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**Application of Cultural Diplomacy Skills for Students of Language Study Programs**  
(Bachelor thesis)

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**FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES**

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(Bachelor thesis)

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**Affirmation**

I hereby affirm that this thesis represents my original writing and research and that I have referenced all appropriate source materials.

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**(Student's Signature)**

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## ABSTRAKT

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Súčasná multikultúrna spoločnosť a vzájomná spolupráca medzi mnohými krajinami v rôznych oblastiach si vyžaduje ovládať cudzie jazyky a disponovať rôznymi zručnosťami. Viaceré vysoké školy na Slovensku ponúkajú výučbu prekladateľstva a tlmočníctva, takže môžu pripraviť študentov na tlmočenie v diplomatickej sfére. Predmetom tejto bakalárskej práce je zmapovanie a analyzovanie prípravy študentov jazykových študijných odborov na tlmočenie na diplomatických misiách.

V prvých troch kapitolách tejto bakalárskej práce sú opísané pojmy diplomacia, tlmočník a jeho kompetencie. Vzhľadom na teóriu a stručnú charakteristiku procesu výučby tlmočenia na slovenských univerzitách je empirická časť venovaná kvalitatívnemu výskumu realizovanému cez krátke rozhovory so študentami jazykových študijných odborov. Ide v nich o skúsenosti študentov s konzekutívnym tlmočením, ktoré sa využíva na diplomatických misiách.

Cieľom tejto práce je získanie prehľadu o výučbe konzekutívneho tlmočenia vzhľadom na špecifické diplomatické zručnosti a následné odporúčenie návrhov na zefektívnenie výučby konzekutívneho tlmočenia pre študijný program Cudzie jazyky a Interkultúrna komunikácia na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov Ekonomickej univerzity v Bratislave.

**Kľúčové slová:** Diplomacia, tlmočník, konzekutívne tlmočenie, kompetencie, diplomatické misie

## **ABSTRACT**

MÓZESOVÁ, Andrea: *Application of Cultural Diplomacy Skills for Students of Language Study Programs*. – University of Economics in Bratislava. Faculty of Applied Languages; Department of Linguistics and Translatology. – Tutor: Mgr. Jozef Štefčík, PhD. – Bratislava: FAJ EU, 2023, 55 pp.

The current multicultural society and the cooperation between many countries in various fields requires command of foreign languages and possession of diverse competencies. Several Slovak universities offer Translation and Interpreting studies so that they can prepare the students for interpreting in the diplomatic sphere. The subject of this bachelor thesis is to map and analyze the preparation of the students of language study programs for interpreting at diplomatic missions.

The concepts of diplomacy, the interpreter and their competencies are described in the first three chapters of this bachelor thesis. Regarding the theory and a brief description of the process of teaching interpreting at the chosen Slovak universities, the empirical part is devoted to the qualitative research conducted through short interviews with the students of language study programs. The interviews deal with students' experience with consecutive interpreting used at diplomatic missions.

The aim of this thesis is to gain an overview of the teaching consecutive interpreting with regard to specific diplomatic competencies and subsequently to suggest proposals for the improvement of efficiency of teaching consecutive interpreting, specifically for the study program Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication of the Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava.

**Key words:** Diplomacy, interpreter, consecutive interpreting, competencies, diplomatic missions

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction	9
<b>1 Diplomacy</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 Origin of the Word Diplomacy	10
1.2 Definition of the Internal Content of the Concept of Diplomacy	10
1.3 Cultural Diplomacy	11
1.4 Diplomatic Missions	12
1.4.1 Types of Diplomatic Missions	13
1.4.2 Functions of Diplomatic Missions	13
1.5 Multilateral Diplomacy	14
1.5.1 Multilateral Diplomacy as Part of Intercultural Communication	15
<b>2 Interpreter</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 Definition of Interpreting	17
2.2. Types of Interpreting	17
2.3. The Competences of the Interpreter	18
2.4. Non-Verbal Communication of the Interpreter	20
2.4.1 Facial Expression	20
2.4.2 Gesticulation	21
2.4.3 Posture	22
2.4.4 Proxemics	22
2.4.5 Image	23
2.5. Teaching Interpreting at Slovak Universities	24
<b>3 Application of Cultural Diplomacy to the Interpreter</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1 Current Languages Used for Diplomatic Communication	26
3.2 Solutions for Linguistic Issue in Diplomacy-Related Situations	27
3.3 Interpreters in Diplomatic Communication	28
3.4 Application of the Interpreter's Competences at Diplomatic Missions	29

