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PHD DISSERTATION THESES

ANIKÓ NÉMETH

Dialogue Interpreting: Characteristics and Coping Strategies in the Context of Business and Corporate Communication

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Doctoral School of Linguistics
Head of the Doctoral School: Prof. Dr. Krisztina Károly, DSc, Full Professor

Translation Studies Doctoral Program
Head of the Doctoral Program: Dr. Edina Robin, PhD, Associate Professor with Habilitation

Members of the evaluation committee:

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Supervisor:
Dr. Márta Seresi, PhD, ELTE Department of Translation and Interpreting, Senior Lecturer

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1. Introduction

Interpreters have always been key – though often invisible – actors in shaping business and economic relations between different peoples and countries throughout history. Many may think that their role has been diminishing, since the economic players of our globalised world have long communicated in a so-called lingua franca based on mutual agreement. Today, this role is fulfilled by English (English as a lingua franca, or ELF for short). It is clear that the choice of language and the medium of communication is a sensitive issue in international companies and institutions (Blahó et al. 2021). The relevance of this topic is well reflected in the fact that the communication of organisations – and of companies in particular – has long been a focus of research in communication studies and economics. Surveys have shown that effective intercultural communication is also a key factor in achieving international business success. The outcome of business negotiations is greatly influenced by the choice of language, as well as by how the negotiating parties are able to handle the very tool of negotiation – language itself (Hofmeister-Tóth and Mitev 2007; Borgulya and Somogyvári 2016). In light of the above, it may seem a rational and logical decision for companies not to leave the successful outcome of business negotiations – or the balancing of negotiating power between the parties – to chance, but to rely on interpreters for linguistic mediation. However, business negotiations and corporate meetings conducted with the help of interpreters still represent an underexplored field of research in linguistics. Furthermore, both international and Hungarian research in interpreting studies indicate that business interpreting has received relatively limited scholarly attention.

2. Choice of Topic and Its Relevance

This dissertation investigates the characteristics of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate settings, with particular attention to the strategies interpreters employ to overcome linguistic and extralinguistic challenges in interpersonal interaction. Exploring the complex activities of translators and interpreters falls within the scope of Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS), yet, as Klaudy observes, these centuries-old professional experience "is still not sufficiently systematised" (2008: 41). She argues that an interdisciplinary perspective is essential for uncovering and organising the phenomena of translation and interpreting (Klaudy 2008). In line with this view, I have set myself the ambitious goal of applying an interdisciplinary approach and rigorous scholarly investigation to uncover the specific features of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate contexts – practices that usually take place behind closed doors and away from public scrutiny. At the same time, I aim to explore the

challenges and difficulties interpreters face in such settings, in order to gain deeper insight into the professional behaviour and coping strategies of business and corporate interpreters.

The novelty of this dissertation lies in its examination of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate contexts, a field that has not previously been explored in a comprehensive manner which integrates perspectives from both communication studies and Interpreting Studies (IS). The research is also relevant because the demands and expectations that economic actors place on interpreters and their roles remain largely unexplored within IS. Identifying client needs is crucial both for the profession of language mediation – and, by extension, for professional associations – and for interpreter training. The findings of this study may contribute to developing interpreting practices that are more closely aligned with client expectations, refining the ethical and behavioural codes that govern the profession, and designing modern interpreter training programmes that not only build on scientific research but also respond to market requirements.

3. Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to explore, from the perspective of IS, the specific characteristics of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate contexts, while taking into account the full context of linguistic and extralinguistic challenges. These challenges may arise from the nature and setting of the interpreting event, the power relations between the negotiating parties, client expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of interpreters. The study also aims to identify the coping strategies employed by dialogue interpreters in these challenging situations. A secondary research objective is to examine clients' expectations of interpreters, as well as their visions for the future of business and corporate interpreting. In addition, this dissertation pursues other objectives. This research aims to introduce and establish in Hungarian a set of terms that have so far been scarcely used – namely (1) dialogue interpreting, (2) dialogue interpreter, and (3) business and corporate dialogue interpreting – while simultaneously contributing to the expansion of the descriptive Hungarian-language literature on the subject.

4. Research Questions

In connection with the above-mentioned objectives, the formulation of the research questions was guided by an interdisciplinary and holistic approach to the phenomenon under investigation. In this dissertation, the following questions are addressed:

(1) What are the defining characteristics of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate environments?

(2) What linguistic and extralinguistic difficulties do dialogue interpreters encounter in such environments? Can gender-related differences be identified in this regard?

(3) What expectations do clients have of dialogue interpreters in business and corporate settings and do these expectations vary according to gender?

(4) Which interpreting strategies and techniques are employed by dialogue interpreters to address linguistic and extralinguistic challenges? Can differences related to gender and qualifications be identified in coping strategies?

(5) How do company executives perceive the future of business and corporate interpreting?

