that L2 speakers of English also account for the majority of languages interpreted, including languages of limited diffusion (LLDs). Among respondents, court interpreting emerges as the most common setting for interpreting assignments, followed by medical interpreting. Results show that advanced training is rare, and many respondents struggle with the question of certification. Through analysis of previous research in Interpretation Studies, I discuss survey results with reference to national and international trends in provision of interpretation services, interpreter training, and the role of the interpreter. Finally, I discuss implications of survey results, the importance of training, and the professionalization of community interpreting in Hawai‘i.

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the provision of language access services in Hawai‘i, with a specific focus spoken on language interpreting in community settings. Although language interpreting is an ancient activity, this study treats interpreting as a modern industry that originated in the late 1940s and early 50s, when simultaneous interpreting established itself as a regular presence at international conferences and meetings. First, I define language access, describe the legal basis for language access to services at the state level, and show how federal policy in the United States has influenced the legal framework in Hawai‘i, which is now driving growth of the interpreting industry within the state. Next, I discuss the development and professionalization of

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the interpreting industry on an international level, and the distinct branches of the interpreting profession which have emerged in recent decades. This serves as a framework for a comparative analysis of Hawaii’s local interpretation market. I describe state-funded organizations in Hawaii that play key roles in spreading awareness of language access issues, training interpreters, and providing certification testing, including the University of Hawai‘i’s Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies, and the Hawai‘i State Judiciary Office on Equality and Access to the Courts, and the Office of Language Access. Later, I review findings from a survey of Hawai‘i-based interpreters, and examine how data collected by the survey can be understood in terms of worldwide trends in language interpreting, and the relationship between research, training, and the professionalization of community interpreting. Finally, I discuss the implications of survey results for developing a reliable marketplace for language access services in Hawai‘i, and argue for regular collection of data from interpreters to help stakeholders encourage the professionalization of the interpreting industry in the state.

Language Access in Hawai‘i

In 2006, the Hawai‘i State Legislature passed Act 290 to regulate the way that state-funded organizations make services accessible to Limited English Proficient (LEP) people. The signing of Act 290 into law constitutes recognition and response, on the part of the State of Hawai‘i, to the steadily growing need for spoken language interpreters and other language specialists in medical and social services settings, and in the courts. According to Hawai‘i law, “language ... can be a barrier to accessing important benefits or services, understanding and exercising important rights, complying with applicable responsibilities, or understanding other information provided by state-funded programs and activities” (HRS § 321C-1). Linguistic barriers deter or prevent many people from accessing critical resources including schools, housing, legal services, routine healthcare and emergency medical services, pharmacies, police, fire fighters, crime-victim resources, driver’s licenses, business licenses, public benefits and other services vital to public safety and welfare (Alanen, 2009). According to Dueñas, Vásquez, and Mikkelsen (2012), “meaningful access exists when members of a minority class have access to and are able to use the same services and benefits enjoyed by members of mainstream society” (p. 246). Accordingly, I will define language access as the provision of services, oral, written or signed,

that remove linguistic barriers from accessing benefits, understanding rights, complying with responsibilities, and participating in programs, services, and other activities.

In Hawai‘i, the growth of the language access industry is evident across economic sectors and institutional settings. In the 2013–2014 fiscal year, the Hawai‘i State Judiciary spent more than \$500,000 providing interpreting services for 8,000 cases (Hawai‘i State Judiciary, FY 2013–2014). In August of 2015, the Annual Language Access Conference, hosted by the Office of Language Access, is preparing for its 8th iteration, and a growing number of organizations are taking part. The growth of the industry is further evidenced by the introduction of specialized training for court, medical, and community interpreters, the emergence of locally organized professional associations for interpreters and translators, and a growing number of language services agencies. Hospitals, social services providers, and state-funded organizations are ever more aware of their responsibility to provide language access to the people they serve, and the language access industry is gaining more substance and attention as time goes on.

The Legal Basis for Language Access in Hawaii and the United States

In the United States, the legal framework that supports language access is built around Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹ Title VI states:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal financial assistance.² (42 U.S.C. § 2000d)

Act 290 came about in response to years of advocacy from the Interagency Council for Immigrant and Refugee Services and other organizations, and was spurred on by a class-action law suit against the Hawai‘i Department of Human Services (Holdway, 2013). The legal framework of the Act is drawn from Executive Order 13166, issued by the Clinton

¹ Title VI does not explicitly address the issue of language discrimination: It was not until a landmark U.S. Supreme Court opinion emerged in the case of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) that language-based discrimination was clearly linked to national origin, as addressed in Title VI (Dueñas-Gonzales, Vásquez, Mikkelsen, 2012). In a 2010 DOJ directive to State Courts, for example, the assistant Attorney General refers to discrimination on the basis of national origin, not language, that may place state courts in violation of civil rights requirements.

² The provision of language access for deaf and hard of hearing Americans is also tied to Title VI, although not to the clause on national origin (in section 601). Instead, the Disability Rights Division facilitates language access through section 602 and other legal precedents which together form the legislative framework for Executive Order 12250, issued by the Carter Administration in 1980 (Dueñas-Gonzales, Vásquez, & Mikkelsen, 2012). Language access services for the deaf and hard of hearing will be briefly discussed below to point out the contrast between these and interpretation services for spoken languages.

administration in 2000. Executive Order 13166 is a framework for institutions to provide language access services: it details legal guidelines for institutions, outlines procedures for assessing the need for language access services, and requires institutions to draft plans to meet those needs. Executive Order 13166 does not create the right to access services; the underlying right is ensured by Title VI. Rather, it improves the way otherwise eligible LEP people access services and programs. Act 290, codified into Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 371-31 to 371-37, and, in 2012, revised into HRS § 321C 1-7, explicitly defines how state-funded entities are to utilize language access services to make programs and services accessible to limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Whereas EO 13166 applies at the federal level, HRS § 321 C 1-7 applies at the state level. As of 2008, Hawai‘i was one of only five states that had enacted comprehensive language policies requiring their public agencies to make programs accessible to LEP individuals (Wang, 2010).

However, the role of interpreters, translators, and other language specialists is not explicitly prescribed by the law. Instead, Hawai‘i law refers to “oral language services,” defined as “the free provision of oral information necessary to enable limited English proficient persons to access or participate in services...” (HRS § 321C-2). The law does not refer to interpreters or translators directly. This leaves organizations several avenues to comply with legal requirements, which may include utilizing interpreters, employing bilingual staff members³, and translating key documents and notices. Bilingual staff may help manage demand, but interpreters and translators will be needed to meet broad demand across institutions and settings. Training is necessary to produce interpreters and translators capable of rendering pertinent information into language that is comprehensible to individuals who wish to access services, exercise rights, or comply with civic and legal responsibilities.

³ Bilingual service providers *are* mentioned in the law, and may be the best means of providing language access. They eliminate the need for an interpreter, along with the ethical issues that interpreters bring in to a communicative event. Bilingual service providers have been associated with improved outcomes in medical interpreting (Flores, 2005), for example. However, there are limitations to the coverage that can be expected from bilingual service providers. To facilitate complete coverage, bilinguals are needed in every sector, in every individual office, and in every language in which services are provided. The impracticability of such a situation ensures that there will continue to be a demand for interpreters in certain locations and settings, while still emphasizing the importance that bilinguals will play in language access.

Language policy and planning provides a framework for understanding how states like Hawai‘i can encourage the development of bilingualism in the various linguistic communities that call the islands home. Specifically, improved policies toward bilingual education in schools is key to producing competent bilinguals. (For more on this, see Holdway, 2013.) Strong bilinguals also have the foundational language skills necessary to become interpreters.

Under HRS § 321 C 3-4, state agencies and organizations that receive state funding (designated ‘covered entities’) are required to institute a language access plan, which outlines their policy in dealing with an LEP speaker who is trying to access their services. Compliance with the law means covered entities must provide interpreters, translate documents, or otherwise utilize the services of language specialists, which has caused a rise in demand for translators and interpreters, as well as discussion on what qualifications are needed. However, training and certification, like the interpreters and translators themselves, are not mentioned in Hawai‘i law, and the qualifications of interpreters and translators can be a thorny subject.

The codification of language access into Hawai‘i law creates conditions that contribute to rising demand for language access services. This raises questions about the number of qualified interpreters and translators working in Hawai‘i currently, about what languages these people specialize in, and what qualifications they possess. Research can begin to answer these and other questions by providing basic information about interpreters working in Hawai‘i today.

Rise in Demand for Interpreting: A Local, National, and International Trend

The growth in demand for language interpreters in Hawai‘i is just one instance of a broad trend that stretches across regional and national boundaries. According the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, language interpreting is one of the fastest growing industries in the U.S. today, and “employment of interpreters and translators is projected to grow 46 percent from 2012 to 2022, much faster than the average for all occupations.” The Bureau cites globalization and increases in migration in the United States and around the world for the growth of the industry, adding, “job prospects should be best for those who have professional certification.” However, provision of language access services also depends on attitudes of government and institutions towards minority language speakers; in the U.S., many institutions have ignored their communication needs for years (Ozolins, 2000).

Title VI and laws built upon it, which recognize the rights of linguistic and ethnic minorities, represent a change in the attitude of government toward minority groups. This change of attitude has produced legislation that in turn has caused government agencies and covered entities to reassess the need to provide language access services. The relationship that interpreters have with society has also begun to change: Historically, trained interpreters have served a select few languages of international diplomacy and power, and they have been primarily employed by

those in a position of influence or expertise (Edwards, 1995). Now, an increasing number of interpreters serve in community settings, where clients are minority language speakers, immigrants, and those in a position of vulnerability. This has resulted in a shift in awareness of the need for interpreting from the international, diplomatic to the national, internal needs of countries:

Whether through increased immigration, refugee or asylum seeker flows, or a ‘rediscovery’ of indigenous groups and languages, many countries that have hitherto seen

Interpreting/Translating needs only in the context of international contacts must now address issues of internal communication needs. (Ozolins, 2000, pp. 21-22)

Today, the national, internal, intra-societal need for communication is rapidly becoming the primary driver of growth of the interpretation industry. The net result in Hawai‘i and other places is more awareness of need, more interpreters and would-be interpreters, more professional associations, more training programs, more language services agencies, and more regulation.

Language services agencies (LSAs) and professional associations of language interpreters now play important roles in local interpreting markets. LSAs take many forms: some are non-profit community based, some serve specific linguistic communities (as is often the case for sign language interpreting), others may be government-controlled, while others still work with specific institutions, such as hospitals (Ozolins, 2007). For the purposes of this study, I define LSAs as organizations that work with service providers (and other end users) to fill interpreting assignments, and which aggregate lists of potential interpreters for purposes of coordinating assignments among them. Interpreters themselves often work on a freelance basis and may work with more than one agency. Oftentimes, an individual practitioner gets the majority of his or her interpretation assignments through language services agencies (Ozolins, 2007). Professional interpreter associations (PIAs), as loosely defined in this paper, are groups of people with an interest in interpreting who band together for professional purposes. Professional associations vary greatly in size, make-up, bargaining power, and other measures. They are represented *par excellence* by the AIIC (*Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence*), which I describe in more detail below. In the context of this paper, the term *service provider* is reserved for hospitals, schools, social services, and other organizations that provide services to LEP individuals.

