

**The Implementation of Community Translation by Newcomer Serving Organizations in the
City of Edmonton**

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Introduction

The City of Edmonton is a diverse and constantly evolving city. As more newcomers move to the city, the need for specific language resources changes and organizations must adapt to these changes. Edmonton has many organizations that specifically assist newcomers with integrating into society. These organizations include Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA), Islamic Family and Social Services Association (IFSSA), Action for Healthy Communities, Catholic Social Services and the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN), among others. Other organizations provide services to specific cultural groups, such as language and culture schools, which also assist newcomers. This thesis will discuss the research project "Mapping Spaces of Translation and Interpretation in Edmonton," which mapped and documented organizations that make use of translation and interpretation to provide services for newcomers, immigrants, and refugees, within Edmonton and surrounding areas. The project sought to research the following two questions: How do organizations within the city of Edmonton that provide services to newcomers utilize translation (text-to-text) or interpretation (spoken/verbal) to facilitate their services? What challenges do these organizations face in using translation and interpretation while providing their services?

Research for "Mapping Spaces of Translation and Interpretation in Edmonton" was conducted from May until August 31st, 2022. I was the recipient of the 2022 Faculty of Arts Roger S. Smith Undergraduate Research Award, which funded the project. The project was inspired by the project "Empowering Communities through Translation: The Case of the Newcomer's Guide to Edmonton" by Dr. Odile Cisneros, Dr. Sathya Rao, and Dr. Ann De León, and City of Edmonton Multicultural Liaison Charlene Ball. Drs. Cisneros and De León were the supervisors of that summer project and advised in the research of this project as well. Although

this project was inspired by the work of Dr. Cisneros and Dr. De Léon, the projects approach different research topics, each providing a broader understanding of translation and interpretation within Edmonton. Concerning the use of translation and interpretation by organizations that serve newcomers, we must connect the terms translation and interpretation to "community translation" or "community interpreting." First, to understand how the data relates to community translation, we must understand what it is. After defining community translation and interpreting, this thesis will interpret the data collected to identify challenges organizations face as they relate to the concept of community translation.

The project focused on organizations that provide services for newcomers such as immigrants and refugees; any translation or interpreting that would facilitate the services provided by these organizations would fall in the category of community translation.

Defining Community Translation

Mustapha Taibi and Uldis Ozolins establish the agents providing translation to belong to broader society or smaller linguistic or ethnic communities; community translation exists to “ensure communication with all citizens [and residents] and permit their participation and, therefore, empowerment.”(Taibi & Ozolins, 2016, p. 7). They explain that community translation is “normally required in multilingual and multicultural societies where disempowered groups such as migrants, refugees or local ethnic minorities do not have access to texts written in the mainstream language(s)” (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016, p. 14). As Taibi and Ozolins argue, by providing translation services to disempowered groups such as newcomers, these groups become empowered by the assurance of such communication. This is supported by Cisneros and De Léon, who state that “community translation is also seen by some as a practice that seeks to

address material and power imbalances in society by ensuring the rights of all individuals and communities to public information and services” (Cisneros & De León, 2020, p. 100). Apart from empowering disempowered language groups, community translation also requires cultural understanding. Pokorn and Južnič make an essential connection to the cultural role that community interpreters and translators serve, referring to them interchangeably as intercultural mediators (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020). Acknowledging a cultural association with the definition draws attention to the importance of recognizing the cultural understanding connected to the role of a translator or interpreter.

Cisneros and De León note that community translation can be done by untrained volunteers or professional translators as long as the work is completed within a community setting (Cisneros & De León, 2020). Pokorn and Južnič expand on this, stating that

Non-professional or ad hoc interpreter to refer to those individuals who have no interpreter training but may practice community interpreting as a full-time or part-time professional activity. Such interpreters may or may not have been exposed to or abide by professional codes of ethics.

Typically, they would be asked to interpret because of the lack of qualified and trained professional interpreters for specific language combinations.

(Pokorn & Južnič, 2020, p. 82).

In contrast, Pokorn and Južnič refer to professional interpreters as “individuals who have received training in the provision of oral or signed translational activity and are committed to abide by the profession’s codes of ethics and conduct” (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020, p. 81). Pokorn and Južnič establish that a code of ethics and conduct determines the difference between professional and non-professional translators. As previously established, with the code of ethics

in mind, we must remind ourselves that community translating can be professional or non-professional as long as the setting is within the community. We will see how the study results demonstrate how community translation within Edmonton recruits professional, volunteer, or non-professional translators.