5. Hypotheses

In formulating the hypotheses, I relied on my own professional and teaching experience, as well as on the academic sources I had previously reviewed. In connection with the above research questions, I formulated my hypotheses with the following additions:

(1) The oral communication activities of companies are highly diverse and multifaceted, and the situation becomes even more complex when negotiations take place between partners from different cultures (Borgulya and Somogyvári 2016; Hofmeister-Tóth and Mitev 2007). This influences not only business and corporate interpreting events, but also the dialogue interpreters who participate in them. It is assumed here that companies' external and internal communication, the negotiation style of the communication partners, the power relations or conflicts of interest between them, as well as the stakes of the negotiation, all affect the interpreters' role and performance.

(2) Dialogue interpreting generally does not rely on pre-prepared or written speeches and is most often performed in a consecutive mode; therefore, both the interpreter and their performance attract greater attention (Mason 2009). Since in business and corporate

environments clients are often highly educated individuals who speak foreign languages, the linguistic difficulties of interpreters presumably stem from the fact that the uncertainty factor and external monitoring place greater pressure on them. The extralinguistic difficulties are assumed to arise from the interpersonal interactions, characteristic of dialogue interpreting, as well as from the specific business and corporate context. Given that in the Hungarian corporate sphere the top management of companies is still characterised by a strong male quota (Nagy 2013; KSH 2022), it is presumed that female interpreters in business and corporate settings face more challenges than their male counterparts.

(3) It can be assumed that – similarly to community interpreting – the demand for business and corporate interpreting at times goes beyond mere linguistic mediation, with clients expecting dialogue interpreters to provide cultural mediation and active participation (Wadensjö 1998; Niemants 2015; CHIA 2002). However, it is likely that in the profit-oriented world – unlike in community interpreting – the paying client expects absolute loyalty from their interpreter (see Mason 2023). At the same time, it can also be assumed that clients may request interpreting for business negotiations not solely because of linguistic barriers, but occasionally as part of their negotiation tactics. In some cases, interpreters may even be blamed – sometimes unjustly – for disagreements or misunderstandings between negotiating parties (see Ko 1996; Válóczi 2011; Hofmeister-Tóth and Mitev 2007).

(4) Since clients do not always provide preparatory materials on their own initiative, therefore, it is assumed that in order to reduce the uncertainty associated with interpreting, interpreters act proactively and attempt to obtain further information, either orally or in writing, prior to the interpreting event. In the interaction between client and interpreter, situations may arise in which the interpreter cannot identify with the speaker, or the content conveyed, and this is likely to manifest itself in their linguistic behaviour. It is assumed that in such cases the dialogue interpreter steps out of their role and, instead of interpreting in the first-person singular, they switch to the third person. Dialogue interpreters are expected to assume not only the role of linguistic mediator, but also that of mediator or coordinator (see Wadensjö 1998, 2013). Consequently, tense or confrontational negotiation situations are likely to impose an even greater burden on

interpreters. Therefore, dialogue interpreters are assumed to not always able to maintain a neutral role.

(5) Despite the rapid pace of development in ICT and the swift advancement of artificial intelligence (AI), I anticipate that human interpreters will remain indispensable in interpersonal interactions within business and corporate environments.

6. Theoretical Background of the Research

In line with the research objectives and questions, the dissertation begins with a review of relevant literature. Drawing on sources from IS, communication studies, cognitive linguistics, and sociology, I present the theories and key concepts relevant to the research, as well as the specific features of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate contexts. To define more precisely the categories of dialogue interpreting and business interpreting, I first examine and compare taxonomies proposed by a number of interpreting scholars (G. Láng 2002; Kalina 2002; Seresi 2016; Setton and Dawrant 2016; Pöchhacker 2015, 2022), then I go on to discuss the categories and genres of communication in business and corporate settings (Borgulya and Somogyvári 2016; Ablonczyné Mihályka 2010), along with the factors influencing business negotiations. These include the tactics of integrative and distributive negotiations (Hofmeister-Tóth and Mitev 2007; McCall and Warrington 1984), as well as the role of English as a lingua franca (Albl-Mikasa 2010, 2014) and the role of gender (Nagy and Primecz 2010) in business negotiations.

The next major section of the paper defines the key concepts in IS that are relevant to this research: (1) dialogue interpreting (Mason 2009), (2) business and corporate interpreting (Takimoto 2006; Sato 2014; Karanasiou 2017), (3) client expectations of interpreters (Pöchhacker 2015; Puklus 2019), (4) interpreters' coping strategies (Gile 1995; Pöchhacker 2004; Lazarus and Folkman 1984), and (5) the role of deictic shift in interpreting (Laczkó 2021; Kuna 2016). In addition to these, the dissertation also draws extensively on research carried out in the field of community interpreting. Among others, it discusses the theories and taxonomies such as Hymes's (1974) communication model, Wadensjö's (1998, 2013) theory of linguistic mediation, Okumura's (2014) model of competencies required for business interpreting, and Chesterman's (2001) ethical model.