The emergence of an interpreting industry. Interpreting as a modern profession emerged during the latter half of the twentieth century in the context of Western Europe. The impetus to train professional interpreters came from the inter-societal need for heads of state and other dignitaries to communicate at international conferences and delegations. There are two main branches of professional interpreting: professional conference interpreting and professional community interpreting (Niska, 2005), each of which include various sub-fields.

Conference interpreters work with international organizations, national governments, international corporations, and the business and scientific community. These interpreters generally represent a “limited number of languages of international diplomacy and commerce” (Mikkelsen, 1996, “Community Interpreting” para. 2). In addition to interpreting at conferences, conference interpreters often interpret television and radio programs, courses and lectures, as well as official state visits (Gile, 2001). The term conference interpreter is thus associated with several roles, which also includes escort interpreting. In contrast, community interpreters generally work at sites within a society where individuals access public services, such as medical, legal, educational and social services. Community interpreting has been described as “the interpreting sector that enhances equal access to public and community services for individuals who do not speak the language of service” (Bancroft, Bendana, Bruggeman, & Feuerle, 2013, p. 95). As such, there commonly exist noticeable power differentials in community interpreting settings which may be absent from conference interpreting (e.g., patient-doctor relationships). Community interpreting has many other names, including *cultural interpreting*, *public services interpreting*, *liaison interpreting*, and *dialogue interpreting*, which vary according to region, role, or interpretive setting. These terms are illustrative of the wide(r) variety of roles and settings where community interpreting takes place.

Conference interpreting was the first to make the leap toward professionalization. Though the origins of conference interpreting can be traced back to World War I (Gile, 2001), “the boom in conference interpreting started in the aftermath of World War II at the Nuremberg Trials” (Niska, 2005, p. 36). Technological innovations (namely, microphones and personal headsets) made interpreting in the simultaneous mode practicable on a large scale for the first time. Interpreting in this manner cut relay time in half, and was less intrusive because the interpreter could be in a booth and away from the arena of action. In the years following WWII,

international conferences proliferated with the help of conference interpreters (Altman, 2001), and the interpreting industry in its modern incarnation was born.

The emergence of an interpreting profession. The boom in demand for qualified conference interpreters was soon accompanied by calls for an organization to regulate the conference interpreting profession. The AIIC was founded in 1953 in Paris in response to repeated calls for regulation (Altman, 2001); its headquarters have since moved to Geneva. According to the AIIC Statutes, the purpose of the organization is, “to define and represent the profession of conference interpreter, to improve it, especially by encouraging training and research, to safeguard the interest of its members and to serve international cooperation by demanding high professional standards of them” (Altman, 2001, p.16).

By setting standards for training and certification of members and creating a body of specialized knowledge through research, the AIIC played a leading role in the professionalization of conference interpreting. This allowed the AIIC to gain control over various factors external to the interpreting industry per se. The AIIC could negotiate on the part of its members for pay and working conditions, act as a consultant for considerations such as booth design (Altman, 2001), and act as rater of interpreter training programs (Niska, 2005). The founding of the AIIC was thus an important moment in the evolution of interpreting as a modern profession.

In contrast, the community interpreter evolved from ad hoc bilinguals—often friends, family members, or bystanders—providing assistance when needed. Lack of regulations allows anyone to interpret, and is still the norm in many regions today. For this reason, the community interpreting sector generally lacks strong professional associations and the regulatory influence they exert. In interpreting as in other professions, strong associations are an indication of the professional status of practitioners (Mikkelsen, 1996). Such associations introduce internal control measures (e.g., standardized training models), and external control measures (e.g., bargaining capabilities) that impact the way practitioners interact with outsiders. (For a discussion of characteristics associated with professions, see Mikkelsen, 1996.) Today, community interpreting is sometimes contrasted with simultaneous interpreting at international conferences to show the disparity these branches of interpreting have reached with regard to professional development (Pochhäcker, 2007).

The peculiar case of community interpreting. The professionalization of community interpreting is a common theme in the literature (e.g., Mikkelsen, 1996; Pöschhacker, 1999; Wadensjö, 2001, 2007; Rudvin, 2007), which is some indication of the complexity it presents. According to Bancroft and Rubio-Fitzpatric (2009), “the community interpreter may or may not be trained as an interpreter” (cited in Matthews & Ardemagni, 2013). In other literature, community interpreting is specifically identified as interpreting performed by non-professionals (e.g., González, Vásquez, & Mikkelsen, 1991). And, as Niska (2007) points out, many community interpreters are not full-time, and may only do occasional assignments. Accordingly, community interpreting has at best an informal relationship with profession-hood.

Community interpreting routinely “takes place in the course of communication in the local community among speakers of different languages” (Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatric, 2009). Working in settings such as social services offices, neighborhood schools, and district courts has direct bearing on the social status of community interpreters. Mikkelsen (1998) notes, for example, that court interpreters are often perceived as advocates for the defendant, or conversely, as employees of the prosecution.⁴ In addition, the professional standing of community interpreters, like conference interpreters, is tied to the social standing of language groups of which they are members: “A great many languages, many of them minority languages that are not the language of government in any country, are interpreted at the community level” (Mikkelsen, 1996, “Community Interpreting” para. 2). The political and economic situation of marginalized and minority linguistic groups (and their members) can be dire, and often contrast strongly with those of the individuals served by conference interpreters.

Community interpreting often takes place in settings where regulations not rigorously observed, which may allow ad hoc, untrained, or under-trained individuals to step into the role of interpreter. Such settings encourage ad hoc interpretation and cause further problems for the professionalization of community interpreting. In multilingual societies around the world, the type of ad hoc interpreting that takes place in everyday, trivial situations is common. It does not require advanced skills, and it is rarely remunerated (Niska, 2007). Such ad hoc interpreting has been commonplace for thousands of years, and there is every indication that it will continue to be so. Ironically, the “humanitarian linguistic assistance” offered by ad hoc interpreters has

⁴ Mikkelsen goes on to explain that “the interpreter serves as an officer of the court and the interpreter’s duty in a court proceeding is to serve the court and the public to which the court is a servant” (1998, p. 4).

probably been an obstacle to contemporary efforts to professionalize community interpreting (Niska, 2007, p. 300).

Ad hoc interpreting is a quick-fix for communication barriers in informal environments, and as such has its proper time and place. But in situations where misunderstandings and wrongly translated information may have severe consequences, such as medical consultations, a trained interpreter has the potential to significantly improve both communicative and treatment outcomes (Flores, 2005). Ad hoc provision of language access services are still prevalent in many places, and are characterized by the response to an immediate need by means of available bilinguals. There is “usually no concept of training, [and] little thought of accreditation” or certification (Ozolins, 2000, p. 23). Ethical considerations such as accuracy, impartiality and confidentiality are often compromised by ad hoc interpreters. They also lack the applied cognitive skills that allow trained interpreters to deliver a high degree of accuracy (Liu, Schallert, & Carrol, 2004). All this impacts perceptions about interpreters: the role boundaries of interpreters are blurred; it seems any bilingual person can do the job, even a child. Ad hoc interpreting invites a fundamental misconception about what the role of the interpreter is, what it is not, and what skills are needed to do the job.

Professionalism as it is conceptualized in the realm of conference interpreting may be wholly inapplicable to conceptualizations of professionalism in community settings. It is, nonetheless, essential to foster a sense of professionalism in community interpreters regardless of setting, participants, linguistic or cultural factors. The term “professional,” as it applies to community interpreters, must emphasize qualification. Professionalism is culturally constructed, not a universal value (Rudvin, 2007), and “what is considered professional or not depends on specific social, political and economic realities” (Pochhäcker, 2007, p. 13).

Qualification, as used in the previous paragraph, stresses training, but allows for variation depending on the linguistic and educational background of the interpreter, and the unique demands of the interpretive setting. Furthermore, a qualification scheme based on training provides a concrete objective that individuals can work towards. And while qualification is related to certification—and certification plays a contributing role in overall professionalization—as I will describe below, certification is increasingly the domain of the industries where interpretation services are needed.

Certification and Industry Driven Specialization of Community Interpreting

Ozolins (2000) describes community interpreting as a collection of specialized, industry-driven fields where changes in professional practice are strongly driven by the industries where interpreters' services are in demand. This contrasts with conference interpreting, a profession-driven field where experts are the drivers of changes in professional practice (Ozolins, 2000).

The recent history of court interpreting in the U.S. clearly illustrates the process of industry-driven professionalization. The process was primed by the Court Interpreters Act of 1978 (the Court Interpreters Act, 28 U.S.C. §1827), an offshoot of Title VI which guaranteed litigants in civil proceedings the right to an interpreter.⁵ Matthews & Ardemagni describe this legislation as “one of the first steps towards the professionalization of community interpretation in the United States” (2013, p. 74). The National Association for Judicial Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) emerged in 1978, strengthening the professional standing of court interpreters working at the federal level.

The Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination (FCICE) followed in 1980, to implement specific provisions of the Court Interpreters Act. Reliable certification testing, although available in only one language, aided the professionalization of court interpreting in the U.S. The FCICE is notoriously difficult; rigorous training and extensive knowledge are required to pass it. Individuals who pass the exam, because of their proven knowledge, skills, and abilities, go on to become important resources for the interpreting community, often serving as trainers, educators, role models, and even returning as exam raters (FCICE Examinee Handbook, 2013). Currently, the FCICE is only offered in Spanish (based on demand in Federal courts—although versions of the exam have been developed in Navajo and Haitian Creole), and as a result, Spanish/English interpreters are arguably the most comprehensively trained and vetted group of interpreters in the U.S. court system today. Based largely on the success of the FCICE, certification programs for court interpreters working at the state level were taken up by the National Consortium for Language Access in State Courts (NCSC). The Court Interpreters Act was amended in 1988 to clarify provisions for certification, and, by implementing an official

⁵ For litigants in criminal proceedings provision of an interpreter was already a requirement of due process, although such requirements have not always been met.

registry of federal court interpreters on a national level, provided a further step towards the professionalization of court interpreters in the United States.

The possibility of becoming a certified interpreter led to an increase in demand for training. However, resources to develop interpreter training programs were not provided for in the legislation, and the availability of court interpreter training was initially limited to short term workshops offered by court administrators, professional associations, and sometimes private entrepreneurs (Matthews & Ardemagni, 2013). By the year 2000, an estimated 17 academic institutions in the United States were offering court interpreter training programs (Niska, 2005, p. 37), including University of Hawai‘i’s Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS). The number of higher education institutions offering interpreter training has increased since then (Matthews & Ardemagni, 2013).

