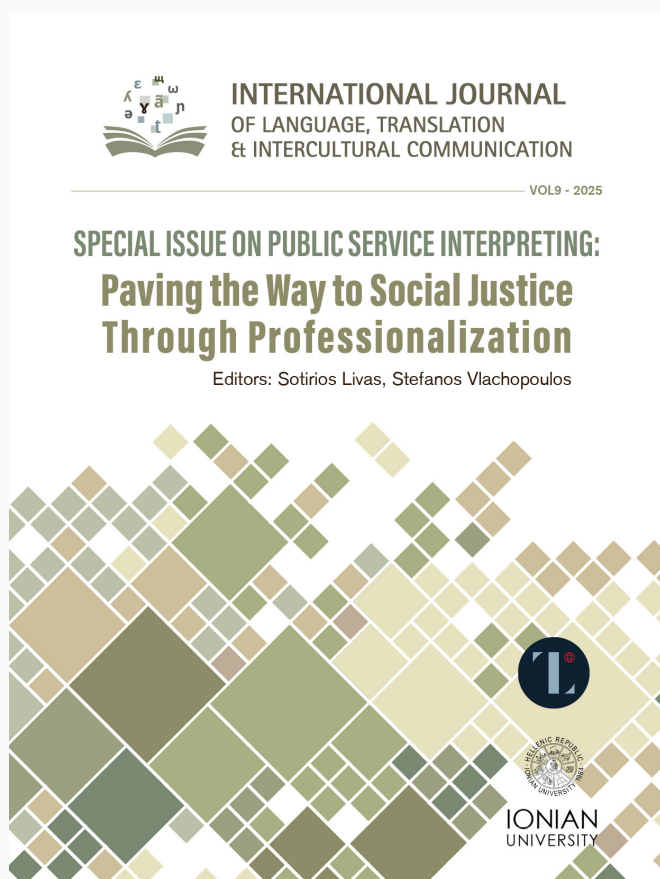**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL**
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A code of ethics in public service interpreting

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A code of ethics in public service interpreting: why a review is needed.

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Abstract

A code of ethics regulates the conduct of a group of people with specific professional, scientific or educational characteristics, with respect to their appointment in a specific post or position for a certain period of time etc., or a specific procedure. The basic principles included in all codes of ethics for public service interpreters, i.e. confidentiality, accuracy, impartiality, avoidance of conflict of interests, CPD, accountability, role definition, solidarity among colleagues and work conditions (Hale 2007), draw inspiration upon the codes of ethics of conference interpreters, among which the Code of Professional Ethics of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) plays a major role. The main concern of the codes of ethics for interpreters is to guarantee quality, professional ethics and work conditions of interpreters in a fast-changing world in order to protect the interpreters' health and well-being. However, how important does that viewpoint sound to a public employee or a civil servant, who is mainly concerned with the respect of rules and compliance with the law? How easy is it to convince the authorities involved in public service interpreting to adopt a code of ethics laying too much emphasis on the interpreter's figure, especially keeping in mind authorities tend to consider interpreters a necessary evil? Following the study of several codes of ethics of both conference and public service interpreters' associations, a review of the codes of ethics for public service interpreters is proposed moving the focus from the interpreters to the procedure and taking into account all participants: public employees/civil servants, beneficiaries and public service interpreters.

Keywords: code of ethics, interpreters' code of ethics, public service interpreters' code of ethics, code of practice, code of conduct, AIIC, Hellenic Association of Conference Interpreters (SYDISE), confidentiality, secrecy, public employees, civil servants, foreign language-speaking beneficiaries, recipients of interpreting services, interpreters' work conditions, confidentiality, accuracy, impartiality, conflict of interests, CPD, accountability, role definition, solidarity, collegiality.