3.5 The Interpreter's Transferable Skills	30
<b>4 Research into Interpreting Teaching at Slovak Universities Related with the Interpreting at Diplomatic Missions</b>	<b>31</b>
4.1 Research Goal	31
4.2 Research Methodology	32
4.3 Results of the Research	34
4.3.1 The Process of Teaching Interpreting at the Chosen Universities	34
4.3.2 The Students' Ability to Make Use of the Theoretical Knowledge in the Practical Part of the Course	35
4.3.3 Awareness of Interpreting at Diplomatic Missions	36
4.3.4 The Students' Competency at Interpreting at Diplomatic Missions	37
4.4 Interpretation of the Results	37
4.5 Suggestions and Proposals for an Efficiency Improvement of Teaching Consecutive Interpreting at the University of Economics in Bratislava	39
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Resumé</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Attachments</b>	<b>48</b>

## **Introduction**

There is an increasing need of interpreters and translators in various fields in the current multicultural society. The state and diplomatic representatives travel to foreign countries for international conferences or negotiations. They discuss important issues that must be comprehended very well in their mother language, so they are able to take serious decisions and agreements. The role of the interpreter in these events is crucial, so they must possess diverse competencies, such as lingual, cultural, or communicational competency. As there are many universities in Slovakia offering translation and interpreting studies, it is necessary to investigate if the students of the language study programs possess required skills of interpreters in the diplomatic sphere.

The main aim of this thesis is to gain an overview of teaching consecutive interpreting in Slovakia and subsequently to suggest proposals for an efficiency improvement in consecutive interpreting, with the reference to the specific diplomatic competencies at the Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava.

For the purposes of our thesis, we use the method of structured interview consisting of four questions, analysis and comparison of the answers, deductions from the developed theories, conclusion, and suggestions. We collect information from various sources, such as books and the internet.

This bachelor thesis consists of the theoretical and the practical part. The theoretical part of three chapters is devoted to the explanation of the concepts such as diplomacy, the interpreter and their skills, the application of diplomatic skills for the interpreter at diplomatic missions, and the interpreter's transferable skills. The empirical part deals with qualitative research, which is devoted to the interviews with eight students of language study programs from several Slovak universities. The chosen approach aims to investigate if they are competent to interpret at diplomatic missions and to suggest proposals to increase the efficiency of teaching consecutive interpreting in the context of diplomatic skills.

## **1. Diplomacy**

The term “diplomacy” has various meanings, which are interconnected. According to Anghel (2011, p.5), it is a foreign policy, which the state adopted as a position in the international field. In the social context, diplomacy can be perceived as traditional or conservative when it comes to preparation, election, and deployment of diplomats. The concept of modern diplomacy consists of contemporary diplomacy according to the method and the field of interest, for instance, public, oil, or peace diplomacy. In the figurative sense, Anghel (2011, p.5. Translation: AM) suggests that this term is also “*an idea of tact, politeness, courtesy, kind of flexibility, even sometimes hollow-hearted or ambiguous attitude of a person (astuteness and guile)*”.

This chapter is dedicated to the description of the origin and the definition of the word diplomacy; cultural diplomacy; diplomatic missions and its functions; and multilateral diplomacy as intercultural communication.