More recently medical interpreting has also followed a pattern of professionalization-via-specialization. Like court interpreting, medical interpreting has developed under the auspices of the industry that it serves, as improved treatment outcomes have been clearly linked with trained interpreters (Flores, 2005). Medical interpreter training and certificate programs, codes of interpreter ethics, and professional organizations have now been established in various parts of the country (Bancroft, 2005). Organizations such as the California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA) have played a key role in establishing standards of practice. CHIA, for example, provides a registry of interpreters and offers training to promote cross cultural awareness and standards of practice (Angelelli, 2006). Within the last few years, national certification testing for medical interpreters has begun to be recognized by hospitals and other healthcare institutions (Matthews & Ardemagni, 2013). Two organizations have begun to certify interpreters nationally. The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters began when physicians, medical staff, interpreters, and educators met to discuss what exactly an interpreter should be expected to know in order to be qualified to interpret in health care settings. Starting in 2011, they developed standards of practices and certification exams that are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). A second organization, the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care, has been setting standards for the training of healthcare interpreters and has created a Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters, who also began offering an NCCA accredited certification exam in three languages for interpreters in health care in 2012. All of this has improved the professional standing of medical interpreters.

In Hawai‘i and states with similar language access laws, hospitals that receive state funds are now mandated to provide interpretation services, which ensures that demand for medical interpreting will continue to grow. Medical interpreting is poised to continue the process of specialization and professionalization in Hawai‘i and elsewhere in the country.

Research and Training in Interpreting Studies

In general, interpreter training is practice-oriented, “in the venerable tradition of masters teaching their apprentices” (Pöchhacker, 2010, p. 1). Schools are often housed within academic institutions, but the system is essentially vocational, and generally follows an apprenticeship system (Sawyer, 2004). As Angelelli (2004) explains, “many of the principles governing the profession today are the result of personal experiences, anecdotes and opinions rather than of empirical research” (pp. 11-12).

Training programs for conference interpreting developed in a formal, quasi-academic process (Angelelli, 2004). Trained interpreters coalesced to form professional organizations such as AIIC, and moved to establish professional guidelines and ethical codes for professional interpreters. The guidelines established by the AIIC were later extended to community interpreting including medical, legal, and social service settings (Niska, 2005). Most interpreter training programs today are still based on the conference interpreting model (Niska, 2005). However, the transfer of ethics and professional guidelines from conference to community settings is problematic because of the different technical knowledge and specialized skills that are required to interpret in increasingly specialized settings. Also, because the training models borrowed from conference interpreting are not based in empirical research, it is difficult to establish their suitability and effectiveness.

Gile (2001) provides an historical overview of research in Interpreting Studies: Early research consisted primarily of reflective writing for didactic purposes, and established many of the theoretical issues which are still discussed today. Later, “the spectacular skill of simultaneous interpreting” (Pöchhacker, 2007, p. 15) captivated the attention of researchers because of the great skill and dexterity it required.⁶ Researchers in the fields of cognitive

⁶ Generally, interpreting is categorized into three different modes: Simultaneous, when the interpreter speaks at the same time as the source language speaker, rendering the message with a very short time lag. Consecutive, when the interpreter waits for the speaker to finish a segment in the source language before interpreting the message into the target language. Sight translation, when the interpreter performs an oral translation of a written document.

psychology and neurolinguistics used interpreting, particularly the simultaneous mode, as a paradigm to analyze cognitive performance and information processing. This research was later rejected by professional interpreters as invalid, because of the laboratory conditions under which it was conducted. In reaction, researchers in Interpreting Studies withdrew to conduct theoretical rather than empirical research in relative isolation from other academic disciplines. The influential and still widely-taught “*théorie du sens*” (Seleskovich & Lederer, 1989) is a product of this period. In its latest phase of research, empirical, interdisciplinary research has begun to characterize Interpreting Studies (Gile, 2001). New research questions the interpreter’s (in)visibility (Vargas-Urpi, 2009), with particular focus on the interpreter’s role (Pochhäcker, 2010; Vargas-Urpi, 2012), and calls for current training models to be updated (Angelelli, 2004).

As studies that focus on the role of interpreters within an interpreter-mediated interaction gain prominence, the invisibility of interpreter, which stems from the model of the conference interpreter in the booth (and out of sight), has been challenged. The consecutive mode (indeed, community interpreting is also known as dialogue interpreting) has become the focal point for research (see Wadensjö, 1998; Angelelli, 2004), as the study of translation and interpreting has become more integrated with fields such as linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, sociology, inter-cultural communication, and others. Although issues of power dynamics have characterized interpreting since its genesis, new perspectives make these issues much more visible. The visibility of the interpreter is now the focus of research, whereas the interpreter was assumed (or prescribed) to be invisible a generation ago.

Research into interpreting practices experienced a lag and is now running to catch up.

Critically,

the understanding of how one type of interpreting (e.g., community) differs from others (e.g., court or conference) will impact the design and implementation of education and certification programs that are designed to prepare competent bilingual individuals who can bridge communication gaps that go beyond linguistic barriers. (Angelelli, 2004, p. 49)

In many places the model being used to train interpreters has not been updated to match current theory. At least two recent studies have focused on the roles of colleges and universities in training interpreters (i.e., Mikkelsen, 2013; Matthews & Ardemagni, 2013). Experts are calling for more research into a number of topics in interpreting which range from prerequisites for interpretation programs, to the role of the interpreter in different settings, and the sociological,

psychological and neurological processes involved in interpretation (Mikkelsen, 2013). At the same time, Mikkelsen (2013) and others have recognized the primacy of training as a cornerstone to advance the professionalization of the industry.

Organizations that Play a Key Role in Language Access in Hawai‘i

The chief public funded institutions that have impacted the provision of language service in Hawai‘i in the last three decades include the Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies at the University of Hawai‘i, the Judiciary’s Office of Equality and Access to Courts (OEAC), and, more recently, the Office of Language Access (OLA). I describe each of these below to illustrate their individual roles in the interpretation market.

The Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies. The Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies⁷ (CITS) was established at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, in 1988, in response to an expressed need for the College of Languages, Linguistics & Literature, to provide specialized language training in interpretation and translation. Specifically, the College identified a need for theoretically-based academic training for professional level conference/escort interpreting and scientific/technical translation. From its founding, the Center was chartered to meet the needs of the State for formally trained interpreters and translators through specialized education and training. CITS’s original academic program offered students the opportunity to earn language-specific certification in Simultaneous and Consecutive interpretation, and later in translation. Certificates were issued for the first time in May, 1989, in Chinese, Spanish, and Japanese, after a two-semester instructional sequence.

The training program offered at CITS was carried out with an appreciable focus on community interaction and service. The Center was commended for providing supporting activities that enabled students to acquire education and experience in the wider community. Furthermore, CITS staff served the role of consultant and advisor to local organizations for their interpretation and translation needs. The Center was also recognized for its efforts at community outreach through sponsorship of lectures, workshops, and seminars. After two full instructional sequences, the Center was awarded regular status in 1990. At that time the Center was one of

⁷ CITS was originally named the Center for Interpretation and Translation, but later ‘Studies’ was added to emphasize the academic and research components of the Center, and eliminate an erroneous perception that the Center was a service unit, in the business of providing translation and interpretation services.

only five institutions in the United States offering conference interpreter training, and one of only two which focused on Asian languages.

In 1995 the Center shifted the focus of education and training goals from language specific to generic courses (i.e., non-language-specific courses) in translation and interpretation, to meet the needs of the local market. This shift coincided with the growing need within the community, and particular the court, to have more qualified interpreters. CITS had a seat on the Supreme Court Committee for Court Interpreters, and began to offer workshops to local interpreter agencies to improve the quality of their community interpreters. This led CITS to offer courses in community interpreting. This also shift proved to be a forerunner to changes that have since become widely recognized in the local interpretation market, demonstrating CITS’s sensitivity to the needs of the community. In Hawai‘i’s current interpretation market, demand is greatest for training in court, medical, and community settings, and CITS’s course listings reflects this.

The Office on Equality and Access to the Courts. Before the advent of OLA, and foremost among organizations that provide services to LEP individuals in the State of Hawai‘i, is the Judiciary’s Office on Equality and Access to the Courts (OEAC). This is the office that ensures access to justice for LEP persons in all courts in Hawaii. The office began to strongly discuss language access issues in the early 1990’s by forming the Supreme Court Committee on Court Interpreters. (It later changed its name to include "and Language Access.") The committee’s first task was to discuss a solution to the problem of unqualified interpreters in the courts. Unlike many other government agencies, the OEAC operates in a domain where legal requirements, including the right to language access, are at the forefront. Basic legal processes cannot go forward without interpretation, and judges will postpone proceedings until interpreters are available, and have sometimes been known to throw out cases when interpreters are repeatedly unavailable.

The OEAC is tasked with providing language access to any LEP person in the court system that requests assistance. In 2013 alone, the OEAC serviced more than 8,000 cases, and spent more than \$500,000 on interpreter services (Hawaii State Judiciary Language Access Plan, 2013-2014). The office also facilitates a Basic Orientation Workshop (BOW) to educate potential interpreters, provides certification testing in conjunction with the National Consortium for Language Access in State Courts (NCSC, a.k.a. the Consortium), and collects limited data about interpreting events in the courts. The Consortium has played an important role in the

development of the Hawaii State Judiciary Court Interpreter Certification Program, as it has in many other states throughout the country. Although the OEAC sponsors seminars and other educational opportunities for would-be and in-service interpreters, it does not consider itself a training provider.

The OEAC’s Basic Orientation Workshop (BOW) is the most visible interpreter recruitment program in the state, and carries out annual training workshops on Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, Maui, and Hawai‘i Island. The OEAC, through its State of Hawai‘i Court Interpreter Certification Program, compiles a Court Interpreter Registry, which is available publicly via the judiciary’s website. The program requires a three step process before a name is added to the registry: attendance at the two day BOW, successful completion of a written English and ethics exam, and a criminal background check. This process ensures a minimum of preparation for interpreters listed on the registry, but is far from the amount of training needed to pass certification exams, or for interpreting the day-to-day activities of the courts. The OEAC offers interpreters the opportunity to join the Court Interpreters Registry after they have met the minimum qualifications for registering with the courts.

I will use the Judiciary’s Registry of Court Interpreters (henceforth, the Registry, see http://www.courts.state.hi.us/services/court_interpreting/list_of_registered_interpreters.html) as a reference population for interpreters in Hawai‘i. Specifically, the registry provides a baseline estimate for the number of interpreters in Hawai‘i, and lists levels of certification—both available and attained—for interpreters of different languages. Although not all Hawai‘i-based interpreters choose to be listed on the registry, it is easily identifiable as the most comprehensive publicly-available listing in the state, and many qualified interpreters and seasoned practitioners are registered.

The Office of Language Access. HRS §321C-6 establishes the Office of Language Access (OLA) to coordinate state-wide efforts to meet language access goals. Specifically, OLA was created:

to address the language access needs of limited English proficient persons and ensure meaningful access to services, programs, and activities offered by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government, including departments, offices, commissions, boards, or other agencies, and all covered entities, for limited English proficient persons.