7. Research Material and Methods

In research on business and corporate interpreting, authentic data are difficult to access due to confidential information and business secrets (Ozolins 2015; Bendazzoli et al. 2018). However, by interviewing both the parties involved in communication as well as the interpreters, it is possible to gain insights into what happens behind the scenes and to explore an area that has so far received little scholarly attention. According to the taxonomy applied in empirical studies on language mediation, participant- and context-oriented research is considered the most appropriate method (Saldanha and O'Brien 2014). The dissertation therefore employs primary research, that is, empirical investigations based on direct data analysis, to examine the phenomenon under study. The research consists of three phases, in which the combination of paradigms reflects a deliberate methodological choice: integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches enables a deeper and more comprehensive exploration of the subject under investigation (Károly 2022). The first two phases involved exploratory qualitative research, comprising two consecutive series of interviews. In the third phase, quantitative methods were applied to examine the professional behaviour and interpreting strategies of language mediators engaged in dialogue interpreting in business and corporate settings.

In the first and second phases of the dissertation research, semi-structured personal interviews were employed as a methodological tool, as they yield rich data and enable an in-depth analysis of the attitudes and expectations of the main actors in the interpreting event. In the third phase, an online questionnaire survey was conducted on a larger sample to investigate the coping strategies of language mediators. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of the findings from the two qualitative studies carried out prior to the survey.

The selection of research participants was undertaken with careful deliberation, and participation remained entirely voluntary throughout all three phases of the study. In the qualitative research phase, the target group consisted of professionals active in the Hungarian interpreting market, namely trained conference interpreters on the one hand, and clients commissioning interpreting services on the other. In the two interview-based studies, 10 participants were involved in each case: 5 female and 5 male qualified conference interpreters, as well as 5 female and 5 male corporate middle or senior managers. In the quantitative phase, research was carried out with a sample drawn from a broader population, involving language experts. In the third phase of the study, the aim of the online questionnaire survey was to include the largest possible number of respondents. Based on the cleaned data, the questionnaire was ultimately completed by 58 participants, of whom 12 were men (21%) and 46 women (79%). The three phases of the dissertation research were implemented as follows (Table 1):

Table 1: Procedure of the dissertation research

Phase 1	**Qualitative Interview-Based Researcl** (December 2020 – January 2021)	10 qualified interpreters (5 female and 5 male)
Phase 2	**Qualitative Interview-Based Research** (January 2023 – March 2023)	10 middle- and senior-level managers (5 female and 5 male)
Phase 3	**Quantitative Questionnaire Survey** (June–July 2024, 4 weeks)	58 participants, language mediators (46 female and 12 male, 79% and 21%)

8. Summary of the Research Findings

The research had three main objectives: first, to explore the characteristics of dialogue interpreting in business and corporate environments; second, to identify the linguistic and extralinguistic challenges faced by interpreters mediating interpersonal interactions; and third, to examine the coping strategies employed by dialogue interpreters in business and corporate communication. An additional aim was to investigate clients' opinions and perspectives regarding the future of business and corporate interpreting. Furthermore, the study sought to identify any potential differences in responses, attitudes, and coping strategies related to gender and interpreter training among the participants. The research findings are presented in line with the research questions formulated at the outset of the dissertation, with reference also to the hypotheses proposed beforehand.

8.1. Characteristics of Dialogue Interpreting in Business and Corporate Settings

The research revealed that power dynamics between clients also influence the interpreting process. Although interpreting in business and corporate settings is generally described as occurring between parties in a symmetrical relationship – unlike, for example, community interpreting – the positions of the participants, their place within the corporate hierarchy, and their professional roles, among whom the interpreter mediates, are of particular significance. Consequently, interpreters tend to receive greater respect and occupy a more prominent role when interpreting for a client in a leadership position, as the client's status is, to some extent, projected onto the interpreter.

Differences observed between external and internal corporate communication also manifest in interpreting, a finding clearly confirmed by the research. While external communication is more formal and generally carries higher stakes, internal communication often includes informal, more relaxed conversations, with a more welcoming and friendly atmosphere. In cases of regular assignments, interpreters are frequently regarded as "team

members" or close colleagues. Interpreting in internal communication is further complicated by in-house jargon and the lack of background information. At the same time, clarifying misunderstandings and resolving communication problems is easier, since the interpreter can immediately ask for clarification. By contrast, in external communication, requesting clarification requires greater discretion. Consequently, interpreting in external corporate communication involves stronger pressure to perform adequately. As far as interpreting quality is concerned, in external communication greater attention must be paid to both accuracy of content and stylistic equivalence. Furthermore, in external communication – most typically business negotiations – the interpreter's attire, appearance, and overall presentation also play an important role.

Summarising the results of the qualitative and quantitative studies, it can be concluded that business and corporate dialogue interpreters experience greater stress when interpreting high-stakes negotiations in external corporate communication. In addition, interpreting is further complicated by conflicts of interest and strained relations between the parties, as well as by power-oriented, competition-based negotiation strategies in which the negotiating parties do not shy away from employing negative tactics. The hypothesis was therefore confirmed that external and internal corporate communication, the negotiation style of the communication partners, the power dynamics or conflicts of interest between them, and the stakes of the negotiation all have an impact on interpreters' roles and performance.