1. Codes of Ethics

Etymologically speaking, code comes from the Latin word "codex", which in turn came from "caudex", which is a tree trunk. Originally, it referred to any wooden board, then to boards covered with wax used to write on, and then to any book ("codex"). As slabs of wood covered in wax were used to write on, codex came to mean a body or system of laws. That was the sense it had when first applied to the book-length systemization of Roman statutes that the Emperor Justinian enacted in 529 AD (Britannica Encyclopaedia). "Ethics" has at least five senses in ordinary English. In one, it is a mere synonym for ordinary morality, those universal standards of conduct that apply to moral agents simply because they are moral agents. Etymology fully justifies this first sense. The root for "ethics" (ήθος, ēthos) is the Greek word for habit or character; the root of "morality" (mores), the Latin word for much the same idea (one's usual way of behaving). Etymologically, "ethics" and "morality" are almost twins. This first sense is dismissed as irrelevant with regard to professions (Davis 2003:8-9). In its other senses (Davis 2003:8-11), ethics is contrasted to morality. In one of them it means "critical morality", it is said to consist of those standards of conduct that moral agents should follow. Another sense of ethics

(critical morality) is closely related to philosophy. When philosophers offer a course in "ethics", its subject is various attempts to understand morality as a rational undertaking.

Socrates, who once observed that "the unexamined life is not worth living" (Plato's "Apology"), is to be regarded as one of the greatest teachers of ethics. Yet, unlike other figures of comparable importance, such as Buddha or Confucius, he did not tell his audience how they should live. What Socrates taught was a method of inquiry. When the Sophists or their pupils boasted that they knew what justice, piety, temperance, or law was, Socrates would ask them to give an account, which he would then show was entirely inadequate (Britannica Encyclopaedia). John Locke (1689) defines ethics as "seeking out those Rules, and Measures of humane Actions, which lead to Happiness, and the Means to practice them" (Locke (1689): Essay, IV. xxi. 3).

Before speaking of professional ethics, which is at the core of this article, "profession" needs to be defined. Profession can, firstly, be used as a mere synonym for "vocation" (or "calling"), i.e. any useful activity to which one devotes (and perhaps feels called to devote) much of one's life, even if one derives no income from doing so (Davis 2003:12). "Profession" can also be a synonym for "occupation", that is, any typically full-time activity defined in part by a "discipline" (an easily recognizable body of knowledge, skill, and judgment) by which its practitioners generally earn a living (Davis 2003:12). In Plato's dialogues, particularly *The Republic*, *Apology*, and *Protagoras*, where Socrates discusses the nature of knowledge, virtue, and the role of individuals in society, he offers insights into his views on the nature of work and expertise and emphasizes the importance of knowledge, virtue, and the pursuit of the good life. In Plato's *Gorgias,* rhetoric and the ethical responsibilities of professionals are discussed. Socrates believed that a true profession should be rooted in knowledge and the service of others, reflecting a commitment to moral and ethical principles. For Socrates, the ideal professional is someone who does not only possess technical skills but also seeks wisdom and acts justly, making a positive contribution to society.

The sense of ethics that seems to be closer to that of "professional ethics" is those morally permissible standards of conduct governing members of a group simply because they are members of that group (Davis 2003:10). The field of professional ethics examines ethical dilemmas and challenges met by the practitioners of professions, the way in which professionals organize and develop ethical standards for members of their profession, and how these standards are applied in everyday practice. In other words, professional ethics is a set of standards developed by an organized group of people working in the same occupation and held by them to be the ideal way for practicing their profession (Pevkur 2011:33).

In conclusion, a code of ethics regulates the conduct of a group of people with specific professional, scientific or educational characteristics, with respect to their appointment in a specific post or position for a certain period of time etc., or a specific procedure. It is a set of principles intended to guide professionals in conducting business with honesty and integrity. A code of ethics document may outline the organization's mission and values, guide on addressing problems, establish ethical principles based on the organization's core values, and define the standards to which professionals are held (investopedia.com). A code of ethics may encompass areas such as business ethics, professional practices, and employee or professional conduct (Lichtenberg 1996).

