Examining the challenges for telephone interpreters in New Zealand

Qianya Cheng

A thesis submitted to

Auckland University of Technology

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Applied Language Studies

2015

School of Language and Culture

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Attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission if my own work and that, tot eh best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), no material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Qianya Cheng

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been completed without support and help of many people.

Foremost, I would like to show my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Ineke Crezee, who have guided me in my study with her professional knowledge and patience. I really appreciate her devotion to my thesis with enlightening thoughts and endless encouragement.

My sincere thanks also goes to Ms Annette Sachtleben, who patiently guided me through the research with great support when Dr Ineke Crezee was on sabbatical leave.

I would like to also express my appreciation to Ms Susan Yue Hua Sun, for kindly offering help with my online survey using SurveyMonkey.

I am also grateful to all the telephone interpreters participated in this study, who devoted their time and effort to the research by sharing their experiences with me.

I would also like to express my special thanks to my parents. I am really grateful for their material and mental support, for their dedication on my education all these years, and for their encouragement.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my husband Guang Chen, who has backed me up all the way and helped me out of the dark moments.

Ethics approval for the current study was granted by the AUT University Ethics Committee (AUTEC) on the 20th August 2014 under number 14/219. The relevant document has been included in Appendices.

Abstract

The present research examines the perspectives of New Zealand-based telephone interpreters on the challenges they encounter at work. Telephone interpreting, as a new form of interpreting, is growing at a fast pace around the world and has been used widely in many different social service settings. However, little attention has been paid to the status quo of telephone interpreting services and the difficulties interpreters face. To the best of my knowledge, no research has been conducted in respect of telephone interpreting in New Zealand. The purpose of this study was to identify problems faced by telephone interpreters in New Zealand and provide possible solutions to address these difficulties through interpreter training and/or on-going professional development.

The findings were based on a mixed method research study with a quantitative online survey and qualitative interviews. A total of 21 telephone interpreters participated in the survey and 9 telephone interpreters volunteered to be interviewed. The results indicated that for telephone interpreters in New Zealand the main challenges included a lack of information for preparation, the absence of visual messages and the difficulties of communicating with other parties (e.g. using direct/indirect speech, controlling turn-taking, interrupting the speakers, asking for clarification, avoiding side-talk and explaining the interpreter's role). Additional challenges also included work stress, interpreters feeling isolated during interpreting work, the relatively low remuneration and the issues of work-life balance. The participants had developed, through their work experiences, their own strategies to deal with the problems stated above. According to the findings, most respondents in this research had participated in some form of interpreter training and had thought highly of such programmes. However, as the training they had had was on general interpreting, several respondents suggested it would be better to have training specifically on telephone interpreting.

The study suggests that both interpreting education and on-going professional development, specifically through the accumulation of work experience, are important for telephone interpreters. It is also indicated that users of telephone interpreting services play an important part in telephone interpreting communication. If telephone interpreting users are educated on how to work with telephone interpreters, the communication will be more effective and efficient. Furthermore, it is also suggested that telephone interpreting providers develop a system on gathering feedback from users to help interpreters improve their performance. Telephone interpreters also need an open policy from employers regarding whether their interpreting performance will affect the employers' prioritization of interpreters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Multilingual New Zealand

New Zealand is a multilingual and ethnically diverse country. According to the New Zealand 2013 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2015), 26% of the population identified themselves as non-European, with 15% identifying themselves as Maori, 12% as Asian, 7% as Pacific Peoples, and 1% as Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA). The proportion of non-European ethnic groups has increased significantly compared with the results of the 2006 Census.

In New Zealand there are three official languages, Maori, English and New Zealand Sign Language. Other popular spoken languages include Samoan, Hindi, Northern Chinese, French, and Yue (Cantonese). English is the language predominantly used in most aspects of life. However, not everyone in New Zealand is able to use English to communicate effectively. The results of the 2013 Census indicated that 2% of people in New Zealand could not use any of the three New Zealand official languages (The Office of Ethnic Communities, 2014a). Those most affected were Asian (7%), MELAA (7%) and Pacific Peoples (5%).

There is however evidence that suggests the proportion of people who are not able to speak English is continuing to increase, with The Office of Ethnic Communities (2014b) indicating this could be now 10% of the total population in New Zealand. This rise leads to an increasing demand for interpreters to assist these Limited English Proficiency (LEP) people to communicate with public services in their daily lives.

1.2 Practice of telephone interpreting

Telephone interpreting (TI) is interpreting that connects interpreters via telephone with individuals who need to speak with each other but do not share a common language.

During the telephone interpreting process, a telephone interpreter may be at the same venue with one party of the telephone interpreting user (either professional staff or a client), at a different location with the other two parties who are at the same venue, or the three parties may be at three different places (Lee, 2007). As a relatively new form of interpreting, telephone interpreting has a short history. It was first introduced in 1973 as a fee-free service in Australia in order to meet the communication needs of immigrants (Chesher, 1997; Mikkelson, 2003). Free telephone interpreting services were also offered in USA in 1981, however nowadays for-profit organizations are the most common providers (Kelly, 2008b). With the "tremendous influx of immigrants" (Mikkelson, 2003), more countries have embraced telephone interpreting to assist communication and it is now a service that has been widely adopted in a number of countries and a service that is used by an increasing number of people (Kelly, 2008b).

In 2003 in New Zealand, Language Line, a government organisation, was established to provide interpreting services. Language Line has grown to now provide interpreting services for 44 languages. Various agencies use Language Line, including government departments, insurance firms, the Human Rights Commission, Victim Support and counsellors for family violence victims (Language line, 2014b). People can access Language Line services from 9am to 6pm weekdays and Saturday 9am to 2pm. For some languages there are also after hour telephone interpreting services available.

Telephone interpreting services are also provided by many of the District Health Boards (DHBs). Within the greater Auckland region these include the Waitemata District Health Board (WDHB), the Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) and Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB). This is important in the context of this thesis as Auckland is the largest urban centre in New Zealand, with the highest proportion of ethnic and linguistic diversity. According to the 2013 Census the percentage of Asian, Pacific

Peoples and MELAA ethnic groups in Auckland have increased significantly compared with the 2006 Census (Auckland Council, 2014).

People with little or no English knowledge are often more willing to let their bilingual friends and/or family members be their interpreters, but in doing so the accuracy, neutrality, and confidentiality of the conversation may be compromised. It is suggested that professional interpreters are required in situations when the agency/agent requires compliance, sensitive issues are being discussed, a person's rights and obligations are being explained, or the information is complicated with many details (Language Line, 2012).

However, it takes time to access on-site interpreters, especially for some languages where there are only a small number of interpreters available. To a large extent, telephone interpreting services, such as those provided by Language Line, solve this problem. The most salient advantage of telephone interpreting is its easy accessibility. Clients can ask Language Line for an interpreter when they are visiting or telephoning an agency. As long as the agency/agent has a working relationship with Language Line, an interpreter can be accessed within two minutes.

Based on Language Line's website (see Figure 1.1), the top ten languages requested in telephone interpreting are Mandarin, Samoan, Korean, Cantonese, Tongan, Spanish, Hindi, Arabic, Punjabi, which corresponds with the results of the 2013 Census on the non-English speaking people.
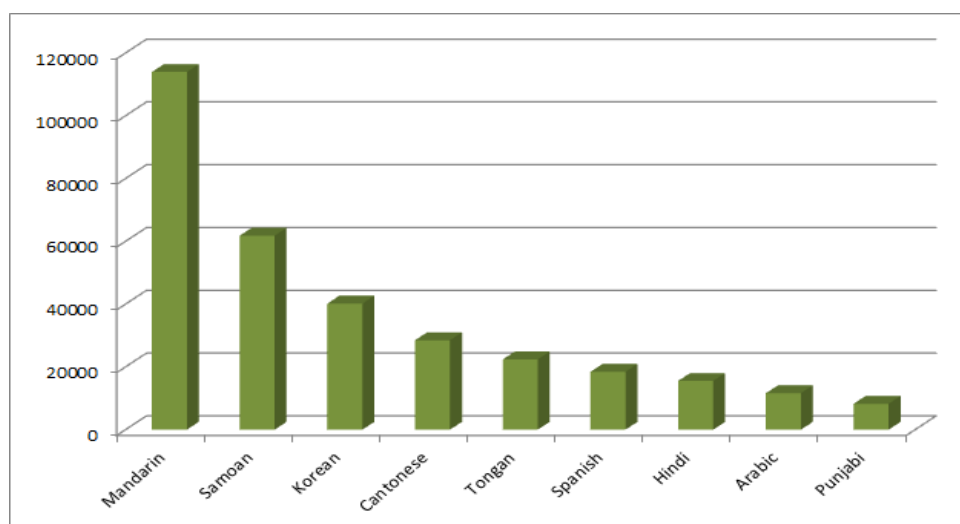
Figure 1.1 The most frequently requested languages in telephone interpreting for Language Line

1.3 Research questions

Although telephone interpreting is increasingly popular and has been adopted by an growing number of countries to bridge communication barriers, there is a dearth of research studies on telephone interpreting. Most researchers have focused on the specific settings of interpreting, such as health interpreting or legal interpreting. In addition, while there have been a few studies about telephone interpreting, only a small number of them have examined the challenges for telephone interpreters. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, there have been no studies conducted on the challenges of working as a telephone interpreter in New Zealand. Likewise we cannot assume that the findings of other related studies would apply to the situation in New Zealand. Therefore, the aim of this study is to fill this gap by investigating the challenges for New Zealand based telephone interpreters.

This study focuses mainly on the following research questions:

  1) What challenges do interpreters face in the New Zealand telephone interpreting setting?

2) How can these challenges be addressed by pre-service training or on-going professional development?

A mixed method approach was applied in this study. It commenced with an anonymous online survey to identify the broad themes, followed by in-depth semi-structured interviews aimed to further explore specific issues mentioned by survey respondents.

The results of the research may help in developing a better understanding of the challenges involved in this profession and might therefore help to improve working conditions for telephone interpreters. In addition, the outcomes of the research may also give some insights into the general conditions of this profession. Interpreters or people who are interested in pursuing a profession as telephone interpreter might also benefit from the research. Organisations and providers of telephone interpreting services may also gain insights and some new ideas on how to train interpreters in this profession in a better way, and how to run their services in such a way that working conditions for telephone interpreters are optimised. Furthermore, potential telephone interpreting service users could gain more information on how to communicate with the assistance of a telephone interpreter.

The thesis has seven chapters. Chapter 2 outlines the major relevant literature and the gap in the literature which this research will try to address. Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the study, as well as the rationale underpinning the chosen approach. Chapter 4 presents the survey results. Chapter 5 describes the interview findings. Chapter 6 compares the results of the survey and interviews in light of the existing literature. Chapter 7 summarizes the findings, discusses the limitations and provides recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has briefly described the background of telephone interpreting. This chapter will look at the relevant literature by discussing the advantages of using telephone interpreting, the challenges of telephone interpreting, situations not suitable for telephone interpreting, and the technological need and training requirements of telephone interpreting services.

2.2 A brief glance at telephone interpreting

As mentioned in the previous chapter, telephone interpreting is growing at a fast pace. In the United Kingdom (UK), the USA, Australia and New Zealand, the major users of telephone interpreting services are government agencies (Lee, 2007). Chesher et al. (2003) indicated that in some countries interpreters "worked as much as in telephone interpreting as in face-to-face settings" (p. 289). It is said that telephone interpreting is beginning to replace on-site interpreting in some contexts (Rosenberg, 2004).

Telephone interpreting comes under the category of community interpreting or dialogue interpreting (Wadensjö, 1993). Community interpreting, in contrast to conference interpreting, takes place in private settings about issues in individuals' life and interpreters offer help in communication for two parties do not share the same language (Hale, 2007). Most of the research on interpreting has discussed interpreting in specific settings, for example, healthcare interpreting and legal interpreting (Kelly, 2008b). Little research has discussed the characteristics of telephone interpreting (Oviatt & Cohen, 1992). It has not been given any special attention as a result of the assumption that telephone interpreting is the same as on-site interpreting (Lee, 2007).

Telephone interpreting also comes under the category of remote interpreting. Generally speaking, remote interpreting can be classified into three categories, namely interpreting via the Internet, interpreting via local area networks (internal or designated networks for audioconferencing or videoconferencing), and interpreting via the telephone (Ko, 2006). According to Sue Lim (QSM) (2015, personal communication), Manager of Asian Health Support and the Waitemata District Health Board Translation and Interpreting Service (WATIS), in New Zealand telephone interpreting is offered by most interpreting service providers, and video interpreting via internet is only provided by the Interpreting NZ Service which operates from Wellington.

2.3 Advantages of using telephone interpreting

Among the research articles on telephone interpreting, it is the strengths of using telephone interpreting that are the most discussed, with the main points referring to cost, convenience, and protection of privacy. However, not all the authors hold the same opinion towards those specific points.

Cost-saving is said to be one of the advantages of telephone interpreting, compared with on-site interpreting, as there is no cost of travelling (Ko, 2006; Phelan, 2001; Rosenberg, 2004). However Mikkelson (2003) also points out that telephone interpreting is not always cheaper than on-site interpreting as the costs depend on the duration of the interpreting process assignment.

Availability of interpreters in non-business hours is also mentioned as a salient advantage (Phillips, 2013). It is frequently the case that emergency situations do not always happen in business hours when most professional interpreters are available. In this case, telephone interpreters can be connected to the clients quickly, preventing a long waiting time for assistance. (Gracia-García, 2002; Mintz, 1998; Valentine, 1994). However, a telephone

interpreter may not always be available in emergencies. New Zealand Herald (2015) reported that a Chinese speaking client rang 111 to report his wife missing, but there was no interpreter available.

Furthermore there is a wider range of languages available by telephone interpreting than face-to-face interpreting, so clients who speak less commonly used languages can get help more easily from telephone interpreting services (Fors, 1999; Gracia-García, 2002; Hewitt, 1995; Kelly, 2008a), where often the number of interpreters of these languages can be fewer and therefore more difficult to find. Remote telephone interpreting provides a technological solution for countries with dispersed, multilingual populations, and particularly for refugee resettlement (Phillips, 2013). Telephone interpreters are more accessible than on-site interpreters, especially when clients live in relatively remote areas, or there is an emergent situation and on-site interpreters cannot be accessed in a short time (Jones & Gill, 1998; Wadensjö, 1999). With a telephone interpreting service clients only need to get access to a phone.

Another situation where a telephone interpreter is preferred is when an on-site interpreter might cause embarrassment to the client, for example in a medical examination. A remote interpreter can provide the communication link without being seen as an intruder, provides greater privacy for the interlocutors because interpreters could not see the person, while also protecting the privacy and modesty of client (Hewitt, 1995; Kelly, 2008a; Wadensjö, 1999, Rosenberg, 2004). Refugees in particular have been found to prefer the assistance of a telephone interpreter than that of an on-site interpreter (Phillips, 2013). In addition, sometimes the gender of the interpreter and the patient might be a significant factor in a medical evaluation, but this would be less important when the communication is conducted over the phone (Ko, 2006; Mikkelson, 2003).

Telephone interpreting is also convenient for interpreters, as it saves them travel time between different venues, provides opportunities to make use of the flexible work hours and spare time, and gives them the choice of working from home (Lee, 2007).

2.4 Challenges for telephone interpreters

It should be noted that the advantages discussed above are mostly viewed from the clients' point of view. Many studies have discussed the difficulties of working as telephone interpreters.

2.4.1 Interpreting without visual message

Interpreting without visual information has long been a controversial issue and discussed by many researchers. As previously discussed, there seems to be several advantages to not having interpreters at the same venue as service users. However, not being on-site means interpreters do not have access to visual clues which are vital for interpreters, as they can help interpreters acquire a clearer understanding about the interpreting situation and decide whether interpreters should intervene in facilitating the communication or not (Gentile, Ozolins & Vasilakakos 1996; Roy 2000; Wadensjö, 1998). A number of researchers point out that interpreters are not able to capture the communicative cues provided by the interlocutors' gestures, posture, facial expressions, and other non-verbal behaviour in telephone interpreting, which can be significant for interpreters' judgement and choice of rendition (Oviatt & Cohen, 1992; Fors, 1999; Kurz, 1999; Mack, 2001; Vidal, 1998; Wadensjö, 1999). Interpreters can only rely on the audio messages and that is a challenging aspect for these telephone interpreters (Lee, 2007).

However, it is also suggested that the limitation of visual clues does not necessarily cause limited communication (Braun, 2006). Even if the lack of visual clues might cause some difficulty in understanding, skilled interpreters should be able to overcome it (Ko, 2006).

Nevertheless, telephone interpreters find non visual interpreting requires extra effort in addition to the interpreting task (Mintz, 1998). Whether, and how, interpreters manage to solve the problems caused by the absence of visual clues seems to be a question worth more exploration. Kelly (2008a) and Crezee (2013) points out that interpreters are still able to perceive auditory cues (e.g. tone of voice, breathing patterns, inflection, pitch, vocal volume) that help them understand the situation.

According to some researchers, non-verbal cues of communication are not necessarily important to the interpreter's performance, and some might even be a needless distraction (Mikkelson, 2003). Some interpreters may prefer interpreting without face-to-face communication as they can maintain a more neutral manner (Lee, 2007). For example, a speaker may have some body language which may not be related to the information being talked about, but might distract an interpreter's attention. Some on-site interpreters think that in some situations it is easier not to look at the speaker to avoid them being distracted by the visual input (Lee, 2007; Mintz, 1998). This is especially so when the interpreter is taking notes, where the visual and mental focus is on the act of listening and taking notes rather than on the speaker.

2.4.2 Use of direct/indirect speech in telephone interpreting

In traditional interpreting, no matter the settings, interpreters are supposed to use the first-person when delivering renditions and interpreting in the third person will usually be considered as a breach of professionalism (Bot, 2005; Kelly, 2008b). However, sometimes it is difficult for interpreters to maintain using direct speech in telephone interpreting, especially when conversations cannot be proceeded smoothly and interpreters have to intervene (Lee, 2007). It is believed that in telephone interpreting using the third person of referring can make the communication clearer by indicating the speaker without confusing the clients, and could ensure the interpreter's role as an independent agent (Hsieh, 2006; Lee, 2007; Oviatt & Cohen, 1992; Rosenberg, 2004).

Bot (2005) argues that in circumstances where users are not aware of the practice of interpreting and the role of interpreters, interpreters have to employ indirect speech in order to clarify the situation and distance themselves from the interpreted information. Oviatt and Cohen (1992) suggest that in service-oriented conversations, telephone interpreters tend to take on an extra role with mixing the use of direct and indirect speech in interpreting to communicate with other parties more efficiently. This suggests that under these circumstances it might be reasonable that interpreters make such adjustments.

2.4.3 Materials for preparation in telephone interpreting

Unpredictable content of interpreting assignments is another challenging issue for telephone interpreters (Lee, 2007). Although it is said that telephone interpreting providers should ensure that frequently used terminologies are provided beforehand for interpreters to get familiar with (Kelly, 2008b), as a result of the nature of telephone interpreting, usually telephone interpreters are not able to prepare ahead of each assignment by reading materials the way on-site interpreters do and they often have to handle a variety of interpreting tasks (Heh & Qian, 1997). This diversity of terminology is a challenge for interpreters (Kelly, 2008a). Additionally, telephone interpreters do not have the ability to specialize as much as on-site interpreters who often limit themselves to court, conference, or medical assignments and only focus on one type of interpreting (Heh & Qian, 1997; Gracia-García, 2002).

2.4.4 Role of telephone interpreter

Although the role of interpreters has long been discussed among many researchers, there has been little research done on the communicative function and roles of remote interpreters (Ko 2006; Lee, 2007). Because of the special form of communication, telephone interpreters once were regarded as a conduit with their only function being the transfer of information between languages (Lee, 2007). Actually the conduit model has

been advocated by many early researchers in interpreting practice (Wadensjö, 1993). This role is mostly applied to court interpreters, who need to deliver everything that has been said, as well as the way of speaking (Hale, 2007; Wadensjö, 1993). However, interpreters are increasingly regarded as an active party in interpreting communications taking on the role of a mediator, facilitator, or coordinator (Hale, 2007; Oviatt and Cohen, 1992; Roy 2000; Wadensjö, 1998). Interpreters are performing activities on behalf of other parties in the conversation (Hale, 2007; Wadensjö, 1998). It has been found that in some situations, like health settings, professional staff may even prefer interpreters to build a personal rapport with clients and provide emotional support (Hsieh & Hong, 2010). Hale (2007) suggests that in health care setting professionals and interpreters should work as teammates to optimize the results. In some situations interpreters may also need to bridge the cultural barrier between professionals and clients by giving essential explanations (Avery, 2001). Oviatt and Cohen (1992) point out that as interpreters are an independent party in the telephone conversation, they sometimes engage in side talk with other parties, for example talking about personal information with professionals. Lee (2007) points out that most interpreters are trying to strike a balance somewhere between the two extremes of either taking an interpreting machine-like role and being involved in the conversation. Sometimes the interpreters' perception of their role may conflict with interpreting services users' expectation (Hale, 2007; Hsieh, 2006). The Code of Ethics has requirements on interpreter's role, but it is a general guideline without explicit explanation for specific situations. It seems that there is no such thing as a "one size fits all" model of the interpreter's role and experienced interpreters tend to adjust their role relying on their professional judgements based on the core principles of the code (Hale, 2007). It is also reasonable to assume that in different settings, concerning different issues, interpreters will take on different roles (Hale, 2007).