(HRS § 321C-1, 2012)

Organizations that meet certain criteria⁸ are required to designate a language access coordinator to act as liaison to the OLA. Coordinators are responsible for establishing and implementing an LAP and conducting staff training. The OLA is mandated to provide oversight, coordination, and technical assistance to organizations and agencies developing a language access plan (LAP).

Staff training is vital to improve awareness of the need for trained, competent interpreters (Ozolins, 2000), and improved language access will be linked to the effectiveness of training efforts. Accordingly, the OLA will play a key role in improving awareness about the need for trained interpreters and requirements for language access in Hawai‘i.

Purpose

Within the broad trend of increasing demand for interpreting services across settings worldwide, Hawai‘i is an idiosyncratic piece of a complex puzzle. With new laws that govern how entities are to provide language access, the use of interpreters and other language specialists is becoming more regulated, and awareness of the need for interpreters is growing. It is a critical period in the development of the profession in Hawai‘i, and decisions made at the policy and professional level now will have far-reaching effects.

To date, little data has been collected to help stakeholders in Hawai‘i understand the complex process of professionalization taking place in the interpreting industry. Government agencies, organizations that receive government funds, and other covered entities are limited by their own perspectives and objectives, and often have no idea of the complexities involved in providing comprehensive, quality interpreting services. A systematic collection of data from Hawai‘i-based interpreters can provide a window into the market that may help stakeholders to understand developments in the field, respond to changes, and plan for the future.

As research enhances our understanding of interpreter mediated interaction, regulatory organizations and stakeholders must not only stay abreast of developments in local markets, but also developments in research and training, which are key to improving the quality of interpreted

⁸ The criteria to determine if a program or service provider must provide language access services is based on an analysis of four factors: (1) The number or proportion of limited English proficient persons served or encountered in the eligible service population; (2) The frequency with which limited English proficient persons come in contact with the services, programs, or activities; (3) The nature and importance of the services, programs, or activities; and (4) The resources available to the State or covered entity and the costs. (HRS §321C-3)

outcomes on the ground. The better stakeholders understand the broader picture, the better they can adapt to changes, introduce effective legislation, develop responsive training and certification, and generally encourage the professionalization of an interpretation industry. Groups that are impacted by language access laws include interpreters and their LEP clients, but also service providers, language service agencies, professional associations, and others. The perspectives of interpreters clearly has great informative potential.

This research attempts to locate Hawai‘i in terms of the national and international trends, and provide a framework to understand the development of Hawai‘i’s industry, foregrounding the individuals who provide interpretation services. Interpreters are on the ground every day doing the difficult job of interpreting in hospitals, social service settings, the courts, and elsewhere. They have an informed perspective. The type of data they can provide may help to improve training initiatives, and thereby improve interpreting outcomes on the ground.

My goal is to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the language backgrounds of Hawai‘i-based interpreters?
2. In which settings do Hawai‘i-based interpreters primarily work?
3. What can recent research teach us about the trend in growth that the interpreting industry in Hawai‘i has experienced in recent years?

METHOD

I conducted this research while working as graduate assistant at the Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS) at the University of Hawai‘i, in consultation with CITS faculty and faculty from the Department of Second Language Studies (Applied Linguistics). The data collection period was from August to December, 2014.

Participants

A total of 69 people who could read and write English⁹ completed the survey. In accordance with guidelines set at the Institutional Review Board (IRB), participants could, at their discretion, choose to answer or not answer any individual survey item. For this reason, individual survey

⁹ English was the appropriate language for the survey instrument because it is the language of service in Hawai‘i, and therefore the language most commonly in demand in interpretive settings.

items netted varying numbers of responses. Of the 69 respondents, 59 completed all four sections of the survey, while 10 only completed the first section (on professional experience). Roughly two thirds of the sample (40 out of 59 or 67.8%) were non-native speakers of English. Out of 67 respondents, 30 (44.8%) reported that interpreting was their primary source of income. A total of 45 respondents chose to provide additional information about their occupations. The most common occupations reported were teaching ($n = 11$), working for non-profit organizations or social service providers (e.g., Pacific Gateway Center, Hawai‘i Health Connector, Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i; $n = 8$), and (free-lance) translation ($n = 6$). Other respondents reported working in the medical or public health fields, in real estate or property management, in the hospitality industry, in business, paralegal work, as office assistants, and in retirement. Several people reported specialized jobs such as coordinating international businesses transactions, working as programmers and analysts, and one language specialist working as a rater for ETS® (Educational Testing Services). Respondents were not asked to report their gender or age.

Sampling

As a group, interpreters present unique challenges for sampling. They are widely diffused in the community, and work in various locations and settings. Although they are connected to the host culture by their strong language skills and cultural knowledge, they also share ties to specific linguistic and cultural groups that are more or less disconnected from the mainstream culture. In general, interpreters are loosely affiliated with professional associations, language services agencies, and service providers—or sometimes wholly unaffiliated—and rarely need to come to a centralized location, even to receive assignments or payment. This makes interpreters difficult to track down, difficult to approach, and can even make them difficult to positively identify. The sampling strategy described below reflects these circumstances.

The survey was dispersed through the medium of organizations that attract interpreters working in the Hawai‘i. Interpreters seeking work have a vested interest to maintain professional relationships with entities such as language services agencies, professional associations, and the Hawai‘i state courts, which are a major consumer of interpretation services and the most visible and active recruiter of potential interpreters in Hawai‘i. This strategy aims to collect data from interpreters that are active in seeking assignments, active in associations, those that are certified or otherwise approved, and those likely to seek (further) education,

training, and/or certification. The strategy depends upon interpreters' own efforts to make themselves visible, and the participation of those organizations listed above.

Importantly, the sampling strategy did not attempt to utilize service providers (such as hospitals, schools, and social service programs) as a means of survey distribution. Although these entities are consumers of interpretation services, they present many challenges for data collection because of their great number, wide dispersal throughout the state, and fluctuating demand for language access services. Such organizations may be more or less likely to either use a language service provider for their interpreting needs, or, if demand is less, use ad hoc interpreters or bilingual staff.

Materials

My research design takes advantage of recent improvements in data collection, and electronic delivery makes my survey cheaper and faster to send out, streamlines survey completion and submission, and allows for efficiencies troubleshooting as well as data tabulation and analysis. Zwischenberger (2009) has argued convincingly for the efficiency of this method of data collection for populations of interpreters.

The survey was administered to participants through an online hosting platform, SurveyMonkey®, and utilized proprietary web-based survey generator and data aggregator tools. The online host also provided access protocols to prevent multiple completions from a single IP address. The host also provides mobile-friendly hosting, which makes it possible to take the survey on a mobile phone or tablet computer. To take the survey, respondents had to go to a specific URL, or, for mobile or tablet users, scan a QR code, which were included on all promotional materials. When entered into the navigation bar of a browser, the URL led to a web page containing a consent form, which was followed by the survey, divided in four sections.

The survey (see Appendix A) includes a total of 42 questions, and took an average of 28 minutes to complete. Native English speakers had 34 questions to respond to, while non-native English speakers had 37 questions; the section on language background questions differed for these two groups. Questions were divided into four sections to break up the survey for the benefit of respondents: Professional Experience, Training and Professional Development, Motivation, and Language Background and Biographical Information. Individual questions were

placed in the most applicable section, but question content is not necessarily exclusive to section theme.

Procedures

My investigation of previously published research was not able to discover any prior efforts to systematically collect information from interpreters working in Hawai‘i. In a review of 40 studies that used surveys to collect data from conference interpreters, Pöchhacker (2009) concludes that methods and instruments used in previous studies have been inconsistent. I reviewed several of the surveys reported in these studies and from among them selected several topics that appeared relevant to present research interests. In order to hone the survey to prioritize topics of concern to Hawai‘i-based interpreters, I invited interpreters and students in an interpretation class to a series of focus group meetings for further discussion.

Focus groups. Focus group participants included students in a class offered through the University of Hawai‘i’s Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies. I conducted a series of focus groups with students from a court interpreting class offered at CITS¹⁰. Participants from seven different language backgrounds took part in the discussion, including active community interpreters and traditional college students. Students were asked for their voluntary participation in a group meeting before or after class hours. Groups were divided by language background to manage group size and facilitate communication between participants. Focus groups had two, three, or four participants each.

Focus group interactions were organized around a handout (Appendix B). Discussions organized around the handout provided details about the landscape of the interpretation marketplace in Hawai‘i, such as names of government agencies, industry, common locations of interpreting assignments, training options, companies of importance to working interpreters, etc. Focus group discussions helped to identify relevant topics for interpreters working in Hawai‘i, and survey sections were ultimately grounded in these topics. Information gathered during the focus groups improved face validity and relevance of the survey instrument. The high rate of survey completion (approximately 85%), despite a relatively long average completion time of 28 minutes, is evidence of the effectiveness of this approach.

¹⁰ The some of the participants in the class were sponsored by a grant from the Department of Health, which included active interpreters from a variety of backgrounds, including Micronesian language speakers.

After conducting focus groups, I created an initial draft of the survey. I reviewed the survey questions in consultation with experts in several fields. CITS faculty members reviewed survey items and provided feedback; an expert researcher in the field of survey design and implementation reviewed the instrument for potential issues and provided feedback on procedures for data gathering other practical considerations; an active interpreter reviewed the survey to ensure intelligibility and face validity of survey items.

Piloting. With the objective of limiting exposure and practice effects on a small pool of prospective respondents, I met with four colleagues from diverse language backgrounds, as well as one active interpreter, to pilot the survey and discuss their perceptions. Each of the five piloting participants took a simulated run through the survey using a preview function in the software. This allowed piloting and troubleshooting within the actual online survey interface. While completing the survey, piloting participants were instructed to take note of any problems, especially those pertaining to understanding survey items and navigating the online interface. After each participant completed a pilot run, we discussed elements of the survey such as navigation, ease of use, presentation of survey items, and any problems noted. This process led to several clarifications of wording and minor restructuring of question and answer options within the interface.

Deployment of the survey. I chose the 7th Annual Hawai‘i Conference on Language Access as the initial launch site for the survey. In Hawai‘i, this conference is the central event in the calendar year for those with an interest in language access, and is attended by government and non-government organizations, industry and community leaders in various fields, as well as many interpreters and translators. At the conference, the survey was promoted by means of flyers, promotional bookmarks, and word of mouth. Conference participants could take the survey at the CITS exhibition table, and were encouraged to share promotional materials with fellow interpreters not present at the conference.

Subsequent diffusion of the survey relied on the cooperation of language services agencies, professional interpreter associations, and word of mouth. A promotional email, containing a

URL link to the survey, was also sent to 299 interpreters listed on the Hawai‘i Judiciary’s public Registry of Court Interpreters.¹¹

RESULTS

Languages

To establish the representativeness of my sample, I conducted a chi-square (χ^2) test for goodness of fit, to compare the frequency of interpreters for each language observed in the sample to those in the Registry. In this test, the Registry serves as a hypothetical population against which the sample is compared to determine whether the observed frequency of interpreters for each language is related.