### **1.1. Origin of the Word Diplomacy**

Considering the idea of the “ambiguous attitude of a person” that is referred to in the figurative sense of the term “diplomacy,” the mentioned adjective “ambiguous” is related to the roots of the term. To be more specific, it was Ancient Greeks who left us the root of the term “diplomacy.” The Greek word *diplóō* can be freely translated as “*doubling, duplicating*” (Anghel, 2011, p. 8). In those days, it meant that a high-profile person issued two copies of an official document, the first one to be filed into an archive and the second one as a copy given to the plenipotentiary who had to hand over the document to the addressee. Later, the plenipotentiary, responsible for handing the document, adopted the name “diplomat” in modern political and diplomatic dictionaries. Although the root of this term is almost 2.000 years old, it came into use just at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (comp. Anghel 2011, p. 8).

### **1.2. Definition of the Internal Content of the Concept of Diplomacy**

In professional terms, diplomacy is a political-legal institute focused on existing relations within the state, more precisely, between two or more states. At the same time, it deals with the interests provoked by those relations. In this context, it is often said that diplomacy

represents primarily national-state interests: preservation of the integrity of the state territory, increasing prestige of the state abroad; friendly and secure relationship with neighboring countries, as well as the preservation of the living standard of the citizens (*comp. Anghel 2011, p. 9*).

### **1.3. Cultural Diplomacy**

It is crucial to talk about this type of diplomacy because it includes dealing with cultures, intercultural communication, and corresponding competence related to this topic. The *Institute for Cultural Diplomacy* (see Internet Sources) offers the definition of this concept such as it is a course of actions used to exchange values, traditions, ideas, and other aspects of identity or culture. Its function is to strengthen relationships, to promote national interests, and enhance sociocultural cooperation. Cultural diplomacy can be executed by both public and private sector and civil society.

In practice, it is the application and implementation of the theory of cultural diplomacy, and it includes all models being practiced throughout history by a state or institutional actors, individuals, or communities. Withing the concept of models, we can imagine, for example various cultural exchange programs, international delegations, or even sports competitions. Each of the mentioned examples can affect intercultural and interfaith understanding, so they promote reconciliation.

The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy states that diplomacy between cultures has existed as a practice for centuries, although the official term “cultural diplomacy” has been established just recently. The practice of this type of diplomacy can be seen throughout the long history of travelers, explorers, traders, artists, and teachers. Their way of living is an example of “informal ambassadors” or the early “cultural diplomats”. We could say that anybody (now or in the past) who somehow interacts with different cultures participates in cultural exchange. The forms of cultural exchange comprise different fields, namely literature, art, music, sport, science, economy, and business.

The interaction of people who exchange language, ideas, religion, art, and societal structures contributes to improving in relations between divergent groups. To be more specific, regular trade routes enable traders and governments to constantly exchange information and cultural expressions.

There is no doubt that the current increase of globalization, rapid exchange of information, diverse possibilities to travel between countries, and multicultural society move

cultural diplomacy forward, so it no longer relegated to the periphery of the international relations discipline. When it is learned and applied at all levels, it reaches a unique ability to influence “Global Public Opinion”, as well as the ideology of nations, communities, and individuals.

Cultural diplomacy belongs to the most vibrant and innovative academic fields of research and has successfully established itself as a stand-alone theory and practice. It encompasses five important principles. When the first one is accomplished, it enables the second, third, and so forth. The principles are the following:

1. Respect and Recognition of Cultural Diversity and Heritage
2. Constant Global Intercultural Dialogue
3. Justice, Equality, and Interdependence for All
4. The Protection of Global Human Rights
5. Global Peace and Stability

(*comp. Institute for Cultural Diplomacy*, URL: [https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en\\_culturaldiplomacy](https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_culturaldiplomacy)).