2.4.5 Managing communication in telephone interpreting

Turn-taking is often referred to in research about telephone interpreting. Telephone interpreters usually work consecutively over the phone and seldom need to use the simultaneous mode (Kelly, 2008b). According to Hewitt (1995), one disadvantage of consecutive interpreting is that it may prolong the interaction. Consecutive interpreting over the telephone can also result in inaccurate rendition for three possible reasons: if the interpreter cannot control turn-taking properly, if the interpreter fails to retain long utterances, or if the interpreter constantly needs to interrupt to clarify what has been said (Wadensjö, 1999).

Wadensjö (1999) points out that it is more difficult to control the pace of turn-taking when the interpreter is not physically present. Interpreters have to take a more active role in interrupting the speaker and managing turn-taking (Hsieh, 2006; Wadensjö, 1999). Moreover, as the interpreter is unable to see the speakers, sometimes when the speakers stop talking the interpreters might think the connection has been severed (Mikkelson, 2003). Oviatt and Cohen (1997) also talk about the interpreter's need to interrupt to confirm understanding and make sure the connection is still viable. It is also pointed out that telephone interpreters take on an active role in turn management and organising the flow of the dialogue (Oviatt and Cohen, 1992). However, interpreters always requesting confirmation to make sure the information given is correct will make the process of communication even longer and cause unnecessary time wasting and cost (Oviatt & Cohen, 1992).

Because of the connectivity of the telephone and the way people adapt to communicate in telephone interpreting conversations, telephone interpreters may not always be able to grasp what has been said by the speakers. Kelly (2008a) and Hale (2007) state that in order to ensure interpreting quality, when telephone interpreters are not able to hear

clearly, they should employ techniques that require speakers to give clarification assertively, yet politely.

2.4.6 Telephone interpreter's mental/physical health

Many factors could affect interpreters and become stressors in their work (Crezee, Atkinson, Pask, Au, & Wong, 2015). The traumatic situation of clients is said to be one source of interpreter's stress. Some researchers, however, state that when an interpreter is at a different venue from the speakers, it may be easier for them to concentrate on the interpreting task and that they may have less emotional involvement in what the client has suffered (Gracia-García, 2002). It is also pointed out that personality traits can impact interpreters, with some of them being more vulnerable and easily stressed than others (Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012). In addition, it can be difficult for interpreters not to empathize with the clients and control their feelings when they hear some traumatic experience of the speaker (Hale, 2007), not to mention end-of-life issues (Schenker, Fernandez, Kerr, O'Riordan, & Pantilat, 2012). However they have to keep these emotions to themselves because they work in an independent mode in isolation from the other parties (Wadensjö, 1999; Wilson, 2010). Because of this independence and isolation it is hard for telephone interpreters to debrief after such assignments (Wilson, 2010), and furthermore they need to carry on working for the next client/incoming call (Kelly, 2008). It is suggested that interpreters feel higher levels of stress in remote interpreting than on-site interpreting (Andres & Falk, 2009).

Sometimes the stress may come from interpreter's personal issues (Crezee et al., 2015). Those stressors may include the interpreter's financial and working situations, their own life experience, and their level of resilience and psychological skills. What kind of situations would cause stress to telephone interpreters and how they manage to control their emotions is an important question which will be investigated further in this study.

2.4.7 Telephone interpreter's work-life balance

It is said that telephone interpreting services are available any time of the day, which indicates that a telephone interpreter might need to work outside of business hours (Kelly, 2008b). A possible solution to this problem is that interpreters develop a shift system where those who work outside of business hours manage their own time during business hours. In terms of the interpreters, they have the option to work part-time and from home, according to the parameters of their own situation (Heh & Qian, 1997; Kelly, 2008b).

Lee (2007) indicates that in her study conducted among Korean telephone interpreters working in Australia, none of participants worked as full-time telephone interpreters. It is also suggested that in a small country, like New Zealand, there are very few full-time staff interpreting jobs, and therefore most interpreters work as freelancers (Crezee, Jülich, and Hayward, 2013). Telephone interpreting generally pays less than on-site interpreting because interpreters do not need to travel between different venues (Lee, 2007). Crezee et al. (2013) suggest that the unpredictability of work and income can cause stress. The unpredictability of telephone interpreting assignments and their irregularity can disrupt the interpreter's daily life (Lee, 2007), and such unstable work leads to unstable income (Lee, 2007). Anecdotal evidence also suggests that interpreters may breach their code of ethics to accept more interpreting jobs, for example taking interpreting assignments without being in a solitary place (Crezee et al., 2013).

2.4.8 Telephone interpreting training

Kelly (2008a) states that training and skills of interpreters are significant factors for quality telephone interpreting. For telephone interpreting service providers they should have ongoing supervision of interpreter's performance to ensure interpreting quality (Kelly, 2008a). It is also pointed out that because less attention has been specifically paid to telephone interpreting, it is less common to have training, particularly telephone interpreting training (Lee, 2007).

2.4.9 Telephone interpreting users

Users of telephone interpreting services are most often government agencies and laypersons (Chesher et al., 2003), however telephone interpreting is also widely used among healthcare settings (Phillips, 2013). Kelly (2008a) suggests that successful communication in the telephone interpreting process also relies on the end user's ability to work with a telephone interpreter. She further explains that inexperienced telephone interpreting service users are likely to do things, e.g. interrupting the interpreter, asking for advice, using the third person, engaging interpreter into side talk, that affect the interpreter's work. Hale (2007), Roy (2000) and Wadensjö (1998) suggest that all participants of the interpreting process are responsible for the quality and outcome of interpreting, not just the interpreter.

2.5 Situations when telephone interpreting is not an ideal choice

In order to ensure the quality of interpreting, telephone interpreting service providers usually have policies requiring that the interpreter's working environments be noise-free (Kelly, 2008a).

One point of controversy is when telephone interpreting should be used. Almost everyone who has written about telephone interpreting, and even providers of telephone interpreting services, caution that it is not appropriate for every situation and should be used wisely (Gracia-García, 2002). Even the most committed advocates of telephone interpreting admit that it is not appropriate for all situations (Mikkelson, 2003). Gracia-García (2002) hold that if the client has access to a qualified on-site interpreter and there is not an emergency, telephone interpreters may not be the best choice. However, for urgent situations, clients may have to choose telephone interpreting service even though it may not be the ideal choice (Kelly, 2008a).

It is pointed out that telephone interpreting is suitable and efficient when the only purpose is to gather simple and basic information and the communication is only about the exchange of raw data, getting facts, communicating ideas and sending or receiving specific information (Swaney, 1997; Perez & Wilson, 2006). Telephone interpreting is not suitable when the communication will be lengthy, because the interpreters may not be able to stand the stress from the requirement to work continuously for long periods (Grabau & Gibbons, 1996; Kelly, 2008a). Another situation is when there are many participants involved in the communication, having to deal with several participants simultaneously can make it hard for interpreters (Wadensjö, 1998). Trials and other evidentiary hearings are also not well-suited for telephone interpreting because any possible misunderstanding of clients' utterances and the inappropriate rendition of the interpreter might affect the judgement and might cause serious problems (Swaney, 1997). Kelly (2008a) suggests that telephone interpreting is not a good choice for circumstances when visual information is especially important (e.g. doctor-patient interviews). It is also advised that settings like mental health evaluations and traumatic situations should not employ telephone interpreting for the reason that clients may not be in a condition to communicate over telephone, which can also cause undue stress for the interpreter (Kelly, 2008a; Wadensjö, 1999).

2.6 Technical/technological needs for telephone interpreting

Several researchers have discussed the technological needs for telephone interpreting. The importance of the interpreter having a clear connection over the phone is always emphasized. Sound quality of the phone and connectivity of the line are vital aspects in telephone interpreting that could affect the interpreter's ability to hear clearly which can impact the quality of interpreting (Kelly, 2008a; Lee, 2007). Mobile phones have the advantage of mobility and availability, but are usually not recommended for telephone

interpreting because of bad reception and other technical issues (Lee, 2007). Researchers advocate that cellular phones should never be used by any of the parties, likewise with speaker phones as the sound quality is often poor (Kelly, 2008b; Rosenberg, 2004). Dual handsets are more convenient as they enable all participants to listen to the interpretation individually without having to pass the handset back and forth (Kelly, 2008b). Videoconferencing is advocated as it can compensate for the lack of visual input, which is cited by many authors as an obstacle in telephone interpreting (Heh & Qian, 1997; Phelan, 2001; Gracia-García, 2002) as discussed earlier. However, at present videoconferencing is currently used more by sign language interpreters (Phelan, 2001). In New Zealand, the iSign agency for New Zealand Sign Language Interpreting is trialling video remote interpreting (Magill, 2015, personal communication). In addition, it is also considered that having a video connection does not solve all of the problems arising out of the interpreter's physical absence because the connection can still affect the clarity of the visual information (Kurz, 1996; Swaney, 1997).

2.7 Discussion

Among those authors listed above, there is one worth special mention. In her book on telephone interpreting, Kelly (2008b), gives explicit guidelines to people who work as telephone interpreters, as well as people who intend to enter the profession, and even for clients who might work with telephone interpreters and educators on the training of telephone interpreters. The book is informative with examples of practical scenarios based on different settings for practice. Nevertheless, it is more like an instruction manual, rather than a reflection of real life practice. That is to say, the principles and guidance listed in the book are for ideal situations that can happen in telephone interpreting practice, however in reality there are many obstacles that can impede the ideal situation.

As there has been no research on telephone interpreting conducted in New Zealand, a major problem is that all the situations discussed above are experiences drawn from other countries' practices. A number of studies on this topic are based on the telephone interpreting services in Australia. Although Australia and New Zealand are close, physically and culturally, this does not necessarily mean that they have the same system of running a telephone interpreting service. We do not yet know whether the situations discussed above, at all or in part, apply to New Zealand telephone interpreting practices, and that is what will be investigated further in this study.

2.8 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has outlined the relevant literature on telephone interpreting. In the next chapter, the method of data collection and analysis will build on the key areas discussed in this chapter, but within the New Zealand setting.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has provided an overview of the related literature. This chapter will describe the approaches and procedures undertaken, including that of data collection, the sample of respondents, and the analysis of data collected. It will also provide a rationale for the chosen methodological approach and how this relates to the scope of the study.

3.2 Data collection

The researcher of this study intended to discover the challenges faced by telephone interpreters in New Zealand, investigate the reasons behind these challenges and hopefully identify possible solutions to these problems. Research commenced after receiving ethics approval from the Ethnic Committee of Auckland University of Technology on 20th August 2014 (Ethic Approval Number: 14/219).

This present study includes two phases, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. As all methods have weaknesses, using a combined quantitative and qualitative approach can help neutralize the individual weakness found in data of each of the methods (Creswell, 2014). In addition, the data from quantitative and qualitative methods can be used to examine the validity of the other data (Creswell, 2012).

Surveys can provide a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2014). A questionnaire was adopted in this study because it is one of the most commonly used methods of collecting data relatively quickly and enables broad themes to be identified (Hale & Napier, 2013). However surveys and questionnaires can only obtain general ideas (Hale & Napier, 2013), and more in-depth, detailed answers are needed to better understand the issues identified,

hence a semi-structured interview method was also chosen. Because of the dearth of studies conducted on telephone interpreting, and no research having been done on telephone interpreting in New Zealand, a survey would also not be sufficient to explore whether telephone interpreters in New Zealand have their own issues and difficulties and how these might be distinct from other those in other countries. Furthermore, the findings of interviews could also be used to check the validity of results from the survey.

In this explanatory study, the researcher first conducted quantitative research. These results were analysed and then built on through more detail with qualitative research. Although conducting both phases of research in a parallel period of time could help save time (Creswell, 2014), it would be more practical for an individual researcher, without other people's assistance, to conduct the two parts separately. Moreover, sequential mixed methods provide strengthened data as the broad themes and trends denoted from the first phase of study are able to be explored further in the second phase (Creswell, 2014).

When the research commenced, an advertisement about this study was posted on the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI) website in the form of a news item to recruit participants. The news page could be accessed by anyone who browsed the NZSTI website. This was important as not all telephone interpreters are members of NZSTI. In order to gather more participants, the advertisement was also posted on the Facebook website of Language Line, along with the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix A).

3.2.1 Online survey

In the first phase of the study, the anonymous online survey was employed to obtain an overview of the target participants' challenges encountered in their work as a telephone interpreter. The survey was posted online with SurveyMonkey and the link was attached

in the advertisement on NZSTI website for a period of four months from September to December 2014. Participation was voluntary.

SurveyMoney was chosen for its ease of use and management. After finishing the design of the survey, a web link for the survey was generated. The researcher then contacted the administrator of NZSTI and the link, together with the advertisement, was posted on the website. Given that some interpreters may not have been members of NZSTI and may not have login accounts, the survey was posted on the newsletter web page where anyone who browsed the website could access and respond. The survey could be accessed via computer, tablet, and smartphone.

At the beginning of the survey there was a notice clearly saying that by completing the survey the interpreter was consenting to participate in the survey. At the end of the survey there was a notice about the face-to-face interview and survey participants who were interested in the interview contacted the researcher directly by email.

In the online questionnaire (see Appendix D), there were seventeen questions in total, with sixteen close-ended multiple choice questions and one open-ended question. The questions included respondents' age and telephone interpreting experience and practice. It covered the main problems identified by previous researchers (regarding the challenges of working as telephone interpreters), and also investigated the participants' interpreting education experiences and their attitudes towards the training programme(s) with regard to the situation in New Zealand.

Most questions were simply designed with respondents only needing to click the answer they thought best suited them. If respondents wished to expand on their answer there was an "other (please specify)" option. The time needed to finish the survey was less than fifteen minutes, to ensure that respondents would not get bored nor quit before they had finished answering the questions.

Taking into consideration that questions in the survey might not cover all the problems faced by telephone interpreters, the last question was open-ended which invited participants to provide text comments. This question was aimed at gaining more information on the challenges participants experienced, which could provide insight on the questions to be included in the interviews.

All the respondents voluntarily participated in the survey and no tracking of IP address or personally identifiable features were built into the survey.

3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

As the research aim was to obtain interpreters' opinions about the challenges of their work and the resolution to the difficulties, more detailed information was needed. In a face-to-face interview the researcher can ask further clarifying questions based on the results from the survey (Hale & Napier, 2013). With open-ended questions, more information not mentioned by the questionnaire could be obtained from the interpreters (Hale & Napier, 2013).

In the second phase of the study the researcher conducted interviews with nine telephone interpreters who agreed to participate as interviewees. The interviews were scheduled at the interviewees' convenience, and for interviewees who were not available to have the interview face-to-face, their interviews were conducted over the phone. Four interviews were conducted face-to-face, and five interviews were conducted over the phone. One interviewee was willing to share more views with the interviewer, therefore for that interview specifically it took over an hour. For the rest of the interviews, they were limited to 40 minutes, in consideration of the interviewee's busy schedules. During the interviews, the researcher asked questions based on the list of indicative questions (see Appendix E) with flexibility. The researcher used open-ended questions and proceeded the interviews in a conversational style, which allowed participants to freely talk about a topic and share

their opinions with the researcher (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). Probing questions to follow up on respondents' answers were occasionally employed to gain more explicit understanding of participants' opinions.

All interviewees were aware that they were being recorded and the conversation would later be transcribed. They had all consented to this procedure by reading and signing the consent form (see Appendix C). For participants in face-to-face interviews, the form was sent to them beforehand along with the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix B) via email. On the day the interviews were conducted, the researcher brought a hardcopy of the consent form for interviewees to sign before starting the interview. For interviewees who did the interview via telephone, the consent form and participant information sheet were sent to them by email in advance of the interview day, and the participant either mailed or emailed a scanned signed copy to the researcher.

For interviews conducted over phone, the researcher turned on the phone speaker, therefore enabling the conversation to be recorded. In order to assure the confidentiality and privacy of participants, interviewees in this study are referred to by numbers, e.g. Interviewee 1. The face-to-face interviews were conducted in the student lounge on level 11 in the WT Building of the Auckland University of Technology. The researcher conducted telephone interviews in her study room at home. All interviews were conducted in English and were recorded by an MP4 player. During the process of the interviews, the researcher also took some brief notes where necessary for later analysis. After each interview, the researcher immediately transferred the recorded interviews onto computer and made a copy on an external hard drive.

When each interview was over, the researcher gave the interviewee a thirty dollars voucher as a token of appreciation for their participation. For interviewees who had interviews over telephone, the koha were sent to them via post. The interview section was

held over a period of three months from late December 2014 to late March 2015. Choosing a survey followed by a small number of interviews (n=9) fitted in with the scope of the study, which required me to complete a one-year fulltime thesis research project in order to fulfil the requirements of a Master's degree.

3.3 Participants

Participants in this study were New Zealand based telephone interpreters working either for Language Line or one of the other services that provide telephone interpreting (e.g. the District Health Board interpreting services: WATIS, ITS and ADHB interpreting service). The participants were recruited voluntarily and could withdraw from the research at any stage prior to the completion of data collection. The recruitment criteria were that the participants must be interpreters who have telephone interpreting experience in New Zealand. Participants could be full-time, part-time or free-lance telephone interpreters; they could be telephone interpreters who also work as on-site interpreters or other professions. Interpreters without telephone interpreting experience were excluded from this research study. In order to ensure the participants were telephone interpreters, a note saying "this questionnaire is only for interpreters who have telephone interpreting experience" was put on the first page of the questionnaire. There were in total 21 participants of the survey and nine participants in the interview. All participants in the interviews were fluent in English.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Survey Data analysis

As the online survey was conducted with SurveyMonkey, some basic trends of the data were identified by the system and question summaries were generated automatically with charts online. They could be transferred into different forms of graphs after the data was

exported to an Excel file, and the researcher chose the most suitable forms for the presentation purpose. By analysing the graphs the researcher identified some major themes presented by the data, and noted them down for further exploration in the interviews.

3.4.2 Interviews data analysis

The interviewees were coded numerically. The interview recordings were transcribed. The transcriptions and notes of the interviews were combined together in Word files for more detailed analysis. The researcher did not edit any of the interviewees' answers and they were transcribed as originally recorded in this research. During the transcribing process, one problem was that the recorded interviews were sometimes unclear. However, as the analysis progressed and the researcher got accustomed to the way that participants talked about the issues, the unclear answers generally made sense.

The interview transcripts were categorised and coded into several salient themes based on the answers (Guest et al., 2012). One difficulty was that sometimes the themes were hard to denote because interviewees answered implicitly and occasionally they strayed from the topic being discussed to other related issues. The researcher tried to reduce ambiguity in coding by defining each theme more clearly (Guest et al., 2012). The interviewee's opinions were compared with the findings from the survey and the literature.

3.5 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has presented the methods employed in this study by discussing the approaches and procedures of data collection, the participants, and the approaches of data analysis, as well as a rationale for the chosen approach. The next chapter will further present the findings of the online survey.

Chapter Four: Survey Findings

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the methodology and the research instruments which included a survey (See Appendix) which was posted on the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI) website. The survey contained 17 questions in total. Twenty-one interpreters responded to the survey, of whom nineteen completed all survey questions, while two respondents skipped one or two questions. This chapter will describe survey responses, focusing on the most salient findings and discuss the findings in comparison with findings of some previous studies.