Of the 42 spoken languages on the Registry of court interpreters, 27 list less than five interpreters per group. The sample, if related to the Registry, is expected to have at or near zero cases for each of these languages because of its smaller size ($n = 79$). To improve reliability of the test, those languages listed on the Registry which include under five interpreters were grouped together before the χ^2 test was conducted. Languages in the sample were grouped following the same guidelines, which are detailed below. Groups are indicated at the bottom of Table 1.

Table 1

<i>Language Groups Observed in Hawai‘i — Chi-Square Test for Goodness of Fit</i>											
Language group	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	Total
Registry, observed:	17.0	40.0	54.0	36.0	25.0	57.0	20.0	91.0	37.0	11.0	388.0
expected:	19.1	36.6	54.8	35.7	26.6	53.2	23.3	88.1	37.4	13.3	388.0
Sample, observed:	6.0	4.0	12.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	15.0	8.0	5.0	79.0
expected:	3.9	7.4	11.2	7.3	5.4	10.8	4.7	17.9	7.6	2.7	79.0
Total:	23.0	44.0	66.0	43.0	32.0	64.0	28.0	106.0	45.0	16.0	467.0

Language groups: a) Cantonese, b) Filipino (except Tagalog), c) Japanese, d) Malayo-Polynesian, e) Mandarin, f) Other, g) Romance (except Spanish), h) Spanish, i) Tagalog, j) Thai & Lao.

¹¹ The Registry lists 388 potential interpreters. However, the names of interpreters who work in more than one language pair appear in more than one place on the list. Also, some interpreters do not list an email address. In addition, five email addresses were broken or otherwise disabled.

Two criteria were used for grouping languages. First was number of members in a language group: if a language enjoyed enough membership (i.e., individual interpreters or cases in the group), it was grouped independently for purposes of the test. This criteria applies to Cantonese, Japanese¹², Mandarin, Spanish, and Tagalog. The second criteria for grouping was determined by a combination of two features: geographic location and family relationship between languages. These criteria apply to the Filipino, Malayo-Polynesian, Romance, and Thai/Lao groups. The Malayo-Polynesian group, for example, includes interpreters from both Micronesian and Polynesian language backgrounds, and represents a total of 11 languages. The final, group labelled “Other,” was a conglomeration of all languages that have low membership on the registry. Such diverse languages as German, Russian, Vietnamese, Taiwanese, and Arabic are grouped together here. These languages are unrelated linguistically, but share the characteristic of being represented by comparatively low numbers of native speakers in the islands, although many have great numbers of native speakers elsewhere.

The results of the test show that the frequency of interpreters for each language on the Registry is not statistically different from the frequencies observed in the sample ($\chi^2 = 11.214$, $df = 9$, $p > 0.10$; see Table 1). In other words, the sample and the Registry list similar proportions of interpreters for each language. This indicates that the sample and the Registry, independently, may be representative of the proportion of interpreters available for each language in Hawai‘i. However, the Registry lists more names and languages, making it a more precise estimate of interpreters in the population. Furthermore, the similar distribution of languages between the sample and the Registry shows evidence that the survey was accessible to all language groups in Hawai‘i, and provides evidence of even coverage during sampling.

Language Background

As mentioned above, roughly one third of the interpreters in the sample were native speakers of English (19/59 or 32.2%). This finding is in line with as previous studies, which have reported that the majority of interpreters are immigrants in the countries where they interpret (Wadensjö, 2001).

To get a better picture of interpreters’ educational and linguistic backgrounds, respondents were asked to report the number of years they had lived in the country where their second

¹² A single Okinawan interpreter on the registry was grouped with Japanese for analysis.

language is spoken (i.e., host country). The mean for number of years lived in the host country for L2 English speakers, 22.82 years ($SD = 13.75$), was compared to the mean for L1 English speakers, 13.40 years ($SD = 13.22$). Using this data, I conducted an independent samples t -test to determine if there was a significant difference between these two groups in the number of years spent in the host country. T -test results indicate that L2 English speakers had lived a significantly longer period of time in the host country, on average, than their native-English speaking counterparts ($t = 2.426$, $p < 0.02$, $df = 1, 51$, two-tailed).

Further analysis revealed that ESL speakers accounted for the majority of languages reported by respondents, with a total of 19 languages spoken by 40 ESL respondents. As a group, these respondents accounted for four Micronesian languages (Chuukese, Kosraean, Marshallese, and Ponapean), and a number of less-commonly taught languages, such as Lao, Hiligaynon, Ilokano, and Shanghainese.

In comparison, a total of seven second languages were spoken by 19 native English speakers. As a group, these respondents were most likely to speak Spanish ($n = 9$), followed by Japanese ($n = 4$). Other languages reported by native English speakers include Chinese (Cantonese, $n = 1$; Mandarin, $n = 1$), Portuguese ($n = 2$), and French ($n = 1$). Three native English speaking respondents chose not to disclose their non-English language. As a group, native speakers of English accounted for one LLD, Ni‘ihau Hawaiian.

*Settings*¹³

The survey addressed setting in two ways. For means of comparison between interpreters, respondents were asked to list all settings where they had experience interpreting. To show how demand for interpreters breaks down across interpretive setting, respondents were asked in which settings they work most often.

¹³ In the survey, setting was defined as:

Court interpreting — in the district, circuit, family, immigration or Federal court in Hawai‘i

Legal interpreting — in a law office for an attorney and client, or for legal proceedings such as a deposition

Medical interpreting — in a doctor’s office, at a hospital, or at a medical clinic

Community interpreting — at a social service program such as welfare, housing, social security, Catholic Charities, etc.

Conference interpreting — at a conference or meeting

Telephone interpreting — over the telephone

Video interpreting — over a video or Skype connection

Of 66 respondents, 53 (or 80.3%) had experience interpreting in court and community settings, and via telephone, respectively. A further 50 respondents (75.7%) had experience interpreting in legal and medical settings, respectively. Exactly half (50%; 33 respondents) had experience interpreting in conference settings. Only 24 respondents (36.4%) had experience video interpreting.

Asked to indicate the setting where they work most often, 19 respondents (29%) reported that they interpret most often in court settings. Medical was second, with 16 respondents (24%) indicating that they interpret most often in medical settings. This was followed by telephone (11 respondents; 17%), legal (nine respondents; 14%), community (eight respondents; 12%) and conference (three; 5%). No respondent chose video interpreting as the setting where they interpret most often. Video interpreting was the setting most likely to be marked “not applicable”, followed by conference interpreting, indicating that respondents had no experience in these settings. Also of note, legal interpreting was most likely to be the second most common interpretive setting for respondents, netting 15 (or 23%) of respondents.

If legal and court interpreting are combined, they account for 43% of all respondents, which means that, according to survey results, court and legal settings are the most common interpretive settings in Hawai‘i, followed by medical settings.

Analysis of the Judiciary’s Registry of Court Interpreters

The Hawaii State Judiciary Court Interpreter Certification Program’s Registry of Court Interpreters includes a wealth of information in its own right. The OEAC, which compiles the Registry, is the state’s largest provider of certification testing for language interpreters. I present some analysis of the Registry below, as it provides context for analyzing the current state of the interpreting industry in Hawai‘i.

Among survey respondents, 49 out of 62 (79.0%) indicated that they are listed in the registry. Individuals listed on the registry must have attended a basic orientation workshop (BOW), passed a written English and ethics exam, and passed a criminal background check, at a minimum (see http://www.courts.state.hi.us/services/court_interpreting/becoming_a_court_interpreter.html).

The Registry, itself an appendix of the Court Interpreter Certification Program, includes supplementary information about the certification program, and details about potential

interpreters listed therein, including: island of residence, tier designation, contact information, and non-English language(s) spoken. As of July 2014, the registry included the names of 388 people working in 42 spoken languages.

The registry lists 29 languages for which certification is available.¹⁴ Of those 29 languages, roughly 40% (12 languages, including ASL), offer certification up to the highest level, “certified master” (tier 6), based on high passage of the Consortium Full Exam. Tier 5 is available only to sign language interpreters, and is based on a separate test, developed independently of the Consortium. Certification up to tier 4, designated “certified” on the Registry, is based on the Consortium Full Exam, but indicates a lower score. The Consortium Abbreviated Exam, which allows for certification up to the “approved” level (tier 3), is available in two languages. The highest level of certification available for an additional 13 languages on the table is the “conditionally approved” designation (tier 2), based on lower passage of the Consortium Abbreviated Exam, or outside testing (such as Lionsbridge). The highest level of accreditation available to interpreters working in the remaining complement of 13 languages is “registered”, which measures neither proficiency in any non-English language, or ability to interpret.

As of 2014, 346 of the 388 spoken language interpreters listed on the registry (89%) are registered only (tier 1 of a possible 6; see <http://www.courts.state.hi.us/docs/services/interpreters.pdf>). 42 individuals are listed at tier 2 or better. If we move the bar to tier 3 or better (designated “approved”) the percentage drops to around 5% (21 of 388 or 5.4%).

Certification Among Survey Respondents

Survey question 11 asked, “Are you a certified interpreter?” About 60% percent of respondents (37 out of 62) indicated that they hold certification. The following open-ended question, “If yes, what certification do you hold, and what year were you certified?” gave respondents the option to provide additional information. Responses to these questions are briefly described below.

¹⁴ However, it should perhaps list only 27, as two of the languages listed are not certifiable past tier 1, indicating there is no testing available for these. In addition to these two, a further 13 languages listed in the registry offer no testing or certification—bringing the total to 15 languages listed on the Registry for which no testing is available.

Among the 37 respondents who indicated they possess certification, six chose not to answer the follow-up question. In addition, four respondents who answered “no” to question 11 unexpectedly volunteered follow-up information. The resulting 35 responses indicate a range of ways that Hawai‘i interpreters deal with the question of certification.

The largest group, which included 13 respondents (21.0%), offered recognizable, clearly described certifications including NCSC certification through the Hawai‘i State Judiciary, Federal Certification through the FCICE, certification through Lionbridge, and conference interpreter certification through CITS. Eight respondents listed “registry” or “tier 1” as a means of indicating certification, which is technically inaccurate, as registry indicates basic training but not any type of certification. Six respondents reported inadequately described or unspecified certification including “Hawaii state interpreter,” “Court interpreter,” “community interpreter,” and “medical interpreter.” Another four respondents provided details of training initiatives and workshops attended, such as Bridging the Gap (a 40 hour course in medical interpreting), a medical terminology workshop offered recently on O‘ahu, and interpreting courses at University of Hawai‘i, CITS. (Some of these issue certificates of attendance, but not performance-based certification.) Two respondents indicated membership with the American Translators Association (ATA) as a credential. If we tabulate results from all respondents, 19 referred to certification through the court certification initiatives (albeit inaccurately in eight cases where registry was reported as certification), and seven referred to certification through medical training or certification initiatives. This gives some indication about the relative importance of these training initiatives for interpreters working in Hawai‘i. But one of the most informative responses, and perhaps the one that best encapsulates all of the above, came from a respondent who indicated that he/she is not certified: “How to get there? I need to get a certificate [to] be certify[ed].”