8.2. Linguistic and Extralinguistic Challenges of Dialogue Interpreters in Business and Corporate Communication

The linguistic and extralinguistic challenges faced by dialogue interpreters can be classified according to several criteria. In summarising the results, two approaches were applied: (1) according to the phases of the interpreting process, and (2) according to the interpreting events. Consequently, some overlaps may appear in the summary. In the first approach, the focus was on identifying the phases of interpreting in which difficulties are most likely to arise.

Unlike conference interpreters, dialogue interpreters do not work with pre-written or pre-meditated speeches. For this reason, it is particularly important for them to receive accurate information from clients to prepare adequately. However, obtaining preparation materials and background information is not a straightforward task. During the interpreting situation itself, even greater attention is directed towards their performance – partly because of the consecutive mode of interpreting, and partly because clients themselves often speak foreign languages and, in some cases, may even be familiar with the language(s) used in the negotiation. Linguistic

difficulties are primarily associated with a company's internal jargon, implicit expressions arising from shared background knowledge, or the terminology used by partner companies. The results of the qualitative study confirmed the hypothesis that interpreters in business and corporate settings are subject to greater external control over their performance and, in some cases, may even be corrected. Additional linguistic challenges arise when interpreting impolite or offensive expressions, which are stressful and emotionally taxing for dialogue interpreters. In this regard, the difficulty does not lie in the linguistic transfer of such expressions, but in the emotional burden experienced by interpreters, who are aware that these verbal utterances violate behavioural norms and conventions of politeness.

With regard to extralinguistic challenges, interpreters typically encounter difficulties arising from cultural differences, such as divergent negotiation cultures or customs, and the use of accepted versus less accepted negotiation tactics – particularly when they have not previously encountered these. Furthermore, the results of the two qualitative studies highlighted that, despite the ethical perspective emphasised in business communication training, businesspeople in practice employ not only integrative (win–win) but also distributive (win–lose) negotiation tactics. This includes, among other things, the use of "dirty" negotiation strategies, blaming the interpreter, applying unethical tricks during business negotiations, abusing a position of power, and failing to observe other behavioural norms and conventions of politeness.

The qualitative research further revealed that the most challenging situations are those characterised by tension and emotional strain. In such cases, the stakes of the negotiation and existing conflicts of interest can generate interpersonal tensions between the communication partners, and impolite or aggressive styles may also emerge in the interaction. The large-scale quantitative study clearly confirmed that the greatest challenges arise in situations involving tense or poorly tempered negotiations, regardless of whether the communication is external or internal, or whether the meeting involves a small group or several participants. Interestingly, while interpreters generally agreed on the challenges posed by tense negotiations, gender differences emerged in meetings with a negative atmosphere, with male interpreters more frequently reporting these situations as highly demanding compared with female interpreters.

The research thus clearly confirmed that negotiations conducted in a tense atmosphere make the interpreter's work more difficult and are also emotionally taxing. This is particularly the case when clients, as part of their negotiation strategy, unfairly hold the interpreter responsible for the failure of the negotiation and blame them for mistranslations. In such situations, it is especially challenging for the dialogue interpreter to remain neutral and loyal to all parties, a finding also supported by the qualitative study. In these circumstances, interpreters

may act beyond their prescribed role, deviating from learned techniques and established professional norms. This, however, can give rise to role conflicts, given the ethical standards governing interpreting practice.

The quantitative study also revealed that, compared with situations where there is merely tension between negotiation partners, dialogue interpreters experience even greater stress and emotional strain when they have to compete for the right to speak, as clients may interrupt each other or speak simultaneously. Participants, caught up in the heat of the negotiation, may fail to wait for the interpreting to be completed or may even interrupt the interpreter's rendition. Consequently, obstacles can arise not only at the level of perception but also during the production process, impeding the interpreter's ability to perform their task effectively.

The situations that pose challenges for business and corporate dialogue interpreters can also be categorised according to other criteria. In the following, the results are summarised according to interpreting events. The quantitative study confirmed that the greatest challenges arise, firstly, in high-stakes negotiations taking place within external corporate communication, and secondly, in events conducted in public with the involvement of the press. The difficulty ranking continues with events in which hierarchical relationships between negotiation partners play a prominent role and the stakes are high – for example, meetings between a company and its supervisory authority, or addresses by company executives delivered to a large audience of employees on ceremonial occasions. At the lower end of the hierarchy in terms of difficulty are events within internal corporate communication, involving participants from lower hierarchical levels or small groups.

In the business and corporate context, the location of the meeting or negotiation, as well as multi-party discussions, can also present challenges – particularly when the basic conditions required for interpreting are not adequately provided. This is especially true in cases where the interpreter cannot hear a speaker properly due to external noise, or because participants speak simultaneously, and when the interpreter cannot see a projected presentation or, in some cases, the actual object or equipment being discussed.