4.2 Survey findings

4.2.1 Demographic details of respondents

The majority of respondents were aged between 29 and 59, with 9% being 20-29, 29% being 30 to 39, and 29% being 50 and 59 (See Figure 4.1). This corresponds with findings by Crezee, Jülich and Hayward (2013), whose participants were mainly aged between 30 and 60 (See Table 1).
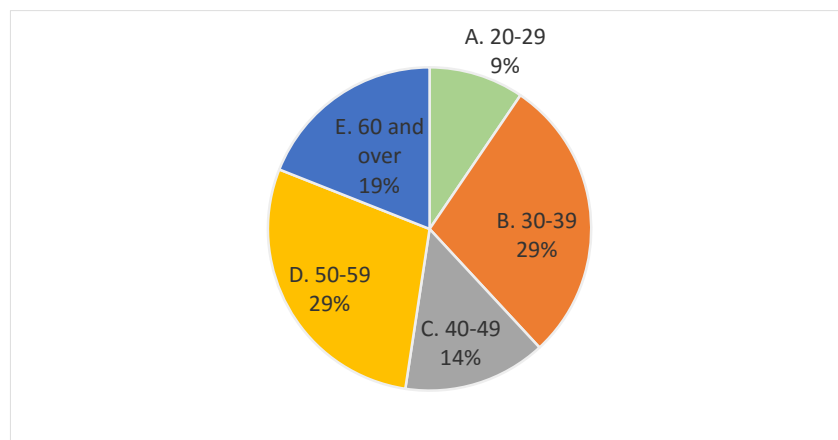
Figure 2.1 Ages of respondents

Table 4.1 Ages of respondents in Crezee, Jülich and Hayward (2013)

20 or over but less than 30	10.3%
30 or over but less than 40	31.0%
40 or over but less than 50	20.7%
50 or over but less than 60	31.0%
60 or over	6.9%

It would appear that most working interpreters in New Zealand are older than 30 years and quite a number are aged 40 years and over. So, it seems that my sample is quite representative for practising interpreters in New Zealand.
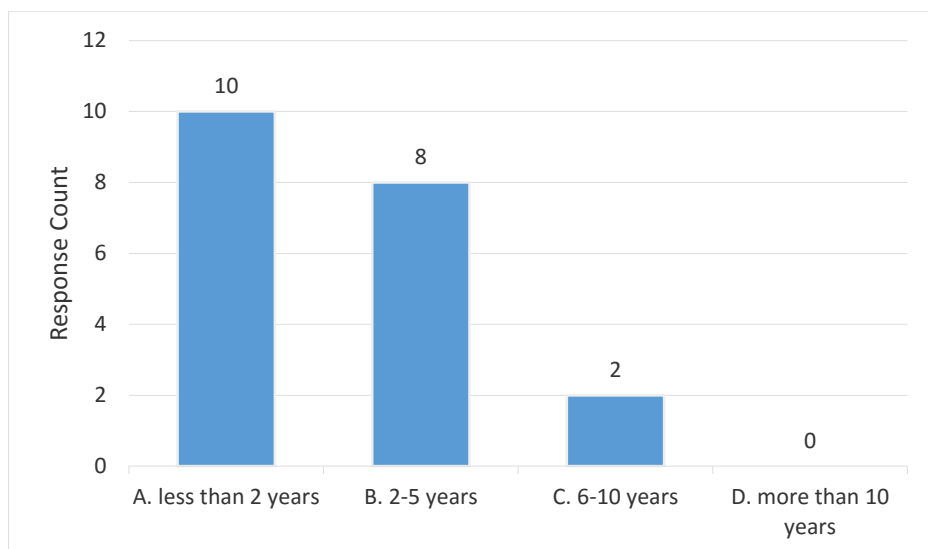
Figure 3.2 Experience as a telephone interpreter

4.2.2 Practice of telephone interpreting

Half of the respondents had been working as telephone interpreters for less than two years, with only two having been telephone interpreters for more than five years (see Figure 4.2). Respondents were not asked how many different telephone interpreting assignments they had carried out.

The majority of respondents (80%) were free-lance telephone interpreters, 20% of them worked part-time while none of them worked as full-time telephone interpreters. This corresponds with the situation in Australia where interpreters rarely have full-time telephone interpreting jobs (Phillips, 2013).

Crezee et al. (2015, p. 76) points out that freelance interpreting work involves considerable work stress: "The unpredictability of ongoing work and income is inherent in the freelance interpreter's work." There is much anecdotal evidence (Crezee, Jülich, & Hayward, 2013) demonstrating that interpreters occasionally breach the rules of ethical conduct for fear of missing out on work.

Participants were also asked about their location when answering telephone interpreting-assignment related calls. Sixty percent of respondents said they did not work in offices when conducting their telephone interpreting assignments, the remaining 40% did use an office. According to Kelly (2008), telephone interpreters in the US typically work in offices provided by the call centre or a separate room they set up at home for telephone interpreting jobs. As the questionnaire did not further enquire on the types of office interpreters worked in, this question will be further explored in the next chapter.

For telephone interpreters who work outside of an office, there are various possible venues. These might be public places with noise, which may compromise the quality of interpreters' performance, but also mean confidentiality of the calls cannot not be assured. Crezee et al. (2015, p.76) briefly mention that interpreters may sometimes take confidential phone calls in public spaces, without ensuring that they are in private, partly due to the nature of freelance work, which means they cannot predict when assignments will come in. They write:

Interpreters may book themselves in for difficult assignments that they know will be very stressful, for consecutive assignments without leaving time for (peak hour) travel, or for telephone interpreting calls without being in a solitary space.

In other words, interpreters may have background noise and movement impacting on their ability to focus. Stress can accumulate when the interpreter reflects on the errors that ensue. Questions such as these will be further discussed in next chapter.

Seventy percent of respondents also accept telephone interpreting jobs after business hours. This may add to work stress, as there is no real distinction between work time and leisure time, so work-life balance may be upset (Crezee et al., 2015).
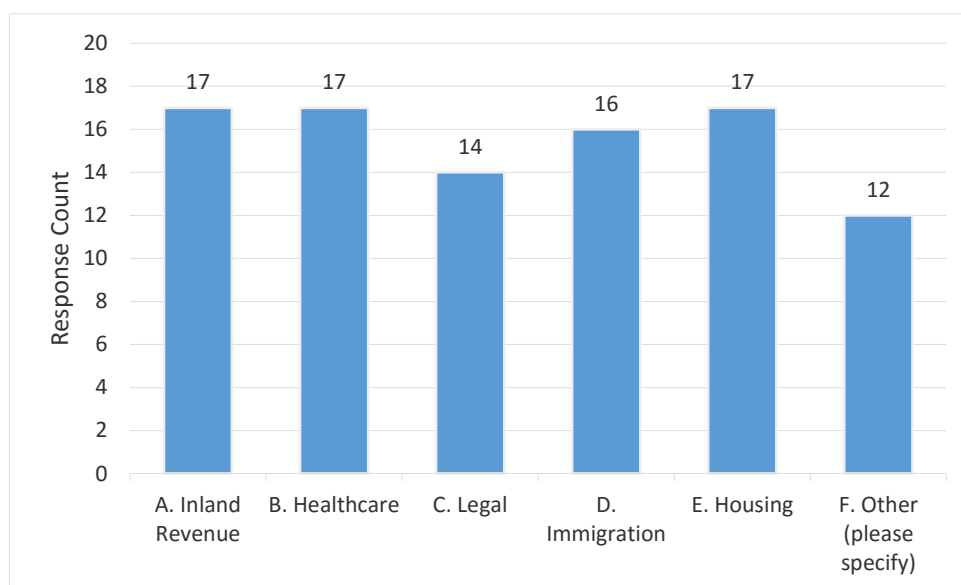
Figure 4.3 Settings of telephone interpreting

For my respondents, their telephone interpreting tasks are mainly about public services, the areas they most deal with are Inland Revenue, Healthcare and Housing, followed by Immigration and Legal (see Figure 4.3). A small amount of the respondents also mentioned ACC, public utilities (such as electricity supply).

Ninety percent of the participants answered that in their telephone interpreting assignments they did not have any material to help them prepare in advance of their jobs.

This fits in with findings by Heh and Qian (1997). This type of situation might be challenging and be a source of stress as the content and length of the tasks were unexpected. However one would expect that this becomes less of an issue as the interpreter becomes more experienced. This will be explored further in next chapter.
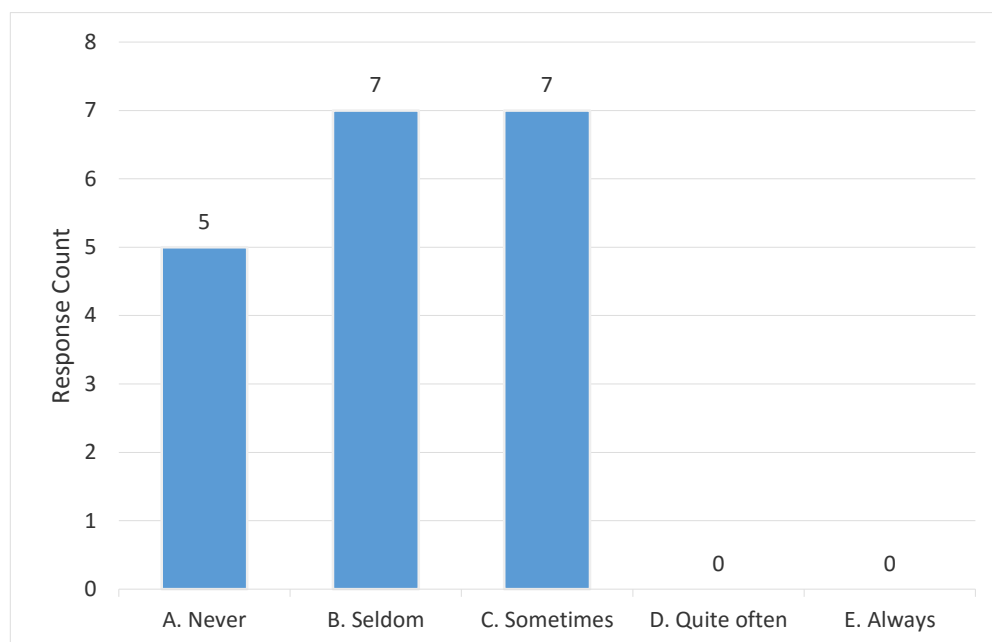
Figure 5.4 Difficulties without visual information

A majority (74%) of the participants reported having had difficulties interpreting without visual information, but also indicated that those challenges did not occur very often (see Figure 4.4). There was a small group (26%) of respondents that indicated they had never experienced any difficulties due to not having visual clues. This is a surprising finding that contradicts with previous researchers' opinion that visual messages are a vital part of the interpreting process (Fors, 1999; Gentile, Ozolins & Vasilakakos 1996; Oviatt & Cohen, 1992; Kurz, 1999; Mack, 2001; Roy 2000; Vidal, 1998; Wadensjö, 1992; Wadensjö, 1999). A possible reason why these interpreters did not find interpreting without visual clues difficult may be that they were familiar with certain topics and with

the process, thus they could handle the job even without seeing the other parties (Ko, 2006).
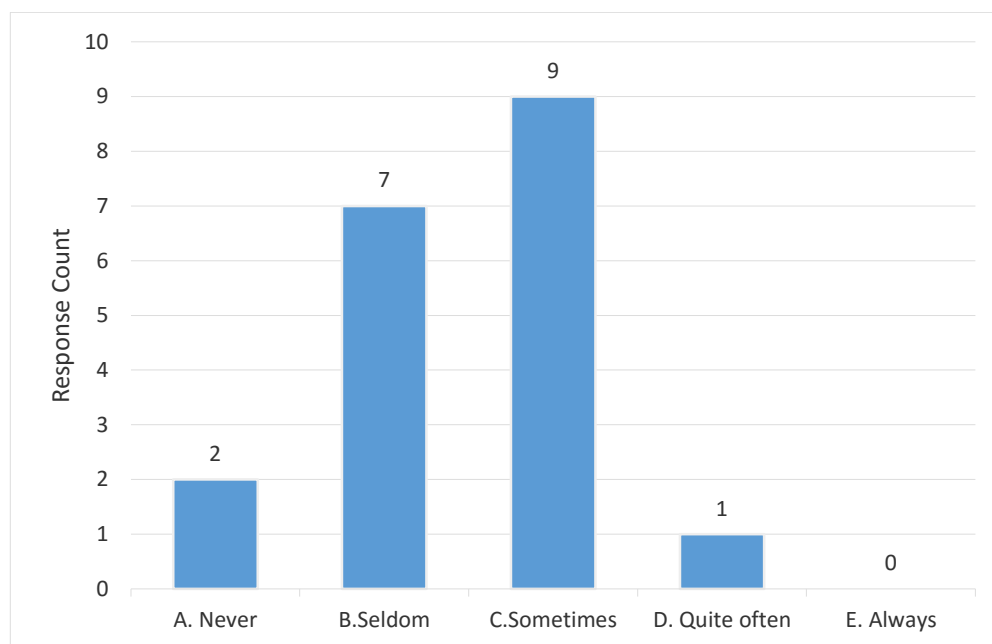
Figure 6.5 Difficulties of turn-taking

Almost 90% of the participants indicated that they had experienced difficulties in controlling turn-taking over the phone (see Figure 4.5). Wadensjö (1999) points out that it is more difficult to control the pace of turn-taking for telephone interpreters because they are not physically present. It is possible that clients keep talking without allowing interpreters the opportunity to interpret, which could be a frustrating situation and cause some work stress.
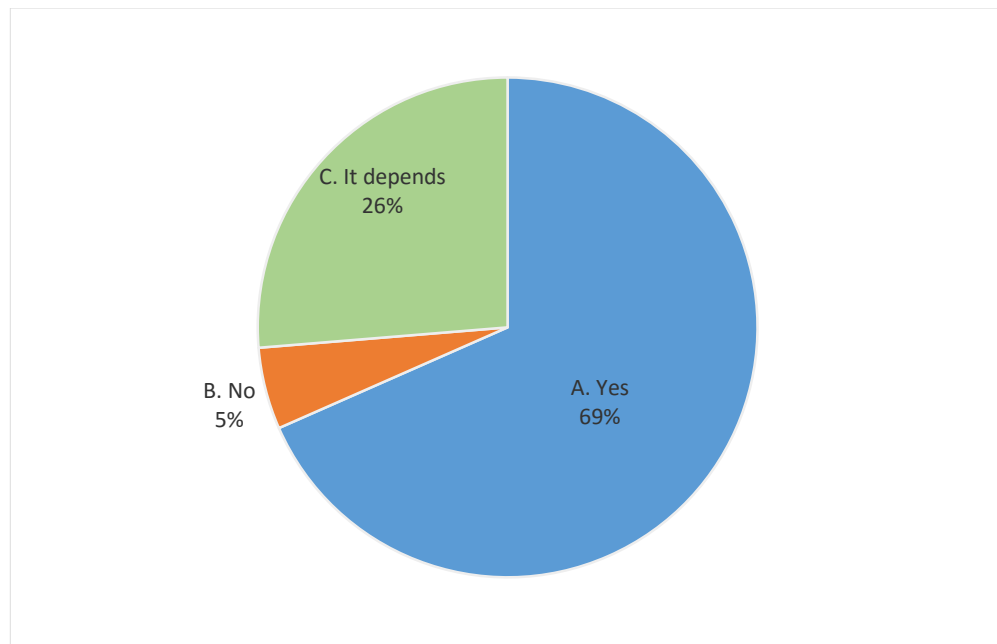
Figure 7.6 Interrupting the speaker

More than half of the participants said they would interrupt the speaker if they could not follow what has been said by the speaker (see Figure 4.6). Only a very small number of respondents thought they would not interrupt the speaker. Phillips (2013) points out that telephone interpreters are more active than on-site interpreters when interrupting the speaker, because unlike on-site interpreters who can indicate their need of a pause by signalling, telephone interpreters can only interrupt verbally.
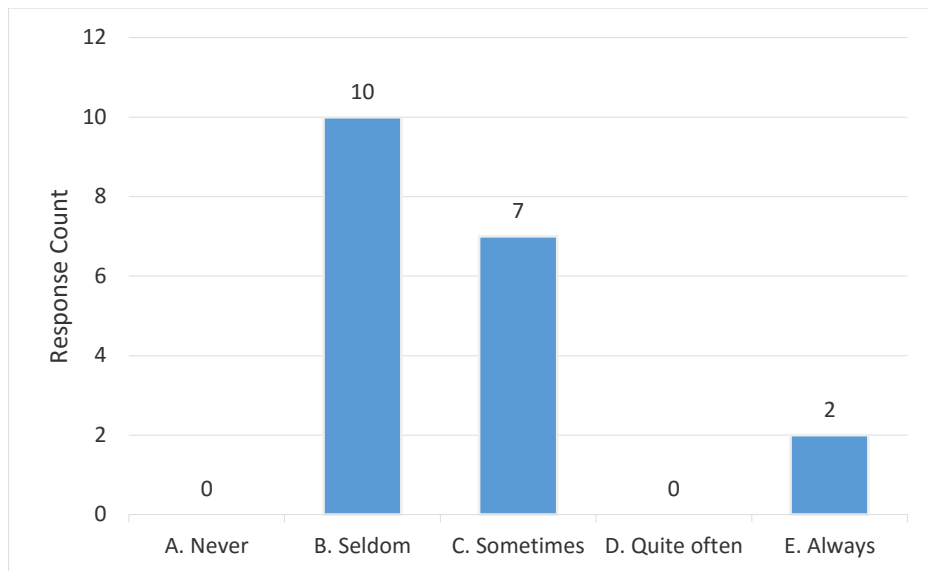
Figure 8.7 Confirm the information

All of the respondents said that they needed to confirm information with the speaker, however 90% of them also reported this was not a frequent occurrence (see Figure 4.7). Only two participants said they always asked the speaker for confirmation. Telephone interpreting usually uses the consecutive mode, and the whole process may include passing the phone from one speaker to another, when interpreters find themselves having misheard some information, they should ask for clarification. However, doing so may also lead to a longer interpreting time.

Only two (11%) respondents used the third person for telephone interpreting assignments. Some researchers suggest that in telephone interpreting interpreters communicate better when using the third person because they can indicate the speakers clearly and make themselves an independent agent (Hsieh, 2006; Oviatt & Cohen, 1992; Rosenberg, 2004). The NZSTI Code of Ethics (2013) states that accuracy is important and interpreters are taught to use the first person when they are training.
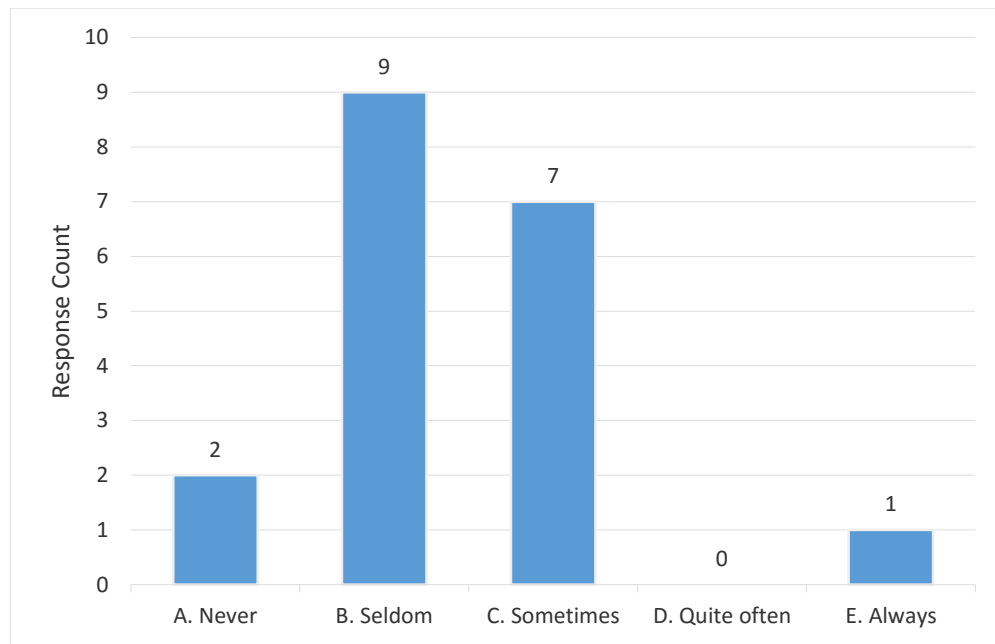
Figure 9.8 Feeling stressed as telephone interpreter

When asked whether they ever felt stressed when working as a telephone interpreter, nine interpreters chose "seldom", while seven interpreters answered "sometimes" (see Figure 4.8). Only one respondent chose "always". While the researcher was unable to find out why the interpreter was always stressed in his/her telephone interpreting job, a possible reason may be that he/she was not experienced (worked as a telephone interpreter for less than two years). Furthermore some researchers point out that the personality of the interpreter also plays a role. According to Bontempo and Napier (2011), some interpreters possess personality traits which make them more vulnerable to stressors.
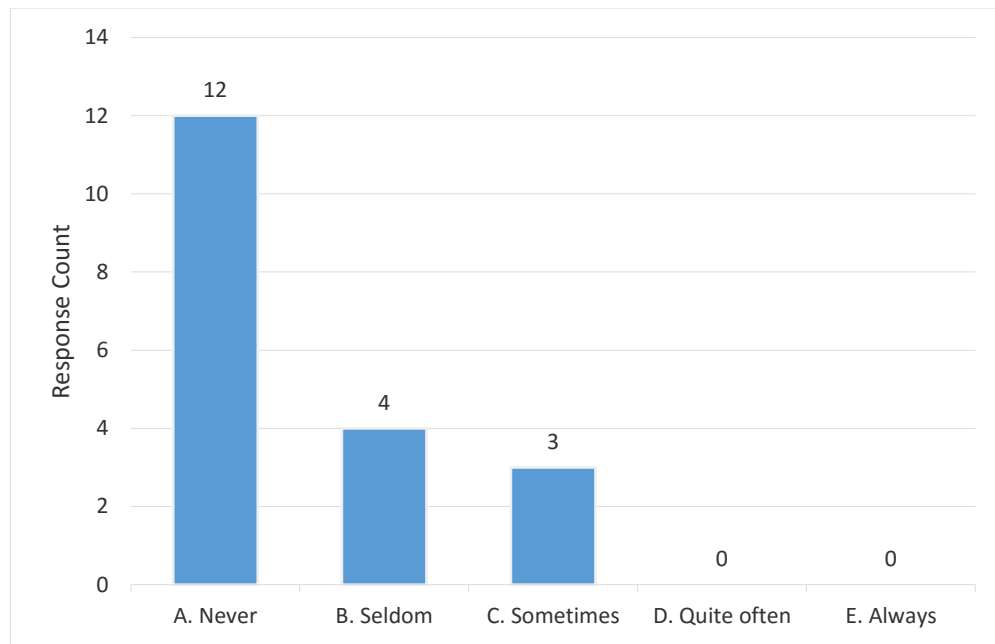
Figure 10.9 Feeling lonely as telephone interpreter

The majority of respondents indicated they never felt lonely when working as telephone interpreters (see Figure 4.9). Four respondents stated they seldom felt lonely and three respondents replied they sometimes felt that way. This was in contrast with the findings from other studies which indicate telephone interpreters suffer from loneliness because they work independently and are isolated from the other parties in the conversations.