Motivation and Self-Evaluation

Table 2 shows respondents’ answers to nine statements, displayed at left. For reference, in Table 1 statements are numerically labeled according to the order in which they appeared on the survey. The percentages and corresponding frequencies (i.e., number of individuals who chose a particular response) for each item are displayed under the “descriptors” column, at center. Values for responses, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), are displayed

across the top, center. These were used to calculate a mean for each item, displayed at right, along with total responses per item (n) and standard deviations (SD) for each item.

Figure 1 displays the mean value for each item, sorted from high to low. The highest observed mean is 4.62, indicating strong agreement for item five, “My job is interesting and challenging.” The lowest mean value, 3.35, is observed for item nine, “I am an active member in the local network of interpreters.” This item also has the lowest mode, at three, indicating that the most common response to the statement is neutral. This indicates that survey respondents have relatively low levels of involvement with professional associations and community outreach initiatives.

Standard deviations are reported in Table 2 as a measure of variability for each item. The lowest standard deviation value, 0.56, is observed for item five, “My job is interesting and challenging.” This item elicited the greatest similarity (lowest variability) of responses, indicating agreement across respondents: Note that this item has the highest mode, at 5 (*Strongly Agree*), and, as noted above, the highest overall mean value. The greatest standard deviation, 1.33, is observed for the item, “I see a future for myself as a professional interpreter.” This item elicited the widest variety of responses, indicating disagreement across respondents: Note that, although the mode is 5 (*Strongly Agree*) it also shows the highest frequency of the rating 1 (*Strongly Disagree*). This finding is concerning, as it indicates that on the topic of whether or not they have a future as a professional interpreter, respondents are more divided than any other item. On the other hand, according to the discussion of professionalization of community interpreting above, this is not unexpected.

Table 2

*From the Interpreters’ Perspective — Descriptors, Frequencies, Percentages**

weighted values: descriptors:	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Statements:	percentages / frequencies:							
1) As an interpreter, I help my community.	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	3.39% 2	37.29% 22	57.63% 34	59	4.49	0.73
2) As an interpreter, people see me as a professional.	3.45% 2	1.72% 1	12.07% 7	41.38% 24	41.38% 24	58	4.16	0.95
3) As an interpreter, my job is difficult to do well.	6.90% 4	13.79% 8	18.97% 11	37.93% 22	22.41% 13	58	3.55	1.19
4) I prepare carefully for each assignment.	0.00% 0	1.72% 1	6.90% 4	41.38% 24	50.00% 29	58	4.40	0.70
5) My job is interesting and challenging.	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.45% 2	31.03% 18	65.52% 38	58	4.62	0.56
6) I see a future for myself as a professional interpreter.	10.53% 6	7.02% 4	14.04% 8	28.07% 16	40.35% 23	57	3.81	1.33
7) I continue to develop my professional skills as an interpreter.	1.72% 1	5.17% 3	6.90% 4	29.31% 17	56.90% 33	58	4.34	0.95
8) I often attend workshops, conferences, or classes on translation and interpretation.	3.51% 2	7.02% 4	28.07% 16	35.09% 20	26.32% 15	57	3.74	1.04
9) I am an active member in the local network of interpreters.	7.02% 4	14.04% 8	38.60% 22	17.54% 10	22.81% 13	57	3.35	1.19

* Items on this table appear in the order that they were presented on the survey.

Several other findings can be inferred from the results presented in Table 2 and Figure 1. Responses offer insights into interpreters’ motivation (item one), interaction with outsiders (item two), and self-evaluation (items four and seven), involvement in the community (items eight and nine), and other areas. Figure 1 clearly shows that interpreters feel positively about the work they are performing in the community. This is indicated by items one and two (“my job is interesting and challenging,” and “as an interpreter, I help my community”), which netted the highest mean values in Figure 1. Items seven and eight, (“I continue to develop my professional skills as an interpreter,” and, “I often attend workshops, conference, or classes on translation and interpretation”) present an interesting comparison: Both items refer to the professional development of interpreters, although the former is an internal assessment, while the latter is an

assessment of external opportunities for professional development. The difference in means here may indicate that respondents depend primarily on self-study for professional development, as the data show that external opportunities for development are lower. An alternative analysis of these data is that interpreters develop and improve their skills by working experience rather than at for psychometric soundness before inferences can be drawn at this level of detail.

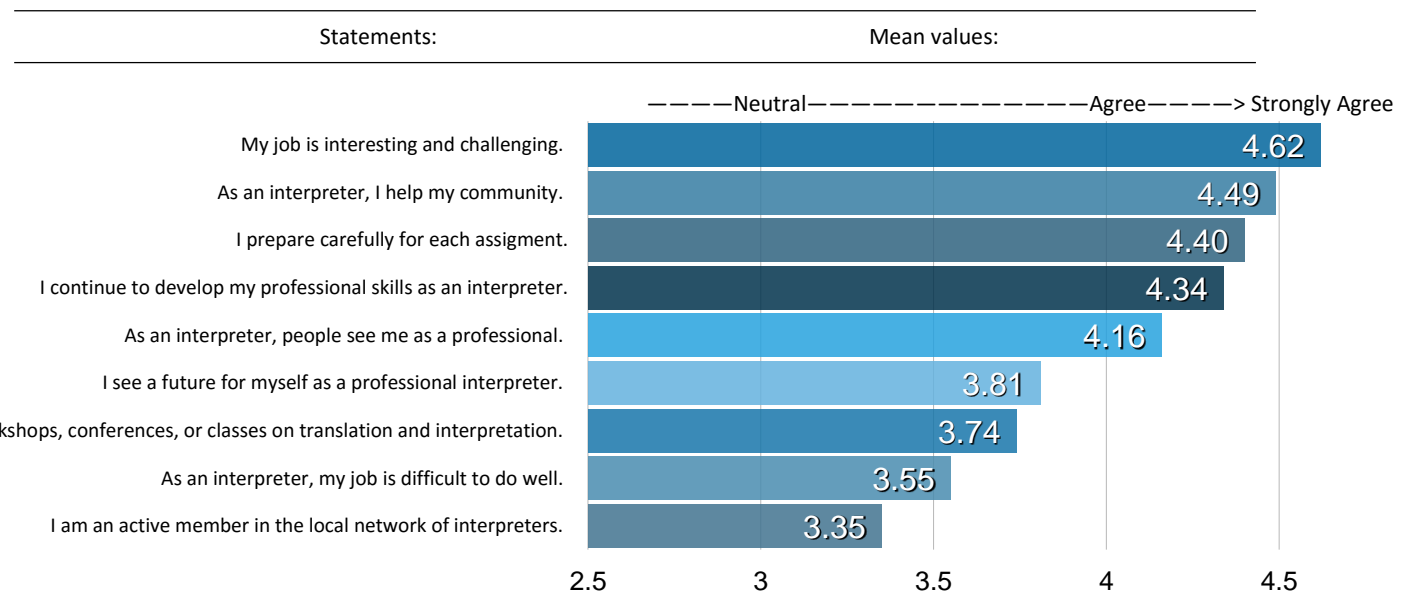


Figure 1. From the Interpreters' Perspective — Sorted by Mean Value

DISCUSSION

Key findings from the survey can be briefly summarized. The language background of survey respondents is not statistically different from that of the Registry, which indicates even coverage, at least across interpreters listed on the Registry. Most interpreters surveyed are not native speakers of English. On average, L2 English speakers reported living more years in the host country than their L1 English counterparts. L2 English respondents also account for the majority of languages reported in the survey, including languages of limited diffusion (LLDs). Court is the most common interpretive setting reported by respondents, followed by medical settings. Conference settings are the least common, and video interpreting appears to be an underused resource. Interpreter certification is rare in Hawaii: among survey respondents about 19.4% indicated recognizable certification, while on the Registry only about 11% of interpreters are *conditionally approved* or better. Interpreter motivation, self-assessment, and community involvement, although generally positive, show mixed results, the implications of which I discuss further below.

Research Question 1: What are the Language Backgrounds of Hawai‘i-Based Interpreters?

Results from the chi-square test reported above indicate that the court interpreter registry may be a useful tool for determining the relative frequency of potential interpreters for languages interpreted within the state. Although the majority of people on the Registry are under-trained, they are an important population because they have taken initial steps to become qualified interpreters. The ability to estimate the number and distribution of potential interpreters has important implications, as availability of specific languages is critical to service providers seeking to comply with Hawai‘i’s language access laws, especially by means of spoken language interpretation. Results about the availability of potential interpreters is also useful for recruiting and training initiatives because service providers can compare them to their needs to determine which language groups suffer from scarcity of available interpreters.

Lived language experience. Results from the survey show that immigrants to Hawai‘i have spent significantly more time living in the host country than their English-native-speaker counterparts. It is also clear that L2 speakers of English provide the majority of interpreting services in Hawai‘i. This is in line with previous findings: “Most community interpreters are

themselves members of minority groups in the host country, but compared to other members of these groups they are relatively assimilated into the host society and familiar with its institutions” (Wadensjö, 2001, p. 34). If Hawai‘i is to meet interpreting demands in the future, well educated, competent second language speakers of English will be an important part of the solution.

Research Question 2: In Which Settings do Hawai‘i-Based Interpreters Primarily Work?

Survey results indicate that the most common interpretive setting among respondents is court interpreting, with nearly one in three respondents interpreting most often in court. This was followed by medical settings, which one in four respondents indicated as their primary interpreting environment. By comparison, one in twenty respondents chose conference settings as their primary interpreting environment.

Furthermore, when combined into a single category, court and legal settings account for 43% interpretation events, and are the most common interpretive settings across respondents, followed by medical settings. If this finding holds true in subsequent studies, then court interpreting may be an advantageous focus for training initiatives in the state. Pöchhacker (2007) describes court interpreting as an critical middle ground between styles of interpreting based on several factors: the focus on specialized vocabulary, the use of various temporal modes (sight, consecutive, simultaneous), the facilitative role of the interpreter in providing an individual access to a public service, and the common occurrence of minority languages on the part of parties requiring interpretation. These features are variously characteristic of conference and community interpreting, respectively, which indicates that training interpreters for court settings is a way to broadly cover skills needed for various interpretive settings. However, it is noteworthy that 20 percent of survey respondents had no experience in court and that training initiatives must be varied.

Research Question 3: What Can Recent Research Teach Us about the Trend in Growth That the Interpreting Industry in Hawai‘i Has Experienced in Recent Years?

