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Training service providers to work effectively with interpreters through educational videos

A qualitative study

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To ensure the quality of interpreter-mediated encounters, not only interpreters but also service providers need to be trained. However, most of them lack adequate training. This study aimed to evaluate educational videos as a (self-)learning tool with which to train service providers to work with interpreters. Eight educational videos were developed in a multi-stage evidence-based process. For the evaluation, semi-structured interviews with 32 service providers across settings and 12 experts in the field of interpreting were conducted in Switzerland and Germany. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using a structuring content analysis approach. Service providers described an increase in their knowledge (e.g. of the complexity of interpreter-mediated encounters, potential challenges, and how to deal with them appropriately) and confidence (e.g. reduced inhibitions about working with interpreters, perceived permission to feel insecure, and encouragement to deal with problematic situations in an interpreter-mediated encounter). However, the need for hands-on practice limits the effectiveness of the educational videos as a standalone (self-)learning tool, as noted in particular by the experts. It is recommended that they be used in combination with other methods, such as face-to-face training, which provide opportunities for hands-on practice. Nonetheless, the videos can be considered a low-threshold and initial (self-)learning tool with which to increase service providers' competence in working with interpreters.

Keywords: interpreter-mediated encounter, training, service provider, competence, educational videos

1. Introduction

1.1 Overcoming language barriers by using interpreters

As a result of globalization, migration and displacement, service-providers (SPs) across all kinds of settings may increasingly be faced with the challenge of providing services to a culturally and linguistically diverse population. According to the latest World Migration Report, the estimated number of people living in a country other than their country of birth was 281 million in 2020. That is 3.6% of the world's population and 128 million more than in 1990 (McAuliffe & Triandafyllidou 2021). Whereas a great proportion of migrants possess sufficient proficiency in the respective national language, some have limited language proficiency (LLP), not only upon arrival but also after years of residence (Liebau & Romiti 2014). LLP is one of the main barriers to migrants' receiving appropriate services (Kim et al. 2011; Lebrun 2012; Wilson et al. 2005) and to SPs' providing these services (Al Shamsi et al. 2020; Ali & Watson 2018; Corsellis 1997).

When the SP and their client do not share a common language, a range of (informal) practices are used to overcome the language barrier, including the use of family members or multilingual personnel as interpreters (Gill et al. 2011; Kilian et al. 2014; Mösko et al. 2013; Smith et al. 2013; Swartz et al. 2014), receptive multilingualism (ten Thije 2018), machine translation technologies (Dew et al. 2018), or professional interpreters (Gill et al. 2011; Karliner et al. 2007). It should be noted that in most countries – including Germany, where the presented study was conducted – no quality standards or legal regulations exist that define what distinguishes a professional interpreter or who is allowed to work as an interpreter at all. Consequently, the level of qualification of interpreters varies greatly (Breitsprecher et al. 2020). A professional interpreter is usually defined as a person who is somehow trained for the interpreting task in a specific setting (Karliner et al. 2007), although there is wide variation in the extent and content of such interpreter training. Despite the vague definition, the literature indicates that the use of trained interpreters can improve the quality of a service to a level that approaches or equals the quality of the service provided to people who are proficient in the particular language and do not rely on an interpreter (Karliner et al. 2007). However, many SPs tend not to use interpreters at all or use inappropriate interpreters, such as family members, in situations actually requiring professional interpreting (Gill et al. 2011; Jaeger et al. 2019b). Previous studies exploring the reasons for the underuse of professional interpreters have shown that SPs might not be able to recognize when LLP poses a problem (Jacobs et al. 2010) or they believe that they can 'get by' and deal with the language barrier through gestures and the use of limited second-language skills, despite the possible neg-

ative effects on the quality and outcome of the communication (Diamond et al. 2008). Besides cumbersome organization and the absence of financial coverage (Jaeger et al. 2019a), reservations about the effectiveness of interpreter-mediated encounters (IMEs) and a general lack of knowledge about working with interpreters effectively (Jaeger et al. 2019a; Patriksson et al. 2019) are major reasons why SPs tend not to use professional interpreters when communicating with LLP migrants. To overcome these barriers and to ensure that LLP migrants receive appropriate services, SPs should be trained in the consequences of language barriers, the importance of using professional interpreters, and also how to work with them appropriately (Hsieh 2010; Jacobs et al. 2010).

1.1 Training service providers for interpreter-mediated encounters

Referring to Wadensjö (1998), who described IMEs as ‘a communicative pas de trois’ (a dance of three, pp.10–12), it becomes clear that the quality of IMEs does not depend solely on the competence of the interpreter. As Hale (2007) stated, it is a shared responsibility between all of the parties involved. SPs, however, are rarely trained for this activity (Costa 2017; Perez & Wilson 2007) and perceive working with interpreters as an intuitive activity rather than an acquired professional skill (Hudelson et al. 2012). Hudelson et al. (2012) showed that even if SPs consider themselves highly competent to work with interpreters, it does not mean that they actually are. This is largely because IMEs differ from monolingual communication in many ways (Perez & Wilson 2007; Tebble 2003). They therefore pose specific challenges for SPs, such as the adjustment of turn-taking and the speed of speech (Juckett & Unger 2014) or dealing with conflicts about expertise and authority with the interpreter (Hsieh 2010). In previous interview studies, SPs reported feelings of being excluded or under observation, experienced a lack of control, and described having to deal with mistrust of the accuracy of their renditions as challenging (Hanft-Robert et al. 2018). In contrast, trained SPs displayed greater confidence in working effectively with interpreters (Bansal et al. 2014; Coetzee et al. 2020; McEvoy et al. 2009; Quick et al. 2019; Woll et al. 2020) and also displayed increased knowledge and a more positive attitude towards doing so (Jacobs et al. 2010). Shriner and Hickey (2008) reported that trained SPs, compared to SPs without prior training, demonstrated improved skills in a simulated healthcare setting, such as speaking directly in the first person to the patient instead of speaking to the interpreter and instructing the interpreter about their role. Furthermore, prior training is associated with an increased use of professional interpreters and increased satisfaction with the service provided to LLP clients (Karliner et al. 2004).