An overwhelming majority (90%) of respondents had participated in interpreting education programmes. All of the respondents with interpreting training experience thought that the training was helpful for their telephone interpreting work.

The last question in the questionnaire was open-ended, and the answers varied. Two participants skipped this question. Each respondent was asked to write the issue they felt was the most challenging part of telephone interpreting. The most mentioned aspects included: an absence of visual information (n=4) and a lack of familiarity with certain settings (n=3).

Two respondents gave their opinions on interpreting without visual information:

To me, absence of visual clues, which has a negative impact on communication for all the parties involved. For example, I find it harder to stop the speaker when they have been speaking for too long or I need to clarify something without the aid of gestures and facial expressions. (Respondent 4)

The reliability of the information given over the phone since I cannot see the facial expression of the person on the phone. (Respondent 15)

One respondent especially pointed out lack of visual information was difficult for healthcare telephone interpreting, he/she wrote: "Inability to have a visual input from the conversants in healthcare surroundings"

Other challenging aspects mentioned are listed below and have been numbered to indicate their frequency, with 1 indicating the most common theme. Aspects mentioned include:

1. Obtaining factual details from clients accurately. One respondent answered:

Keeping accurate records of each phone call, i.e. job numbers, name of departments, length of call. (Respondent 5)

Another respondent also said it was frustrating to obtain information from clients who have low levels of literacy. He/she wrote:

When the service provider is identifying the client by asking them their birth date address phone numbers and asking them to spell certain things when the client is illiterate. This causes frustrations on all concerned. (Respondent 17)

2. Trying to fit in telephone interpreting work with other work. One survey respondent wrote: "Deal with other work during a day while working as a telephone interpreter."

3. Having to repeatedly give or ask clients (for) the same information. One respondent answered:

When you have to repeatedly tell the client the same answer when you have already told them once and they keep asking the same question again and again. It makes you feel that the agency may think that the interpreter is not able to get the correct message through. This is very true of our Indian clients. (Respondent 9)

4. Having to interrupt the speaker. One respondent stated:

Sometimes the client can ramble a bit, and one needs to direct him to answer a particular question. This interruption can come across as a bit rude. (Respondent 8)

5. Service users could not understand telephone interpreter's role. One respondent pointed out that: "Same as per interpreting in person, the fact that other parties never fully understand your role."

6. Trying to catch up with the speech. One respondent wrote: "When people talk too fast".

7. Interpreting for emotional clients. One respondent pointed out:

As a phone interpreter in NZ you deal a lot with socially disadvantaged people and sometimes I do interpret drunk people who may swear, people not emotionally stable, they yell etc. (Respondent 3)

It will be clear from some of the comments cited here that participants' English ability sometimes appeared to leave something to be desired. Almost all respondents had been through professional training courses and for at least one of these, a level of IELTS 7.5 (Academic) was one of the stated entry criteria. In other words, student interpreters were not required to have perfect English proficiency in order to gain entry to the course, but it did have to be of an advanced level. I found the less than perfect English ability of interviewees a bit concerning, as to me it meant they might not be able to convey all nuances appropriately, however, I have no evidence to support my impressions.

Some of the comments also appear to betray a certain degree of impatience (with clients and professionals) and a tendency to be slightly judgmental. It may be that I 'caught' interviewees on a day when they were stressed, or there may have been other things going on in their lives that made them slightly impatient. However, on the whole, interpreters should maintain a calm, professional demeanour at all times, especially in relation to their work, so I was slightly concerned at hearing such coments.

4.3 Summary of chapter

This chapter looked at the main findings of the survey questions and discussed them in comparison with other research studies. It gave a brief outline of the questions under discussion and shed some light on the issues worth further exploration. It also listed the most frequently mentioned challenges. The next chapter will report on my interview findings with more detailed explanation.

Chapter Five: Interview Findings

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four looked at the findings of the online survey. This chapter will describe the results of the interviews. In total nine interpreters participated in the interviews, and all of them were employed by Language Line. A small number of them (n=3) also worked for the District Health Board telephone interpreting services. Two interviewees also accepted telephone interpreting jobs from other clients/agents.

5.2 Basic information of participants

5.2.1 Demographic information of participants

Of the nine interviewees two were male and seven female. Five of them were 30-39 years old, three 40 to 49 years old, and one was aged over 60. The languages interviewees spoke included Vietnamese, Samoan, Chinese, Kurdish, Arabic, Russian, Spanish, and Tagalog.

5.2.2 Working experience

Apart from taking telephone interpreting jobs, the majority of the interviewees (n=8) also worked as on-site interpreters or had on-site interpreting experience. Four interviewees also took translation jobs. One interviewee reported that he/she also interpreted by Skype for people all over the world.

When asked how long they had been working as telephone interpreters, most (n=7) said they had worked as a telephone interpreter for around two years. Interviewee 3 had the most work experience, having worked as a telephone interpreter for more than three years, while Interviewee 4 only had one year's telephone interpreting experience.

5.2.3 Working conditions

Most of the interviewees (n=6) also took telephone interpreting assignments after business hours. One interviewee only had telephone interpreting jobs after 4pm, because he/she worked full-time during the day.

Among the participants, one interviewee had his/her own office which he/she used for telephone interpreting jobs. Another three interviewees took telephone interpreting jobs while at home. The majority (n=5) of interviewees took their telephone interpreting jobs wherever and whenever they were able to take them. They did not state whether they were always in a private place.

Interpreters who took telephone interpreting jobs in the office or at home said they were required to work in a quiet environment with little or no background noise, in order to assure the quality of the interpreting. However, interpreters who did not work in an office or at home said that they did not compromise the quality of the interpreting. Four interpreters commented that they tried to find quiet places for telephone interpreting tasks when the calls came in. They also emphasized that if they could not find a suitable environment, they would decline the job. One interviewee said:

> I have to have my phone on me all the time and find the quiet place I can talk, so that's important for interpreters to be able to understand everything, it's not just thinking about the money, it's thinking about how to deliver the message to the client, to the patient, how to interpret and be professional. So when I am in public, lots of time I get phone call I don't pick it up. Yeah, I don't pick the phone because I don't want to interpret when I am on the street or on the shop when people talking, you know, I can't hear them and they and I know that they are not gonna hear me. So the best thing, I don't pick up the phone. (Interviewee 3)

He/she further explained that if sometimes he/she was about to leave the house and got an assignment, he/she would do the interpreting in his/her car, which was a quieter space for interpreting, without other noise.

When asked whether they were full-time telephone interpreters, only one interviewee answered "Yes". By answering that the interviewee meant he/she received telephone interpreting assignments every day at any time during the day.

However, based on the other 8 interviewees' responses, Language Line did not offer "full time" telephone interpreting assignments to them, and they called their telephone interpreting job "freelance", "casual" or "part time". Interviewee 3 answered:

> Freelance, it's contract, I have a contract with them, I have a new contract signed every two years, just like my contract with ADHB, some days we are busy, some days nothing.

Other interviewees commented on their job:

> We call it, maybe we call it casual, which means we don't have fixed hours, so that means only when we receive call, we have job, and we are paid on that specific time period, but the length of the call and the time of the call are unexpected. (Interviewee 2)

> I work as a freelancer, I am working for myself, and uh so I am working whenever my services are needed, so I, I mean I can't say that I am a full-time interpreter or part-time interpreter, but I am a freelancer. (Interviewee 4)

> Well it's part time, cos you know you can't, it will be great if there was lots of works and you can stay on be a full-time, but that doesn't happen so you have to do other things as well. (Interviewee 6)

The interviewees' responses indicated that in New Zealand interpreters did not do telephone interpreting job full-time. This corresponded with Lee (2007) and Crezee et al.'s (2013) findings that interpreters have their interpreting job part-time or as freelancers. According to some interviewees, they did want to have full-time telephone interpreting job, but the fact was that there was no full-time interpreting job provided.

5.3 Telephone interpreting practice

5.3.1 Interpreting settings

In their telephone interpreting assignments, interviewees mostly dealt with social services issues, which included, but were not limited to, healthcare, legal, police, immigration, housing, and Inland Revenue. Some interviewees also mentioned Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) and electricity supply companies such as Genesis and Mercury Energy. When asked which setting was the most difficult for telephone interpreting, the answers varied.

One respondent did not think there was a setting that was especially hard for telephone interpreting, but there were settings that he/she most preferred. This interviewee answered:

> Honestly, there is not any more difficult, but definitely there are the ones that I love to do like immigration. I love like Housing New Zealand or you know, that's my preference. Most difficult, no, that's not very difficult. (Interviewee 6)

Another interviewee had the similar opinion that no setting was difficult as long as he/she followed up the vocabulary. He/she was quoted below:

> Well, for me, as a person, that's my personal preference, for me it's nothing difficult if I follow up, you know like study, and you know, get familiar more if it's in health, more the terminology, sometimes I interpret for South Island, and

hospital emergency, if I don't keep up with the terminology, it could be difficult, but in the same time I always, if something I don't understand, I ask for clarification, to clarify or to explain it in different way. (Interviewee 3)

Among the interviewees who thought there was an area especially hard for telephone interpreting, one regarded the police setting was difficult because it took more effort to interpret from his/her language to English to describe the situations, and this interviewee said:

I can say police. Because for most of the phone interpreting, is English to [Language], but for police interpreting, it's [Language] to English. So I think that might be the reason why I find it's challenging for me. So people might feel easier to interpret from English to [Language], because they are native [Nationality]. But for police interpreting, sometimes when the customer for example they notice something and they call the police and they report this case, then the police will ask many details regarding the report, then they need to use a lot of adjectives, to describe something, so that part is one of the challenge, the [Language]-English interpreting. (Interviewee 2)

A majority (n=6) of interviewees thought that health/medical interpreting was the hardest setting for telephone interpreting. However, they provided different reasons. One reason was that medical interviews could be about any topic related with health, therefore it was challenging for interpreters to interpret without knowing the content in advance, which gave them no opportunity to prepare. In addition, the medical terminology was relatively complicated, and this made the interpreting job even harder. One interviewee reported on this:

Of course, with health, especially with Language Line, they ring in and they lift you up for your help, you don't know what they are going to ask, so you are not

prepared, so you have to be able to present as accurate as you can, in that case because of the terminology, I think it's complicated terminology. (Interviewee 1)

The other five respondents also agreed with the interviewee above, they believed that medical terminology was the main factor that made telephone interpreting in a healthcare setting difficult. One interviewee said he/she had to know the up-to-date medical terminology in both languages and present them correctly in interpreting, and that required great effort. Another interviewee stated that occasionally he/she could not find an equivalence of an English medical term in his/her own language, which was very frustrating. He/she had to paraphrase the term into an explanation that could be understood by the patient. Two respondents also reported that they worked with their computer at hand in case there was some medical terms (e.g. name of medicines) they did not understand, and could check them online. The two interviewees stated:

And the terminology could be any terminology, I usually have, I always have, try to have computer with internet at hand, when I work as phone interpreter, because if there is some term that I did not understand, I always will look online for that, so that's yeah, so medical is the hardest setting for telephone interpreting. (Interviewee 4)

[…] another one is hospital, because there are many vocabularies that we don't use regularly, so what I do is I sit beside the computer, I use dictionary, online dictionary, and I actually advise the doctor and the patient that "could you give me one second I want to, use the dictionary to check, could you spell that specific name of the tablet for me? Or name that medical vocabulary for me?" So they understand, they are very nice, they are willing to wait in that case. (Interviewee 2)

One interviewee pointed out that in his/her interpreting experience, the doctors would usually try to use simple vocabulary to describe the situation, which to some extent made the interpreting less difficult. Even so, he/she admitted that it was still hard when they encountered some vocabulary he/she did not know. The participant said:

> In the medical one, the doctors, they usually use simple language, but sometimes when they get to the names of the medicine, I tend to find it a little bit challenging like if I have never heard the medicine before, you know, totally, completely new, unusual word, sometimes that poses a challenge to me. (Interviewee 7)

It seemed that medical terminology was a source of challenge for telephone interpreting. There is an excellent book on healthcare for interpreters (Crezee, 2013), so the researcher thinks interpreters could make good use of this. Another reason why interviewees thought medical telephone interpreting was difficult was that they had no access to the visual messages, and this will be explored further later when discussing the impact of working without visual information.

5.3.2 Devices for telephone interpreting

Interviewees mostly used mobile phones for telephone interpreting assignments, only two of them used their landline. When asked why they preferred using their mobile phones over a landline, these interviewees (n=7) unanimously stated that it was much more convenient for them to use mobile phone because they might receive their telephone interpreting assignments anytime and anywhere and it gave them the freedom to deal with daily activities in between interpreting assignments.

There was only one interviewee who insisted on using his/her landline by answering "I do work with landline, I was taught by my employer that the landline is preferable device." A Language Line spokesperson (personal communication, 2014) confirmed that ringing

interpreters on mobile phones involved a higher cost for the service, which was why it preferred to call their freelance staff on landline numbers.

Quite the opposite, another interviewee was strongly against the use of a landline. He/she thought that it was not convenient for either the interpreters or the clients. This interviewee stated:

> It's more convenient for everyone because it's your personal phone, it's not a house phone with other people, and yeah, you don't have other people answering the phone, you don't have to wasting time and trying to locate you, where you are, if you are in the bathroom or maybe you don't want to take the call but you can take other calls. At some stage there was this idea that maybe because of cost, there was another one, oh, clarity of the line which is rubbish, anyway. Because the mobile phone needs really good line, it was this idea that all the interpreters will gonna have to work through landline, and I said "if that's the case, I will have to look for other job because I am not gonna work from a landline." Working from the landline is not convenient for anyone, it will translate later on and long waiting time until they locate someone, which means long waiting time from the call centre, and clients like the medical or whoever have to wait much, much longer time. And plus, when you answer on the mobile phone, not only that you can do it while you are not in particular, your house, but you are between jobs or you are at somewhere else waiting in the breaks in the calls or whatever. And plus, you can have the record of how long the call was, because it's still in your phone, so yes definitely on mobile phone I will work in (Interviewee 6)

Actually, as was mentioned by Interviewee 6, two interviewees who used mobile phones for telephone interpreting also reported that sometimes the connectivity of the line was not very good, while other interviewees could not recall having experienced this situation. One interviewee was quoted below:

Most of the time they do, sometimes, however, connection may not be so good,

and, yeah, at those times I may struggle, but it's definitely not my phone, not the

issue of my phone, it's just sometimes the connectivity from the um clients' side.

Yeah. (Interviewee 7)

One interviewee reported that in order to hear clearly, especially for tasks that lasted for

a long time, he/she used a headset with a high sound quality for his/her telephone

interpreting jobs.

I prefer to use headset and I try to use headset every time except when I don't

have that. Um, except when I forgot to take that when I go out. But I think headset

can help to for phone interpreter to have a clear understanding, clear voice of the

English speaker. And I even bought a nice headset, which is a SONY one, and I

find it's much clearer, and I highly recommend phone interpreter to use the high

quality headset, not the simple one, not the one that we see people use when they

walking on the street, but a more professional one, especially for task that last for

quite long, like hospital, like police interpreting, which requires very accurate

interpreting service. Sometimes that can be last like one hour, or half hour, for

some interpreting task. (Interviewee 2)

Two interviewees reported that they used bluetooth earphones for telephone interpreting

as it meant they did not have to hold the phone for a long time. One of them said:

I started with the phone on my head, and then I put on, you know the bluetooth

one, and then I ended up, you know putting on speaker, because it was so much

like holding it for a long time. (Interviewee 1)

It seemed that mobile phones were more favoured by the interviewees than landline. The

most salient advantage of mobile phone was its convenience for use. However, as it was

also reported above that sometimes the connectivity of mobile phones was not very good,

the researcher wondered whether this would compromise the quality of interpreting. Although some interviewees said they did not find any problems working with mobile phones, but the researcher thought it might because the interviewees did not want to work with landline which would constrain their daily activities. In addition, interviewees had their own devices (e.g. headset, bluetooth earphones) for telephone interpreting which was very interesting. It is really good that interpreters make good use of the technology in their jobs and achieve better effect.

5.3.3 Use of direct speech in telephone interpreting

With regard to using either direct or indirect speech in telephone interpreting, all interviewees said they used the first person to interpret because that was what they had been professionally trained to do. Among those interviewees, most (n=7) of them had a very clear opinion on using direct speech. One respondent answered:

> I always interpreted as from the first person, because that's how the professional interpreting should be done, that's how we were taught it should be done, unless there are some other situations, but as a phone interpreter, yes and yeah I, I can't think of any other actual interpreting situation yeah definitely from first person. (Interviewee 4)

Only two interviewees thought it might sometimes also be appropriate to use the third person. One interviewee stated that as long as it did not cause difficulties in understanding, it would be appropriate for the interpreter to interpret in indirect speech. This interviewee said:

> Uh, maybe, I think if it fits them well, or if they are more used to interpreting in the third person, so long, I, I think that would be fine so long as the client and the provider understand what this may infer. I have no objection to that. (Interviewee 5)

Another respondent told me that he/she would let the professional staff or the client decide whether to use direct or indirect speech. He/she was quoted below:

> Actually I ask the person, or the service provider, like from IRD, I ask them "what do you want I interpret", and usually they want in the third person, but for the immigration I interpret in the first person. (Interviewee 8)

It was pointed out that quite often it was the professionals or clients that were not able to process the conversation by using direct speech. Three interviewees reported on this issue:

> Yeah, as you might have known that I have been professionally trained as an interpreter, and we were taught to use the first person. And during my work as phone interpreter, I don't find any problems to use first person at all, so I keep using first person at most of the time, but sometimes maybe the staff of government entity, they might, they don't understand this interpreting practice, occasionally some staff might ask me "Could you ask the client what's their full name and date of birth?", and so at this time I understand why they don't use first language they use third person because they are not professionally trained, but as interpreter, I feel it's the easiest way to use first person, but it's also a good idea to let the person who use interpreter to know that it might be easier for them and for interpreter as well, that if they use first language it might be easier and quick. (Interviewee 2)

> I always use the first person, because that's the right way. But there saying that for a client who doesn't speak English or who speak a little bit, if I keep using the first person that client sometimes think I don't know how to speak English because I am using the first person. So I explain it to him why I am saying that because this is the rule of interpreting, I can't keep saying "he said that, he said that" it is not a professional way. So I have to say to the professional as well because still

sometimes when I say "I blah blah blah" I have to tell the professional, I am using

the first person, so don't think I am talking about myself, I am talking about the

patient but I am using the first person. (Interviewee 3)

Usually I trying do the first person although some clients might go and just saying

"oh, tell them that" or "if he/she" and you know it's quite awkward, I try to keep

the professional way of dealing, of talking in the first person, mostly, yeah.

(Interviewee 6)

One interviewee reported that sometimes even when people were informed of the practice

of using direct speech, when there was a conflict, they just could not help using indirect

speech. This interviewee answered:

Some professionals you also need to work with them to improve the interpreting

process as well, because when it gets into that sort of discussion, they tend to go

into, they tend to talk to you, so they will go "tell him" or "tell her that", "he's

okay and not agreeing with this process, but he can appeal", so that becomes a

conversation between the professional and you, so then you just go and say, to

stop them "Just talk to me as if you are talking to the client", but professionals do

that quite often as well. Normally when it's an interview, they doing that pretty

good, they ask you as if you are the client, but then when conflicts happen then

they will "tell him that", "tell her that", that's quite tricky, so you just got to

remind them, you'll find that most professionals are okay when they are going

with normal interview questions, but when things get a bit rough, they will revert

to say "can you tell her", "can you ask her", same as the clients. (Interviewee 9)

This shows that sometimes the professionals and/or the clients are not aware of the fact

that interpreting should be in the first person, and this may cause an issue for the

interpreter. In other words, it seemed that sometimes it is not the interpreter's choice on

using direct or indirect speech and interpreters might find it difficult to explain their role over the phone, as opposed to face-to-face interpreting where it is easy for interpreters to halt proceedings by a hand signal followed by clarification of their role. From the interviewees' answers, they tried to practice in a professional way by using direct speech. In face to face interpreting, the client and professional can be seated in such a way that they have eye contact, and this encourages the use of direct speech (Kelly, 2008). However, it is easier to lapse into indirect speech over the phone as the client and professional cannot see each other.