#### **1.4. Diplomatic Missions**

It is impossible for diverse problems range to be solved only by the heads of state, prime ministers, or ministers of foreign affairs. The fact that politicians come and go remains. Despite the initiatives, dynamics of relations, and the frequency of foreign travels; these functionaries cannot cover regular diplomatic, operational, and economic aspects, nor the bilateral field. Their meetings at congresses do not meet the entire range of mutual interests. That is the reason for maintaining a certain continuity of relationships that have existed between countries for many decades. From this explanation derives a necessity to establish and maintain diplomatic missions abroad, that conduct talks and execute affairs on behalf of the state. They also solve political-legal problems between countries to maintain and develop friendly and cultural contacts. Apart from mentioned responsibilities mentioned, the members of diplomatic missions contribute to the prestige of their state through dignified performance as well (*comp. Anghel 2011, p. 32*).

### 1.4.1. Types of Diplomatic Missions

Rusiňák (2012, p. 83) suggests the types of diplomatic missions based on their subject and length: **permanent** and **temporary**; and his explanation of these terms is following:

**Permanent** diplomatic missions are foreign authorities of the state for international contact with permanent main office in a place of corresponding international organization. They represent the sending state as their member, hold talks with international organization, provide information about the activities of the international organization to the government of the state that they are representing; and collaborate with other member states to accomplish tasks and goals of the international organization.

**Temporary** diplomatic missions are those authorities entrusted with only certain, usually time-limited powers, including special missions and delegations at the international conferences. The temporary authorities are, for instance, commissioners of international exhibitions, state delegations in terms of technical and cultural contacts, etc. Special missions are sent by states in order to participate in various occasions of a protocol character, where they represent the head of the state, prime minister, or ministers of foreign affairs. Another of their mandates is to hold talks on issues that cannot be solved by diplomatic representation. These types of issues include certain political, cultural, and economic matters (*comp. Rusiňák 2012, p. 83*).

### 1.4.2. Functions of Diplomatic Missions

Rusiňák (2012, pp. 90-95) also distinguishes 6 fundamental functions of diplomatic missions: **representative**, **protective**, **informational**, **developing**, **negotiating** and **administrative-legal** function. These functions are essential activities carried out in the diplomatic practice of all Member States of the United Nations without ranking them in order of importance.

**Representative** function comprises activities in which a diplomatic representative, primarily the leader of a diplomatic mission, must participate (in the name of the sending state) in the negotiation with representatives of the receiving country; interpretate the attitude of their sending state; and accept corresponding decisions and obligations.

**Protective** function belongs to the most difficult activities of diplomatic missions. It includes protection of interests of the sending state in the receiving state and their nationals, natural persons, as well as legal persons in the receiving country. To be more specific, it

involves protection from non-fulfilment of obligations of the receiving state derived from concluded both bilateral and multilateral contracts, or protection of property and other rights of the sending state in the receiving state.

The activities belonging to **administrative-legal** function are providing to natural and legal persons of the sending state, which stay temporarily or permanently in the receiving state, to accomplish their obligations in relation to their sending country by using their rights. These activities have a civil character, for example issuing passports, travel documents and visa of the sending state citizens in accordance with laws and regulations of the receiving state.

The subject of **negotiating** function is negotiation of both formal and informal character between diplomats and government of the receiving country, as well as between diplomatic representatives of two or more states or international organizations with the purpose of achieving a written contract about solving a certain problem of bilateral or multilateral character; or achieving an attitude to various bilateral or multilateral matters.

**Information** function enables to diplomatic missions to find out conditions and development in the receiving state by all legal manners possible, and afterwards provide that information to the government of the sending state. They come from diplomatic contacts, conversations, and negotiations.

The last function is **developing** function, which consists of certain impulse or initiative with the purpose of supporting friendly relationships between the sending and the receiving state, as well as the development of their economic, cultural, and scientific contacts. It also comprises support in obtaining and transmitting information, intermediating of contacts between business entities and entities in fields like science, technique, and culture of the sending and the receiving state.

## 1.5. Multilateral Diplomacy

The rapid growth of international relations after the fall of the Iron Curtain contributes to the development not only of bilateral diplomacy, but also of the multilateral one. Initially, it was only occasional during international conferences and congresses. Currently, multilateral diplomacy is institutionalized on the level of permanent diplomatic missions.