It is worth noting that reference is sometimes made to a code of ethics and sometimes to a code of conduct. The difference between the two is debatable. Ladd (1990) objects to the use of

the word "ethics" and prefers speaking of a "code of conduct". A code of ethics is broader in nature, outlining what is acceptable for a company, an organization or an association in terms of integrity and operation modalities. A code of conduct is more focused and provides instructions on how the employees of a business or the members of a group or an association should act on a daily basis and in specific situations, which links these to the values and principles of the organization. Codes of ethics are also known by other names, such as code of practice, ethical code, ethical guidelines, business conduct, operating principles, code of professional behaviour and so on (Yallop 2012:504). Schwartz (1999) suggests that it is very difficult to isolate a code of ethics from other documents containing ethical guidelines and principles and concludes that "…a code of ethics could also be a code of conduct, code of practice, corporate credo, or even a values statement" (p. 20). Yallop (2012:505) defines a code of ethics as "a written document that incorporates ethical guidelines and principles, and is designed to guide employee or practitioner behaviour".

Therefore, according to Davis (2003:3) the first code of professional ethics must: 1) be a code of ethics; 2) apply to members of a profession; 3) apply to all members of that profession; and 4) apply only to members of that profession. To evaluate corporate codes of ethics ethically, universal moral standards such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship must be applied to the stages of content, creation, implementation, and administration. To cite an example, let us refer to the code of ethics of The Institute of Internal Auditors (2009). The leading principles and rules of conduct of their code of ethics include integrity, objectivity, confidentiality and competency.

2. Codes of ethics for public service interpreters

All the codes of conduct for conference interpreters are inspired by the Code of Professional Ethics of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), which has laid the foundations of the profession of conference interpreting since its emergence in the mid-20th century and has been constantly updating its Code of Conduct from time to time, in order to guarantee at all times, in a constantly changing world, the quality, professional ethics and working conditions of conference interpreters, protecting their health and well-being. Since its foundation in 1953, AIIC has been guiding interpreters and their national and regional associations around the world, but also negotiating good working conditions for interpreters working in international organisations (UN, EU, Council of Europe, etc.) and drafting collective agreements on their behalf that defend the interests of interpreters.

What stands out running through any Code of Conduct for Conference Interpreters is the concern of the author to safeguard the recipient of the interpreting service (principles of professionalism, confidentiality, integrity, discretion, lifelong learning, independence, impartiality, responsibility and credibility of the interpreter), the interpreter and the interpreting profession itself (disclosure, collegiality and good professional practices (including but not limited to simultaneous interpreting always with at least one pair of interpreters, simultaneous interpreting in an insulated booth, avoidance of the systematic use of relay, the need for sufficient briefing and preparation of the interpreter before the assignment).

The Code of Professional Ethics is usually accompanied by a more detailed guide on the working conditions of interpreters (working hours, number of interpreters, briefing of interpreters before interpreting, working conditions inside and outside the premises), which in

the case of AIIC is a separate document ('Rules of Professional Conduct'), while in other associations it is included in the Code of Ethics as an annex (Hellenic Association of Conference Interpreters, SY.D.I.S.E.).

In turn the codes of ethics in the field of public service interpreting draw upon the code of ethics of conference interpreters. Their main objective includes shaping a profession, ensuring the prestige of the profession and supporting the execution of the role of the interpreter (Corsellis 2003, Roberts 1997, Vlachopoulos 2016). The professional standards on which these codes are built constitute a set of recommended best practices promoting the maturation of the profession (Bancroft 2005:5).

Practitioners - conference interpreters and others – often invoke codes of conduct to declare their professionalism, as codes often serve as a fundamental document for the birth of a profession, following the example of Hippocrates' oath for physicians (Gilman 2005: 4). They are even considered a "hallmark" of the practitioners' "professional status" (Setton & Prunč 2015: 144). Codes of ethics then become a point of reference outlining the ethical rules and principles in a given profession and provide guidance to people working in the field. The codes call on practitioners to consider ethical issues that may arise before, during and after the provision of service and to behave ethically (Phelan 2020).