5.3.4 Information to prepare for telephone interpreting tasks

At on-site interpreting, usually interpreters are able to know in advance which ward or department they are called to interpret in, so they can have a rough idea of what the assignments will be about. However, the nature of telephone interpreting makes it impossible for interpreters to know the content of the assignments. According to all the interviewees, there was no information provided in advance to the telephone interpreting tasks, unless they were booked beforehand for the specific appointment.

Four interviewees talked about this issue was quoted below:

> No, the only prior preparation that you have is when Language Line rang you says "[Interviewee's name] can you accept this call, this is IRD." And that's the only cue. (Interviewee 1)

> […] usually people do not book for the phone interpreter, there are sometimes booking and I am very happy with this sort of, when there is planned medical appointment for example, but it's quite rare, usually people do call and you have to be prepared of any sort of discussion, when I pick up the phone, usually the operator asks whether I am available to take this call, they give me the job number, and in many cases but not in all cases they do tell me what social service I'll be

interpreting for, for example they can say "police" " this is police" or "this is Immigration New Zealand" or "this is Housing New Zealand" but not always, not always. (Interviewee 4)

No, actually not. That's not how Language Line works. […] sometimes they do book, I was booked for interpreting for police, once, and they think they gave me some really rudimental, like really basic information which wasn't of a lot of help, but normally it's just on the spot, you know they phone you up and you connect to them, to the parties, and you interpret without any knowledge. I mean they will tell you which organization it is, and the name of them and the name of the person and that's all, that's all you get. (Interviewee 7)

Ah, with bookings you do get some information, so Language Line will call you up, and they will say "look, we got a booking next week, say on Friday at two, right, and it's Auckland DHB, so you know it's to do with medical, so that's about all you get. Or let's say police matter, so you know it's a legal matter, but that's all the information you get. (Interviewee 9)

According to the responses above, even if interpreters were booked in advance, the only information they could get was the setting of the assignment, e.g. healthcare, police, or a simple introduction about the case. For some interviewees (n=4) such information was not sufficient. Nevertheless for one interviewee he/she said having this small amount of information could at least give him/her the opportunity to study the relevant terminology and information. The interviewee commented on this:

For phone interpreting, it's all on-call, without any notice, only one time I was booked, it was the hospital interview, that's the only time, all the information I was given is the patient's, what's the, medical appointment is about, then I need to do my research, by my own and I was not given the relative vocabularies.

However, if I can have more information, it's much more, uh, it would be very helpful. (Interviewee 2)

Although sometimes all they received was the topic of their task, to some extent it was still helpful for interpreters as they were able to get psychologically prepared and start to search relative vocabulary in their mental "storage". Nevertheless, the operator who connects interpreters with clients or the professional services providers was not always able to give interpreters a briefing, as one interviewee reported:

[…] sometimes they don't even know what the client type, and call for, they don't have any idea, so they say, so they cannot give me a brief. (Interviewee 8)

One interviewee reported that the worst situation was that sometimes the operator or the professionals might have misunderstood the situation, resulting in them providing information that was in fact misleading for the interpreter. This interviewee shared his/her experience:

[…] and that was once or twice actually during my experience here in New Zealand, I am told that that would be the topic, but actually this is not the topic. When I start interpreting I understand that actually the operator or maybe the social service had the wrong impression because I'll give you one example. I was connected to the police, and the operator who was connecting me he said "this is the case of the missing person" so somebody is missed, right, and somebody is looking for someone. And, so the operator gave me the topic basically, right, so I already psychologically was thinking that I will be translating and helping to find someone, and once I started to interpret I realized that actually this is not the case at all. It was the case of an elderly lady just could not find, she forgot where she lived, where her daughter lived and so on. So basically the old lady got lost herself, and I did not know how old is the client, right, because I can't see her, so and I

can't understand the details about cos I can't see the person, but at the same time, little by little I start, I am interpreting everything what she's saying to the police, right, and the police is asking her different questions, and she said she's looking for her daughter, but only after some time I realize that she's actually, she lives with her daughter and she's looking for her daughter because she doesn't know where to go, she's lost, she's 90 years old and whatever and she just doesn't have, she doesn't remember the address. […] the police started to ask her very different questions, I did not interfere at all because I have no right to interfere but I just realized at some point and I know the police also realized later on that actually she is lost you know but it took some time for people to understand that and that's quite interesting because I was given very different information in the beginning. (Interviewee 4)

Because they could not anticipate what type of assignments they would have to deal with, interviewees said that they had to know as much as possible of the relevant vocabulary of social services. One interviewee commented on this:

It's too hard to know specifically what to expect when you are working as a phone interpreter for social services, because it covers quite a wide range, sometimes I have a phone call from WINZ, like work and income, and that means that I need to know all the taxation you know terminologies well, and so that's quite a wide range, and that's why I like the job very much, because it's so you know so diverse. (Interviewee 4)

Generally, interviewees thought it would be better if they could have more information before their telephone interpreting assignments. However, one interviewee did not think it was necessary to know what the assignment would be about because telephone interpreting tasks were not very complicated for him/her and he/she would know what to interpret when the tasks come in. The interviewee said:

[…] with the telephone interpreting, I don't think it's necessary, because sometimes it's just an interview or for example with the ACC, how did the, with questions like how did the accident occur. (Interviewee 5)

Another participant made a similar comment that for him/her knowing the topic when the call came in was enough. He/she answered:

Yes, as long as you know when they call, they said "This is so and so from the, can you accept the call from Housing New Zealand?" so as long as you have that, for me that's enough to go into it unless when they go in and said "oh, it's about maintenance" or whatever. But I think that's enough information for me, I don't know about other people, but, yeah. (Interviewee 1)

One interviewee who had had a lot of telephone interpreting experience stated that when an interpreter got familiar with the topics and the pattern of the jobs, there was fewer difficulties, even without any preparation. This interviewee said:

[…] I mean you'll get into a pattern of, when you've been working for a while then the calls are more or less around the same topics anyway, so you really sort of know then if you are really well informed with medical things, legal things and IRD things, and immigration things, then there isn't much new, it's almost the same every time. (Interviewee 6)

Unlike on-site interpreting, telephone interpreting, in general means interpreters have no access to the content of the assignment. It would be better if there was some information for interpreters so they could get prepared. However, as the interviewees stated above, interpreters are able to get familiar with the patterns of conversation in some settings through the accumulation of work experience, and gradually become accustomed to the practice of interpreting without preparation. It seemed that interpreting without previous preparation is not as difficult as some previous studies may have suggested. In addition,

it seemed that for the interviewees they enjoyed working in different settings. One interviewee gave his/her opinion:

> […] we have knowledge in various area, I even think it might be a bonus for us. If you keep calling me in the same topic everyday every hour, I might feel very routine, so I actually think when you can deal with different topic, I think it's the bonus for me. (Interviewee 2)

It seemed that interpreting without knowing the content beforehand was challenging to some interviewees, but as they got accustomed to this mode of working, they were able to cope with the interpreting jobs more confidently.

5.3.5 Interpreting without visual message

Working without visual information was another important issue highlighted. Six out of the nine interviewees thought that visual messages were a significant help in interpreting. They agreed that if they could see what was going on, for example the thing people were pointing at, they could understand the situation better, and that would be easier for them to interpret. Three interviewees commented on this:

> Sometimes it can be a little bit hard if they say "oh, this is a form", and say the other two people are in the same room. And sometimes it could be a little bit hard if they say "I am showing you this", and you are not seeing what they are showing you. (Interviewee 6)

> Certainly, if I could see them, if I could see their faces, you know, and gestures and their lips moving, it probably would help things a little bit. Yeah, it does, it does help, it do help to have it face-to-face. (Interviewee 7)

> Sometimes like a Housing New Zealand one, the client pointing something but you can't see it to explain it, and you don't know what they're talking about. (Interviewee 8)

Another respondent said without seeing the other parties' reaction, he/she could not know whether they understood the interpreted information or not. This interviewee said:

Because the on-site interpreting see the client, you could even see their reaction, and understand, because you could tell because of their facial expressions, so if they don't quite understand me, immediately I would know, so I have to rephrase the if it's a question being asked to them I then could rephrase. But with telephonic interpreting, they would just have to tell me, to repeat. (Interviewee 5)

Two participants indicated that as their experience with topics increased, they could cope better with the tasks without having to see what was happening.

At the beginning of my phone interpreting work, it seems, every call is challenging without seeing the face. But after a few times, some time, when I get used to the content of the call, for example, like IRD, I was quite familiar with the topic, then it was less challenging. (Interviewee 2)

Even so, there were still five interviewees who believed that visual cues were sometimes vital when they were dealing with healthcare/medical interpreting. Three interviewees were quoted below:

However, I found the most challenging interpreting task when not seeing people's face is, for hospital interpreting. Like when the patient seeing the doctor, then as interpreter, if I can see the face, I can see the gesture of the doctor, it's easier for me to judge, because sometimes doctor just saying to the patient, without my assistance, but as interpreter I can't judge which part they want me to interpret, and which part they are just, like, measuring the blood pressure of the patient. Sometimes there's long silence I have no idea and I have to say "hello?" and the doctor tell me "oh, I was just measuring the blood pressure of the patient" and I say "oh it's okay." Because after the doctor finished the blood pressure part they

might need my help, in the next step. But as a phone interpreter, I can't see what's happening, I can't see the contextual scene, so sometimes I feel, difficult. (Interviewee 2)

Sometimes the challenges when I interpret medical for example, medical situation, I can't see what is going on there, right, so I have to visualize, I have to know, and I have to have this experience of visiting hospital beforehand, and I have been to some hospital before, and I've been interpreting at some surgeries as well, physically, so that helps a lot. (Interviewee 4)

Um, when people are describing pain, for example, and they'll say "pain in my leg", normally on the scene we pointing to where it is, but over the phone they can't, so you have to then interpret what they say, and the professional then ask for, they normally ask for a detailed description of where the pain is, and then you proceed to interpret that to the client, so it takes longer. (Interviewee 9)

One interviewee even suggested that Language Line should provide video devices for medical settings so they could see the other parties' activities. This type of facility is currently being used in large countries like the US, where platforms for video remote interpreting (VRI) are economically feasible because of the large demand for and large number of interpreting assignments every day (Roat and Crezee, 2015). This interviewee said:

Um, just I hope we can have a screen one, telephone interpreting, a screen one. Sometimes if it's possible, that I'd love to see cos I saw they have in Canada and USA, I'd love to see we have a screen telephone conference, like a kind of conference interpreting. (Interviewee 8)

Interestingly, three interviewees did not find working without visual information difficult when interpreting, and one even preferred working without visual information so he/she was able to concentrate on interpretation of the information. This respondent commented:

> I think it makes, our work much easier, because you just like, whatever they say you just interpret the information to and back and forth, and I think it will make it much harder if you see their reaction because then you will probably like um, you know drawn towards them, or feel sorry for them, or have those kinds of you know different, you know reactions. (Interviewee 1)

5.3.6 Telephone interpreters' role

When asked whether they would facilitate the communication by giving advice to professionals and/or clients, all respondents firmly answered that they would only interpret the information without interfering in the communication. They were fully aware that it was not their role to give any suggestions related to the issue under discussion over the phone. All interviewees said they had experienced situations where clients had asked them for advice, and they agreed that under these circumstances, interpreters should refuse to give advice or talk with the clients on the side, by stating this to the client in a firm but friendly manner. In most of the cases, the clients understood this, though in some cases some clients could get upset. Four interpreters reported:

> Well, I just reiterate my position that "I do apologize but I am actually an interpreter, and I am now abide by the rules that I can only say what the doctors or whoever on the other line that come the departments." So to actually saying so to actually make them understand, well, I try to make them understand that you are actually abide by such thing that you're not supposed to say or have on the side conversation. So clearly say that, yeah, most of the time they said "oh, okay". Accepted, yep. (Interviewee 1)

I just interpret the information. And even if I am asked by the client: "what do you think?" I will say, I will tell them "I'm just interpreting I am not allowed to, my role is not to give any advice", I just let them know, of my role. (Interviewee 5)

Once a client asked me how to say a word in English, actually it was very simple for me to answer it. But at that time I was not very sure whether I was allowed to answer the question so I said "I'll ask the staff for you" and then the client said "never mind, forget it", which sounded a little unhappy. (Interviewee 2)

So at times they will ask you for advice, so my approach there would be just to point them, take them back to the fact that you are only there as an interpreter, you are not an expert and whatever the context is, and most of the time it's to do with legal, matters, so you trying to stay away from it, you by telling them you are not a professional lawyer, so you can't give them advice. (Interviewee 9)

It was also pointed out that, apart from asking for advice, clients sometimes wanted to engage them in small talk when the professional person was away. Two interviewees said:

Well. That's interpreters' role to explain what, why I am there, I interpret for people in hospital for example, I know and when I go I tell them I am here as an interpreter, I am not here as your friend. Sometimes people try to make conversation, have small talk while the doctor checking something on the computer, I tell them it's not time for that now, and please stay on the subject, you are here to see the doctor, not to see me. It could be sometimes hard, but you have to be confident, you know how to explain it, and how to tell the person, or the client, or patient, in nice way, I always find a way to tell them, you know I don't tell them 'no', point at them or, no, because most of the client or the patient I interpret for they are all old. (Interviewee 3)

For example in medical translation sometimes the doctor says "I'm sorry I need to get out of the room for a minute or so, and consult with the nurse" or something, and you are left on the phone with another side, and there's another side start to talk to you and ask where you are, where you come from, and where do you live in New Zealand, are you from this town or that, and that could be a challenge as well because you can't be rude, at the same time you can't really give any details about yourself, well sometimes because of security safety reason, most these cause you just can't because you are a professional interpreter, not like you are chatting to a friend, and you have to report all the side conversations as well. So when somebody starts to talk to me, and say "don't interpret that" or "don't say" I just say "only for your information, I am sorry that the interpreter has to interpret everything that was said in the room or even when the doctor is not there", or "the interpreter can't give any personal information about herself." (Interviewee 4)

However, one interviewee thought that it might be appropriate to have the conversation as long as it was "safe". He/she said:

Yes, yes sometimes they do. But they are safe questions like 'where did you come from?' that sort of and that I could answer, without prejudicing my interpreting work. (Interviewee 5)

This interviewee also reported his/her frustration when he/she was not able to interfere in the conversation and help the client in clarifying his/her idea.

It's frustrating, like I cannot give them any advice, for example, when I know what to say for like an international patient like were the client does not know what to do, and the service provider did not seem to grasp the whole situation, but I could not interfere, I would not there explain to the service provider that was not what was meant by the client. (Interviewee 5)

Although the interviewees held that they should not interfere in the conversation between the professionals and clients, some of them (n=3) also mentioned that there were some special situations where they might have to take action and clarify information with both sides on the phone. One interviewee commented on this:

> That's the job, we have to do only interpreting, but if there is something need to clarify, or the target language is hard to interpret, so I get the permission to make it open for us to rephrase the question again or the answer again, so I can do the job correctly. (Interviewee 8)

Another interviewee reported that he/she would clarify the situation when there was a misunderstanding between the professional and client. This interviewee said:

> Only when I detect some misunderstanding between, between the English speaker and the [Nationality] speaker, I will raise such concern. In most of the time, my role is to just interpret, but there is, I do have come across occasionally, sometimes I need to raise the concern, yeah. (Interviewee 2)

The interviewee further explained his/her opinion by giving an example:

> There's one time, a customer call IRD regarding the cheque return to her. The cheque was issued by IRD to return the student loans the client's employer deducted. The reason of that deduct is the employer give IRD the wrong tax code. And the client keep worrying that the return of the money means her employer haven't deduct the tax for her, and I can understand from the conversation that she really wants her tax to be deducted for whatever reasons. So the IRD staff keep telling that this cheque is for, to return the student loan, and the conversion stuck in this point for some time, I mean repeat the same question and answer. Then I detected that the client wants to clarify that the cheque's money does not mean that her tax has not been deducted, so I raise the customer's concern to the IRD

staff, I used "she might", she might concern the employer hasn't deduct her tax, I think that might be helpful for the staff to understand why the customer keep asking the same question "Does that mean my employer hasn't deduct my tax?" So if conversation stuck on one thing for some time, then I will detect something might be helpful for the staff to understand, I will raise my concern for them to understand each other. (Interviewee 2)

Another interviewee said that there was once she noticed that the client might be drunk, and she reported this to the professional staff to help him understand why the client was speaking in a strange way. This interviewee explained:

I interpret the information as a professional interpreter, I do not give any of my own advice or references, unless, there is a necessity to that. Well I've faced quite a lot of challenging situations with [Language] speakers on the phone sometimes they can be drunk, I don't want to generalize but most of the clients that I was interpreting for, they were people on benefit, and sometimes these are people of our society that need support, and so sometimes when I am connected and I know that the [Language] speaker is actual intoxicated but I can't be sure about that because the person may be sick, maybe that some sort of psychological trauma or something and that's why the person speaks that way. And after the conversation, I might give a small reference to the New Zealand side, like police for example, because the New Zealand side may not understand why the interpreter is repeating, putting illogical sentences, so I might give a small reference that the interpreter may be wrong, but there might be the situation that the client might have been intoxicated or something like that. If there is a reason for that, and that would be after the conversation, and only if the situation is critical situation like for example the police, or ambulance and I might do this sort of reference but that's only after

the conversation, and it's only if it's like real life-threatening situation. (Interviewee 4)

A tricky situation reported by interviewees was that when they were recognized by the client over the phone, it became harder to refuse to offer personal help. One interviewee reported on this:

And sometimes the client say "Oh you know my situation, was that you who interpreted me last week?" And sometimes they are right, I did interpreted them last week, or they can be wrong, it could have been some other interpreter, but I can't say yes or no to them, because I am interpreting everything that is said today. (Interviewee 4)

Another respondent had a similar experience when she was assisting a client from her community, the client recognized him/her, and requested him/her to explain the situation to the professional staff for her:

[…] it's about a Housing New Zealand one, […] and then the lady, I knew her husband's name but not her name. And then she recognized me and then she said "Oh, you are the person." and then I said "Yes" and she said "Well you came to my home and you know, so you explain for us what happen." I told her "I cannot do that, you have to tell me what's the problem cos I been to your house ages ago, and you got some changes." And she got upset. […] I try to be calm and just make them understand as much as I can, and mostly I will let the person know what's the problem here, what's going on here. (Interviewee 8)

It is a common practice that interpreters should interpret exactly what is heard, but a few (n=3) interviewees pointed out that sometimes the speakers over the phone might not be aware about this and they kept talking to the interpreter or their colleagues, which is quite

confusing for interpreters. They had to clarify with the speaker whether the information should be interpreted or not. One interviewee was quoted below:

> Sometimes they give many information, and sometimes I even need to ask the conference holder "Shall I, do you want me to interpret this to customer?" Sometimes he says "Yes, it's necessary." Sometimes he says "No, it doesn't necessary." So interpreter needs to, clarify which part is necessary to interpret, which part is not necessary, which part is just for, the information of the English-speaker party, so I don't need to interpret to the [Nationality] speaker, which part is necessary to let the [Nationality] speaker understand, and I need to interpret for him, or her. I would clarify with them when I feel maybe it is not necessary to interpret to the [Nationality] speaker. […] because sometimes he would just talk, he would just speak to the English speaker, then I feel it's not necessary, so if I was not sure I would clarify with the conference leader. (Interviewee 2)

Another interviewee said he/she was once misunderstood by the professional because he/she was interpreting exactly what the client said and who was giving different answers to the same questions.