Anghel (2011, p. 81) describes this term as the international organizations, regional groupings of states, political alliances, political-military alliances (NATO), confederations; and a new European grouping as well, such as the European Union and the Council of

Europe. According to the duration of each multilateral diplomacy event, Anghel (2011, p. 81) distinguishes permanent diplomatic missions, and temporary diplomatic missions like delegations in conferences.

### **1.5.1. Multilateral Diplomacy as a Part of Intercultural Communication**

We have adopted attitudes, values, and beliefs from our social environment unconsciously. A social psychologist *Geert Hofstede (1973)* describes these patterns of feeling, thinking, and acting as “*software of the mind*”. He defines the concept of culture as “*the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.*” (*Hofstede, 1973, in: Slavik, 2004, p. 13*). These differences basically lead to difficulties in communication between people from different cultures. Probably, this was the reason, why researchers such as Hall, Hofstede, Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars investigated and afterwards identified various dimensions of culture, hoping that people could more easily understand and communicate with each other through understanding these differences.

A singer quotes *Harry Hoijer*, a linguist, and an anthropologist from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who states that “*Intercultural communication, however wide the differences between cultures may be, is not impossible. It is simply more or less difficult, depending on the degree of difference between the cultures concerned.*” (*R. Weekes et al., 2001, in: Slavik, 2004, p. 13*). Singer suggests that the first step towards improvement of intercultural communication is to understand the impact of the culture on everything we think, feel, and do. In conclusion, it is essential to keep our mind open, avoid judgement and be willing to understand other cultures’ ways of perceiving and thinking.

Diplomats have a long tradition of intercultural communication skills. Many of them were led to their career by their natural ability and interest in communication with people different from their own culture and nation. However, in the current world of immense international relations, the natural interest is not enough. Diplomats need to learn how to communicate within a different culture very quickly. At the same time, they need to retain the ability to report their own culture effectively.

Mentioning the report of their own culture, diplomats increasingly address not only foreign audiences, but foreign and domestic audiences parallelly. Diplomacy must work to convince a domestic audience of how the foreign policy is progressing. This domestic communication is increasingly direct. Currently, diplomats communicate daily with

businesspeople, journalists, pressure groups, local authorities, as well as with religious institutions. Each of these group has its own specific organizational and professional characteristics (*comp. Slavik, 2004, pp. 13-15*).

It must be taken into consideration that multilateral diplomacy is deeply connected with multicultural environment, which basically means, that a diplomat as a representative of their sending state must be aware not only of the receiving state's culture characteristics, but also characteristics of other cultures that are present in the event of the receiving state they are coming to. That is the reason why the profession of a diplomat requires a lot of training in communication and knowledge about cultures and proper behavior because they form a part of intercultural communication.

## **2. Interpreter**

Vertanová (2015, p. 13) affirms that under the phrase "commanding language" people understand very different language competencies. The whole metaphor "to command a language" is a bit misleading, since just those people, who study a foreign language and deal with languages professionally, consider absolute perfection of a mastered foreign language as an almost unreachable goal. This is true especially if one was not born in that lingual environment. A different process is applied when a person learns a foreign language after the age of fourteen. The process differs from when a person is acquiring a mother tongue: learning foreign language is about memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary. After some point, the level of automatic transcoding of the verbal sequence from mother to foreign language (and vice versa) is reached. The famous proverb "*As many languages you know, as many times you are human*" is confirmed also by the famous philosopher of the 20<sup>th</sup> century *Ludwig Wittgenstein* with his famous quote: "*The limit of my language means the limits of my world.*" (*Wittgenstein, 1992, in: Vertanová, 2015, p. 14*. Translation: AM). Each additional communication code opens a new dimension to the mankind, new points of view, new segmentation of reality, and it reveals new connections between phenomena.