Pokorn and Južnič establish that community interpreting exists in order to ensure people who do not speak the dominant or societal language access to services such as schools, universities, healthcare institutions, or social services (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020). Taibi and Ozolins determine that translation or interpretation services which exist to facilitate communication can be “produced by national or local authorities, non-governmental organisations, ethnic community organisations or leaders, neighbourhood associations, or any other social agent” (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016 p. 7). All organizations explored in this study fit these criteria and were investigated to establish how translation or interpretation can facilitate the service.

City of Edmonton Language and Immigration Demographics

The organizations studied in the project “Mapping Spaces of Translation and Interpretation in Edmonton,” as mentioned earlier, were selected on the basis of their involvement in providing translation or interpretation services, and the project sought to focus on newcomer-serving organizations. By looking at the 2021 Canadian census data, we can establish a picture of the current language representation within Edmonton and understand the demographics of what organizations might currently be working with. The 2021 census determined that from a total population of 996,485, non-immigrants composed 686,190 or 65%, whereas the immigrant population comprised 343,310 or 32.5% (Government of Canada, 2022).

Between 2011 and 2021, Edmonton received 135,590 immigrants, only 11% less than the 151,585 immigrants from the 30 years between 1980 and 2010 (Government of Canada, 2022). This demonstrates the major growth of the newcomer population since 2011. The census highlights a recent immigrant population which is established as a landed immigrant or permanent resident status between January 1, 2016, and May 11, 2021; this population totals 68 085 (Government of Canada, 2022). Significant events such as the war in Ukraine create human migration and refugees are not yet represented in this data. The census states that Edmonton is home to 49,110 refugees (Government of Canada, 2022), but this does not include the roughly 7000 that have arrived in Edmonton since the start of the war in Ukraine (CBC News, 2023). This data provided by the census shows how important newcomer serving organizations are, as the newcomer/immigrant population is clearly only rising.

The 2021 Canadian census data provides specific language information that we can use to demonstrate the necessity of providing translation and interpretation services. From the single responses of 945,620 residents, 626,085 declared their mother tongue to be English, 16,200 declared French, and 303,340 declared their mother tongue to be a non-official language (Government of Canada, 2022). Regarding knowledge of languages, from a total of 996 490 responses, 973,345 people answered that they speak an official language of Canada, and 410,435 declared to speak a non-official language (Government of Canada, 2022). Although the data does not explicitly address bilingual or multilingual speakers, we can see overlap in the amount of speakers of official and non-official languages, which we can determine represents a large number of multilingual speakers. Though we cannot use this data to determine precisely which languages are in demand or require translation and interpretation services, we can understand that from 410,435 non-official language speakers and an ever-increasing amount of newcomers,

there is a tremendous need for these services. Interviews completed with organizations will be discussed in the following sections, establishing the languages for which there is a greater need for translation and interpretation. The discussion will also examine the reasons for specific language services and why the demand for distinct languages changes over time.

Mapping Spaces of Translation and Interpretation in Edmonton

Research Method

As the name suggests, the goal of this project was to create a map of the city of Edmonton and identify organizations as spaces within the city where translation or interpretation occurs to facilitate their services. With the guidance of Dr. Cisneros and Dr. De León, a proposal was written to apply for the research grant outlining the objectives and goals of the project. Once the grant was awarded, a research plan was developed. This included creating documents such as the invitation email and information/consent letter. These documents needed to be completed in order to apply for ethics approval. Ethics approval was necessary because the research involved human participants. Organizations could not be contacted until ethics approval was received. While waiting for ethics approval, a spreadsheet of potential organizations to contact as project participants was created. The organizations included in the initial list were organizations that provide services to newcomers, such as immigrants and refugees. A principal goal of the project was to determine which of these organizations utilize translation or interpretation, so these organizations were the priority of focus throughout the project.

Participating organizations received a Google Survey, which asked for information about the organization they represent. The survey was separated into two sections with the questions listed below:

Part A: Organization background information

1. What is the name of the organization?
2. What type of organization is it? (e.g., a non-for-profit, government organization [federal/provincial/municipal], private business, other)?
3. Name of interview participant: (Note: Your name will remain anonymous in this study unless you request otherwise).
4. What is your title/role in the organization?
5. How long has the organization been in operation?
6. What types of services does your organization provide? (e.g., immigration, housing, education, etc.)?
7. Who are the services provided for? (e.g. What age groups, ethnocultural communities, language speakers etc.)
8. How do members of the community find out about your organization and access your services?
9. What is the address, phone number, or email that the public can contact and is there a website where they can find more information?

Part B: Translation and Interpretation services

1. Does your organization provide your clients with any translation (text-to-text) or interpretation (spoken/verbal) services?
2. If translation (text-to-text) service is provided, what kinds of documents are translated and which are most in demand?
3. If interpretation (spoken/verbal) service is provided, for what kinds of contexts or situations?