1.2 Educational videos as a learning tool

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of research on the effectiveness of educational videos (EVs) in imparting knowledge, teaching and learning skills across a variety of disciplines (Bäwert & Holzinger 2019; Denny et al. 2017; Jang & Kim 2014; Kim et al. 2020). In the field of interpreting, too, initial studies have been examining the use of videos as a learning method (Ikram et al. 2015; Kalet et al. 2005). For example, Kalet et al. (2005) have developed a web-based module for medical students on working with interpreters. The participants were asked to analyse patient – physician – interpreter videos presenting the common pitfalls of and effective strategies for IMEs. Kalet et al. (2005) showed a significant increase in SPs knowledge and improved attitudes towards interacting with LLP patients and interpreters. Ikram et al. (2015) developed an e-learning module aimed at teaching medical students the skills needed to work effectively with interpreters and imparting knowledge of the benefits of using professional instead of non-professional (untrained) interpreters. The participants were presented with patient – physician – interpreter videos (either with a family member, an untrained bilingual staff member or a professional interpreter) and asked to answer two questions per vignette, followed by feedback that compared their responses to expert information. The participants showed significantly improved knowledge of and higher self-efficacy in using professional interpreters (Ikram et al. 2015).

Whereas the importance of the interpreter undergoing training is increasingly being emphasized (Ertl & Pöllabauer 2010; Hale & Ozolins 2014; Mikkelson 2014), the role of the SP is often still overlooked. In the light of the need to train SPs to work effectively with interpreters, coupled with growing evidence indicating the effectiveness of EVs as a learning approach, eight EVs for training SPs on how to conduct IMEs effectively were developed as part of an interdisciplinary research project. In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with SPs across disciplines and with experts in the field of interpreting to evaluate whether these newly developed EVs are a suitable (self-)learning tool for training SPs and increasing their competence in conducting IMEs effectively.

2. The study

2.1 Aim of the study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether the newly developed EVs are a suitable (self-)learning tool with which to train SPs and increase their competence

in conducting IMEs effectively. The aim was to explore (1) what SPs can learn about conducting IMEs through these EVs, (2) the impact that the EVs have on SPs' confidence to conduct IMEs effectively, and (3) the strengths and limitations of EVs as a (self-)learning tool in the field of interpreting.

2.2 Study design

A qualitative approach was chosen which allowed an in-depth, flexible exploration of the participants' perspectives and experiences with these EVs. The reporting of methods is in accordance with the consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ) (Tong et al. 2007). Ethical approval was obtained in writing from the Ethics Committee of the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf (4 April 2020; LPEK-0132).

2.3 Development of educational videos

The evidence-based development of the EVs consisted of the three modules displayed in Figure 1. Experts in the field of interpreting, SPs working with interpreters, and interpreters themselves were involved in the development of the EVs. Based on a systematic literature review and qualitative interviews with interpreters, SPs across settings, and experts, possible themes for the EVs were identified. In two separate workshops with experts and SPs these themes were discussed and prioritized. Based on these results, the scripts for the EVs were written. To make the EVs as authentic as possible, lay actors were chosen who are also interpreters or SPs in real life.

The EVs aimed to train SPs across settings in how to conduct IMEs effectively instead of focusing on just one setting. The EVs were designed to be a self-directed, independent learning tool to support SPs in the process of learning and self-reflection. In an effort to go beyond mere case-vignettes, a trainer (via voice-over) was included who directly addressed and guided the user through the presented situation. In total, eight EVs were developed with two different objectives. Three EVs aimed to teach SPs the best practices regarding the different modes of IMEs ("Best Practices in IMEs"): face-to-face, telephone, and video interpreting. Each of the three EVs demonstrated one mode. The trainer guided the user and explained the ideal procedure. Five EVs showed common challenges when working with interpreters ("Challenges in IMEs"). Each of them demonstrated one challenge: interpreter and client slipping into a dialogue; confusing reaction on the part of the client; client avoiding eye contact; perceived gaps in interpretations; cultural uncertainties. The trainer explained the problem and one possible way of dealing with the specific challenge was shown. These EVs aimed to raise