Public service interpreting (PSI), though as ancient an activity as any intercultural interaction, is a relatively young occupation and an ever-younger field of study (Vargas Urpi 2012: 50, Baixauli-Olmos 2017: 250). However, it has grown in presence in an increasing number of countries since the First Critical Link conference in 1995 (Carr & Roberts 1997). Despite the high significance of the practice, public service interpreters are still unrecognized and underpaid in many countries, the services provided are also absolutely inadequate. Despite all the work done to date, doubts pertain as to different issues such as whether or not to intervene to adapt register, clarify cultural references or prevent communicative breakdown (Baixauli-Olmos 2017: 250). The lack of professionalization is also a serious issue. As early as 1998, the significance of research in the field for the professionalization of the practice has been highlighted: "[…] if interpreting is to be acknowledged as a profession also when it occurs outside of international conferences, i.e. in the everyday life of public institutions and organisations, and if those of us who work as interpreters in legal, health, social service and other institutional face-to-face encounters are to gain the confidence and respect of the public, we need to have well-founded and shared ideas about what interpreting in these settings is all about, what interpreters are good for, and about preferred standards to apply in various situations" (Wadensjö 1998/2013: 4). This is why a code of ethics is important.

Research on codes of ethics in interpreting has shown that some principles, such as respecting confidentiality and avoiding any conflict of interest, are universal, while there is a difference of opinion on other principles, such as impartiality, professional solidarity, clarifying the interpreter's roles and maintaining professional competence (Bancroft 2005). Similarly, according to Hale (2007) codes cover three broad areas of responsibility for the interpreter: as message producers, as members of a professional field and as professionals. Hale (2007) also lists, in descending order, the following principles that codes of conduct generally include: confidentiality, accuracy, impartiality or conflict of interest, professional development of interpreters, accountability or responsibility for their own performance, role definition, professional solidarity, and working conditions. In Mette/Pesare (2015), accuracy of expression, neutrality and confidentiality emerge as the most important components of the codes of ethics.

Following the study of seven PSI codes of ethics (California Healthcare Interpreters Association, 2002 ("CHIA"), National Register for Public Service Interpreters, 2007 ("NRPSI"), International Medical Interpreters Association, 2007 ("IMIA"), National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, n/d ("NAJIT"), Healthcare Interpretation Network, 2007 ("NSGCIS"), National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (USA), 2005 ("NCIHC") and American Society for Testing and Materials (USA), 2007 ("ASTM")) (Baixauli-Olmos 2017:251-254), the four most recurrent notions include confidentiality, impartiality, accuracy and professionalism. The second most recurrent one is respect (with occurrences in 5/7 documents). These five principles are the core values of PSI that represent the philosophical good that the profession offers to society.

The validity of each principle should in any case be tested and verified in the different fields in which interpreters operate (Hale 2007; Rudvin 2015). It should be examined whether ethical principles match reality or - at least - are not negated by reality itself. Angelelli (2006), who has worked in the field of medical interpreting, states that codes need to be constantly reviewed. Indeed "any attempt to prescribe what role interpreters should assume must take into consideration the situational reality of their working environments" (Angelelli 2006: 189).

Codes of ethics also reflect the ideology and political aspirations of professional organizations. "The professional organisation's capability to produce change depends on the capital, in Bourdieu's terms, they have accumulated". This is why "professional organisations publish such documents [i.e. codes of ethics] in order to transform and organise the field in a certain way" (Baixauli-Olmos 2017: 269-70). The capital Baixauli-Olmos refers to includes three different forms: social capital (identity, stipulation of responsibilities and control over the profession), symbolic capital (recognition, coherent practices, specialised knowledge, quality and good behaviour) and cultural capital (competence and qualifications).

It is also worth noting that, due to the interactional nature of PSI, PSI practitioners often find themselves confronted with ethical dilemmas on site because of which they need to refer to a specific code of ethics to guide and protect themselves in their everyday practice (Pena-Diaz 2018:100). If the code of ethics is applied correctly, interpreters will find it easier to handle the numerous challenges and dilemmas arising during an interpreting event (Dragoje & Ellam 2012). This is why adherence to professional ethics should be classified as one of the main issues in every single interpreting assignment undertaken by a PSI practitioner. The issue of ethics is also of major significance, especially due to the degree of trust placed on interpreters and their responsibility in delicate and intimate personal sectors, such as health care (Pena-Diaz 2018:100).