> Sometimes it could be hard especially when I interpret for old people, sometimes it happened interpreting for clients over 80s, and they can't spell their name, or the address they live in, they don't know how to spell their address, and I have to repeat and ask. And one of this incident that it was, I think it was a Housing New Zealand. I was interpreting and the professional lady which I didn't, I called her "you are not professional", because she was asking me question and the client was giving me wrong spelling, and someone, his daughter was repeating, you know there is always someone at the background repeating, and this makes that person more confused. He doesn't speak English and I am asking him question, someone else repeating, and he was in his 80s, so I, and then the professional lady,

"unprofessional lady" thought "You keep giving me different spelling, you don't know what you are doing." I said "No, excuse me, I know what I am doing, you don't know what you are doing. You can tell by the date of birth, I gave you the date of birth, this person, over 80, and he doesn't speak English, and there's someone else repeating at the background telling him what to say, and you telling me I don't know what I am doing, no, actually I think you don't know what you are doing and what you are asking." And then I said "Sorry, you better call another interpreter." she said "Yeah, I will do that." And things like that happened. (Interviewee 3)

Another problem with telephone interpreting is when the professionals and/or clients do not understand the role of the interpreter. Successful communication between professional service providers and clients does not rely solely on the interpreters' performance, it's the joint effort of all parties involved in the conversations (Roy, 2000). Two interviewees specifically pointed out that if possible, people, not only the clients but also the professional service providers, should be educated with the telephone interpreters' role and how telephone interpreting should be done, because that could help people make full use of the service and interpreters could undertake their job more easily. One interviewee said:

Um, it is hard but one thing I am not sure they can do that or not, one thing with Language Line or any telephone interpreting they can do, they can educate the community, and community can educate their people, because some of the community even they don't have, they don't have any idea about interpreting, telephone interpreting, but they can have a conference or they have a workshop, and invite the community, cos I know some of the community they don't have any idea about telephone interpreting, even they do it wrong, so if they can, Language Line or interpreting service can educate them, educate the community, about this

job, about how telephone interpreting carry on here, and hopefully they can educate their people, the job gonna be much easier.(Interviewee 8)

5.3.7 Turn-taking/interrupting in telephone interpreting

Turn-taking is another significant issue for telephone interpreting. Based on interviewees' responses, it was quite common that during telephone interpreting assignments, speakers kept talking without taking breaks, which gave no opportunity for the interpreter to interpret. All interviewees had experienced this kind of situation and they thought the right action was to interrupt the speaker politely and explain this to them in a courteous manner. One interviewee stated:

> Obviously, my role as an interpreter is to pass the message as clearly as possible, and as you know, and that's why if I need I will interrupt the speaker, otherwise I can't really do my job professionally. (Interviewee 4)

He/she then gave more detailed explanation on how he/she dealt with the problem:

> I usually do not say every time that "Please make a pause after each sentence or after each three, four sentences", because the dialogue itself, well usually people understand, you know. However, if, you know if the person speaks for a long time and give lots of details, and I always have a pen and paper at hand, I always write down the information like the numbers, the geographical names or the proper names, but if I see that is too long, you know, then I do interrupt the person I say "I am sorry the interpreter need to translate, in detail". (Interviewee 4)

He/she also pointed out that occasionally, when he/she was interpreting for an angry client, it would get harder to interrupt and control the situation:

> Also I have sometimes angry clients on line, like when there is a conflict for example between some social service and the [Nationality] speaking client, and angry people, I am generalizing perhaps but they tend not to hear anything around

them, they just continue because they have this pain, you know, they have to speak up and they also speak very loud they can, you know, and they speak in their native language, and I understand that if I do not interrupt the person several times, if I did not then I won't be able to translate what this person is saying or shrieking or yelling, you know in in his or her native language. And I just say sometimes to these people, I say several times, and if they do not stop for me to interpret I say "Everything that you are saying cannot be translated because the interpreter can't do the professional job and thus everything you say is in vain basically, please stop for interpreter to translate because as you understand, the New Zealand side have no idea what you are talking about." And so I have to kind of give a little bit of more of, probably of this sort of you know, to convince the person to stop, because otherwise interpreter cannot do the job professionally as everything you are saying have no sense and just you know, so basically that's this sort of challenge I do have sometimes, but it's not my challenge it's the challenge, it's normal, because what I found that not so many people here in New Zealand know how to work through the interpreter. (Interviewee 4)

Another two interviewees dealt with this kind of situation in slightly different ways. One interviewee said he/she would not just interrupt the speaker but also confirm the things had been said:

It depends on how long they have been talking. If that, if they keep going on and on and on, and I am losing the you know I am kind of not quite making it, if they are not stopping any time sooner I might ask them to pause, and explain again, but if they I mean if they stop you know I don't have to ask them to stop, but I will ask them to explain if I missing if I didn't understand something. So it's kind of like um back-forward communication I'll just confirm with them, you know, what they have just said and if that's correct I will, yeah, that's what I do. I know that,

I mean sometimes interpreters they have this really high expectations of themselves, to get everything right, I don't even believe in that, I believe in the in the message being transformed, transported accurately, that's extremely important, so I yeah I've been in the situation so I have to request the person to pause to confirm that I got that correctly. (Interviewee 7)

One interviewee said before educating the client he/she would inform the professional:

Yes, at times, because some clients do tend to just carry on talking, I have had a few of those occasions where they just keep going, so you have to stop them, and then you explain to the professional that you gonna just briefly explain to the client the process, so do not speak for too long, so break it up for sentences so I have the chance to interpret, so um then that's the additional part of your job, to make sure everyone is clear on their role, or the, how the process works. (Interviewee 9)

Two interviewees had also had the experience where several people were talking at the same time from (the client's side) which made the whole conversation very complicated.

It gets out of control and everyone is talking at the same time then you say you can say "excuse me, stop, one at a time", I said that, you know, sometimes you have to, "sorry one at a time I can't handle two people talking at the same time." You should say that, it's not a problem. (Interviewee 6)

[…] it was five people talking over there, and this one said "no say that, no say that" and I was just like, so I had to get back to the organizer I said to them "hey this is the problem" and she said that "yes I think 'how many people talking'" I said "yeah, five people". (Interviewee 8)

What also made interpreting frustrating was that sometimes speakers used a long paragraph of detailed explanation to answer a simple question, and interpreters kept

listening and waiting for the information they really needed to have. Two interviewees suggested that the speakers be given a relatively brief question and asked to respond with short answers, rather than elaborating with more detailed and unrequired information. They shared their experiences concerning this situation:

> They talk too much, they are not organised, I mean they use very long sentence to express simple idea, so that can be solved by I interrupt them. That's the way they speak, they use long sentence and they don't understand that for interpreter, the longer sentence you use for one idea, the more difficult for interpreter, because also interpreter have memory challenge as well. And also they need to find out the main idea when they listen to the long sentence. So if the speaker can use key words, use comparatively short sentence, so the interpreting might be less difficult. Even when they express themselves, if they can say it briefly, then we understand what they want to express, what they really want to say, so it's really much less difficult because one is the understanding of the main idea, another one is the memory challenge for interpreter, and if I find they keep talking, ignoring someone else, I will interrupt them (Interviewee 2)

> Sometimes I ask question, they wanted to tell me the story of their lives. Well I stop them, I stop them, I say "please let me to interpret what you are saying, and then you I'll let you to continue." So that's the and sometimes as they one small question, they tell you one paragraph, but the answer at the end of the paragraph, yeah, you know what I mean? So sometimes they keep talking and talking, and the answer you looking for to give it back, to interpret it back to the professional, at the end of the paragraph, "yes" or "no", you know it's just "yes" or "no", they say and that end. So they "blah blah blah" and keep going, for maybe one minute, two minute, and then they say, "no". They could say "no" from the beginning, but you know client, people try to explain things, and they never give you straight

answer, they try to get into the subject, and talk about it, and then, say "yes" "no".

(Interviewee 3)

It was reported that usually this kind of situation happened with the clients, not the professionals. One interviewee commented:

Not the um organization, not yet, but it's happen to me I had to stop the client because they just carry on talking and talking, yes non-stop so I have to stop them, like two or three times. (Interviewee 8)

5.3.8 Asking for clarification/confirming the information

Interviewees said they could not always hear clearly what was said by the people during their telephone interpreting assignments because sometimes connectivity was not stable, the sound effect of the phone was not very good, the speakers might talk too fast or mumble, or there were some background noises. Seven interviewees stated that sometimes they might have missed or misheard some messages given by professionals and clients. One interviewee said:

If I miss, if I have the feeling that I have not heard something, I would yeah I would ask for their repeat, or if I do not understand some term, I would ask for clarification. (Interviewee 4)

As mentioned by the interviewee above, other interviewees also said sometimes they encountered some unfamiliar vocabulary in telephone interpreting tasks and did not understand the meaning. They all agreed that it was important and professional to ask the speakers to repeat what they had said, or confirm the message with the speakers to clarify the meaning if they were not sure about the information. There was a consensus that asking for repetition or confirmation was not a sign of interpreter's incompetence, but a manifestation of respect to the other parties in the conversation. Three interviewees reported on the issue:

Yes, of course. Especially at the beginning of my interpreting task, in the beginning, no, I mean, I first start working as phone interpreter, I actually did a lot of repeat, ask for repetition, have more clarification, and I found the more familiar you are with the topic, the more confident and less repetition and clarification you need. (Interviewee 2)

Oh I just ask for clarification, all the time, I just ask for clarification, I should take my part and say "can you please explain it to me first before I can explain it to the other person because if I don't understand it won't work". (Interviewee 6)

One interviewee said that he would confirm with the client that they understood what was interpreted. This participant stated:

Well of course. Not to repeat, I ask them if they understood, if they not understood sometimes they say in my own language they say "I don't know what you mean" then I explain it in different way, so it's not just English, if something they didn't understand I explain it different way, so that's important for interpreter to be able to do that. Yeah, you can't just straightaway ask the question, but you have to put it in nice form, you know, shape it and ask them the questions so they can understand and give you the answer. (Interviewee 3)

Nevertheless, sometimes the process of clarifying or confirming information with one party could take a long time and might cause confusion for the other party. One interviewee told me an experience when he/she was explaining to the client, and the professional staff was confused with the situation:

One time I was interpreting for a hospital, there was another case the nurse asked me "Excuse me, interpreter, I don't understand what you say." When people sometimes they raise their tone, and then I have to answer them professionally, not yell at them, I said "Yes, of course because I am not speaking in English.

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Otherwise why would I be here interpreting? I am explaining what you said, but sometimes you said one word or two word I have to give them one sentence to make sure they understand." (Interviewee 3)

According to one interviewee, a better way to prevent this kind of confusing situation was for the interpreter to communicate with one party first to make sure that person was informed of the situation before starting to clarify information with the other side. He/she said:

You just basically let the professional know that you did not get the last sentence, and you just want to request for a repeat, um before you do it, so the professional know what's going on, the most important thing is you don't let it turn into a conversation between you and the client, leaving the professional just wondering what's going on, you stop the interview or whatever, the process, you point out to the professional that you didn't catch the last sentence that the client has said, and you gonna ask for clarification. Normally the professional will say "yes, go ahead." So that, that's quite easy. (Interviewee 9)

5.4 Telephone interpreter's mental health

5.4.1 Work stress affecting telephone interpreters

When asked whether they thought telephone interpreting was stressful, responses varied from one interviewee to another. Seven out of nine interviewees felt they had had stressful experiences while working as telephone interpreters. As to the other two interviewees, one said that he/she had never experienced any stressful situations at all when interpreting over the phone and he/she just enjoyed the job. The other interviewee thought that as telephone interpreting was generally about relatively easy issues, it was not stressful for

him/her to work as a telephone interpreter compared with interpreting on-site. This respondent said:

> I am okay with interpreting over the phone, at least it's easier than being in the court or being on the scene say assisting a police arrest or something, that's more stressful. (Interviewee 9)

Another interviewee agreed that telephone interpreting was the easiest interpreting setting, however, it was sometimes stressful not because of the difficulties of the job itself, but other factors such as how to manage his/her timetable with the telephone interpreting job. This participant said:

> I think generally speaking phone interpreting is the most easy part compared with like court interpreting, or hospital interpreting. I think the challenge comes some others factors like the unexpected time, uncertain of the length of the conversation, and how to organise the day schedule, so that we can also deal with your own things along with the phone interpreting. It's good that when you can arrange the time good, weekly, for example I work every Monday, no, for example, um if now I have a work from 8 to 10, because there is no conflicts, not much phone in this period, it's fine. So from Monday to Friday, I take all the task, but in the evening maybe I have another job, I don't know which day I will arrange, so I just ask my employer that "You can call me to work on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday", then I also let Language Line know my arrangement, then if you have a good planning, then you will have a more, you can handle your work well. Yeah, so it's very important because from my own experience, I feel very stressful if I have too much, and that will influence the performance, both, not only for Language Line but also the work performance for your another, like part time job, so this really important, but now I think I am trying to arrange the things better. (Interviewee 2)

Interviewee 6 also thought that balancing daily activities with his/her telephone interpreting job might be a source of stressfulness. This interviewee stated:

> It depends, I mean if you, that day working from home, and doing some translation or something and you have the time, it's not a problem, now if you are in the middle of the road, and it's noisy, and you have to go and pick up you kids, yeah that would be stressful, that if, the thing is the phone call has half an hour, you can say "look, I need to go" and they can look for someone else. It hasn't happen to me, I think only once, maybe. (Interviewee 6)

One interviewee admitted to feeling stressed when encountering some aggressive clients because he/she needed to interpret what was said even it was offensive language. He/she was concerned that the professional might misunderstand him/her. This respondent said:

> It could be stressful, it could be stressful absolutely. I have been through different situations these year as a phone interpreter, I mean here in New Zealand. As I said I had a client, a [Language] speaking client who was very angry, not at me, but still, you know, shrieking, yelling, also swearing, dirty words like using swearing words. And as interpreter you have to translate everything you hear, right? So obviously I can't say, I can't omit this thing, you know, I have to show that the person is swearing, so I have to swear as well at the doctor you know I just, as this is my job I have to do the job. And sometimes I do say "the interpreter is using that". Sometimes people are surprised, you know, cos they don't, they think that's the interpreter who is doing anything, they are not used to work through the interpreter, that's why sometimes I have to say I am sorry I am interpreting everything that is said, so that could be stressful. (Interviewee 4)

As has been discussed previously in this chapter, in general practice, interpreters are trained to use direct speech in interpreting. However, in situations when interpreters

intend to clarify the situation and distance themselves from the information they rendered, e.g. Interviewee 4's experience, they might have to adopt a reported form of interpreting by saying "the interpreter is using that" or "the client says that" (Bot, 2005).

Another interpreter reported being faced with a similar situation but did not feel stressed because he/she was aware that the client was not angry with him/her. He/she answered:

> Um, personally I was never stressed very much but I did interpret for some really stressed people, who were getting quite aggressive, and yeah in that way, yeah I wasn't I mean I was okay with that because the anger wasn't directed at me, but yeah I haven't had super stressful situations. I mean, of course it was a little of stress, if you start worrying about not getting something right, that that's obviously, but I've never been to like stressed beyond my limits, while doing telephone interpreting personally. (Interviewee 7)

One interviewee described telephone interpreting as "emotionally stressful":

> For example, not technically stressful but emotionally stressful because sometimes I get so impatient, and the service provider has explained the situation, and then the client keep repeating, it seems like, did he not understand what I have interpreted or did he not understand what I said because kept saying the same thing, asking and asking, that's the stressful part for me, when they don't seem to understand. (Interviewee 5)

One interviewee also reported an "emotionally stressful" experience when helping a parent communicating with St. John's ambulance services, and trying to distance him/herself from the situation and continue to work professionally. This interviewee explained:

> […] one situation was with ambulance as well, St. John ambulance when a little, and I have a small child as well, and that was the case when the small child has

problem and that was a little bit challenging for me because I am a parent as well, I kind of can understand how this if my little girl was like, you know, through this sort of situation I would be also very stressed, as a parent, but as a translator I have to be very professional. And I also I am very thankful actually to all New Zealand social services, very professional people, and because I understand you know how this ambulance operator give instruction to this poor parent who can't speak any language under stress you know, and I stay professional as well no matter how difficult the situation is, after I helped after I interpreted and after the crew arrived on spot, the crew I mean the ambulance, car arrived with their team of doctors then we finished the conversation and that crew arrived with more, and I felt like there was post, you know, post-stress or post-shock, but during yeah I was able and I know that I can you do this sort of job professionally, after I had, yes, I do need, you know sometimes I feel like "Oh my goodness!" I just need shower something or calm down. (Interviewee 4)

This respondent further commented that as she gained more experience, she was better able to distance herself from the situations clients were going through. His/her comment was quoted below:

I've been through many situations and I think that little by little, when you have more and more experience, you do need to abstract yourself like just separate yourself from the problem, it's not your problem, and you are just helping people no matter how difficult it is. (Interviewee 4)

In addition, he/she also suggested that there should be professional psychological support for telephone interpreters. This interviewee stated:

I do say that yes sometimes and I think that would be the situations with other phone interpreters, perhaps when we do need to have psychological support, and

I do not know about any psychological support for interpreters, I am sure it exists, but because I really do not need that, that's why I do not know about that sort of thing, but I think it's very important to give such psychological support to interpreters who are working through these difficult situations when somebody is wounded, or somebody is dying, and you are helping when somebody is even sometimes swearing and very angry and aggressive, and threatening people, you have to have this resource of professional psychological support, and I think that's important. (Interviewee 4)

It is important for interpreters to have psychological support, Crezee et al. (2015) suggest that interpreters should have access to counselling, but should also be taught about self-care.

Other stressful experiences reported by interviewees were when they had phone calls that went on for a very long time. Usually telephone interpreting assignments were about information gathering, for example the basic information of clients like their names, ages and addresses, etc. Those kind of interpreting tasks would not take very long. However, occasionally, interviewees got assignments relating to more complicated cases, which could last for a long time. Most (7 out of 9) of the interviewees said they had telephone interpreting tasks lasting over half an hour, and one interviewee said the longest one he/she had was up to two and a half hours. That means they had to keep holding their phone and keep listening carefully with concentration all that time. That caused physical stress for some interviewees (n=4). One interviewee said after a two hour telephone interpreting job, he/she had a headache caused by information overload. Another interviewee was quoted below:

It was tiring. It was, especial because of the in your ear, nothing else, just one sense, one of your senses getting all of the information. (Interviewee 8)

Nevertheless, for some interviewees (n=3), the long telephone interpreting tasks were at the same time exciting, because they thought these calls were very good opportunities for interpreters to improve themselves. One interviewee said:

> I think it's exciting. I think the longer it goes, you know, it takes me into a different realm like you are actually there, like a real situation, a face-to-face one, but if a short one, that's okay, but more than 30 minutes going into an hour, I'm actually in, in the end you know, I am actually in the real life. (Interviewee 1)

5.4.2 Loneliness and feelings of isolation

When it comes to feelings of loneliness or isolation, four out of nine interviewees said they had experienced such feeling. One reason was that as telephone interpreters in New Zealand, they worked independently, without offices or colleagues. Three interviewees discussed this problem:

> Yeah, lonely. If you only work as a, if that's the only job you have, you will feel very isolated. And one thing is that I don't know who my colleague, I don't know how many [Nationality] interpreter, who is also working with me and we all have direct contact with Language Line, but we don't know our colleagues. We don't have a team. (Interviewee 2)

> I found that interpreting job is isolated job. And you can't talk to anyone, like if you are working in the bank, you come home and talk to you family what happen in your bank, and interpreting job is you just alone, completely. You cannot even have a counsellor to go and talk to. (Interviewee 8)

> That's because you are all on yourself, you don't have someone else to talk to, but that happens after you leave school, anyway, so when you going through classes here, and you are doing exercises, you can actually talk to your school friends and

classmates and bounce ideas, I found that once I started, once I finished my diploma and started working, um that was it, I was on my own. (Interviewee 9)

Another reason was that while they were talking over the phone, they were working separately with the other parties of the conversation, without seeing them or knowing who they were, and as a result they felt isolated. One interviewee said:

In telephone interpreting, you cannot see the people, to express your like your facial thing and just understand their mood, they are not close to you. (Interviewee 8)

In contrast, none of the other (n=5) interpreters ever felt isolated. One interviewee had his/her full-time job during the day, so he/she had colleagues and encountered other people every day. The other four interviewee did not find telephone interpreting lonely because they thought telephone interpreting gave them the chance to help people, which gave them great sense of satisfaction, and the geographic isolation in telephone interpreting tasks did not make them feel alienated.

One interviewee answered:

No I don't. I think that actually working as a phone interpreter, again I work for social services, I feel a huge satisfaction actually, job satisfaction, because I help people, it gives me all sorts of feeling I am part of the group, I am part of the social service, I am part of society, I am contributing to New Zealand society, I am helping. There is huge satisfaction once you helped someone, and especially huge satisfaction when both sides on the phone thank and I do not feel lonely. Moreover, when people book me again and again, you know and the operator calls me back and says "oh they actually wanted you" you know "they wanted [Interviewee's name]" that's when I actually feel very happy. (Interviewee 4)

5.5 Feedback from users or employers

In order to ensure the quality of interpreting, some telephone interpreting service providers in the US implement monitoring programs, in which a senior interpreter or mentor monitors the process of telephone interpreting assignments (Kelly, 2008). In addition, telephone interpreting service providers have programs aimed at gathering and analysing customer feedback.

All interviewees answered that they did not have a "mentor" who monitored their telephone interpreting process, but a "team leader" or "operator" who contacted them and connected them with the clients over the phone. The researcher believes this is possibly due to the fact that in New Zealand telephone interpreters are either freelancer or have part-time jobs, their working schedules are different, and it is difficult for their employers to assign interpreters to carry out any monitoring. Also, for some languages there may not be that many interpreters, not to mention any that can be engaged in monitoring others. Cost may also be a factor that this is not conducted in New Zealand.