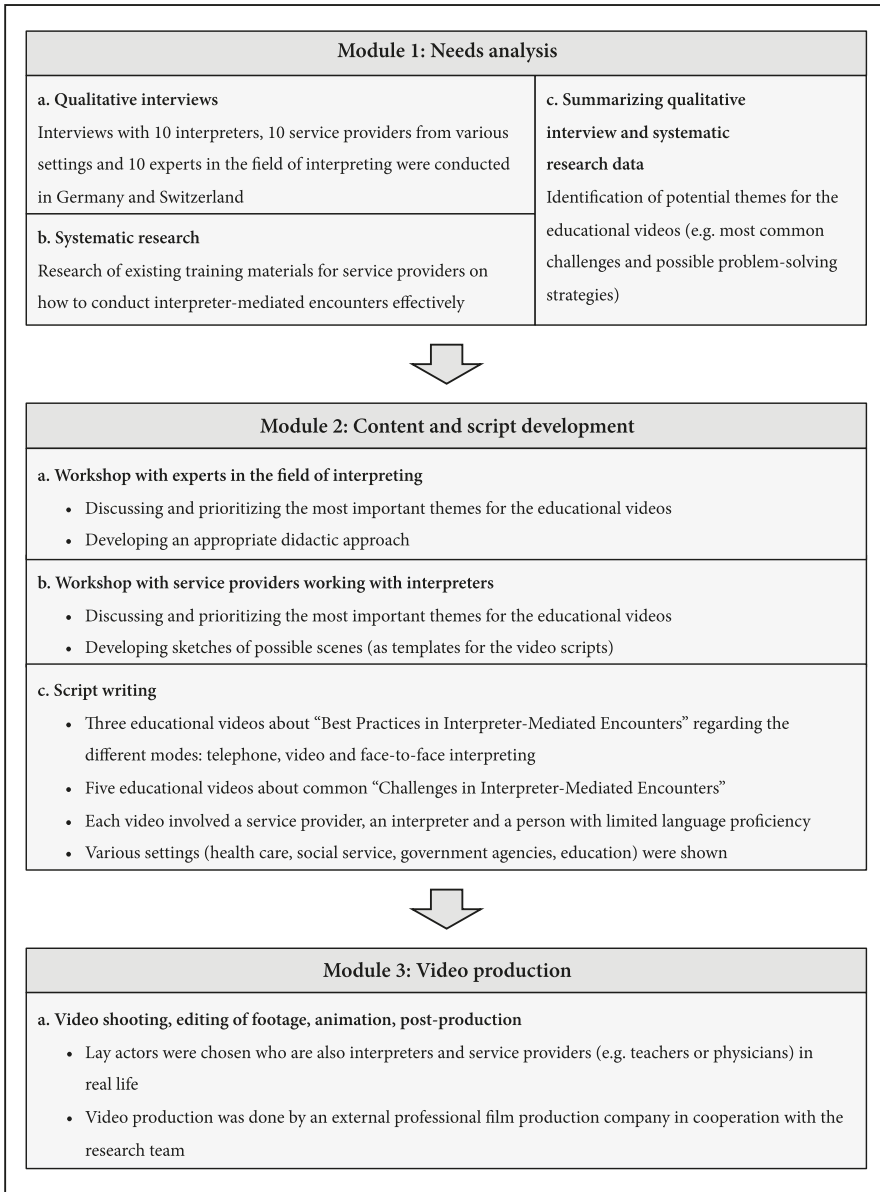


Figure 1. Overview of the evidence-based development of the EVs

the SPs’ awareness of problematic situations and to encourage them to find appropriate solutions. The duration of the EVs varied between 2:18 and 6:38 minutes. After the evaluation, the EVs were made freely available online in German and English.

2.4 Participants and recruitment

The participants were selected based on a purposive sampling approach (Marshall 1996). The inclusion criteria for SPs were: (1) working in one of the four settings: health care, social service, government agencies, or education; (2) had conducted at least five IMEs in the past 12 months; and (3) no previous training explicitly on IMEs (previous attendance at general intercultural training sessions was not a criterion for exclusion). To avoid biased results, no one who had already participated in an interview or one of the workshops in the process of developing the EVs was interviewed again in this study. A maximum variation sample (Marshall 1996) was aimed at with respect to settings, years of work experience, and the frequency of work with interpreters (Figure 2).

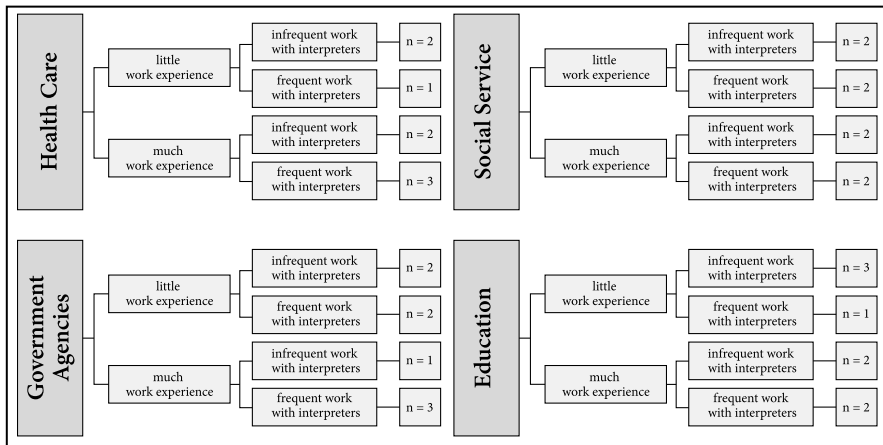


Figure 2. Recruitment of SPs

Settings: health care, social service, government agencies, education. Work experience: little (≤ 3 years) or much (≥ 7 years). Work with interpreters during the last six months: infrequent (≤ 1 per month) or frequent (≥ 2 per month).