The ever-evolving conditions in each field require constant comparative and in-depth dialogue and call for careful consideration of ethics as recorded in the codes to date. The specific needs of each field and the different missions of the entities or organizations offering interpreting services require that ethical aspects be considered from an organizational/operational point of view as well.

Therefore, considering the factors that contribute to the effective provision of interpreting as a special in-house service, clearly a code of ethics (or conduct) needs to be drawn up at the level of the organization and/or unit. The reasons are as follows:

The multiplicity of factors that affect the provision of quality services also depends on the development of an appropriate framework. For instance, details such as foreigners' access to the translation of the necessary information for foreigners, public employees' adherence to the

protocol, legal implications of the provision of interpreting services (such as respect of personal data of interpreters and citizens, access to documentary material for preparation, confidentiality), issues relating to the working conditions and health of interpreters, need to be clarified. Generally speaking, codes of ethics should be a guide for the organization, interpreters and users of these services, so that there may be a common ground for understanding the services provided and giving a sense of responsibility for proper provision of service. Thus, agencies and interpreters, having a guide, will be able to negotiate the framework of provision of interpreting services and provide their services more freely, taking decisions on the basis of a teleological model that responds to the specific circumstances and conditions of each assignment.

The proposed code of ethics (or code of conduct) therefore works within a professional group and radiates outwards. In particular, the code of ethics protects the rights of citizens and public officials, who rely on the interpreter's expertise but who are not able to evaluate it, safeguards the process and promotes social equity and transparency, protects the interests of the members of the profession, ensures quality standards in the practice of interpreting, and lastly promotes the profession broadly speaking.

3. Why a review is needed

Civil servants or public employees as recipients of public service interpreting (PSI) services usually view interpreters as a necessary evil. They would certainly prefer communicating with foreigners directly without using an intermediary, i.e. an interpreter. Another important issue to consider is that public service interpreting practitioners are not always professional; they interpret because they speak the specific language of lesser diffusion without having often received any training in interpreting. This heavily reflects upon the quality of their work making public employees feel uncomfortable and nervous. This is why possible demands on the part of an interpreter based on the PSI code of ethics may sound exaggerated to public employees and make their intolerance vis-à-vis interpreters grow even stronger. As the main goal of interpreting is successful communication between the parties involved, teamwork and collaboration between the parties, in this case interpreters and public employees, is key to success. The better the parties involved collaborate, the better outcome will be produced in terms of communication.

The code of ethics of Greek public employees as devised by the Hellenic Ministry of the Interior (July 2022) includes four fundamental values for public administration:

The first fundamental value is respect for the Constitution, laws and institutions. Respect for the law, serving the public interest and respecting the principles of administrative action constitute the matrix of values through which respect for the Constitution, laws and institutions is promoted. In this respect, public employees are called upon to conform to the principles of administrative action, in particular legality, discretion, sound administration, serving the legitimate expectations of the public, proportionality, equality, good faith and indulgence. The second fundamental value is integrity. Integrity includes transparency, accountability, impartiality, objectivity and confidentiality, which values help promote integrity in the public sector. The third value is respect for people and the environment and includes fairness, civility (treating everyone with courtesy), non-discrimination, and ecological awareness. The fourth value mentioned in the code of ethics of Greek public employees is professionalism, which comprises effectiveness, efficiency, collaboration, innovation and lifelong learning.