4. In what language(s) are translation (text-to-text) and/or interpretation (oral/verbal) services offered?
5. If more information is needed, would you or someone from your organization be available for a quick follow-up interview either by email, phone, or Google Meet?

At the end of the survey, participants had the opportunity to state if they were willing to do a follow-up interview. The follow-up interview asked specific questions regarding translation and interpretation, such as:

- What specific successes and challenges does your organization face with respect to how translation and/or interpretation services are provided?
- What do you think would help your organization achieve its goals with respect to translation or interpretation services?
- How are employees or volunteers who provide translation (text-to-text) or interpretation (oral/verbal) services recruited?
- If multiple languages, what languages are the most and least in demand? Why do you think this is the case?
- What skills or credentials are employees or volunteers who provide translation (text-to-text) or interpretation services (spoken/verbal) required to possess?

While waiting for ethics approval, any relevant publicly available information was compiled. Publicly available information, in many cases, assisted answering questions on the survey. However, any specific information that the follow-up interview asked was never available publicly and required completion of the survey and interview.

As participants were slow to respond, the research was expanded to include language schools and cultural centres. Again, any information publicly available online was also compiled.

After ethics approval was given, invitations were sent to nearly 30 organizations within the city that research had determined might utilize translation or interpretation. An initial invitation email was sent. If an organization expressed they would like to participate, they received the information and consent form to sign and send back to me. After receiving a signed consent, I returned the form with my signature, and at this point, I could also send the Google survey. This process was tracked on a tracking sheet to establish which organizations had participated, which organizations had declined, and when any contact, including invitation and follow-up emails were sent. In some cases, follow-up emails were required after participants had returned the consent for them to complete the survey. However, surveys and interviews were done at the convenience of the participant.

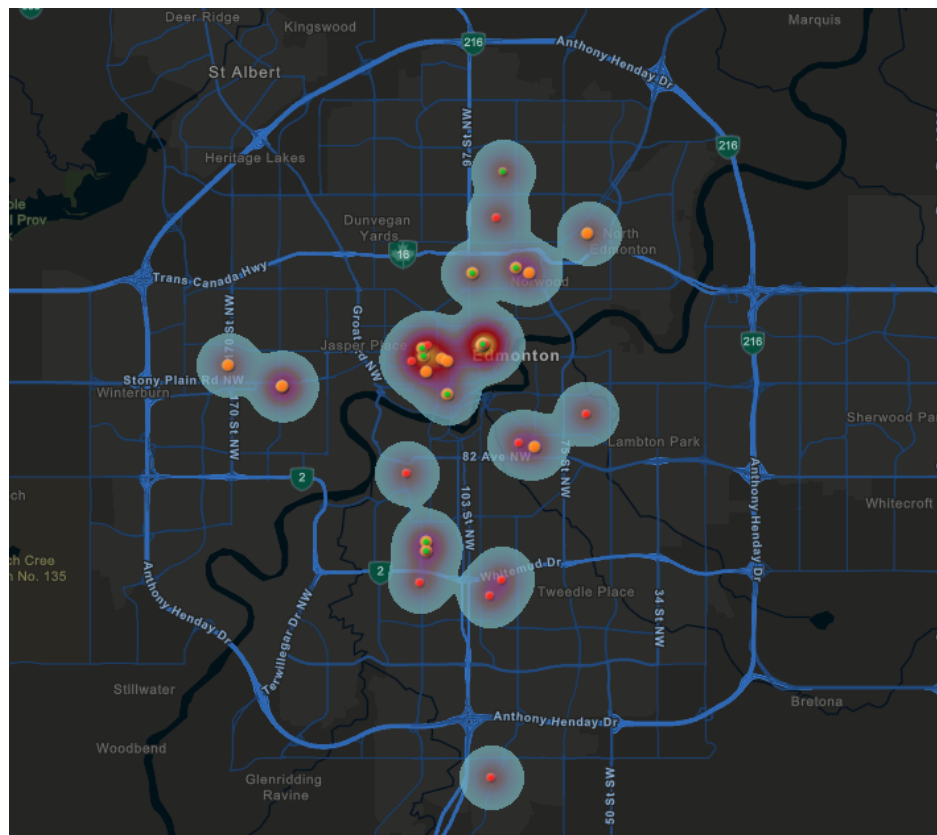
Any information gathered was compiled into document folders specific to the organization. This data was used to create the final product using ArcGis Story maps, a free mapping tool that allows users to “Create inspiring, immersive stories by combining text, interactive maps, and other multimedia content. [Users can] publish and share [their]story [their] your organization or everyone around the world.”(*ArcGIS StoryMaps*, n.d.).

A second ethics approval was required to include any data collected from the participants in this thesis. The thesis discusses and interprets the data received through publicly available information, surveys and follow-up interviews.