In addition, the interviewees highlighted the physically demanding nature of interpreting work, as dialogue interpreters in Hungary often work alone for a full day or even several consecutive days – partly because persuading clients to engage a relief interpreter is difficult. This issue, however, cannot be effectively addressed at an individual level and requires professional collaboration. Examining gender differences, both the qualitative and quantitative research confirmed my hypothesis that female interpreters encounter distrust more frequently, particularly in technical fields perceived as male dominated.

In summary, the empirical findings of this study also support Hymes' (1974) theory that effective and successful communication also requires attention to extralinguistic aspects of communicative behaviour. Consequently, the role of business and corporate dialogue interpreters extends beyond linguistic and cultural mediation. As several interpreting scholars have previously emphasised (Pöchhacker 2012; Takimoto 2012; Wadensjö 1998, 2013), dialogue interpreters must also take on interaction-oriented coordination to ensure successful transfer of the intended message.

8.3. Clients' Expectations of Dialogue Interpreters in Business and Corporate Settings

The results of the qualitative study clearly highlighted that in business and corporate contexts clients consciously decide to involve an interpreter, and this decision is based on both objective and subjective reasons. The linguistic deficiencies of participants can be considered an objective reason, as the stakes of the negotiation require confident communication skills and a high level of active language proficiency. In such cases, clients place particular emphasis on accuracy of content. Among the subjective reasons are considerations of convenience: clients may engage the services of dialogue interpreters even when they are familiar with – and, in some cases, are capable of speaking – the working languages of the negotiation. Corporate leaders are aware that the choice of language plays a crucial role in the success of the negotiation. Accordingly, conscientious clients share this responsibility, as negotiating in a foreign language is more demanding and tiring for them. In order to focus on the professional content, they entrust the linguistic formulation of messages to the interpreter. In this capacity, dialogue interpreters assume a co-constructive role, as demonstrated in community interpreting by Niemants (2015).

Clients in business negotiations typically prefer the consecutive mode of interpreting, thereby ensuring equal opportunities for all participants in the meeting or negotiation. Although this approach extends the overall duration of the discussion, it allows clients extra time to organise their thoughts and carefully formulate their responses. Additionally, having control over the interpreter's output provides clients with a sense of security. The study therefore confirmed that clients in business and corporate dialogue interpreting place strong emphasis on content accuracy. At the same time, the findings also indicated that in monologue-style, one-way communication, particularly in major languages such as English, company executives are less likely to use simultaneous interpreting, as their passive knowledge of the foreign language is sufficient to understand and follow the presentations.

Clients sometimes request the services of interpreters as part of their negotiation strategy, which not only saves them time but also provides the opportunity to attribute misunderstandings to the interpreter in cases of conflict between negotiating parties. This confirms the hypothesis that clients do not engage interpreting solely due to language barriers in a given negotiation. It also clearly demonstrates that company executives plan their corporate communications deliberately, with specific expectations and concrete demands regarding both the dialogue interpreters and the interpreting process.

Based on the results of the qualitative study, in addition to a high level of proficiency in both their native and foreign languages, interpreters were selected according to the following criteria: (1) confidentiality, (2) the interpreter's personality, (3) subject–matter expertise relevant to the assignment, and (4) the interpreter's appearance. Although the ranking of these criteria suggested that the interpreter's gender was not considered important, the interviews made it evident that clients consciously choose a female or male interpreter depending on personal preference, as well as the topic and given context. In the survey's preferences section, four male company executives (n=5) indicated that they preferred to work with a female interpreter. The interpreter's appearance and loyalty to the client, however, were generally given greater emphasis by female company executives. The study thus confirmed the assumption that in business and corporate communications, clients hold high expectations of interpreters and, beyond the quality of interpretation, place considerable importance on the interpreter's personality and reliability.

The role of dialogue interpreters in the business world extends beyond linguistic mediation, as clients also expect them to coordinate the turn-taking of negotiating parties – particularly in situations where, for example, clients speak simultaneously or when one participant holds the floor for an extended period without interruption. With regard to behaviour, interpreters are generally expected to maintain a neutral stance; however, in certain contexts, such as tense or high-stakes negotiations, clients explicitly expect the interpreter to demonstrate loyalty towards them. Interestingly, this expectation was voiced primarily by female company executives. Opinions were also divided on the precise and literal rendering of impolite remarks or coarse, vulgar expressions. The responses did not reveal gender-based differences in this respect, but rather suggested that views were closely linked to the respondents' individual personalities and attitudes.

Mason's (2023) claim that clients expect unconditional loyalty from dialogue interpreters was only partially confirmed by the study. Interestingly, the issue of loyalty also arose in relation to the linguistic role adopted by the interpreter. In this respect, the expectation was that the

interpreter should render the words of the client faithfully, with appropriate emphasis, and in the first person, while the client's counterpart's statements could be conveyed in a summarised form and even in the third person. By applying such a deictic shift, the interpreter positions themselves outside the interaction, thereby signalling a degree of distance from the utterance. However, the respondents' views on the use of direct and reported speech by interpreters were far from consistent.