All the above values included in the code of ethics of public employees are quite similar to those mentioned in the code of ethics of interpreters in general and public service interpreters in particular. However, because interpreters may be untrained or not professional or their knowledge of the language of the country of reception may be inadequate to perform interpreting duties effectively, they need a clear-cut framework of rules and instructions on how to perform their duties in the interest of all parties involved but also to serve public interest and justice. Furthermore, if a code of ethics focuses on the interpreter's personality, well-being and/or work conditions too much, as is the case in most codes of ethics for interpreters today, it may not be convincing for public employees and may act as a deterrent to good collaboration between the parties. When drafting a code of ethics for PSI intended to be followed by the authorities, a change of focus seems imperative. This is why, holding the above considerations in mind, a review of the current PSI codes of ethics is proposed, where the focus is not on the interpreter but on the procedure and the communication outcome. This was also proposed by Petrocheilou et al. (2023) in the framework of the Migration and Asylum Interpreting Project - 3rd Predefined Action "Enhancing and Building-up national capacity of Migration and Asylum strategic planning" of "Programme G – Capacity Building of National Asylum and Migration Management Systems" (EEA 80629). If the focus is on effective procedure and communication, the PSI code of ethics will become a sort of manual with instructions to follow not only for the public authorities but also for PSI practitioners. Public authorities will be more willing to accept it and comply with its rules, while PSI practitioners will find it simpler to follow its rules.

When preparing such a document, i.e. a code of ethics (or conduct) governing PSI as a procedure, concision is of the essence. Public employees are annoyed when documents are too long. They need a short guide with clear-cut instructions. Concision is however also useful for public service interpreting practitioners, who have to understand some simple basic rules, learn and respect them at all times.

As to the content, the code should explain what interpreting is by providing a short definition. It should also refer to accuracy and fidelity as fundamental values of successful interpreting. Confidentiality is also of paramount importance. All information disclosed during an interpreting assignment is strictly confidential, subject to the data protection regulations and may not be disclosed to third parties. The aim of the confidentiality principle is to protect the privacy of all parties involved and the confidentiality of information. Information that becomes known orally or in writing during the interpreting process shall not be disclosed outside the interpreting process without the express permission of all parties involved unless expressly allowed by law. Even information concerning the time and place of a meeting shall not be disclosed if such information reveals the purpose, the participants or content of the meeting. In cases where interpreters need to be informed by other interpreters or public officials about the content of a meeting, professional boundaries must always be respected; no personal opinions should be expressed. All recipients of information involved in the provision of interpreting services are ethically bound by a duty of confidentiality.

Emphasis must also by laid on the principle of impartiality that must govern the interpreting process. Public officials and interpreters involved in the process must be able to perform their professional duties impartially and without bias in favour of or against the foreign language speaker. Conflicts of interest are also to be avoided. This is why public officials or interpreters must be reminded that if they are related to the foreign beneficiaries or asylum seekers in any way either through family bonds or friendship, or if they have feelings of dislike or aversion

towards them, or even have a history of intolerance or animosity (of any kind and for any reason) they must not be allowed to be involved in a procedure, as the above constitutes a conflict of interest. In the case of a relationship or situation that may give rise to a conflict of interest, participation in the interpretation process is not possible and the other parties involved must be informed beforehand.

Special emphasis is to be laid on respect. The parties must be reminded that the interpreting process is to be conducted with respect vis-à-vis all parties involved in the process. Treating each other with respect, recognising the dignity, importance and particular role of all parties involved in a meeting conducted through interpretation is fundamental in any communication event and all parties involved must adhere to this very principle.

Both public employees and PSI practitioners have to be reminded of the importance of limiting themselves to the tasks defined by their professional role. Strict adherence to boundaries is intended to protect professional integrity, reduce the exposure of those involved to professional liability issues, and maintain the emotional well-being and physical safety of those involved. Specifications as to the procedure need also to be included in a PSI interpreting code of ethics. Within this framework, basic interpreting procedural rules have to be explained, i.e. that the public official asks questions or engages in conversation with the foreign person in the first person as if the interpreter were not present. This is not self-evident. Both in court but also in community interpreting situations, prosecutors, judges, public employees address the interpreter instead of addressing the foreign witness, defendant, asylum seeker, migrant etc. directly. PSI practitioners also have to be reminded to use the same person as the speaker and avoid by all means the use of indirect speech. Public officials must also be reminded to address foreign persons directly if they need explanations or clarifications. Additionally, PSI practitioners must be reminded to use the third person to refer to themselves (i.e. "the interpreter does not understand" or "the interpreter asks you to repeat"). Interpreters must also be reminded not to engage in private conversations with asylum seekers or beneficiaries. They must not discuss the proceedings in person, nor exchange advice, opinions or judgements with them. PSI practitioners must be constantly reminded of their role, i.e. that of translating what is said during the interview, hearing, session or meeting, as well as faithfully conveying everything mentioned during a meeting to both parties: public officials and asylum seekers or beneficiaries, keeping the necessary distance from both parties.