Results

In total, I researched 44 organizations, 38 of which were included in the final results. The research found that 10 of the organizations were confirmed to utilize or provide translation and interpretation services. The other 28 organizations included are still represented to facilitate users in discovering or finding a service they might not provide and foster collaboration between organizations. It was found that translation and interpretation are utilized in various ways, both formally and informally.

Using ArcGIS story maps, I created four maps to demonstrate the physical location of all 38 organizations within the city of Edmonton. Three of the maps demonstrate the location of confirmed spaces of translation or interpretation, social service organizations, and language schools within Edmonton. The fourth map developed is a heat map to demonstrate the grouping of all organizations based on their proximity to each other. Below is a map containing the layers of all four maps.



(ArcGIS StoryMaps, n.d.)

The green dots represent organizations within the city that have confirmed through the research to offer translation or interpretation services. The orange dots represent social service organizations, many of which provide immigration or refugee services. The red dots represent language schools within the city of Edmonton.

Following the maps, each of the 38 organizations are highlighted, noting a brief overview of the organization, their primary services, the status of translation or interpretation services within the organization (yes, no, or referred out), contact information and what languages the organization works with or serves. In some cases, publicly available videos that the organization released could be attached to provide further information. This is now a publicly available resource that can be shared between organizations in order to facilitate inter-organizational cooperation. A link to this resource can be found here: <https://arcg.is/1inj4O0>.

Focusing on the ten organizations confirmed to utilize or provide translation and interpretation services, the service was either offered directly through the organization or referred out to a partner organization. In total, the research established that translation and interpretation are offered for 46 different languages. In some cases, specific languages were not advertised; Instead, it was noted that the service is offered for “various” languages, whereas the languages highlighted through the research are:

Amharic, Arabic, Blien, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, Dinka, English, Farsi,
French, Fulani, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Hindko, Italian,
Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili, Korean, Kurdish, Kyrgyz, Mandarin, Mandingo,
Nepali, Nyanja, Oromo, Pashto, Persian, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Saraiki,

Serbian, Somali, Sosso, Spanish, Sudanese, Swahili, Tagalog, Tigre, Tigrinya, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

At the time of the project, one organization, The Family Centre, claimed to offer translation in over 60 languages and interpretation in over 80. However, they have now updated that their interpreter/translation services program has closed and no longer accepts new interpretation or translation requests.

Nine of the 38 organizations included in the project responded and completed the survey. Of these nine organizations, five utilize both interpretation and translation, one offers just translation, and one offers interpretation but refers out any translation needs or requests. The remaining two do not offer either translation nor interpretation through their services. The survey responses established that the target population of their services was either a specific language group or newcomers such as immigrants or refugees. This includes, as the Multicultural Family Resource Society representative responded, “Ethno-cultural families who have an immigrant and refugee background” (L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 5, 2022).

Through publicly available information or surveys, twelve of the organizations establish that they are non-profit charitable organizations. This is important to note, as it will be addressed in the discussion section. Of the nine participating organizations that responded to the survey, 5 identify themselves as non-profit. These organizations include: Comitato Promotore della Lingua Italiana, International Heritage Languages Association, Kiswahili Learning Centre Inc., Catholic Social Services, GROW Women Leaders, Multicultural Family Resource Society, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA), FOCAS Canada (Foundation for Oromian Culture, Education, and Arts Services), and Action for Healthy Communities. GROW Women Leaders noted that their services provide Job matching, training, and ongoing career support for

immigrant women, translation and interpretation were noted not to be aspects of the organization (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 26, 2022). GROW is included in the ArcGIS Storymap as they work with a newcomer population, but is not discussed within this thesis because they could not provide any information on translation and interpretation. The International Heritage Languages Association representative informed them that they do not provide any services directly. However, they are an organization that harbours 29 language and culture schools, providing a network of organizations (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 12, 2022).

The survey participants offering translation service note that the types of documents most translated and in demand are: legal, licences, medical, and educational. Apart from this, two participants also mentioned that simple documents or notes are also translated. Catholic Social Services expands on documents translated, stating they are “Legal documents, such as marriage certificates, educational credential information, and other government forms” (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 22, 2022). The six survey participants who utilize interpretation for their service offered more specific information regarding the context and situations in which interpretation is used. Action for Healthy Communities responded that interpretation is provided:

to explain legal and education, immigration and other documents.

In-person or virtual interpretation supports to the clients in courts, doctor's appointments, schools and other places. Our staff speak more than 30 languages, and interpretation support is offered in all eight departments of services that we offer based on clients' needs.(L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 12, 2022)

The Multicultural Family Resource Society responded that interpretation is used in the context of “[m]eetings with other service providers, such as schools, clinics, government offices, etc. (only for the families we are already supporting who might require some assistance in certain situations)” (L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 5, 2022). Catholic Social Services responded that interpretation is used in the context of “[c]ommunity orientation, medical appointments, appointments with mainstream public services (such as schools), with landlords, government phone lines and accessing government services, among others” (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 22, 2022). The three remaining organizations responded stating that services are utilized in general communication, government, legal, and medical contexts.