Summarising the research findings, it can be stated that business and corporate dialogue interpreting constitutes a confidential service – one in which not only the safeguarding of business secrets but also the interpersonal relationship established between the client and the interpreter plays a role.

8.4. Dialogue Interpreters' Coping Strategies

The difficulties faced by interpreters working in business and corporate settings already emerge during preparation for interpreting, as they do not always receive adequate information and sufficient preparatory materials, particularly in the case of their first assignment. This is most likely due to business confidentiality and the sensitive nature of the information involved. Interpreters address this problem through proactive intervention, by searching for other publicly available materials, and, as a last resort, by gathering information directly at the interpreting venue. More experienced interpreters, however, seek to prevent such situations by adding a clause in the contract agreement, concluded with the client, about their obligation to provide preparation material.

Based on the findings of the qualitative research, dialogue interpreters employ a variety of strategies to overcome linguistic difficulties. In cases involving job titles or positions in the business and corporate environment that are difficult to render, they resort either to foreignization or domestication (Fischer 2018, 2023). When faced with unfamiliar expressions or terminology, they make use of paraphrasing, or, applying the method of intralingual explicitation, they request assistance or clarification directly from the expert on site. In technical interpreting contexts, even pointing can serve as a helpful tool. The research results clearly demonstrate that interpreters make confident use of requests for clarification and on-site specification as means of overcoming linguistic barriers. Wadensjö (1998, 2013) refers to this as text-oriented explicit coordination.

Another linguistic difficulty mentioned was the interpreting of vulgar or obscene expressions, which interpreters usually mitigate or even omit altogether. The qualitative research clearly highlighted that, when faced with impolite utterances, most interpreters tend to

soften what has been said. Linguistically, this is manifested in the retention of the message while replacing the original expressions with terms from a higher register, and grammatically through the use of less direct, more polite constructions. Thus, adherence to the rules of politeness overrides the principle of strict fidelity to the source text, meaning that maintaining a normal interpersonal relationship is considered of higher priority than verbatim interpreting. However, in doing so, the interpreter does not violate the norm of using the first-person singular.

The results of the quantitative survey confirm these findings, as approximately 60% of the respondents do not opt for precise and complete interpreting in such cases, but instead employ some alternative strategy. Several respondents reported mitigating the utterance, using reported speech, or resorting to clarification requests. When examining the respondent groups separately, it can be observed that while two-thirds of male interpreters tend to mitigate or tone down the original expressions, nearly half of female interpreters prefer to provide a summary interpretation, often relying on reported speech. Considering the results in terms of qualifications, more than half of the untrained interpreters primarily mitigate vulgar expressions, while almost one-third employ deictic shifts. In contrast, more than half of the trained interpreters (41%–41%) opted either for precise and complete interpreting or for summary interpreting, with fewer than one-third choosing to soften impolite expressions.

Another strategy for dealing with impolite or coarse language is for the interpreter to ask for repetition or clarification, framing it as if they had not properly heard or understood the utterance that violates social or moral norms, thereby seeking confirmation from the client. When examining the different respondent groups, nearly half of the female interpreters reported using this strategy, compared with less than one-fifth of the male interpreters and about one-third of the untrained interpreters. In such cases, the interpreter takes on the role of gatekeeper or moderator of the conversation, seeking confirmation before conveying the message accurately.

Both the qualitative and quantitative findings support the notion that utterances likely to cause embarrassment or loss of face are typically handled through mitigation or summary interpreting. Interpreters also distance themselves from the speaker by employing a deictic shift – stepping out of the first-person perspective and rendering the utterance in the third person. In the quantitative survey, 48% of respondents reported using deictic shift as a coping strategy. Differences between male and female dialogue interpreters were, however, insignificant: 42% of men and 50% of women employed this approach when interpreting impolite, coarse, or vulgar expressions. Greater variation, however, was observed based on qualifications: 55% of trained interpreters used this strategy, compared with only 29% of untrained interpreters.

There are various reasons for employing a deictic shift in dialogue interpreting. Based on the research findings, three distinct motivations can be identified in business and corporate dialogue interpreting. First, it can be regarded as a procedural necessity, aimed at preventing communication breakdowns. Second, it may be explained by loyalty to the client or the desire to meet client expectations, in which case the dialogue interpreter consciously alternates between first-person and third-person perspectives to distinguish the communication of the interlocutors. Here, the interpreter steps out of their role due to the deliberate separation of speaker turns, occasionally even naming the person associated with the utterance. This corroborates the findings of Cheung (2012) and Angermeyer (2015), who note that the use of the third person is sometimes unavoidable in order to identify the speaker in multi-party interactions. Additionally, there are instances when the client explicitly requests that the interpreter avoid using the first person. In such cases, fulfilling the client's expectations takes precedence over applying a norm-compliant strategy in interpreting. Third, dialogue interpreters may apply deictic shift as an optional strategy when they cannot or do not wish to identify with the speaker or the statements made, rendering the utterances in the target language in the third person (E/3) using an indirect form of communication. Even in this case, the interpreter employs deictic shift as a coping strategy, as they are unable to reconcile the content of the utterances with their personal feelings. This finding supports the research of Berk-Seligson (1990), Wadensjö (1998), and Van de Mieroop (2012), who note that indirect interpreting indicates the interpreter's intention to distance themselves from what has been said.