Approaches to providing interpretation services varies around the world according to attitudes of government, legal precedents, cultural diversity (and the recognition thereof), and many other dimensions (for an overview of approaches to provision of interpretation needs by country and region, see Ozolins, 2000). Until recently, the field of interpreting focused almost

exclusively on the international needs for countries to communicate with one another. Ad hoc provision of interpreting services, which has been routine since time immemorial, are being replaced by the services of trained interpreters as recognition of societal diversity continues. Taking the right steps now can encourage the professionalization of interpreting in the future.

Provision of language access services is highly context specific; demand for specific languages fluctuates by country and by region. Along these boundaries, demand for interpretation services varies by institutional setting as well. Moreover, different service providers constitute different interpretive settings, which place unique demands on the interpreter. Hawai‘i is one of only a few states that have enacted legislation that calls for comprehensive language access at the state level (Wang, 2009). However, it remains to be seen how meaningful access will be achieved on the ground. Trained, capable interpreters are still a small minority, and many service providers face a struggle to meet demand for qualified interpreters.

In Hawai‘i, legal parameters form the basis of language access; the legal approach is also taken in the U.S. at the federal level. Such legalistic approaches offer the particular advantage of better organization of interpretation services within the court system, which is exemplified in Hawai‘i. Court interpreting is, according to survey results, the most common interpretive setting in Hawai‘i, and certification programs for court interpreters have helped to introduce certification into the local interpretation marketplace. Given the legalistic approach to provision of interpreter services in the United States in general and in Hawai‘i specifically, and the effectiveness of the OEAC in raising awareness, providing basic orientation to would-be interpreters, and offering certification testing, the field of court interpreting will likely continue to be the center of activity and positive change in Hawai‘i in the foreseeable future. The weakness of the legalistic approach is that it does not necessarily correspond to improved coverage in other interpreting sectors (Ozolins, 2000).

Training and specialization. Training is the first step to improving the situation on the ground (Mikkelson, 2013), and trained interpreters will be critical to government agencies’ and other covered entities’ attempts to comply with language access legislation. The specialization of the field has led to broad recognition that training must be specific to interpretive setting, and has contributed to the professional standing of community interpreters. Training must cover the diverse specializations within the the field of interpreting, and must be updated to reflect new

theoretical insights offered by the academic field of Interpreting Studies (Angelelli, 2004; Niska, 2005). In addition, training creates practitioners who help to regulate the market in the areas where they practice (Mikkelson, 1996). As provision of interpretation in institutional settings shifts gradually from an ad hoc to a comprehensive approach, the public must be educated about the role of the interpreter. Well-trained interpreters are capable of providing this education through simple interaction, because they adhere to professional ethics and facilitate improved outcomes: through interaction with such interpreters, the public learns about the role of the interpreter. Well-trained interpreters function as a cohesive unit capable of informing outsiders of what the interpreter's role is (Mikkelson, 1996), what it is not, and help to ensure that professional standards of practice are met, regardless of the language being interpreted.

The relationship between training and certification is fairly straightforward: Practitioners will not be able to pass certification tests without training, and if relevant training is not available, the validity and appropriateness of certification testing may be challenged by the interpreters themselves. The FCICE serves as a case in point, where certification was introduced before appropriate training had been formulated. This made the test very difficult to pass, and many failed. As a result, the FCICF has a notorious reputation and has been the object of much abuse from former examinees; it even has faced litigation (*Seltzer v. Foley*, 1980) seeking an injunction against its use on grounds that it is invalid and inappropriate. The lawsuit was ultimately quashed, but the point remains that education initiatives should precede certification attempts.

The availability of certification has clearly had a positive impact in the court interpreting sector, and has begun to effect medical interpreting in a similar way. Nevertheless, provision of appropriate training and certification may prove difficult for those interpreting languages with limited resources, especially LLDs. For many such languages, development of certification exams is not possible, and must be preceded by advanced training of practitioners who have the expertise and capacity to develop and rate exams. Until that happens, the focus of stakeholders must be to improve training options, especially those that apply to specific industries.

CONCLUSION

Limitations

The survey design in this paper relies on data collection from a sub-group of respondents from among the population so that the sample is representative of the overall population (Brown, 2001). The aim of this design is to accurately represent a population of interest. However, sampling represents one of the key limitations in generalizing the findings of my survey to the population of Hawai‘i interpreters. In simple terms, it is difficult to know whether survey respondents are representative of interpreters working in Hawai‘i. Below, I will discuss the difficulties that past and present research has faced in estimating the population of interpreters working in the field and my strategies for confirming the representativeness of my sample.

A common strategy for sampling is to compile a list of all potential respondents and then send out the survey to the individuals on the list. This allows researchers to generate an estimate of return rate and coverage achieved by the survey. In the present case, however, the population of interest lacks defining characteristics that allow for this type of sampling procedure.

According to the US Bureau of Labor statistics, there are between 40 and 210 interpreters and translators working in Hawai‘i as of May, 2013. However, this population estimate is complicated by its wide range, and combination of interpreter and translator into one occupational category. In Hawai‘i licensure is not a requirement, certification is not the norm, and there is no official registry of Hawai‘i-based interpreters, all of which makes the target population difficult to define for sampling purposes.

Previous survey-type research in the field has primarily targeted conference interpreters, very often with a focus on AIIC members (e.g., Bühler, 1986; Zwischenberger, 2009). Although AIIC members are arguably the best organized population of interpreters anywhere, sampling and, more specifically, defining the survey population is a complicating factor even for researchers working with registered AIIC interpreters (Pochhäcker, 2009). The difficulty is that AIIC members may be classified in any of several ways, as most work on a freelance basis and may also work as translators or as language experts in other capacities, while only about seven percent are staff interpreters (Altman, 2001). For researchers investigating community interpreters, these complications are multiplied by the number of languages interpreted, the wide

variety of settings and locations where interpreters work, the low rate of certification among practitioners, and an undetermined rate of affiliation with professional associations and agencies.

The decentralized and unstandardized nature of community interpreting means that registry and certification are not useful characteristics for defining this population. The present study relies on self-reported language background of participants to determine whether the sample surveyed is proportionally similar to the Registry of Court Interpreters, the largest publicly available listing of interpreters in the state. Test results indicate that these two groups are not statistically different in their composition, hence both may be representative of the population of interpreters in Hawai‘i. This argues for the representativeness of the sample.

Another limitation comes from relying on a newly created survey instrument. As Clifford (2005) points out, when the object of study is being used as the sample and the data from the sample is being used to make inferences about the population, psychometric soundness becomes more important. Testing the soundness of the instrument allows for more structured inferencing and is a hallmark of carefully conducted research. In the process of developing the instrument, I conducted multiple interviews with working interpreters and consulted with experienced researchers and industry experts, but ultimately, the instrument could not be thoroughly tested before application in the field.

In recognition of these difficulties, the survey was designed to allow for abundant written qualitative feedback. This feedback provided a means to assess the degree to which survey items were understandable and applicable to respondents. These measures offered a basic reading of validity, and I believe merit further analysis, especially to improve any subsequent data gathering strategies. And while the reliability of survey items and constructs could not be systematically reviewed as of this time, evidence, in the form of qualitative feedback provided by respondents, shows that measurements generally correspond well with the content they purport to measure.

Electronic data collection has made survey-based research significantly more streamlined and efficient in recent years. Because the survey is online, internet connection and smart phones improve the ease with which prospective participants can become respondents. This may favor respondents with internet access, but in general it makes the survey easily available to a large number of potential respondents. Future data collection must take into consideration those communities of interpreters who may not have internet at home, and those unfamiliar to electronic surveys.

Challenges in Hawai‘i

There are many barriers to providing quality, comprehensive interpretation services in the community. Kohn, Stubblefield-Tave, and Seifert (2004) cite cost “especially for small providers with minimal demand for [interpretation] service,” questions of “liability, lack of awareness about legal requirements, difficulty assessing the qualifications of interpreters, time burdens for training and deploying staff, and a lack of knowledge about why interpreted and important and what resources are available” (p. 20). Although Hawai‘i is certain to face its own particular challenges, there are steps that can increase the odds of good outcomes.

Organizations with a stake in language access face a number of challenges such as working with interpreters from diverse cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. Perhaps foremost among these are PIAs, who face the difficult challenge of organizing interpreters from very different walks of life into a cohesive and responsive unit, particularly as most interpreters work on a freelance basis. These difficulties are compounded by the diversification and specialization of the interpreting profession, the various professional organizations and language service agencies to which individual interpreters pay their allegiance, and confusion about training and certification.

Theoretically, there is a relatively small body of capable interpreters who are retained by stakeholders for the majority of interpreting assignments in courts, hospitals, and social service settings, locations in the state where demand is highest. Entities that frequently utilize interpreters’ services stand better chances of recognizing good interpreting outcomes and rewarding them by funneling more assignments to capable interpreters. However, disorder in the field, which is the result of lack of training, certification, and meaningful qualification, may lead service providers and end users to rely on ad hoc interpreters, especially where interpretation services are sporadically needed. Such disorder leaves opportunities for un- and under-trained interpreters to secure assignments, potentially on a repeat basis. Service providers may not know the law and may not know where else to turn.

Market stability is an objective that will be helped along by the overall professionalization of the interpreting industry. The process of professionalization has many moving parts, and the continued development of interpreter training programs, the growth of PIAs, and government grants to train interpreters and create resources will all play a part. The training initiatives need

to capture the interest of new, would-be interpreters, and need to be varied enough to adapt to a multiplicity of languages and interpretive settings, and fluctuating demand. Stakeholders will benefit from a perspective that has a basis in research, which has not yet been established.

A structure that will allow comprehensive language access is beginning to take shape in Hawai‘i, with the OEAC positioned at the cornerstone. The emergence of at least two PIAs in Hawai‘i is a sign of the continued growth of this structure. Locally based language services agencies are now well established, and their number continues to grow, which is indication of a competitive market. The state has taken steps in response, and OLA has a mandate to educate service providers and covered entities that are at risk of lawsuit about provision of interpreter services. Meanwhile, the Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies, the state’s primary training institution, has been offering training that focuses on community/medical/court interpreting for nearly two decades. All of this affects the situation on the ground.

The end goal of language access is comprehensive coverage for LEP people of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As interpretation has specialized, its various branches have matured at different rates and to different degrees. This growth has fractured the field, and, in the U.S. at least, there are competing models for certification, with each setting developing its own accreditation model, and sometimes more than one (Bancroft, 2005). Ozolins (2000) argues that a generalist accreditation is better for comprehensiveness than sector-specific certification. Specialized certification is useful, but has some drawbacks. For example, it can cause confusion among end users, when interpreters and LSAs send out “mixed signals ... about who is competent to offer which service” (Mikkelson, 2013; p. 70). At the same time, certification models are being driven forward by sector-specific needs. These certification models provide a gauge with which to measure interpreter competence, and may also motivate would-be interpreters to build the skills they need to become certified. This in turn leads to better interpreting on the ground, which is the end goal.