Based on the survey results, we can summarize that translation and interpretation services are offered surrounding the following contexts: licences, legal, medical, government and educational. Community translation in these contexts will be discussed in the discussion section.

Five organizations completed a follow-up interview, and all of these organizations also completed the survey. The follow-up interview asked the questions mentioned in the research method section.

Follow up interviews

Follow-up interviews were conducted with representatives from five organizations: Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA), International Heritage Languages Association, Catholic Social Services, Kiswahili Learning Centre Inc., and Comitato Promotore della Lingua Italiana. These five organizations provide a diverse representation of services provided within the city of Edmonton, and interviews with representatives provided vital

information surrounding the implementation and challenges of community translation and interpretation.

The Kiswahili Learning Centre Inc representative stated that Edmonton is a multilingual space that creates translation opportunities to facilitate communication. However, the amount of translation work available varies as demand changes for specific languages—finding people that are fluent and can write at a professional level rather than just bilingual (L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 2, 2022). All organizations established that bilingualism is the only essential requirement. Catholic Social Services stated that mandatory training or certified translators are not possible in many cases due to rapid hiring and rapid refugee arrivals resulting in discrepancies in organizational practice and operation (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). Due to the difficulties noted by participating organizations in using trained or certified interpreters and translators, documents are not always accepted by agencies despite oaths and affidavit signatures (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). The representative from EISA explained their process for ensuring quality translations. The document is done by the translator and then given to the proofreader- the affidavit confirms that this is done to the best of knowledge to be the best version possible and is signed by the proofreader and then signed by a commissioner of oaths, to say that, to the best of their knowledge a faithful translation (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). This process was only noted by EISA; in most cases, as previously mentioned, translators are hired based on language and cultural competency and are untrained, which might result in a rough translation (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). The importance of cultural competency is an important aspect that will be addressed further in the discussion session. The representative from CPLI noted that the only requirement is to be bilingual in English and Italian, although

translation experience and adequate writing skills are an asset (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 16, 2022).

A common challenge participants mentioned was that further training is often difficult to provide or does not happen at all. CPLI noted that further training in the translation of Italian that teaches specific vocabulary within the area of legal terminology would assist in the quality of their translations (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 16, 2022). Catholic Social Services noted that due to the urgent nature of work as refugee groups arrive, training does not occur (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). EISA established that lack of funding inhibits their ability to provide training which used to be done in-house (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). In comparison, Catholic Social Services determined that another problem they face is the lack of consistent staffing due to a shortage of work for specific languages, but also that the need for specific languages changes, causing fluctuations in workload resulting in inconsistent amounts of work (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). As a result, community support workers provide interpretation work on call.

Discussing translator and interpreter recruitment, EISA noted that existing staff often act as translators and interpreters (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). Catholic Social Services also recruits the use of existing staff to work as interpreters but also as cultural brokers, providing cultural interpretation as well (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). Apart from existing staff, many interpreters and translators are volunteers. Catholic Social Services also noted that interpreters are often recruited from bilingual persons who arrive with a group of immigrants or refugees and have been providing more unofficial interpreting for the group; Catholic Social Services often utilize the linguistic and cultural

knowledge of these individuals, and have provided them with work as a result (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022).

From the interviews, we can establish that although organizations would like to require higher certifications and provide further training for interpreters and translators, various reasons inhibit or make these aspects difficult. This will be discussed in the next section.

Discussion

The follow-up interviews established answers from community organizations to questions regarding the successes and challenges they face regarding translation and interpretation. This provides valuable insight into how community translation exists within the city of Edmonton as well as the obstacles that might inhibit its success. By focusing on the challenges established through the interviews, we can now look at sources that have also determined these challenges and discuss implementing strategies to overcome them. This discussion session will expand on defining community translation to establish how it exists within the city of Edmonton through the organizations researched. Additionally, this discussion section will focus on: the challenges of community translation, how organizations can better achieve their goals, recruitment of volunteers or employees, language demand, and the skills, credentials and qualifications of translators and interpreters.