Special reference is to be made to high quality interpretation and how this is to be achieved. Specifically speaking, the value of written or oral information and briefing material must be underlined, that such information should be provided in good time and in any case within a reasonable period of time to PSI practitioners before the planned meeting. In this context, as PSI practitioners are not always professional, it should be explained that if they become aware of any mistake they unknowingly made during the interpretating assignment, they should apologise and immediately inform the parties involved. It would be a good idea to add in this context a reminder that the task of interpreting is to be entrusted only to persons having the necessary qualifications and/or experience.

Professionalism is another important notion, which is always included in the PSI codes of ethics. When speaking of the interpreting process, emphasis must be laid on the existence of appropriate conditions (appropriate meeting place, cleanliness, absence of noise) during interpretation. Punctuality as well as respect of the agreed timetable or agenda are aspects to be included in this paragraph. Special reference must be made to decorous clothing according to the

occasion. Both public employees and PSI practitioners need to be reminded of the importance of having a decent attire when working. All participants and in particular public employees must be reminded of the importance of working in a place where there is silence and no noise, especially in the case of interpretation by telephone or videoconferencing. A note on the requirements for the provision of remote interpreting services is also necessary and particularly useful (sound and stable internet connection, dedicated microphones, insulated space, muting microphones when not using them), as these methods of communication are relatively new and not everyone is familiar with the correct working conditions in the case of remote communication.

Life-long learning (or CPD, continuous professional development) is also mentioned in all professional codes of ethics nowadays. Technology is developing fast and new methods or tools constantly emerge in all professions. All professionals have to keep themselves up-to-date. This is why a PSI code of ethics should include CPD as a requirement for both PSI practitioners and PSI recipients. In order to achieve the best possible quality in interpreting, those involved in the interpreting process (interpreters or recipients of interpreting services) should receive regular training by attending relevant seminars and training courses.

Evaluation is also a point to include in the PSI code of ethics. Evaluation should however not be left in the hands of public officials, as they are not interpreting or linguistic experts. It would be a good idea to introduce a system of self-evaluation or peer-evaluation for PSI practitioners as a part of the evaluation process.

Last but not least, special reference should be made to the avoidance of using whispered interpreting as a part of the public service interpreting process, because all parties involved must be able to follow the rendering of the conversation into the other language.

Conclusions

The code of ethics of public employees includes four fundamental values: respect for the law, serving the public interest and respecting the principles of administrative action; integrity, which includes transparency, accountability, impartiality, objectivity and confidentiality; respect for people and the environment, including fairness, civility (treating everyone with courtesy), non-discrimination, and ecological awareness and professionalism, comprising effectiveness, efficiency, collaboration, innovation and lifelong learning. All these values are quite similar to those mentioned in the code of ethics of interpreters in general and public service interpreters in particular. However, because interpreters may be untrained or not professional or their knowledge of the language of the country of reception may be inadequate to perform interpreting duties effectively, a clear-cut framework of rules and instructions is imperative. Such framework should focus on how to perform their duties in the interest of all parties involved but also to serve public interest and justice. Furthermore, if a code of ethics focuses on the interpreter's personality, well-being and/or work conditions too much, as is the case in most conference interpreting and PSI codes of ethics today, it may not be convincing for public employees and may act as a deterrent to good collaboration between the parties. Therefore, when drafting a code of ethics for PSI intended to be followed by the public authorities, a change of focus seems imperative. If focus is on effective procedure and communication, the PSI code of ethics will become a sort of manual with instructions to follow for both public authorities and PSI practitioners. Public authorities will be more willing to accept it and comply with its rules, while PSI practitioners will find it simpler to follow.

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