Several German and Swiss organizations and institutions from the four settings were contacted by email or telephone and asked to forward the information on the study to their employees. Further participants were recruited by snowball sampling (Marshall 1996). Experts in the field of interpreting were included as a key informant sample based on their expertise and experience (Marshall 1996). Their inclusion criterion was at least three years of professional practice in the educational or scientific field of interpreting. Owing to the small number of eligible persons in Germany and Switzerland, experts were contacted directly by email or telephone. None of the experts refused to participate. All of the participants

were provided with oral and written information in German about the study prior to the interview. All of them gave their written informed consent to be interviewed and for the interview to be digitally audio recorded, transcribed and analyzed for the purposes of the study. Participation in the study was voluntary and not remunerated.

2.5 Development of interview guide

The semi-structured interview guide was developed by SHR (psychologist and doctoral student with many years of experience in conducting semi-structured interviews and qualitative data analysis) in close consultation with LEF (social anthropologist with many years of experience in conducting interviews), NJP (psychologist and post-doctoral researcher with comprehensive experience in teaching about and conducting qualitative (interview) studies) and MM (psychotherapist and professor of clinical psychology with comprehensive experience in qualitative research) following Helfferich's (2009) SPSS approach of collecting, reviewing, sorting and finally subsuming questions. The guide was critically discussed and refined by the research team. After two pilot interviews conducted by SHR in Germany, minor changes were made to reduce the length of the guide. The guide for both SPs and experts consisted of three parts: (a) evaluation of the EVs "Challenges in IMEs", (b) evaluation of the EVs "Best Practices in IMEs", (c) suitability of the EVs as a (self-)learning tool. Parts (a) and (b) were almost identical and covered the following topics: interviewees' general impression, relevance, impact on knowledge and confidence. In addition, Part (b) covered dealing with the challenges in IMEs. Part (c) explored the strengths and limitations of EVs as a (self-)learning tool in the field of interpreting.

2.6 Data collection and transcription

All of the interviews were conducted between June and October 2020 in a one-on-one setting in Germany and Switzerland. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the interviews in Germany ($n=23$) were conducted by SHR by telephone, in Switzerland by LEF by telephone ($n=5$) and in person at LEF's office ($n=16$). All of the interviews were conducted using the semi-structured guide, which allowed the interviewer to deviate from the pre-formulated questions and to ask individualized questions in order to explore new or unexpected topics raised by the interviewee during the interview. The participants completed a short questionnaire on sociodemographic data. The interviewer filled in a postscript to document the interview situation and any potentially disruptive factors during the interview. To ensure that the interviews were of a manageable duration, three randomly

selected EVs were presented per participant: two EVs about “Challenges in IMEs” and one EV about “Best Practices in IMEs”. Consequently, each EV was watched by at least ten SPs and four experts.

The interviews were digitally audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by a professional agency. All of the transcripts were proofread by SHR. Personal data that could lead to the identification of an interviewee (e.g. the names of participants, employers, institutions) were deleted or changed. The transcripts were not returned to the participants. The interviews lasted on average $M=56:05$ minutes (range = 32:19–83:50) with SPs and $M=71:05$ minutes (range = 46:00–102:00) with experts.

2.7 Data analysis

All interviews were analyzed according to the structuring content analysis by Kuckartz (2014). The objective of structuring content analysis is to summarize and structure interview data by developing a category system consisting of main categories and subcategories. A combination of deductive and inductive coding was applied (Kuckartz 2014). Deductive categories were derived from the interview guide and were supplemented by inductive categories during the coding process (Kuckartz 2014). To ensure intersubjective comprehensibility and credibility (Creswell 2013), SHR and SH (psychologist and doctoral student with some experience in conducting semi-structured interviews and qualitative data analysis) each coded six transcribed interviews separately and discussed the categories afterwards. Based on this, a first category system was developed. SHR analysed the remaining interviews in close consultation with SH and NJP. After finalizing the first coding process, all of the material was coded one more time by using the developed category system to ensure that no relevant aspects were missed. The final category system was discussed in two different research groups to ensure intersubjective reproducibility and comprehensibility (Creswell 2013). The study participants did not provide feedback on the findings. The data were analysed using MAXQDA 2020.

2.8 Sample

The sample consists of 32 SPs (27 female, 5 male) working in health care ($n=8$), social service ($n=8$), government agencies ($n=8$) or education ($n=8$) (see Figure 2) and 12 experts (all female). Of the participants, 17 SPs and six experts were German and 15 SPs and six experts were Swiss. The SPs were on average $M=40.5$ years old (range = 23–62) and had $M=9.6$ years’ work experience (range = 0.42–30). Of the SPs, 16 had worked infrequently (≤ 1 per month) and

16 SPs had worked frequently (≥ 2 per month) with interpreters during the past six months. In total, they had $M = 6.9$ years' experience (range = 0.08–25) working with interpreters. Two experts worked in the scientific field of interpreting and translation studies as researchers and lecturers; four worked in the educational field as trainers of SPs (and interpreters); six experts worked in both fields. The experts were on average $M = 48.7$ years old (range = 34–61) and had $M = 16.3$ years' expertise (range = 5–30).

3. Results

Four main categories with a total of 13 subcategories were identified (Table 1). The main categories are:

- gaining knowledge;
- gaining confidence;
- strengths of the EVs as a (self-)learning tool; and
- limitations of the EVs as a (self-)learning tool.