Most of the organizations researched identified themselves as non-profit or Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). Shindo acknowledges that many NGOs are underfunded and forced to look internally for translators or interpreters who can communicate adequately between the dominant and target languages (Shindo, 2021). This establishes that due to inadequate funding, many organizations are forced to settle for non-certified translators, which

would contribute to the idea that community translation is an amateur and subordinate form of translation. Taibi and Ozolins add that organizations often even seek to hire bilinguals who can serve multiple roles apart from and in addition to translation (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016). Taibi and Ozolins elaborate on this, stating:

In some cases, public services rely on non-government organizations that work with ethnic communities and language minorities using the services of volunteer or untrained freelance translators. The result of all this is often poor, inappropriate or less effective translations, which constitute eloquent evidence of inappropriate commissioning processes and inexistent or inadequate quality control measures. (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016, p. 23)

Although this is a common aspect of community translation, as noted earlier, the representative from EISA stated their effort to ensure quality in their translations by the signing of an affidavit by a commissioner of oaths after being read by a proofreader (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). The representative further stated that EISA has implemented a training manual for volunteer translators, and the lead proofreader is a certified translator (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). This helps them understand that despite funding challenges, newcomers can access quality interpretation and translation services within Edmonton.

It is important to note that, as previously explained, community translation includes both amateur and professional translators. Souza notes a distinction in the perception of community interpreting as non-professional but includes that this was a dismissal perpetuated by professional conference interpreters (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.). In response to this perception, we

can look at the work by Cisneros and De León, who highlighted the importance of hiring local community translators as the coordinator of the project they were investigating is quoted stating ““hiring a professional translator doesn’t necessarily guarantee you the results you want for material that is for local use”” (Cisneros & De León, 2020, p. 115). Shimabukuro et al. even note that in community interpreting, the idea of professionalism must come from the interaction between private and public identities as well as between the group and the individual (Shimabukuro et al., 2022). Here Shimabukuro et al. draw attention to the agents involved in community interpretation but note that what defines professionalism in the craft is adherence to ethics and values shared between agents (Shimabukuro et al., 2022). Within the city of Edmonton, it is hard to determine from the results how many organizations must adhere to this code of ethics, as EISA was the only organization that established its quality control process and ensured the translation was done as best as possible. In this respect, we can conclude that most organizations within Edmonton that utilize translation and interpretation to provide their services do not necessarily adhere to the defining aspects of professionalism that Shimabukuro et al. highlight. Further research would need to be done to specifically ask the organizations what kind of non-disclosure agreements or contracts they require translators and interpreters to sign.

The representative from CPLI stated that the quality of a translation can vary depending on the experience of the translator as well as their knowledge of the target language (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 16, 2022). Although it varies, these aspects of language competence and experience are often the criteria for translator selection. As highlighted in the translator selection of the various translations of NGE, the selection was based on experience and language competency (Cisneros & De León, 2020). In the case of the statement by the CPLI representative, we can look at this type of translation as ad hoc, as Souza suggests that it is

performed more informally by a community agency (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.). Taibi and Ozolins note that in community translation.

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This is consistent with the challenges organizations who participated in the study faced as they noted their reliance on bilingualism as the primary or only qualification. Importantly within the city of Edmonton, the representative from Kiswahili Learning Centre stated that without training, if the only requirement is that the translator is bilingual, bilingualism does not ensure or establish an ability to translate (L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 2, 2022).

When Catholic Social Services were interviewed, they said that Ukrainian language services were in high demand due to the war in Ukraine (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). However, several months later, when EISA was interviewed, they mentioned they were preparing for languages spoken in Turkey and Syria due to the earthquake (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). This demonstrates the ad hoc nature of community translation as the need for specific languages changes. Additionally, Catholic Social Services noted that in assisting with arriving refugees, the work is very urgent which inhibits training which is constantly changing as refugees arrive from different areas of the world depending on the event or reason for their migration (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022).

This is consistent with what the representative from Kiswahili Learning Centre has noticed, stating that there may be demand for their target language for a period of time, but it is inconsistent as that need changes; this inconsistency in demand causes translators to be unable to rely on consistent work (L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 2, 2022). In relation to the ad hoc nature of community translation and interpretation, Shimabukuro et al. highlight the demand of interpreting for indigenous communities in Peru. They assert that recognizing the need for interpreters establishes a cultural belonging and empowerment of minority groups (Shimabukuro et al., 2022). As noted earlier, “community translation is a service that is normally required in multilingual and multicultural societies where disempowered groups such as migrants, refugees or local ethnic minorities do not have access to texts written in the mainstream language(s).” (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016, p. 14). Here it is essential to draw attention to the active role an interpreter plays in empowering refugees, migrants, newcomers and ethnic minorities through their role as an interpreter. Shimabukuro et al. highlight that interpreters must “confront power imbalances, cultural differences, and dissimilar expectations between the judiciary agents and minority language speakers” ¹(Shimabukuro et al., 2022, p. 129). In acknowledging that translators and interpreters must confront power imbalances between minority groups and the language majority, we can begin to understand the connection and importance of cultural mediation through translation.