In today's world of immense globalization, there is a huge increase in bi- and multilingual people. For this reason, the necessity of both interlingual and intercultural oral intermediaries is increasing parallelly with the rise of globalization. In effect, these oral intermediaries have been known for a long time since communities of people speaking different languages entered to a mutual interaction. This role of both interlingual and intercultural oral intermediary is called interpreter (*comp. Vertanová, 2015, pp. 13-14*).

This chapter focuses on the basic explanation of the concept of “interpreting”, the main characteristics of interpreters and the essential competencies they should have.

## 2.1. Definition of Interpreting

There are numerous ways of how the concept of the interpreting could be defined, so we have chosen the following:

According to Šveda (2021, pp.10-12), the interpreting is an activity mediating the direct communication between two languages. Compared to the translation, interpreting is characterized primarily by spontaneity and certain communication situation.

Vertanová (2015, p.14) defines the interpreting as an oral translation (transcoding) of verbal speech, which is done in accordance with pre-known needs of communicating parties (or at least one). It is used for economic, political, and cultural purposes. It requires various fields of specific skills, such as linguistic competence, personal qualities, and working tools like interpreting equipment (in case of simultaneous interpreting), and both terminological and referential materials. Lingual competence refers not only to an excellent command of the language, but also a great pronunciation and articulation. Personal qualities comprise multitasking, fantastic memory, and ability to listen. The domains of the interpreter are both language and communication competences, as well as the pragmatics of communication situations. Absence of specialization in individual disciplines is solved by diligent preparation *ad hoc*. It means that the interpreter must have an increasing demand of self-improvement, including continual education.

## 2.2. Types of Interpreting

According to Šveda (2021, pp. 82-83), there are two main types of interpreting, **simultaneous** and **consecutive** one.

The **simultaneous** requires specific equipment, namely a soundproof cabin, headphones, microphone, etc. This interpreting is more difficult, as the interpreter speaks parallelly with a speaker with a difference of just a few seconds. Maximum concentration together with great short-term memory are essential because of the necessity of being able to both listen and reproduce the spoken word. Usually, simultaneous interpreting requires two interpreters in order to make their interpreting more effective and precise. It helps them to keep their attention, as well as to mutual support and help. They watch talks from their cabins using

their technological equipment; they mediate communication for their clients parallelly with the orator's speaking. Interpreters are indirect participants in communication situation. This type of interpreting has become more popular during the pandemic when travelling was almost impossible. It is remarkable that it has been adapted very quickly and found its usage on online platforms within various virtual conferences.

Müglová (2009, pp.166-167) characterizes the **consecutive** interpreting as an alternation of the speaker and interpreter after a shorter period, usually 3-5 minutes. The speaker presents a particular passage of his/her speech and gives time to the interpreter to translate the spoken word. The interpreter makes notes during the orator's speech in order to provide essential information without distorting the meaning. These notes possess a specific denomination - interpreting notes. They serve as external memory, whereas the interpreter's memory is called internal memory. Currently, interpreters have the advantage of agreeing with the speaker on the speech's length before a speech itself. If the orator digresses from a topic and overruns the time, the interpreter has the right to let the speaker know tactfully, for instance, by eye contact. This type of interpreting is decreasing because of today's dynamically developing society, where the speed of information exchange is the most important.

Šveda (2021, pp. 20-24) claims that there are also other types of interpreting, namely **chuchotage** (whispered interpreting; when the interpreter is located very close to someone who he/she is interpreting to and translates them the spoken word to their ear), **distance interpreting** (when the direct presence of the interpreter is not necessary, so they can perform their work through telephone or an online application; the most significant advantage of this type is that it is a low-cost) , **online video interpreting** (became popular during the pandemic of COVID-19, related to online videoconferences), **official interpreting** (at court, registry office or weddings) **accompanying interpreting** (an interpreter is a traveling companion especially in business travels, where they help with orientation and communication in a foreign environment); or **sign language interpreting** (communication between two or more systems of sign language, and between spoken and sign language).