The analysis showed little difference in the views of SPs and experts. Most aspects were mentioned by both groups, which is why the results were combined. Any differences are presented in the text. No differences were found between the participants in Germany and those in Switzerland. Most of the categories refer to both types of EV (“Best Practices in IMEs” and “Challenges in IMEs”); in cases where this does not apply, it is specified.

Table 1. Identified main and subcategories

Main categories	Subcategories
1 Gaining knowledge	1.1 Complexity of interpreter-mediated encounters
	1.2 Basic elements of successful interpreter-mediated encounters
	1.3 Challenges and how to deal with them
	1.4 Clear division of roles, including role boundaries
	1.5 Refreshing existing knowledge
2 Gaining confidence	2.1 Reducing inhibitions about working with interpreters
	2.2 Permission to feel insecure
	2.3 Encouraging to deal with problematic situations
3 Strengths of the educational videos as a (self-)learning tool	3.1 Impetus for self-reflection
	3.2 Vivid learning tool
	3.3 Flexible learning tool

Table 1. (continued)

Main categories	Subcategories
4 Limitations of the educational videos as a (self-)learning tool	4.1 Lack of exchange and discussion 4.2 Need for hands-on practice

3.1 Gaining knowledge

Complexity of interpreter-mediated encounters

All of the SPs stated that through the EVs they came to realize the complexity of an IME and that it differs significantly from a monolingual conversation. They explained that the EVs enabled them to understand the importance of being adequately trained for this specific and complex type of communication:

The more you learn about it, the more you realize how important it is and how many things you don't know, how much you have to think about when working with interpreters. (SP06)

Furthermore, the experts pointed out that the EVs show that, compared to monolingual encounters, IMEs have communicative peculiarities for which SPs need to be sensitized and trained:

Yes, also to have it very clear again. What is this conversation – what is this setting about. [...] We can't always communicate with the same models or with the same schemes that we usually use. Three-way communication has its own rules. (EXP02)

Basic elements of successful interpreter-mediated encounters

This category refers to the three EVs about “Best Practices in IMEs”. SPs and experts perceived these EVs as being beneficial in increasing their knowledge about the basic elements needed to conduct IMEs effectively. The interviewees mentioned, for example, arranging seating; clarifying technical details when using a telephone or a video interpreter; informing the interpreter about the reason for and the content of the conversation; explaining their role and tasks to the interpreter; obtaining clients' consent; pointing out the confidentiality of the conversation; establishing clear rules of communication (e.g. everything said will be interpreted); clarifying linguistic understanding between interpreter and client; speaking slowly, clearly, and in short sentences; addressing the client directly (in the first person, maintaining eye contact); being continuously attentive and observing nonverbal behaviors and reactions; and conducting a short debriefing with the interpreter after the conversation.

SPs described these EVs about “Best Practices in IMEs” as easy-to-follow checklists, which are especially useful when working with an interpreter for the first time:

I become aware of the procedures involved in such conversations and how they take place. I’ll definitely take that away with me again. And actually some kind of little checklist in my head. (SP25)

Challenges and how to deal with them

This category refers to the five EVs about “Challenges in IMEs”. Both experts and SPs considered these EVs helpful for learning about potential challenges and how to deal with them appropriately:

SPs have to become aware of this problem. Then they have to think about how to deal with it. That’s what they can learn in this EV. How I can deal with it, ideally. And then I know that, and then I can use that again and again and then – yes, it is wonderful. Then the EV has fulfilled its purpose. (EXP01)

Some SPs reported that the EVs made them realize why something might be problematic regarding the quality and outcome of an IME:

My impression was that I immediately thought, “oh yes, I know this phenomenon” and I thought it was good to get it explained again in a very simple and understandable way and also to have it illustrated to you in a practical way that you have to do something in this case. So how you can bring the conversation back to you. (SP09)

Clear division of roles, including role boundaries

All of the experts emphasized that the EVs convey the need to have a clear understanding of the division of roles, including role boundaries:

Yes, that is definitely the key point here. The focus is on the role of the SP. He is moderating the conversation; that is his task. And he is also responsible for the atmosphere in the conversations. (EXP02)

On the one hand, SPs described how they became more aware of their own role as the leader of the conversation, the one who bears the main responsibility. On the other, they viewed the interpreter as the person enabling and being responsible for the verbal comprehension but not possessing any responsibility for the process or content of the conversation:

What I have become even more aware of is that the person interpreting really is providing a service and is not, for example, like the client’s confidant. [...] Which

in turn means for me as a SP that I am really aware of this and that it is clearly down to me to lead and conduct the conversation. (SP26)

One SP described feeling like a bystander sometimes during IMEs, and in so doing handing over the responsibility to the interpreter. The EVs made her aware of the importance of retaining responsibility for the conversation.

Refreshing existing knowledge

Some of the SPs who were already highly experienced in IMEs reported that their existing knowledge was re-activated. They stated that they could imagine viewing the EVs every now and then to refresh their existing knowledge of IMEs: *“It has refreshed it again and also made it more understandable and clearer for me that it really makes sense to do it this way for the counselling process”* (SP09).

One expert also stated that the EVs offer experienced SPs the opportunity to re-activate their knowledge and improve certain aspects of their communication skills: *“And someone who is perhaps already familiar with this can recognize and optimize certain parts”* (EXP10).