None of the interviewees had received any feedback from their employers about their performance. On the one hand, some thought no feedback was a good sign which indicated that he/she had not done anything wrong and had caused customers to complain. One interviewee gave his/her opinion by saying:

> If I do the bad job, yes. If there's complaint, yes, I haven't got yet, but as like you could talking to colleagues or employments say it if there is bad if there is no feedback that's mean good. (Interviewee 8)

On the other hand, some interpreters (n=3) thought it would be good if their employer could give them feedback so they would know what to improve on. Two interviewees commented on this:

I don't have any feedback regarding my performance from my employer. I actually think it might be helpful if they can sometimes give me feedbacks. (Interviewee 2)

Language Line is not very good at doing that, but I guess the only feedback that I can draw from is the um, they always come to me first, um on the call, yeah that means like that they've got first choice, second choice, or third choice. I don't have any feedback, performance feedback. (Interviewee 9)

As mentioned by the interviewee above, other several interviewees also mentioned that their employer had a list of interpreters, but they did not know how the employer prioritized the interpreters, which means they had no idea when a telephone interpreting task came in, who the operator would call first, or how the interpreters were ranked. One interviewee also wondered whether their performance affected their order on the list, he/she commented that there was no open and transparent policy on how interpreters were prioritized:

And another thing is we don't have an open policy regarding what would happen if I miss calls. So sometimes it cause me very nervous if I miss calls, like when I return to Auckland this September or August, I just arrived, and I was sleeping, and after I got up, I missed 3 calls, I feel really nervous because I was worrying that would influence my performance, but it seems that there is no open policy regarding what would happen regarding this. So if they can have open policy like people who receive call every day, then they would have the priority to receive calls, um from the next week. Like how do they evaluate, how do they prioritize calls when they assign task, what would happen if I miss calls. So there's no open policy. (Interviewee 2)

One interviewee told the researcher that their employer did have a system that gathered customers' feedback, and interpreters could also report on assignments where they had identified problems, he said:

> […] if someone they need interpreter what they do they call 0800 number which is based in Wellington, and they connect, they call us. If interpreting go well sometimes they give feedback to them, so that they have our list of names, and we get a job number, that's important we get a job number, if I have a problem I can, I gave that job number to my team leader because I am in contact with them, I deal with them. And I gave them the job number and I said this is what happened, and they look at the system to see if there is any feedback, if any good feedback or bad feedback, they check, but nothing, I haven't received any complaint or anything in my past five years of interpreting, yeah. (Interviewee 3)

However, some (n=5) interviewees said they did have some indirect feedback from the clients or the professional staff, for example the client and/or professional thanked them for their assistance, and the client and/or professional asked for the interpreter's name for future assignments or booked the interpreter for upcoming services. Four interviewees are quoted below:

> Not directly, I can only have feedback from their tune or the way they say, like "I really thank you", so sometimes you can feel the emotion, from words. (Interviewee 2)

> As I said the as phone interpreting the only feedback is, if there is any of them that will be in the end of the communication. When people thank you, thank the interpreter, and, but I do not ask for the feedback, because it's not my job you

know "how was I?" Obviously there's not. But in many occasions, they do thank the interpreter, both sides, especially it's interesting especially those whom you help, like the [Nationality] speakers, um especially the elderly ladies, they are very thankful, yeah. And also medical, you know for medical situations people do thank you as well, and they say that was "very good interpreter and I can't comment you alone" this sort of things and I just said "thank you very much" and " thank you for using our line on phone" but yeah, the feedback would be either in the end of our of my service or the feedback will be to the operator sometimes when they book me again, because they say "that interpreter we would like to work with her, we don't know where she is where she live like Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, but her name is [Name of the interviewee] and she interpreted for us, and we would like to book her again for this medical appointment in a week or two week. So that happened and that's wonderful, yeah. (Interviewee 4)

Sometimes they said to me "what's your name", and I said my name and they said "oh, you've been amazing, thank you very much, you've been great", I've got a client said "you've been the best I've ever had" or "next time I call I'll ask for you". That's very nice. (Interviewee 6)

From the clients I do get a preference from some of the DHBs, doctors, they asked for my name, so that's a kind of a sign of, I mean, a type of feedback. Normally after the interview or something or after the assignment the professional said "Can I grab your name, just in case, next time I need an interpreter I will request for you." That means that they, and that also tell you that they didn't have a good experience with some other interpreters, so there's a preference there, so when you get that sort of conversation going and that's a good feedback. (Interviewee 9)

One interviewee said he/she knew that there were some telephone interpreters entering the profession after only a twelve-week course at Unitec, and he/she thought they were not qualified to get the job. He/she further suggested that there should be staff to monitor the interpreting process, which would ensure the quality of the interpreting was high. This interviewee commented:

> [...] they have actually not there to monitor, no one is there to monitor or supervise, the whole conversation, so you are not sure whether its quality, you are not sure whether it's right. So maybe I am not sure who's, who supposed to be responsible for that but I guess, the first one is the Language Line, they should look at that and perhaps because all interpreters are different, and different in experience, different in education and different in you know in interpreting itself. So you know, they have to look at that. (Interviewee 1)

5.6 Telephone interpreting remuneration

When it comes to the payment of telephone interpreting, this is not very high at NZ$8.40 for the first 15 minutes and NZ$0.56 per minute thereafter, no matter how long the assignment goes on for (that would be NZ$33.6 per hour if the assignment were to go on for exactly 60 minutes). According to interviewees' responses, there was no upgrade policy on the payment, which meant that no matter whether an interpreter was new to the profession, or had been working as an interpreter for a long time, and therefore highly experienced, their remuneration remained the same.

Seven out of nine of the interviewees believed that the payment was low, only two interviewees regarded it reasonable.

One interviewee thought it was acceptable because he/she did not have that much experience as a telephone interpreter. This respondent replied:

It's acceptable for me because I am still at the entry level and I am new to this profession, but I think it would be quite low for those interpreters who have higher qualification and years of experience. (Interviewee 2)

When asked the question, two interviewees answered implicitly and one interviewee said: "I think it's not as well paid as we interpreters would wanted to be paid", and another interviewee said: "I am not doing it for the money, I am doing it because I enjoy helping people."

Some interviewees (n=2) thought it was low compared with on-site interpreting. One interviewee told me that for court interpreting, the payment would be forty dollars an hour.

One interviewee thought even given the fact that telephone interpreting spared them from travelling between different venues and save the money for gas and parking, the pay was still pretty low. This respondent said:

Be remuneration is very, very poor, because it is a highly skilled job, that requires a lot of experience, and also requires flexibility, with your task you use your own resources cos you are using your resources, so it is quite, it is very poor remunerated. You don't have to travel anywhere to do it, yes, in generally it's not good at all. (Interviewee 6)

Another interviewee gave a straightforward answer:

Being completely honest? I find it ridiculous. I think that telephone interpreter should be paid more than what we get, for the particular service anyway. It's really ridiculous. The pay is not very good. (Interviewee 7)

One interviewee said: "there's just one straight remuneration for everybody" and he/she thought it was not very fair that interpreters who were new to the profession and had only a short time of interpreting education were paid the same as him/her.

As was mentioned above, sometimes in one day an interpreter could receive several calls while sometimes there were none. This instability in work means an unstable income, which is a challenge for interpreters trying to earn a living.

5.7 Participants' interpreting education

All interviewees said they had interpreting training before they started working as interpreter. A majority (n=8) of them held a Diploma in Interpreting and Translation or a Graduate Diploma in Arts (Interpreting) from the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). Both diplomas involve either two years of part-time study or one year of full-time study, which is why it is understandable that interviewees felt that a twelve-week course in interpreting was insufficient preparation. One interviewee had interpreting training in his/her home country before coming to New Zealand.

When asked what they thought of the interpreting training programme(s), all of the interviewees said they were satisfied with the outcome of the courses, and they all found the training experience helpful for their telephone interpreting work. One participant is quoted below:

> I am just so proud of, just so happy of actually have the opportunity to go to AUT, and I hope that I do justice to what they have actually taught us. (Interviewee 1)

One interviewee reported that apart from studying at AUT, he/she also participated in an interpreting training course on immigration. This interviewee answered:

> After graduating I signed up for Language Line, courts and I also do immigration, and they ran a couple of sessions on interpreter training for immigration only, so that's the only extra training that I've had in the last year. That's more to do with updating the immigration status and other interpreting issues that other immigration and interpreters have, so they run those sessions once or twice a year. Yep. You catch up with, that's the only chance you get together with other interpreters and share your, sort of learning. (Interviewee 9)

Two interviewees reported that they were further proceeding their study. They said:

> I am doing my master in Language, Applied Language Studies. So I did a degree last year I finished my degree in interpreting and translation, and I've been working as an interpreter since 2011.
>
> (Interviewee 3)
>
> I've done a diploma in interpreting and translation and currently I am doing my bachelor's major in interpreting and minor translation. (Interviewee 7)

It seemed that telephone interpreters were all required to have interpreting training before entering the profession. However, one interviewee reported that some of his/her colleagues did not had any training experience. This interviewee thought they were not qualified to be interpreters. The interviewee commented:

> Well, people need to be trained, and people need to come and take course like what I did, from AUT, or from anywhere else. And I am so proud of that, and I wish, and I also talked about our training here too. People need to go and be trained as interpreters, I've been educated, I see the difference, man, honestly, and it made me angry, yep. (Interviewee 1)

The interviewee also pointed out that sometimes people had interpreting training might not be a proper candidate as telephone interpreter. He/she suggested that employers pay attention to the quality of telephone interpreting and select the qualified interpreters. This interviewee commented:

> You can go through a training but if you are not the right candidate with training, you come out and you are mismatch. I just have a feedback from a patient that another [Nationality] interpreter, just stand there, it took her nearly two minutes to think of [language] words for something, and then the patient says "I tapped

her shoulder and said 'it's alright, I understand.'". Interpreting providers should look into candidate should have the ability within our language. (Interviewee 1)

Several (n=5) interviewees who held a diploma from AUT said that their interpreting courses were on general interpreting, in which telephone interpreting was not specifically taught. They suggested that it would be more useful if they had a course particularly on telephone interpreting. In fact, AUT offers one paper (course) focused specifically on telephone interpreting.

5.8 Telephone interpreter's professional development

All interviewees thought it was important to have on-going learning and they had developed their individual approaches to study. As mentioned in a previous section, two interviewees carried on studying in interpreting. One of them said:

> I am a student at the moment um kind of constantly in the learning mode anyway, you know, but then I talk, I communicate with other telephone interpreters, too, we can discuss things sometimes, and I participate in some forums for translators and interpreters as well, so that that can help sometimes, so that's what I do. But currently I am doing the course so it's constantly, you know I am constantly learning something. (Interviewee 7)

Several participants (n=5) reported that they kept themselves updated with the policies and regulations related to the settings in telephone interpreting. One interviewee is quoted below:

> I study a lot. Listen to radio news, reading newspapers, looking websites, for the newest policies and trying to keep update to myself with the, my target language, which is my language and English. (Interviewee 8)

Other respondents (n=3) said that after telephone interpreting assignments they reflected on their performance. One participant answered:

> I keep a log of my jobs, so after each job, there's always something to learn. Yeah, so you note down new terms, you note down, I always ask the same question when I am writing notes for my log is "how could I have done that assignment better? How could I have it improved?" And there's always things that you can improve on for the next assignment, so that's kind of like myself sort of improvement, reflection process. (Interviewee 9)

5.9 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has explored further the questions discussed in the previous chapter by adding interviewees' views on the matter. This provided the researcher with respondents' more in-depth perceptions of telephone interpreting (TI) in terms of payment, the nature of the work, and how it impacted on them (sense of isolation), which may help the researcher to better understand these findings. In particular, it helped the researcher to understand why respondents chose to conduct telephone interpreting assignments in public spaces, rather than in private, where their calls could not be overheard. It may also help the researcher to formulate some recommendations for some specific issues. In the next chapter findings from both the survey and the interviews are triangulated and the results discussed.

Chapter Six: Analysing survey and interview findings

6.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters the findings of the survey and interviews have been described separately. In this chapter these two sets of data are compared by looking at the most salient survey findings to see if these were also reflected in the interviews. The findings from the survey and interviews will also be examined in the light of the literature.

6.2 Demographic information of participants

The survey results showed that the majority of respondents were aged between 30 and 60 years of age. The interviewees mainly fell into this group, with five participant in the age group 30 to 39 years, three aged between 40 and 49 years, and only one participant aged over 60 years. Again we assume that New Zealand based telephone interpreters are mainly aged between 30 and 60 years, and the participants in this research are representative for practising interpreters in New Zealand. Similar age groups for interpreters were found by Crezee et al. (2013) and Lai et al. (2015), where the majority of participants of both these studies were also aged above 30 years. Interpreters need to have had some life experience, and being aged 30 or over may reflect such experience which may better prepare interpreters for a range of assignments.

6.3 Work experience

The survey findings indicated that half of the respondents had worked as telephone interpreters for less than two years. According to the interview results, a majority (7 out of 9) of interviewees had been practicing as telephone interpreters for around two years, so in this regard interviewees' answers did not appear to align with the survey results.

However, it should be noted that the interviews were conducted a few months later than the survey, which might be a factor that affected the participants' reported duration of overall work experience. We may also speculate that more experienced interpreters were more willing to be interviewed.

6.4 Working conditions

All of the survey respondents worked either as free-lance or part-time telephone interpreters. This was also reflected by interviewees' answers. While one interviewee said that he/she worked as a full time telephone interpreter, there are actually no "full-time" telephone interpreting jobs provided by New Zealand employers.

Sixty percent of survey participants did not work out of an office, and this also showed in the interview findings. The majority (5 out of 9) of interviewees took their telephone interpreting assignments whenever and wherever they were available, while three interviewees worked from home. Only one interviewee worked in his/her own office. As interviewees reported, there was no office provided by their employer, so in the survey the participants who chose the answer "in the office" might have had their own offices at home (or at work) as one of the interviewees did.

The survey results also indicated that most (70%) of the respondents also took telephone interpreting assignments outside of normal business hours. This corresponded with the interview findings which showed that the majority (7 out of 9) of interviewees took telephone interpreting assignments outside of business hours as well, though not often. Perez and Wilson (2006) found that in Scotland, 24/7 telephone interpreting services are provided by a small number of providers, and 35-40% of telephone interpreting assignments are outside business hours. In Australia and the US, telephone interpreting services are also available after hours (Chesher, 1997; Kelly, 2008b), but no study has

investigated the proportion of after hour telephone interpreting jobs. It is likely that most public service telephone interpreting falls within business hours, as that corresponds with the hours these services interact with their customers.

6.5 Telephone interpreting practice

When it comes to the settings for telephone interpreting, the results from the survey and the interviews were overwhelmingly consistent. They both showed that in New Zealand, telephone interpreting services are mostly concerned with public service interpreting, such as interpreting for the Inland Revenue Department (IRD), Housing New Zealand, Accident Compensation Commission (ACC), Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), the Plunket helpline (where parents can obtain information on health conditions affecting young children), and Immigration New Zealand (INZ).

With regard to material for preparation in advance of their assignments, again, the survey findings matched those of the interview. Almost all (90%) of the survey respondents did not receive any information on their interpreting setting for preparation beforehand, and all the interviewees reported they had no access to any information concerning the content of the assignments unless they were booked in advance. However, we need to bear in mind that, as time goes by, interpreters are able to compensate for this lack of information through knowledge developed during previous work experience. For example in the case of IRD calls, they will become more familiar with tax legislation in New Zealand and with the standard questions asked by IRD staff. The AUT telephone interpreting course also includes a session on IRD interpreting.

The survey findings on interpreting without visual messages was unexpected, with 74% of respondents indicating that interpreters occasionally had difficulties, while a significant 26% (n=5) of participants said they had never found telephone interpreting

difficult, even in the absence of visual clues. The interview findings corresponded with these survey results. While six among nine interviewees did think seeing what was happening with the other parties over the phone was essential for their interpreting, three interviewees did not feel that visual information was really essential.

The survey results showed that 90% of respondents faced turn-taking issues in telephone interpreting processes, while two participants replied that they never found this a problem. According to the interview findings, all the interviewees reported that they sometimes had to deal with the problem of controlling turn-taking during their telephone interpreting tasks. This should probably be addressed in telephone interpreting courses.

In the survey almost 70% of participants reported that they would interrupt the speaker when they were unable to keep up, 26% replied that this would depend on the situation, and one stated he/she would not interrupt the speaker. This differed from the interview findings where all interviewees reported that they would interrupt the speaker if he/she kept talking without pausing.

All survey participants indicated that they had experienced the situation of asking speakers for clarification. Similarly, all interviewees said they did check information with clients and/or professionals when they thought they had misheard information. According to the NZSTI Code of Ethics (2013) interpreters must always ask for clarification when they are unsure about the source text. The Code of Ethics (NZSTI, 2013) is included in interpreter training in New Zealand and since all interviewees were trained it is to be expected that they would follow the Code of Ethics in this regard.

Most of the survey participants used the first person in telephone interpreting tasks, with only two participants choosing to use the third person. In the interviews, all interviewees said they used the first person and direct speech in their interpreting practice, though two of them thought it might also be acceptable to use indirect speech. According to Bot

(2005), using the third person is often done when interpreters want to distance themselves from what is said by the other parties in the situation. When interviewees were asked when they thought the use of the third person would be acceptable, they replied that they would use it when clarifying to the professional that it was not the interpreter who was being aggressive or swearing. This finding therefore fitted in with Bot's (2005) findings.

6.6 Telephone interpreters' mental health

In the survey, the great majority (90%) of respondents reported that they had experienced feeling stressed from their telephone interpreting work. One participant thought he/she was always stressed, while two participants said they never felt stressed. In accordance with the survey findings, for the interviewees, most interviewees (7 out of 9) reported they had stressful feelings, while the other two had never felt stressed. Of the interviewees who thought they had felt stressed, all of them said it happened sometimes but infrequently. Again, the results from the survey and the interviews were consistent.

Over half of the survey respondents reported that they never felt isolated working as telephone interpreter. For those participants who did feel alone, it did not happen on a regular basis. Similarly five out of nine interviewees did not experience feelings of isolation, the reason being that they were satisfied with their work and enjoyed helping people. Only two interviewees stated having experienced feelings of loneliness, this being due to feeling alienated and isolated because of the geographic separation from other parties and the independent working mode. These low percentages of feeling lonely contradict Wilson's (2010) finding that remote interpreters always suffered from feeling isolated.

6.7 Interpreting education

The majority (90%) of participants had interpreting education, all of those who had participated in interpreting training programs thought the courses were useful for their telephone interpreting practice. The interview result was generally in line with the survey findings, with all interviewees having had interpreting education and all agreeing that the training was helpful for their telephone interpreting work.

6.8 Summary of chapter

This chapter compared the findings of the online survey with results from the interviews. It seemed that a great majority of the findings of the survey were also reflected in the interviews. It is fair to say that to some extent it proved the validity and credibility of the research. Although it is impossible to say whether all survey results reflected the same perceptions as those expressed by the interviewees, a comparison of survey results and interview findings did give the researcher a deeper understanding of the issues under discussion, which can be explored by other researchers.

The next chapter will summarize the findings, explore to what extent the study has been able to answer the research questions, and provide some recommendations for future research.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter compared the results of the survey and interviews, this chapter will summarise the study by reviewing the research questions, describing the most salient findings, discussing the limitations, and providing recommendations for future research.

7.2 Reviewing the original aim of the study

This study aimed to examine the challenges for New Zealand-based telephone interpreters from the interpreters' perspective, and investigate how interpreting education and on-going professional development can address those challenges. A review of the original research questions and findings of the study are reviewed below to see if the aims of the study were accomplished.

7.3 Main Findings

7.3.1 Research Question 1

Survey findings

The survey results indicated that all of the respondents were either free-lance or part-time telephone interpreters. The majority of them worked out of offices. Most of participants also took after-hour telephone interpreting work.

The majority of respondents said they did not have information related to the telephone interpreting assignments in advance. Based on the results, the lack of visual messages seemed to be challenging only in certain situations, rather than all the time. Interestingly, a small part of the respondents reported never experiencing any difficulties in regard to the absence of visual information.

The majority of survey participants said they had difficulties in managing turn-talking during their telephone interpreting conversations. More than half of participants stated they would interrupt the speaker if they were unable to keep up with what was said. All respondents reported they sometimes needed to ask for clarification or confirmation from the other parties, but not very frequently. The majority of survey participants preferred using the first person when interpreting, while a small number said they used the third person during telephone interpreting assignments. The researcher feels that controlling turn-taking should therefore be something that is addressed in telephone interpreting training.

Most of the participants said they had experienced some stressful instances during their telephone interpreting work, but not very often. Two interpreters said they never felt stressed while one respondent always felt stressed. Bontempo and Malcolm (2012) stress that interpreters bring different personality traits to training, and the researcher suspects that this not only applies to student but also to practising interpreters. Therefore, this respondent may have had a more anxious attitude to life in general, which may have had a flow-on effect on his/her interpreting assignments. Less than half of respondents said they occasionally felt isolated when interpreting over the telephone but not very often. This contradicts with Wilson's (2010) finding that remote interpreters always feel lonely.

When asked about the most challenging aspects of telephone interpreting, respondents gave various answers based on their own experiences. The main points brought up by participants included the absence of visual messages, the lack of information in advance of their assignments, the difficulties of work-life balance, and the difficulties in communicating with speakers over the telephone (e.g. using direct/indirect speech, controlling turn-taking, interrupting the speakers, asking for clarification, avoiding side-talk and explaining the interpreter's role to services users).