Historically translators were recruited by one party to establish a more favourable role in negotiation to the party that recruited them (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.). This would establish a bias in the relayed message, which translators now strive to make as invisible as possible. However, as Vicente L Rafael explains, neither the invisible nor the neutral translator exists (Polezzi et al., 2022). In this context, neutrality refers to the power (in)balance a translator must work within,

¹ My translation p. 129

and invisibility refers to an expected impartiality of the translator. Souza notes the “invisible paradigm, which also became prevalent in the field of interpreting, a successful interpreter conveyed the message to the audience in a way to allow the audience to forget the language barrier (or interpreter) existed” (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E., p. 223). Although the invisibility model is more prevalent in conference interpreting, where the interpreter is not seen but only heard through an earpiece, this model denies any cultural significance an interpreter might need to draw attention to or interpret (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.). By focusing on newcomer serving organizations, the project ultimately sought to determine how these organizations worked to assist immigrants, refugees or specific cultural demographics within the cultural context of Edmonton and Canada. In providing linguistic services such as translation or interpretation, organizations remove linguistic priority to the dominant language (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.).

Although Shimabukuro et al. suggest that Sistema Nacional de Evaluación, Acreditación y Certificación de la Calidad Educativa, 2016 determines that the professional conduct of a translator transmits only the message, it is not changed, made better or worse; any emotion must be transmitted with equal intensity without softening the expressions (Shimabukuro et al., 2022). We can relate this to the project in that the cultural significance of the CPLI and Kiswahili note that they draw translators or interpreters from the cultural demographic that their organization represents. This draws attention to another essential aspect of community translation: the cultural role that a translator or interpreter plays.

As suggested in defining community translation, the term intercultural mediator can be used interchangeably with community interpreter (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020). It can be added that because language and culture are intertwined, cultural mediation is an intrinsic aspect of interpretation (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020). This draws attention to, as Katan highlights, an

interpreter needs to be able to participate within both cultures they are representing linguistically through their service (Katan, 2008). This qualification is common among participating organizations who note that in providing translation or interpretation services, they search for individuals who are members of the linguistic and cultural community they represent. Belonging or understanding two cultures ensures that nonverbal communication cues that reflect cultural values are maintained as best as possible between communicating parties (Ra, 2018). Katan highlights that awareness of the effect that cultural context will have on a translation is essential in mediating the accuracy of a message, noting that a lack of cultural awareness implicitly carries inaccurate sentiment between the source and target text (Katan, 2008). Katan defines this context as “in any communication, there is a process of ‘contexting’, whereby interlocutors negotiate how much of the meaning is to be retrieved from the context, how much of the context is shared, and if not shared: ‘it can be seen, as context is lost, information must be added if meaning is to remain constant’”(Katan, 2008, p. 76). Here it is essential to highlight that Katan is speaking of adding information to establish that the significance of a message remains constant. This can be understood to enhance mutual understanding; as Cisneros and De León draw attention that the role of a cultural broker serves to “act as mediators between groups or people with different cultural backgrounds to increase mutual understanding” (Cisneros & De León, 2020, p. 97).

Additionally, because culture is reflected through language, parties might need to be made aware of cultural values reflected in nonverbal communication cues (Ra, 2018). We can look at how Katan acknowledges that there needs to be a message that is maintained but understand that in some cases, there need to be interpretation considerations to ensure that the message is conveyed in a way that the message remains constant as a result of cultural considerations and potential adaptations by the translator. Souza highlights that during

intercultural interactions, the addition of non-linguistic benefits by an interpreter has even become more expected and understood (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.). Intercultural mediation also encourages the instruction of service providers to raise their cultural competence, which improves the quality of service (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020).

Raising cultural competence assists with limiting or avoiding communication breakdown. Sophia Ra discusses that the “education and training of healthcare professionals about how to work with interpreters, especially on intercultural communication, and how they can be culturally sensitive, maintain mutual respect, and negotiate with patients from culturally diverse communities, can help to avoid communication breakdown” (Ra, 2018, p. 270). Through the survey, FOCAS noted that they provide interpretation services for Oromian newcomers in medical settings (L. Mahoney, personal communication, August 10, 2022). The survey confirmed four more organizations to provide translation or interpretation in a medical setting. From these results, we can see that in Edmonton, community translation is prominent in a medical setting. However, no further data was obtained to establish a more thorough understanding of the role of community interpretation in a medical setting within the city. One major reason for this was the requirement of a different ethics approval to research within a medical context. Research in this setting is essential because, as Ra states, by addressing the cultural attitudes and beliefs of patients within a healthcare setting, “healthcare professionals should increase cultural sensitivity and receive specialized training in such matters” (Ra, 2018, p. 260). This statement supports that there needs to be a focus on cultural competence, especially as it relates to the role of an interpreter in a medical setting. Further research into this context would prove informative and further develop the role of community translation within the medical setting of Edmonton.