3.2 Gaining confidence

Reducing inhibitions about working with interpreters

SPs who had little experience in working with interpreters found the EVs particularly helpful as a means of enabling them to become (more) familiar with IMEs. Some described the EVs as being helpful in enabling them to understand that working with an interpreter is less problematic than they had often feared and that communication through an interpreter can be successful. The EVs were considered to be useful in the way they reduced fears and prejudices about working with interpreters: *“It can actually be very uncomplicated. [...] And from that point of view, I think you can help people to overcome their prejudices or fears”* (SP05).

Experts acknowledged that the EVs can be especially useful in enabling inexperienced SPs to become familiar with IMEs and in this way reduce possible inhibitions:

Someone who has never done this before will have now an idea of how it could work. And they also have insight into possible little traps they could fall into and can think carefully about how they plan it. (EXP10)

Permission to feel insecure

After watching the EVs, SPs reported that they felt they were allowed to feel insecure when working with an interpreter. They described feeling relieved and encouraged to witness that they are not the only ones who experience insecurity

during IMEs. Insecurity does not seem to be a personal shortcoming but a challenge that can be dealt with:

It shows that this probably happens to every conversation leader that you have to cope with a degree of uncertainty during the conversations. [...] And I would actually also feel a bit more encouraged going in, because now you also see that it's not just you with this insecurity. (SP25)

Some SPs explained that the EVs encouraged them to deal openly with insecurities and to be authentic: *“I always feel like I need to know how to act. And this [the EVs] gives me inspiration for that: hey, just try it! Or just ask! And ask the client directly and don't do it through the interpreter”* (SP17).

In addition, most experts emphasized that IMEs can be unsettling for the SP and described the EVs as helpful in dealing with such insecurities: *“Yes, so I definitely find, as I said, that the EVs strengthen [the SPs] not to feel afraid to have such thoughts and insecurities”* (EXP12).

Encouraging to deal with problematic situations

This category refers to the five EVs about “Challenges in IMEs”. Interviewees from both groups reported that dealing with problematic situations during an IME is associated with reluctance and might therefore be avoided. The experts explained that the EVs can encourage SPs to deal with and resolve problematic situations: *“I found that very good. I always do that in my trainings with SPs. That's just a basic strategy. When I work with SPs, I just encourage them to ask what's going on instead of saying nothing”* (EXP06).

The SPs reported that these EVs helped them to understand the need to deal with problems in order to ensure the quality of the communication. Some felt encouraged to intervene, even if they felt uncomfortable and were afraid of offending the interpreter: *“Address the issue! That's a real takeaway for me: talk to them! Even to interpreters I don't know, because the inhibitions are greater with them”* (SP17).

Some SPs described the actors (SPs) in the EVs as role models whose approaches and behaviors could be adopted.

3.3 Strengths of educational videos as (self-)learning tool

Impetus for self-reflection

Interviewees from both groups considered the EVs as a catalyst for self-reflection. However, some experts emphasized that this effect always depends on an individual SP's ability and willingness to self-reflect:

I find that a bit difficult with EVs. If you haven't performed the action by yourself but only observed it from the outside, then it's easier to judge the person you watched. It's more difficult to go into personal reflection. (EXP06)

One SP described IMEs as a safe setting and, as a result, it is usually not possible for her to be reviewed on the way she conducts IMEs and how she behaves in certain challenging situations. She described it as helpful to get some kind of feedback through these EVs:

Due to the fact that in our job we are often alone in such situations [...] you are alone with the interpreter and the client. At that moment, you don't have anyone who can give you feedback and say, "Oh, that was a bit weird, the way you did that." Or, "You could have asked that again." I think it's good when we have the opportunity [...] to have some form of feedback. That's what I like about the video. (SP30)

SPs reported that they compared the approaches shown in the EVs with their own approaches and behaviors. As a result, some SPs mentioned that they want to do things differently in the future. Other SPs stated that they felt vindicated in their way of conducting IMEs and therefore relieved and encouraged.

Vivid learning tool

Compared to text-based learning materials, all of the interviewees described the EVs as a more engaging learning tool because the situations are vivid and therefore easier to understand and remember: "*These are all points that can also be written down in a list. [...] But because it is visual, it can be better memorized*" (EXP10).

Visualization helps SPs to empathize with the situation and to identify with the actors (SPs):

I think the visuals and audio aspects are great; you can really feel emotions when you see something. I think when something is illustrated to you in this way again, it evokes even more emotion than when you read a text. Yes, I find that very helpful. (SP03)

Flexible learning tool

Interviewees from both groups described it as beneficial that the EVs can be used independently and flexibly. Therefore, the EVs could be more easily implemented in SPs' daily work than if they had to attend longer in-person training courses: "*You learn a lot and you can do it in a relatively short and easy amount of time. So you [...] don't have to attend a week of an in-person training course*" (SP26).

3.4 Limitations of educational videos as (self-)learning tool

Lack of exchange and discussion

SPs expressed the need to ask questions or discuss certain aspects while and after watching the EVs, especially after watching the EVs about common challenges in IMEs: “*It would be really good if you could watch the videos and discuss them afterwards*” (SP16).

All of the SPs and experts considered it useful to embed the EVs in a setting that enables in-depth discussion and further reflection:

From my experience in the classroom, I would say educational videos are a great element for setting a theme. I don't think educational videos alone do much. But integrating them into a course, into further education or, in our case, into our studies, in order to set topics and talk about topics, I think educational videos are great for that. (EXP05)

Some experts pointed to the blended learning concept (combining online and classroom methods) and suggested using the EVs as preparation for a (face-to-face) workshop.