Extralinguistic difficulties are linked, on the one hand, to the diverse settings typical of business and corporate environments, and, on the other hand, to multiparty communication situations, as highlighted above. Interpreting in varied locations often poses a challenge for dialogue interpreters. The setting of the assignment – whether the event takes place on a production line, at a restaurant table, or around a conference table – is usually predetermined and difficult to modify. In such cases, it is crucial for the interpreter to consider where they are positioned among the participants and to be able to adjust their placement if the circumstances hinder effective work. Furthermore, it is essential for the interpreter to operate audio and video equipment competently and appropriately. Above all, despite these challenging conditions, the interpreter must remain calm and confident at all times.

In multiparty communication situations, this occurs when (1) participants' utterances overlap, (2) they interrupt each other or the interpreter, (3) they speak at length without pauses, disregarding the interpreting process, or (4) they exclude certain participants from the conversation. In such cases, the interpreter's coordinating role becomes central: they may

manage turn-taking through implicit coordination or pause the speaker to request time for interpreting. According to Wadensjö (1998, 2013), the latter represents interaction-oriented explicit coordination. Interpreters may also step out of their usual role, employing deictic shifts to render multiple participants' speech in the order it was spoken, using the third person.

In addition, other extralinguistic challenges may arise when tensions emerge due to the stakes of the negotiation or pre-existing conflicts of interest, when interpersonal relationships between the parties are unsettled, or when negotiators employ "dirty" tactics or attempt to blame the interpreter. In such situations, dialogue interpreters face considerable psychological pressure, which they can mitigate by maintaining emotional distance and upholding a neutral stance. The results of the quantitative study confirmed that, in high-stakes or tense negotiations, the vast majority of dialogue interpreters (over 90%) strive to remain neutral and interpret every utterance. In some cases, they also employ clarification requests, seeking confirmation that they have accurately understood the statements made. The research further revealed that a few interpreters actively attempt to mediate conflicts verbally, aiming to restore a constructive relationship between their client and the other party. Interestingly, this tendency is most pronounced among female dialogue interpreters.

Regarding corrections to the interpreter's output, the results of the quantitative study indicated that the vast majority of interpreters either do not respond or politely thank the person for the correction. The situation becomes even more challenging when the interpreter is unfairly blamed by the client. While such criticism is naturally unwelcome, few interpreters, in their service role, are willing to confront clients in order to defend the professional decisions they have made. This type of criticism most commonly affects interpreters working with English, as noted by Válóczi (2014) in one of her studies.

The study thus confirmed that tense or contentious situations between the parties impose an additional emotional burden on dialogue interpreters, and that they manage these situations in different ways depending on their personality. In summary, dialogue interpreters find it difficult to maintain their neutral role in such cases, and through their verbal or non-verbal behaviour, they may intervene in the communication between the negotiating parties, at times even going beyond professional norms.

8.5. The Future of Business and Corporate Interpreting from the Perspective of Corporate Executives

Visions regarding the future of business and corporate interpreting are shaped by the current attitudes of clients, including how they perceive the value of interpreting itself. The topic can

also be approached through the dichotomy of whether interpreting is seen as a necessary evil or as added value. The results are not entirely consistent: more than half of the respondents had a clear opinion on this question, either positive or negative, while some could envision both scenarios. Overall, a majority saw interpreting as an added value, in which case they primarily meant consecutive interpreting. Although they were aware of its drawbacks – namely, that it slows down the conversation and interrupts its dynamism and flow – they felt that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages. Consecutive interpreting is considered the most reliable mode, and clients believe it is where the least information is lost. At the same time, it allows participants time to gather their thoughts and respond thoughtfully. Arguments underpinning the "necessary evil" perspective typically mention the lack of direct communication and the cost implications of hiring an interpreter.

However, if interpreting is viewed as a service, factors beyond the accurate and complete transmission of content also influence whether clients perceive the performance as successful or unsuccessful. Among the positive factors, the importance of relationship-building with clients is clear, as is the presence of a discreet, unobtrusive interpreter who can, when necessary, coordinate smooth communication assertively and only expresses professional or personal opinions when explicitly invited. This reflects a client expectation identified by Moore and Woodrow (2010) as key success factors in negotiations: negotiation success depends not only on content but also on facilitating the process and fostering positive relational dynamics. In addition, the interpreter's loyalty to their client is regarded as a further positive factor. Likewise, the characteristics of interpreting perceived as unsuccessful are equally instructive. Inaccurate, incomplete transmission of information or misinterpretation is one of the most prominent indicators. Furthermore, if the interpreter breaches confidentiality, expresses personal opinions, or oversteps their role by intervening in the professional content, this invariably generates a negative response from clients.