None of the interviewees worked as full-time interpreters because there was no full-time telephone interpreting jobs provided by their employers. A great majority of them took telephone interpreting assignments either at home or wherever they were when they were available. Most interviewees also took on after-hour telephone interpreting work. The researcher believes that the freelance nature of telephone interpreting work and the low pay may influence participants' decisions to accept any assignments offered, including after-hours calls, even this may adversely affect their work-life balance (cf. Crezee et al., 2015).

The interviewees reported that in most cases, they did not have any material to prepare them for assignments beforehand. However, they would have some information about the topic of their upcoming assignments if they were booked prior to the tasks. For some interviewees it gave them an opportunity to do some research and get prepared. Nevertheless, several interviewees thought it was not necessary to know the content of the assignment, because they thought telephone interpreting conversations were simple and the interpreting processes almost always followed the same pattern. The researcher believes that such comments reflect interpreters' attitudes towards their work. It seemed that some interpreters always try to do their very best to be as well prepared as they could possibly be, whereas others take a less perfectionistic approach. Considering the fact that the Code of Ethics for interpreters (NZSTI, 2013) stresses the importance of ongoing professional development, the researcher was somewhat disappointed to notice what could be considered to be quite a cavalier attitude among some of the studies participants. The researcher believes interpreters should always try to be the very best they can be, regardless of pay rate.

When it comes to the absence of visual clues in interpreting, most interviewees explained it would be better if they could see the other parties' activities, including the gestures,

facial expressions, the subjects they are pointing at, and other important visual clues, so they could have a more holistic understanding of the situation. In addition, visual information was reported to be especially important when dealing with health interpreting, without which interpreters could experience increased difficulty understanding the situation, and subsequently prolong the process. Furthermore, as one interviewee suggested, telephone interpreting services providers should think of adopting video-remote-interpreting (VRI) for health settings. However, it was also pointed out by some other interviewees that it would not be difficult interpreting without visual clues when a telephone interpreter gained more experience on telephone interpreting and was familiar with the patterns of different interpreting settings. One interviewee even preferred interpreting without visual input, as they felt this could helped them focus on the interpreting without visual distraction. The researcher feels that telephone interpreters should ensure they are very familiar with health care settings and associating terminology.

Interviewees said that when the speakers (mostly the clients) kept talking on their own without taking a break for interpreters to interpret, and interpreters could not keep up with the speech, hence they had to take actions and interrupt the speaker for a pause. All interviewees also said when they thought they might have misheard or missed some messages from the speakers, they would ask for clarification or confirm of the information with the speaker.

All interviewees stated that they were trained to always use direct speech in interpreting so they tried to stick to this rule during their telephone interpreting work. However, a small number of participants said it would also be acceptable to use indirect speech if that would not cause confusion. Some interviewees further explained that occasionally using indirect speech could help the interpreter to distance him/herself when faced with difficult situation, such as when assisting aggressive or angry clients. In addition, it was reported that sometimes neither professionals nor clients were aware of the practice of using direct

speech in interpreting, and this also posed some difficulties for the telephone interpreters'. The researcher thinks that telephone interpreting courses should also prepare attendees for this issue.

Respondents in the interviews reported they had experienced varied levels of stress in telephone interpreting. The majority of participants said they had had stressful experiences, while the rest of the respondents reported they had never felt stressed. Among the participants who said they had felt stressed when working as telephone interpreters, the frequency varied from one to another, and the stressors were different as well. The researcher agrees with Bontempo and Malcolm (2012) that different personalities may pay a role here.

When it comes to the feelings of loneliness, most respondents said they did not feel lonely. They explained that it was because they were assisting people as a member of society, and they thought it was rewarded with great job satisfaction. A minority of participants said they had experienced loneliness in their work. The main reasons were the geographical isolation that made them feel distanced from the other parties, and the independent mode of working without other colleagues or team work.

It was reported that most of the end users of telephone interpreting were not informed as to how telephone interpreting should be conducted and what an interpreter's role was. All respondents in this research said sometimes they had to take extra time to explain to either the professional staff or clients how telephone interpreting worked and what interpreters were there for. It was suggested by several interviewees that there should be workshops for telephone interpreting users. The researcher thought this was an excellent idea and other authors also agree, Crezee, Jülich and Hayward (2013) include it in their recommendations for professionals working with interpreters.

As all the participants were either part-time or free-lance telephone interpreters, the number of calls they received were neither regular nor steady. This means they did not have stable incomes from their telephone interpreting work. In addition, all interviewees reported that they regarded the remuneration for telephone interpreters to be relatively low. This was also a challenging aspect of being a telephone interpreter and interviewees had to take other jobs to make a sufficient living. This would certainly add to their work stress as it would mean juggling different jobs.

Triangulating survey and interview findings

The challenges presented in the survey were also reflected in the interviews. Interviewees further explained the reasons behind the difficulties demonstrated by survey findings. They also pointed out more challenges they were facing, which was beyond the scope of the survey, and gave more comprehensive information on the challenges faced by telephone interpreters.

7.3.2 Research Question 2

Survey findings

Only one participant in the survey did not have an interpreting education, the rest of respondents were all trained before they began working as interpreters. All of the participants with interpreting education were satisfied with the result of their interpreting training and they thought it was helpful for their telephone interpreting work.

Interview findings

All interviewees had had interpreting training. However, the level of the education varied from one interviewee to another. The majority of them had an interpreting diploma from the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). Among those interpreters, one participant had started their Bachelor's degree, while one interviewee was proceeding with a Master's degree in Applied Language Studies, focusing on interpreting. One interviewee

had completed a Master in Linguistics in his/her own country before coming to New Zealand, which had included training on interpreting.

All interviewees thought their interpreting education was of great help to their telephone interpreting work, even though, as several interpreters pointed out, the courses were mainly about general interpreting practices, which did not specifically concentrate on telephone interpreting. They further suggested that if it was possible, there should be specific training programmes on telephone interpreting, because telephone interpreting had its own characteristics. AUT does offer a course on telephone interpreting and videoconferencing (AUT Calendar, 2015), but this was not a compulsory part of the Diploma which most participants had completed. The telephone interpreting course is a compulsory component of the Graduate Diploma in Arts (Interpreting) at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT).

According to the interviewees, the challenges in interpreting were difficult to resolve when they first encountered them. After some practice they got accustomed to the scenarios and generally had developed their own strategies to deal with those situations.

All interviewees thought highly of on-going learning, while different interpreters had their own approaches to study. Some participants carried on pursuing higher level of interpreting education, other respondents kept a log for their interpreting work to reflect on their performance, while some kept themselves updated with the policies and regulations through reading the newspaper and online news.

Triangulating survey and interview findings

The interview findings corresponded with survey results, while the interviewees provided additional insights on how interpreters attended to their ongoing professional development and suggestions on improving interpreting training programs. The

researcher feels that training should address turn-taking issues, the use of direct or indirect speech and self-care.

7.4 Where my study fits in with the existing literature

In this study, most of the respondents found interpreting without visual information difficult. This corresponds with previous studies which indicates that visual clues are significant for interpreters' judgement and their rendition (Gentile, Ozolins & Vasilakakos 1996; Roy 2000; Wadensjö, 1992). However, several participants did not find interpreting without visual clues challenging, which reflected the idea that skilled interpreters should be able to overcome the challenge of interpreting without visual messages (Braun, 2006; Ko, 2006). One interviewee even thought visual input was a distraction. This shows that for some interpreters visual information is not only unnecessary and insignificant, but even potentially needless (Mikkelson, 2003). In addition, cumulative experience may help interpreters anticipate what topics may come up during an interview and what terminology may be needed.

Respondents stated that managing turn-taking in telephone interpreting was another challenge. This fits with the idea that controlling turn-taking is harder when interpreters are not on-site (Wadensjö, 1999). Respondents said they needed to interrupt the speaker from time to time so they would have an opportunity to interpret, which corresponds with Oviatt and Cohen (1992) who state that telephone interpreters should take the initiative and the required action to control the flow of the conversation.

Most of the respondents used direct speech in telephone interpreting. Interpreters are supposed to use the first person no matter the settings (Kelly, 2008b). However, a small number of respondents also used indirect speech when they needed to clarify the situation and distance themselves. This is consistent with previous research which suggests that in

telephone interpreting, using the third person is a reasonable adaptation to prevent confusing the other parties (Bot, 2005; Oviatt & Cohen, 1992; Rosenberg, 2004).

According to participants, there was no information provided beforehand for them to prepare, and they could only get access to the setting of assignments when they were booked in advance, and they found this a challenge. This mirrored the idea that unexpected content and length of the calls is a challenging aspect in telephone interpreting (Lee, 2007).

7.5 Limitations

There are five main aspects to the limitations of this study. Firstly, the study was based on an interpreters' point of view, which are subjective (Hale & Napier, 2013). There was also no uniform standard on how a situation should be regarded as "challenging". Therefore, different participants had varied opinions towards one issue. Some participants found telephone interpreting challenging in almost every aspect, while other respondents did not think telephone challenging at all. Secondly, some of the interviews were conducted over the phone, which made it more difficult to establish rapport between interviewees and the researcher. A non-face to face interview could also make it harder for interviewees to express their opinions. Thirdly, the size of the samples of both the survey and interviews were small, which may not be sufficient in size to gain a holistic view of the question under discussion and might only represent part of the telephone interpreters' point of view. Therefore, the findings are not generalizable. In addition, some participants' responses to a number of the questions were hard to categorize. This was because respondents were allowed to talk about anything they thought related to the questions, and they sometimes strayed from the point. Furthermore, because of the time constraint and the limited resources, the research only focused on the opinions from a

small group of interpreters, and investigating the views of other parties related to telephone interpreting (e.g. telephone interpreting users, telephone interpreting organizations) were outside the scope of this study.

7.6 Recommendations for future research

This study has shed light on the challenges for New Zealand-based telephone interpreters based on the opinions of a small group of telephone interpreters. Future studies could explore the issues with a larger sample and conduct the research over a longer time span, which may help researchers to gather more in-depth information. If possible, the opinions on the telephone interpreting experience from professional services providers and LEP clients should also be investigated, which could be triangulated to get a more comprehensive understanding. It would be even better if future research could investigate telephone interpreting practices in experimental settings with real observations on interpreter's performance, which would provide a more objective point of view.

7.7 Concluding remarks

This study has discussed the challenges that New Zealand-based telephone interpreters are facing with. It provides more insights into the profession of telephone interpreter, and hopefully may help people understand the telephone interpreter's role and profession better. According to the respondents in this study, telephone interpreting does have unique characteristics, and is worth special attention. This can be summarized with the words of one respondent:

> I am very thankful to this sort of researches, it's very important, it's not just empty words, I do mean that we do need to talk more about our profession here, in New Zealand, because in many cases it's not really appreciated and it's kind of underestimated as well. This is a difficult job, it's

a stressful job, it's rewarding but it's not easy. This is the start, I hope it won't stop after the research, phone interpreters can have more opportunities to state our words, so that would be a very valuable opportunities to express our thoughts. (Interviewee 4)

Telephone interpreters, while providing society with an essential and necessary service, they face various challenges in their work. Although less attention has been given to this profession, telephone interpreting is no less difficult than any other form of interpreting, and telephone interpreters should be respected and their voices should be heard.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet (Online Survey)

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

8 July 2014

Project Title

Examining the challenges for telephone interpreters in New Zealand

An Invitation

My name is Thea (Qianya) CHENG and and I am a student completing my MA thesis at the Auckland University of Technology. First of all I would like to thank you for volunteering to take part in this project.

In this project, I am interested in identifying what challenges you, as telephone interpreters, face in New Zealand, and how these challenges can be addressed by either pre-service you receive or by on-going professional development. The three main reasons for this study are: 1) Previous studies suggest telephone interpreters face a variety of challenges while doing their work. 2) Few studies have looked at similar challenges telephone interpreters may face in New Zealand. 3) Further studies are needed to find out if trained interpreters feel their training programmes have offered sufficient preparation for the many challenges involved in telephone interpreting, or if ongoing professional development would be helpful, and if so, what type.

What is the purpose of this research?

The primary purpose of this study is to obtain better understanding of the challenges and issues faced by telephone interpreters in New Zealand and to increase the understanding of the effectiveness of pre-service training as well as on-going professional development in solving these challenges.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You are invited to participate in this research because you are a telephone interpreter who has worked in New Zealand, and you emailed your willingness to be interviewed.

The criteria for the selection of telephone interpreter participants will be you:

Have worked as a telephone interpreter.

What will happen in this research?

You are to fulfil an anonymous online survey which will take you about 15 minutes. If for any reason, you feel any discomfort during the interview, you can choose to not answer a question or choose to withdraw from the interview immediately. And as a participant in this project, you

can access the AUT counselling online services if needed, even if you are not a student or staff member at AUT.

What are the benefits?

The suggestions offered by (anonymous) telephone interpreters in my study will be fed back to interpreter education programme leaders and government organisations, such as the Department of Internal Affairs. The primary researcher hopes that these suggestions once implemented will lead to better (on-going) training and will benefit not only practising interpreters but also help people in general have better understanding and make better use of telephone interpreting services.

How will my privacy be protected?

Please note that all attempts will be made to protect your confidentiality. You will not be identified as the survey is conducted anonymously.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost to you for participating in this project apart from the 40 minutes you spend in the interview. You will be offered a koha in the form of a $30 voucher to thank you for giving your time to this project.

Participation is voluntary and you will be able to withdraw from the research at any stage prior to the completion of data collection.

It is unlikely that you will suffer any embarrassment or discomfort and any discomfort is likely to be of a passing nature and will most probably only involve mild embarrassment. In addition, you may feel free to refuse any questions they do not wish to answer.

Health, Counselling and Wellbeing at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) are able to offer confidential counselling support for the participants in your AUT research project entitled:

You will need to contact our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 09 921 9992 City Campus or 09 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment

You will need to let the receptionist know that they are a research participant

You will need to provide your contact details to confirm this

You can find out more information about our counsellors on our website:
http://www.aut.ac.nz/students/student_services/health_counselling_and_wellbeing

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Simply fill out the consent form and return it to me.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

A summary of the findings will be posted on the NZSTI website.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor,

Dr Ineke Crezee, Phone: 921-9999, Ext 6825; Email: ineke.crezee@aut.ac.nz

Annette Sachtleben, Phone: 921-9999, Ext 6083; Email: asachtle@aut.ac.nz

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Acting Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , 921 9999 ext 8316.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Qianya (Thea) CHENG   Email: theac0721@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Ineke Crezee, School of Language and Culture, AUT University, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

Annette Sachtleben, School of Language and Culture, AUT University, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 20 August 2014, AUTEC Reference number 14/219.

Participant
Information Sheet

AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

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The criteria for the selection of telephone interpreter participants will be you:

Have worked as a telephone interpreter.

What will happen in this research?

During this approximately 30 minute interview, you will be asked questions based on your answers to the questionnaire. I will also invite you to share some of your perceptions about your experiences in telephone interpreting.

If for any reason, you feel any discomfort during the interview, you can choose to not answer a question or choose to withdraw from the interview immediately. And as a participant in this

project, you can access the AUT counselling online services if needed, even if you are not a student or staff member at AUT.

What are the benefits?

The suggestions offered by (anonymous) telephone interpreters in my study will be fed back to interpreter education programme leaders and government organisations, such as the Department of Internal Affairs. The primary researcher hopes that these suggestions once implemented will lead to better (on-going) training and will benefit not only practising interpreters but also help people in general have better understanding and make better use of telephone interpreting services.

How will my privacy be protected?

Please note that all attempts will be made to protect your confidentiality. You will not be identified as I will only use codes, such as interpreter 1, interpreter 2, and so on.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost to you for participating in this project apart from the 40 minutes you spend in the interview. You will be offered a koha in the form of a $30 voucher to thank you for giving your time to this project.

Participation is voluntary and you will be able to withdraw from the research at any stage prior to the completion of data collection.

It is unlikely that you will suffer any embarrassment or discomfort and any discomfort is likely to be of a passing nature and will most probably only involve mild embarrassment. In addition, you may feel free to refuse any questions they do not wish to answer.

Health, Counselling and Wellbeing at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) are able to offer confidential counselling support for the participants in your AUT research project entitled:

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Researcher Contact Details:

Qianya (Thea) CHENG   Email: theac0721@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Ineke Crezee, School of Language and Culture, AUT University, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

Annette Sachtleben, School of Language and Culture, AUT University, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.

Project title:

Examining the challenges for telephone interpreters in New Zealand

Project Supervisor:

Dr Ineke Crezee, Phone: 921-9999, Ext 6825; Email: ineke.crezee@aut.ac.nz

Annette Sachtleben, Phone: 921-9999, Ext 6083; Email: asachtle@aut.ac.nz

Researcher:

Qianya (Thea) Cheng, Email: theac0721@gmail.com

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 8 July 2014.

○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

○ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

○ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

○ I agree to take part in this research.

I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes○ No○

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………..

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 20 August 2014 AUTEC Reference number 14/219.*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

Questionnaire on Telephone Interpreting

Thank you very much for giving up some of your time to do this Questionnaire. <u>Please note that this questionnaire is for interpreters who have telephone interpreting experience. This questionnaire contains less than 20 questions and will take you no more than 15 minutes of time. By completing this questionnaire you are indicating your consent to participate in this research.</u> Your time and effort in providing the information is greatly appreciated.

Telephone interpreter's profile

1. Please choose your age:
A. 20-29   B. 30-39   C. 40-49   D. 50-59   E. 60 and over

2. How long have you been working as a <u>telephone interpreter</u>?

A. less than 2 years   B. 2-5 years   C. 6-10 years   D. more than 10 years

3. On what basis do you work as a telephone interpreter?

A. full- time   B. part-time   C. free-lance

4. Where do you mostly work as telephone interpreter?

A. In office   B. Out of office

5. Do you work after hours?

A. Yes   B. No

Telephone interpreting work

6. Which type(s) of settings of telephone interpreting do you mostly deal with? (You may choose more than one option)

A. Inland Revenue

B. Healthcare

C. Legal

D. Immigration

E. Housing

F. Other (please specify)

7. Will you be provided some basic vocabulary of different settings in advance of your assignments?

A. Yes   B. No

8. How often you find it difficult to interpret without any visual information?

A. Never   B. Seldom   C. Sometimes   D. Quite often   E. Always

9. How often do you find it difficult to control the turn-taking over the phone?

A. Never   B. Seldom   C. Sometimes   D. Quite often   E. Always

10. Will you interrupt the speaker if you could not follow what has been said?

A. Yes   B. No

11. How often do you need to confirm the information given by the speakers?

A. Never   B. Seldom   C. Sometimes   D. Quite often   E. Always

12. In telephone interpreting, do you mostly interpret in the first person or in the third person?

A. In the first person   B. In the third person

13. Have you ever felt stressed working as a telephone interpreter?

A. Never   B. Seldom   C. Sometimes   D. Quite often   E. Always

14. Have you ever felt lonely working as a telephone interpreter?

A. Never   B. Seldom   C. Sometimes   D. Quite often   E. Always

15. Have you participated in any interpreting training program?

A. Yes   B. No

16. Do you find the interpreting training program helpful for your work as a telephone interpreter?

A. Yes   B. No

17. What do you think is the most challenging part of working as a telephone interpreter? (Please specify)

Thank you again for your time. If you are interested in this research and willing to be a participant of the upcoming interview, please contact the primary researcher Thea Cheng by sending e-mail to: theac0721@gmail.com.

Indicative Questions for Interviews on Telephone Interpreting

1. May I ask your age?

2. How long have you been working as a telephone interpreter?

3. Are you a full-time telephone interpreter?

4. Do you also worked as an on-site interpreter?

5. As a telephone interpreter, do you mostly work in office or out of office?

6. Are you working for Language Line?

7. Do you also work after business hours?

8. Which area(s) (medical/healthcare, legal, police, IRD, etc.) of telephone interpreting assignment do you mostly deal with?

9. Which area(s) of interpreting assignment do you think is the most difficult?

10. When you are working over the phone, do you interpret in the first person or the third person?

11. Do you usually work with your mobile phone?

12. During those telephone interpreting assignments, can you hear clearly what has been said over the phone?

13. As a telephone interpreter, will you facilitate communication (by saying so I mean will you help the clients to deal with problems/give advice or suggestions) or just interpret the information?

14. Do you think sometimes the clients could not understand your role as a telephone interpreter?

15. Do you think it is hard to interpret over the phone without visual information?

16. Will you interrupt the speaker if you could not follow what has been said?

17. Do you need to confirm the information with the speaker?

18. Do you think it is difficult to control the turn-taking when you are interpreting over the phone?

19. Will you be given any material for preparation in advance to your telephone interpreting assignments?

20. Can you still remember the longest telephone interpreting task you've ever had?

21. Do you think telephone interpreting is sometimes stressful?

22. Have you ever felt lonely working as a telephone interpreter?

23. How do you think of the remuneration/the pay?

24. What do you think is the attraction/attractive part of telephone interpreting?

25. What do you think is the most challenging aspect/part of telephone interpreting?

26. Have you ever participated in any interpreting training programme?

27. Do you think the interpreting training course helpful for your work as a telephone interpreter?

28. Will you get feedbacks from clients or your employers?