Need for hands-on practice

The experts emphasized that conducting IMEs is a complex activity. They noted that comprehensive training should include a hands-on practice component, allowing SPs to practise the activity and experience it for themselves:

It also becomes difficult to apply the whole thing to your own actions. Because the ratio does not behave in accordance with the action itself. [...] The way you sit down, the way you enter, the way you leave. There are so many characteristics, facial expressions, postures in it. You can't really optimize that, so to speak, through rational input, just like that. That's why this hands-on practice part is necessary in any case. (EXP06)

They stated that it takes time and practice to reflect on and adjust one's own behavior. Most SPs acknowledged the need to practice IMEs by themselves:

But I don't think it's enough to train SPs properly just to watch a video about it. I think you have to talk to someone who has a lot of experience with this topic and also practice, and maybe go through such difficult cases. (SP16)

4. Discussion

This study evaluated newly developed EVs as a (self-)learning tool with which to train SPs and increase their competence in conducting IMEs effectively. In total, 44 semi-structured interviews were conducted with the SPs across all kinds of setting and inclusive of experts in the field of interpreting.

The findings indicate that SPs can acquire basic knowledge about conducting IMEs effectively through the EVs. A lack of knowledge about working with interpreters effectively is one of the main reasons why SPs tend not to use interpreters when communicating with LLP clients (Jaeger et al. 2019a; Patriksson et al. 2019). Because of the two objectives of the EVs, knowledge can be gained about basic elements for successful IMEs and also about possible challenges and how to deal with them appropriately. As shown by Hudelson et al. (2012), a lack of knowledge about good practices when communicating through an interpreter can lead to a false sense of confidence, which might jeopardize the quality and outcome of the service provided. The EVs were described as being beneficial in providing a clear understanding of the division of roles, including role boundaries. As reported by one SP in this study, a common challenge is the SPs' perception of being excluded due to the language barrier and therefore tending to relinquish responsibility for the conversation to the interpreter (Hanft-Robert et al. 2018; Tebble 2003). The literature emphasized that the presence of an interpreter does influence the way in which a conversation is conducted, but that the SP still controls what is said and the way it is said (Gentile et al. 1996). Through the EVs, SPs felt encouraged in their role as the leader of the conversation bearing responsibility for the content and its outcome.

Possessing knowledge of the basic elements of successful IMEs and potential challenges, in addition to gaining a clear understanding of the division of roles, is crucial. It is especially crucial considering the great variation in interpreters' qualifications and the fact that there are still people commonly used as interpreters who are not trained for the task (e.g. family members) (Jaeger et al. 2019b) and, accordingly, do not know what their role and tasks are or ought to be (Martínez-Gómez 2015).

Previous studies indicate that SPs often perceive working with an interpreter as an intuitive rather than an acquired skill (Hudelson et al. 2012). The study participants emphasized that the EVs enabled them to appreciate the complexity of conducting IMEs and therefore the need for them to be adequately trained for it. This implies that the first step in SPs' training might be to create an awareness that IME is not an intuitive task but one that requires training: knowing about the specialized skills needed to conduct IMEs effectively could help SPs to acknowledge their own lack of skills. As indicated by Burch (1970), this so-

called ‘conscious incompetence’ is an important step towards the development of competence. Since knowledge was not objectively measured either before or after watching the EVs, only a subjective perceived or potential increase in knowledge can be reported on. However, previous studies have shown that EVs can significantly increase knowledge (Denny et al. 2017; Yao et al. 2012).

It became evident that an increase in knowledge of how to conduct IMEs effectively through the EVs is associated with an increase in confidence. This supports previous studies which show that training leads to greater confidence in conducting IMEs effectively (Bansal et al. 2014; Coetzee et al. 2020; McEvoy et al. 2009; Quick et al. 2019; Woll et al. 2020). Moreover, it could be shown that the presence of an interpreter and the inability to communicate directly with a LLP client can be unsettling, which is in line with previous research (Hanft-Robert et al. 2018). However, the SPs reported feeling relieved and encouraged when witnessing in the EVs that insecurity experienced during an IME is common and not a personal shortcoming. Instead, the EVs were found to be empowering regarding dealing openly and authentically with one’s own insecurities.

The literature emphasizes the importance of training SPs to understand that interpreters facilitate communication instead of hindering it (Roberts-Smith 2009). The EVs provide an opportunity for SPs to become familiar with IMEs, in this way reducing inhibitions about working with interpreters. As mentioned above, the results show that the EVs could empower SPs in their role as conversation leaders. This includes recognizing and clarifying problematic situations which are often associated with inhibitions – for example, owing to concerns about offending the interpreter. Corsellis (2000) emphasized the need to teach SPs how to respond appropriately to interventions by an interpreter in order to ensure the integrity of the communication. It was reported that the actors (SPs) in the EVs serve as role models whose behavior could be adopted. Even if this study did not measure actual behavioral changes, it is known from the literature that observing correct behavior is beneficial to inducing behavioral change (Bieri et al. 2012).