With this in mind, how will the rapid development of technology and the changes already occurring in the language mediation industry shape the future of business and corporate interpreting? The role of English as a lingua franca in the business world is unquestionable; nevertheless, the present study also shows that interpreting remains necessary in the business context. It is, however, clear that we are dealing with a dynamically changing environment, which continuously prompts its participants to adapt and respond flexibly.

Based on the results of the study, respondents consider it technologically conceivable that human interpreters might one day be replaced by machine interpreting, though perhaps not in the near future. Surprisingly, however, they can imagine this scenario more readily in the

context of simultaneous interpreting, or among clients who are comfortable with using IT tools. This idea can primarily be attributed to the impersonal nature of the relationship between client and interpreter. Nonetheless, the current attitude of corporate leaders remains clear: in situations where personal presence is important, where non-verbal cues, intonation, and emphasis matter, where human emotions and the "human brain" are key, where the interpreter's personality adds value to the negotiation, or where the stakes are high, the use of machine interpreting in place of human dialogue interpreters is considered inconceivable.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that trust remains a pivotal factor in establishing and maintaining human relationships within the business environment. Consequently, the question of whether corporate leaders will engage human or machine interpreters in the future hinges not only on decision-makers' risk tolerance, the reliability underpinning interpreters' performance, or cost-efficiency, but also on the clients' subjective experiences and personal preferences. The hypothesis concerning the future of business and corporate interpreting is thereby substantiated: there continues to be a pronounced demand for human interpreting services in the corporate sphere. It is further evident that these demands are of a high order, and the service is likely to move toward the premium end of the spectrum (as highlighted in a study by Szabó in 2024).

In conclusion, the findings indicate that clients' opinions and attitudes constitute a key determinant in shaping future demand for interpreters and interpreting services. Beyond individual experiences, however, decision-making is also shaped by considerations of data security and ethical standards. While the small-scale nature of the study precludes broad generalisation, the trends identified may nonetheless provide valuable insights for future developments in interpreter training and scholarly research.

9. New Results of the Dissertation

i. An extensive review of the literature on dialogue interpreting research was provided for the first time in the Hungarian context; in connection with this, the concept of dialogue interpreting was clarified on the basis of interpreting taxonomies.

ii. The terms dialogue interpreting, dialogue interpreter, and business and corporate dialogue interpreter were introduced into Hungarian scholarly discourse for the first time, and their precise definitions were established within the dissertation.

iii. A comparative analysis of dialogue interpreting and conference interpreting was undertaken for the first time, through which the principal differences between the two modes were identified.

iv. The categories, genres, and success factors relevant to interpreting within the system of business and corporate communication were examined for the first time in an interdisciplinary framework.

v. It was demonstrated that clients expect business and corporate dialogue interpreters not only to provide linguistic and cultural mediation but also to perform interpersonal coordination, and that the interpreter's role during communicative events is dynamic, shifting along a continuum from invisibility to active participation.

vi. On the basis of the data analysed, both linguistic and extralinguistic factors that complicate interpreting in companies' external and internal communication were identified and systematically categorised.

vii. It was established that differences in negotiation cultures – particularly the use of unfair negotiation tactics and the occurrence of tense negotiation situations – complicate the work of interpreters and impose additional emotional demands upon them. Furthermore, it was empirically demonstrated that the very act of engaging an interpreter is sometimes regarded as part of a negotiation strategy.

viii. The analysis of the data revealed that even trained dialogue interpreters occasionally resort to deictic shifting. It was further established that deictic shifting constitutes a coping strategy employed either obligatorily or voluntarily in response to linguistic or extralinguistic challenges.

10. Relevance of the Research

In conclusion, the findings of the study demonstrate that business and corporate dialogue interpreting constitutes a sensitive and confidential service, the provision of which is significantly shaped by clients' needs and expectations. The role of dialogue interpreters is therefore expanded, shifting dynamically along a continuum from that of a neutral, invisible participant to that of an active contributor. The results also highlight the distinctions between conference interpreting and dialogue interpreting, which in turn indicate the necessity of adopting new approaches and perspectives, as well as innovative pedagogical methods, in the training of dialogue interpreters.

The findings of this dissertation can be applied in the practice of professional interpreters, in interpreter training, and in interpreting research. Furthermore, they may be of interest to professional associations representing interpreters' interests. Given that the study also examined the attitudes of interpreters working in international business settings and of managers employed by international corporations, its results may inform research in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and business communication, thereby contributing to a more reciprocal interdisciplinarity between interpreting studies and related disciplines (Klaudy 2017).

As highlighted in the study, technological developments within the language industry are continuously and increasingly shaping the demands for linguistic mediation in the business world, and by extension, within corporations. Consequently, further research involving larger participant samples and covering other linguistic and cultural contexts is required to determine whether the findings of the present study are valid and transferable. Accordingly, the value of scholarly research, and the interpreter training programmes that draw upon its results, remains indispensable for ensuring the presence of interpreters on the market who can meet clients' needs at a high professional standard.

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