Solutions for Hawai‘i. Professional development is one area where investment is likely to see large returns. “Where service provision comes mainly from freelancers who may meet each other and their institutional contacts infrequently, then professional development increasingly becomes the responsibility of individual practitioners themselves.” (Ozolins, 2000, p. 27) This means making training affordable to would-be interpreters, who are often members of marginalized linguistic groups, is critical. Training must also be adaptable to the diverse

language backgrounds of would-be interpreters, and based on the latest research. Such programs can be tailored to meet the needs of the local community by means of data gathering efforts such as this research project.

Suggestions for Future Research

The present study collects quantitative and qualitative data that may be analyzed to identify professional interpreters based on assessment of a number of factors, including: assignments completed on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis, experience in different interpretive settings, membership with professional organizations, affiliation with language services agencies, qualifications and certifications held, and training programs completed. However, I was unable to discover any previous research to suggest analysis of this type, or to determine levels that would indicate professional standing—or otherwise. Further research is needed to determine whether data reported in the survey offers sufficient data to identify members of the population of interest (i.e., professional interpreters), and conversely to identify ad hoc, un- and undertrained interpreters by comparative analysis.

A survey instrument that could distinguish trained, professional interpreters from in-training, untrained and ad hoc interpreters, by means of factorial analysis, for example, would be useful to all stakeholders. In the current Hawai‘i marketplace for interpretation, this type of data is particularly relevant, where there is very little credentialing available to positively identify capable interpreters. This paper reports on exploratory, hypothesis-generating research which I hope will provide baseline data and also a research model for improved data gathering strategies to develop further hypotheses.

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Appendix A

The Questionnaire Design

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

3) Is the money earned from interpreting assignments your primary means of income?

- Yes
 No

Do you have another job, and if so, what do you do? *Please explain briefly*

4) Please indicate your employment status as an interpreter:

- I work for an agency.
 I work with an agency as an independent contractor.
 I work at a company where I am paid as a staff interpreter / in-house interpreter.
 I work independently / I am self-employed.
 I am a bilingual staff member who provides services in English as well as my non-English language(s).
 I get most of my assignments from the judiciary.
 Other (please explain)

5) How do you usually communicate with clients and service providers about interpreting assignments?

Note: write "1" for most often, "2" for second most, and so on. Write "n/a" if not applicable.

- ___ By phone (including text messages, landlines, cell phones and smart phones.)
___ By e-mail
___ In person / by word of mouth
___ By social media
___ By post (traditional mail)
___ Other

6) Are you a member of an organization, association, or network of professional interpreters and translators?

- Yes
 No

If yes, which organization(s) are you affiliated with?

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

7) Approximately how many interpreting assignments do you complete...

in an average week? _____
in an average month? _____
in the last year? (approximately) _____
Additional comments?

8) Do you volunteer your services as an interpreter?

- Yes
- No

If yes, approximately what percentage of your assignments are completed on a volunteer basis?

9) Have you ever attended the annual Hawaii Conference on Language Access?

- Yes
- No



Section 2: Training and Professional Development
The questions in this section are designed to collect data about your training and professional development. Highly trained and certified interpreters often act as mentors to their colleagues, and resources for the interpreting community. Remember, the data collected in this survey is anonymous; please answer all questions truthfully!

1) Do you hold any certifications? (Are you a certified interpreter?)

- Yes
- No

If yes, what certification do you hold, and what year were you certified?

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

2) Have you ever attended the Basic Orientation Workshop (BOW) put on by the Hawaii State Judiciary?

- Yes
- No

If yes, have you taken the Written English proficiency Basic Ethics exam administered by the Judiciary?

3) Are you listed on the Hawaii State Judiciary registry of court interpreters?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your tier designation? _____

4) Have you ever observed another interpreter work for the purposes of improving your own interpreting?

- Yes
- No

Comments?

5) Have you ever recorded yourself while simultaneously interpreting, and compared your performance to a transcription of what was originally said?

- Yes
- No

If yes, were you happy with your performance?

6) Do you take notes while you interpret?

- Yes
- No

If yes, have you been trained on note taking?

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

7) Is there a resource (book, website, conference, workshop, course, etc.) that you would recommend to other interpreters to help develop interpreting skills?
Please explain briefly

Empty text box with a dashed horizontal line for response.

8) What was the best skills development course offered in Hawaii in the last 5 years that you attended and why was it so good?

Empty text box with two dashed horizontal lines for response.

9) Please list the 3 modes of interpretation:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____



Section 3: Motivation

Part of understanding interpreters is understanding why they started interpreting, and what makes them keep doing it. The following questions will ask about your motivation for interpreting.

1) Is there an individual (person) that inspired you or helped you to become an interpreter?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain briefly.

Empty text box with a dashed horizontal line for response.

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

2) Is there a personal reason why you chose to become an interpreter?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain briefly.

3) Are you currently seeking certification, or studying to pass a certification exam?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which certification are you interested in, and what training options are you using/ considering?

4) If you are not seeking certification, please indicate why not:

Check all that apply

- There is no certification available in my language.
- I already hold sufficient certification.
- I don't have time to pursue the additional training required for certification.
- Certification testing is too expensive.
- Other (Please explain briefly)

5) In your opinion, does obtaining certification improve the career prospects for professional interpreters?

6) on the following page, please indicate how strongly you agree / disagree with each statement by filling in the circle:

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Niether Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
As an interpreter, I help my community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an interpreter, people see me as a professional.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an interpreter, my job is difficult to do well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prepare carefully for each assignment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Niether Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My job is interesting and challenging.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see a future for myself as a professional interpreter.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I continue to develop my professional skills as an interpreter.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often attend workshops, conferences, or classes on translation and interpretation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am an active member in the local network of interpreters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

Section 4: Language Background and Biographical Information

This is the final section of the survey! Thank you for your participation. Just a little more to go! In the final section you will be asked about your life experience with the languages that you speak and interpret.

1) Which island do you live on?

2) Have you done interpreting assignments on other islands?

- Yes
- No

3) Is English your native language?

- Yes
- No

4) In the last 5 years, how often have you used your non-English language?

- everyday
- most days
- occasionally
- rarely
- almost never

5) How frequently do you read and write in your non-English language?

- everyday
- most days
- occasionally
- rarely
- almost never

If English is your native language, (if you answered "Yes" to question 26) please skip ahead to the [English as First Language](#) page (page 11) →

If you answered "No" to question 26, please continue on to the [English as a Additional Language](#) page (page 9)→

Thank you. :-)

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

English as an Additional Language: Final Page!

Language background is very personal, and varies greatly from one person to the next. When answering questions on this page, please feel free to add any comments or information that you feel is important.

1) What is your first language?

2) Please indicate any language(s) you speak well enough to interpret:

3) At what age did you first arrive in an English-speaking country?

4) How many years of your life have you lived in an English-speaking country?

5) How many years of your life have you lived in your native country?

6) How many years of school have you completed in your first language?

7) How many years of school have you completed in English?

8) Have you taken an English language proficiency test?

(For example, TOEIC [Test of English for International Communication], TOEFL [Test of English as a Foreign Language])

- Yes
- No
- I don't know / can't remember

If yes, were you happy with your score?

You're done! Thank you for your participation. The data you provide will be used to help improve interpretation training in Hawaii!

SURVEY OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS HAWAII

English as a First Language: Final Page!

Language background is very personal, and varies greatly from one person to the next. When answering questions on this page, please feel free to add any comments or information that you feel is important.

1) Please indicate any other languages you speak well enough to interpret:

2) How many years have you lived in the country where your additional (non-English) language is spoken?

3) How many years of school have you completed in your additional (non-English) language?

4) At what age did you begin to learn your additional language?

5) Have you taken a proficiency test in your second/additional language(s)?
(That is, a test that is designed to test your level of fluency and ability to use your second language in a professional setting.)

- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know / can't remember
- If yes, were you happy with your score?

You're done! Thank you for your participation. The data you provide will be used to help improve interpretation training in Hawaii!

Appendix B The Focus Group Design

Hi!

Thanks for participating in my focus group!

I'm designing a survey to send out to language interpreters in the state of Hawaii. Interpreting is a difficult job, and it involves many skills. I want to find out how people become good interpreters, and your ideas and opinions are valuable to me.

Description:

The survey will be designed for two groups:

- 1) Certified interpreters (High skill / experience level)**
- 2) Registered Interpreters (Low to mid skill / experience level)**

Important points:

- 1) Low to mid skill level interpreters are more common, so they are a very important group. The more people take the survey, the better the results. *How can I get the cooperation of these people (without paying them \$20 each to fill out the survey)?*
 - 2) The survey must have questions that can identify the skill level of the person taking the survey. *What questions should I ask to find out the skill level of the interpreter taking the survey?*
-

Discussion topics:

- 1) Not all languages are equal. Some “big” languages have millions of speakers, with many books and language learning resources. Some language are closely related to each other, and this can make the interpreter’s job easier in some ways. Think about your own language. What are the benefits and problems that you face when you interpret to and from English? What would make your life as an interpreter easier?

 - 2) Every interpreting assignment is different. How do you prepare for different assignments? What are the steps to properly preparing for and assignment? What is your best resource?

 - 3) In T&I 406, what do you think was the best part of the class? What helped you to learn most?
 - a) readings
 - b) videos
 - c) class discussion
 - d) practice / exercises
 - e) lecture
 - f) other: _____

 - 4) Outside of class, is there an activity that you do to help you improve your interpretation skills?

 - 5) What are the skills, characteristics, experiences, and personal qualities that you think make a good interpreter?
-

Questions types:

Questions will be divided into a 4 or 5 different areas:

- Language background questions

For example:

- What is your first language?
- How many languages do you interpret in, besides English?
- Which language do you speak at home?
- Other: _____

- Professional practice questions

For example:

- Do you have experience interpreting in a hospital, a courtroom, or other formal setting?
- How frequently do you interpret?
- How do you get assignments? e.g.- are you contacted by an agency?
- Other: _____

- Professional development questions

For example:

- What do you do to practice and build your background knowledge? What do you do to improve your interpreting skills?
- Have you taken any interpreter training or certification programs? Explain.
- What is your favorite reference when preparing for an interpreting assignment?
- Other: _____

- Motivation questions

For example:

- How did you get into interpreting?
- Do you consider yourself a professional interpreter? (Yes, no, sort of,...)

- Was there an influential or inspiring individual or event that made you want to become an interpreter?

- Other: _____

• Access questions

For example:

- Who do you find out about interpreting assignments from?
- How do you learn about interpreting assignments?
- How do they contact you? Choose all that apply: telephone, mobile phone, e-mail, post,...
- Do you have a cell phone?
- Do you have a home computer? Y / N Are you connected to the internet at home?
- Other: _____

Sample questions:

Please read the questions below. Are they understandable? Do they need to be re-stated? Can you think of any addition to them?

➔ On a scale of 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with the following statements:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.) I help my community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.) My job has a high level of prestige. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.) My job is difficult to do well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4.) I try hard to be prepared for different assignments. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5.) I continue to develop my professional skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6.) I work with an organization that coordinates the activities of local interpreters. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