In line with previous research (Barratt 2010; Forbes et al. 2016), the possibility of using the EVs at any time and place was considered to be a great advantage in this study. The vividness of the learning tool was described as engaging, facilitating comprehension and enabling SPs to remember the content. The EVs can also provide the impetus for SPs to reflect on their own experiences and behaviors. Compared to other text-based learning methods, the visualization made it easier to empathize with the situation presented. However, it was mentioned that the EVs would be even more effective if there were an opportunity to exchange experiences and discuss questions that arise during and after watching them. This is in line with other studies describing the lack of interaction and opportunities

to ask questions as barriers to a more effective use of educational videos (Jang & Kim 2014). As a means of acquiring sufficient competences to conduct IMEs effectively the EVs were considered insufficient as a standalone (self-)learning tool. The main reason given for this was the complexity of IMEs: to be able to perform such a complex activity successfully, it is necessary to have hands-on practice, to have one's own experiences, and to reflect on them.

It could be shown that the EVs are beneficial in enabling SPs to acquire basic knowledge of IMEs and the confidence to conduct them effectively. They are helpful in familiarizing SPs with IMEs, in this way reducing any inhibitions that may exist due to a lack of experience. In addition, they can raise awareness of the complexity of IMEs and the fact that specific skills are required to conduct them successfully. Therefore, the EVs can be a low-threshold but highly useful tool, especially for inexperienced SPs, with which to gain a first insight into IMEs. However, it is strongly recommended that the EVs be used in combination with face-to-face training, which includes the opportunity for hands-on practice – for example, through role-play. Following the blended learning concept, the EVs could be used as preparation prior to such training. This is in line with previous findings that EVs are more effective when combined with other methods, allowing users hands-on practice in what they have learned (Bieri et al. 2012; Forbes et al. 2016; Ikram et al. 2015).

4.1 Strengths and limitations of the study

One of the main strengths of this study is the heterogeneous sample. The SPs interviewed differed in terms of setting, work experience and frequency of their work with interpreters. By interviewing people from the target group (SPs) and also experts in the field of interpreting, it was possible to assess the EVs from different perspectives. Moreover, the qualitative and explorative study design enabled a variety of aspects to be identified and understood in-depth – such as that confidence can be gained through the perceived permission to feel insecure during IMEs. However, the qualitative approach does not allow for the results or any measurable conclusions about the effectiveness of the EVs to be generalized. Nevertheless, this study gives valuable qualitative insights into the effectiveness of the EVs as a (self-)learning tool for training SPs in working effectively with interpreters. The results can therefore form a basis for quantitative studies: for example, based on the categories depicting the knowledge gained, a knowledge test could be developed to measure the impact of the EVs on SPs' knowledge objectively.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the interviews were conducted by telephone. However, this did not seem to have negatively influenced the estab-

lishment of a trusting and open atmosphere during the interviews. For instance, the interviewees also raised critical aspects of the EVs. Moreover, the literature indicates that conducting expert interviews by telephone is acceptable (Creswell 2013). But it has to be taken into account that a self-selection bias on the part of participants who are exceptionally interested in and open-minded towards IMEs and also EVs as a learning approach cannot be excluded. In addition, as is the case in most interview studies, the impact of social desirability and the Hawthorne effect on the study results cannot be avoided completely. However, at the beginning of each interview, the participants were explicitly encouraged to express their personal views and they were told that there were no right and wrong answers. Both the SPs and the experts also expressed criticism of the EVs, which indicates that there was a trusting atmosphere during the interviews and that the interviewees felt free to express their personal opinions. Nevertheless, for future research, the additional use of different methods (e.g. quantitative measures or observations) and research approaches (e.g. pre-post and post-test and a control group) could be useful in investigating the effectiveness of the EVs on SPs' actual practice. Furthermore, the lack of a comparative learning tool in addition to the abovementioned high demand for training and the simultaneous lack of training opportunities could have led to a positively biased assessment, especially on the part of the SPs. It is therefore strongly recommended that the EVs be evaluated in comparison to other learning tools.

5. Conclusions and outlook

The EVs can be considered an appropriate (self-)learning tool with which to train SPs and increase their competences in conducting IMEs effectively. However, the EVs in themselves are not sufficient for SPs to become fully competent at conducting IMEs. It is recommended that the EVs be embedded in face-to-face training which includes hands-on practice. Nevertheless, the educational videos can be a first step towards narrowing the large gap between the need for training and its availability.

Whereas the literature increasingly emphasizes the importance of training interpreters and encouraging SPs to use professional interpreters (Ertl & Pöllabauer 2010; Hale & Ozolins 2014; Mikkelsen 2014), attention should also be paid to the SPs' qualifications. SPs who work with interpreters are rarely trained for this complex type of communication (Costa 2017; Perez & Wilson 2007), which could jeopardize the quality and outcome of the service provided. Further research should qualitatively and quantitatively assess the training needs of SPs and the impact of SPs' training on the quality of IMEs. Furthermore, training SPs

in how to work with interpreters effectively is also a prerequisite to enhancing the professionalization of interpreting services (Corsellis 2008; Tebble 2003) and a crucial element in improving the quality of interpreting in general (Felberg & Sagli 2019).

Funding

This work was supported by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) under Grant [AM17-HH3403]. The funders played no role in study design, -collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/asylum-migration-integration-fund_en







Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the participants in this study for their time and effort, and also all of the lay actors and the video production team who made the development of the educational videos possible.

Competing interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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Publication history

Date received: 10 February 2022

Date accepted: 25 August 2022

Published online: 4 November 2022