Regarding training, Ra establishes that “training and professional development for practising interpreters, regarding the interpreter’s role boundaries and providing cultural information, should be mandatory” (Ra, 2018, p. 270). It is important to note that here Ra has emphasized the importance of cultural training for both the interpreter and the healthcare professional. It has been established that striving for culturally sensitive care is also to achieve optimal patient care (Souza & Souza, 1 C.E.).

In further discussion of training, the representative from Catholic Social Services expressed that more, better, and more rigorous training for their staff would help to achieve their translation and interpretation goals; But, as noted earlier, the urgent nature of the work along with rapid hiring inhibits training (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022). Of course, in defining community translation, trained interpreters and translators are not established to be a requirement (Pokorn & Južnič, 2020). Much like the context of interpreting in a medical setting, the limitations of training within community translation would be essential to research to develop higher-quality translation and interpretation in Edmonton. The EISA representative noted that before the COVID-19 pandemic, their organization had a translator training program through Norquest College. This program no longer exists; any training is done in-house at EISA (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). It is important to emphasize that by investing in quality translation more migrants will be attracted to the organization (Shindo, 2021). This highlights that by investing in training, organizations would be investing in higher-quality translation and assisting more people.

The follow-up interviews aimed to determine what languages the organizations find to be most in demand and least in demand and why they believe that to be the case. We have already noted that people are forced to migrate due to conflict, often as refugees. The representative from

EISA mentioned that due to the war in Ukraine, they have found Ukrainian as well as Russian to be in high demand due to the recent influx of refugees from Ukraine and its surrounding areas (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). They also noted that the organization's involvement with various communities draws language speakers from that community (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). This demonstrates that there may be more people drawn to the services of one organization over another due to its current or prior involvement in that specific community. Regarding languages found to be in less demand, both EISA and Catholic Social Services noted that newcomers from countries where English is an official language do not often require translation or interpretation services. The representative from Catholic Social Services expressed that one of the top arrival countries is Nigeria, where English is a national language, and individuals will not require translation or interpretation services even when they speak other languages (L. Mahoney, personal communication, July 27, 2022).

Conclusion and Further Research

Edmonton is a growing city that is constantly receiving newcomers from different parts of the world. As the city grows the need for various language resources, translation and interpretation changes. Organizations that welcome and assist newcomers as they arrive in the city face a variety of challenges discussed throughout this thesis. General themes researched in the project *Mapping Spaces of Translation and Interpretation in the City of Edmonton* were the challenges organizations face in providing services, recruitment of translators or interpreters, and training. Apart from these themes, the project established a comprehensive representation of organizations within the city, highlighting 38 organizations and developing an information

resource and maps through ArcGis StoryMaps which might be used in order to facilitate cooperation between organizations.

This project sought to identify challenges organizations face in implementing translation and interpretation services. One central theme was identified is the accessibility of translator or interpreter training. This was demonstrated through answers highlighting the need for further training for existing interpreters and translators. Further research would be essential to investigate specifically into translation and interpretation study or training within the city of Edmonton. This would help identify the accessibility of training and potentially help develop a more comprehensive training program available for organizations to enrol their translators or interpreters. As mentioned earlier, the representative from EISA mentioned a program for translators and interpreters existed through Norquest College prior to the pandemic, but now any training is done in-house (L. Mahoney, personal communication, February 22, 2023). In the article by Cisneros and De León a successful 12-hour community translation course is mentioned which was offered to translators of the NGE translation project to help empower them “by making explicit the tacit beliefs embedded in their own translation practice” (Cisneros & De León, 2020, p. 118). Successes such as this course are incredibly valuable and should become a priority by organizations in developing and supporting in order to provide the best quality community translation possible. Currently, the University of Alberta offers a certificate in translation, which is available in French, German, Ukrainian and Spanish.² This has limitations due to the languages available, and the certificate is limited to students at the university. Additionally, the research noted that there is a higher demand for the translation of less common languages. Still, there remains a need for translation in these four languages. Of course, due to

² (Program: MLCS Certificate in Translation Studies - University of Alberta - Acalog ACMSTM, n.d.)

the war in Ukraine and the recent arrival of so many refugees, the Ukrainian translation certificate will be beneficial for individuals who have it.

Through the project research and writing this thesis, apart from researching translation training in the city, the implementation of interpreting and translation in the medical field would be another vital theme to research. As mentioned prior, as a separate ethics approval to research in the medical field, translation and interpretation was not investigated for this research but would be a valuable topic of research that would establish a more comprehensive representation of what translation and interpreting looks like within the city of Edmonton.

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35

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