### 2.3. Interpreting Competences

Vertanová (2015, pp. 75-79) distinguishes two qualitative levels regarding to a practical language use (mother or foreign language).

The first level consists of **linguistic competence** represented by the adoption of lexicology - grammar, correct pronunciation, and orthography. Within a linguistic competency, the most important is to have the richest vocabulary possible, from scientific terminology to literary language. Another essential part of this competence is correct phonetics and phonology. Pronunciation and accent of the interpreter should be the closest possible to the accent of native-speaking people who form the audience. Potential phonetical differences from the interpreter's mother tongue can be disruptive not only for the audience, but also for the interpreter's colleagues.

The second is **communication competence**, which comprises a correct use of linguistic competence depending on a communication situation (the topic of the speech, character of the communication situation and its social circumstances, the purpose, relations between the participants of communication, etc.). According to behavioral psychology, communication competence is not innate, but acquired via an individual's socialization, education, and professional life. This type of competence comprises the whole scale of communication competence, which can be divided into two main categories, **fundamental** and **superstructural**.

The fundamental includes **interpretative** competence, which means an identification of information in the text and cognitive part of the comprehending the text. The golden rule is to understand that the interpreting only *mediates the meaning and signification, not the rote transcoding of the words*. The second fundamental competence that belongs to communication competence is the **ability to alternate communication roles in accordance with the situation**.

Into the superstructural competencies we can include **intercultural** and **expert themed**. The **intercultural** competency means perceiving the difference between initial and terminal culture. To reach this ability, it is necessary to possess knowledge about the terminal culture's history, geopolitics, religion, etc., as well as to perceive differences between communication strategies and schemata. These competencies should naturally derive from the awareness of one's own culture and include the ability to identify its relevant components, compare them with the components of their cultures and form attitude towards certain cultures in accordance with the respect of other points of view and acceptance of cultural differences. The interpreter explains different culture, to be more precise, transforms cultural differences into a shared culture (interculture), which enables the communication to continue. For a better understanding of communication behavior in a foreign language, direct experience of living in a culturally different environment is often necessary. The interpreter's

multiculturality is essential for them because, according to German theorist of translation *Hans J. Vermeer* (1986, in: *Vertanová, 2015, p.79*. Translation: AM): “*we forgive more easily lingual mistakes than more serious social offence.*” Another inevitable interpreter’s communication competency is the **expert-themed** one, which represents a general factual and terminological overview from diverse fields of the social and scientific world. Requirements for successful development of this competence are willingness to learn and familiarity with specific topics when the communication situation requires it, even though the interpreter is not a specialist in the field.

## **2.4. Non-Verbal Communication of Interpreters**

Non-verbal communication also significantly contributes to communication. In the case of interpreters, non-verbal communication must be moderated to a certain extent because otherwise, it could be perceived as disturbance. It is not supposed for the interpreter to imitate the speaker’s non-verbal communication, but they should observe its meaning. This subchapter deals with recommended **facial expressions; gestures; posture; proxemics, and the image of the interpreter** according to *Vertanová (2015, pp.121-130)*.

### **2.4.1. Facial Expressions**

Since we can express numerous emotions with our face, people learn to hide them when while getting older. It is necessary to learn to have a neutral facial expression, especially in the case of the interpreter (above all during the consecutive interpreting). Eyes play the most important role, and sight is the “gateway” for more than 80% of the total amount of the information.

The speaker can get information from the audience’s facial expression and sees if they are listening and comprehending the orator. *Vertanová (2015, p.123)* claims that it was proven by experiment that the speaker pays less attention to the audience than the audience to them. It is related with the fact that the orator must formulate and adjust their speech in connection with their communication partner’s reactions.

In the consecutive interpreting, making eye contact between both communication parties is very important, although not every situation enables the *vis à vis* contact. In an ideal case, communication between the original speaker and the final addressee realized is face-to-face and the interpreting is happening parallelly. In that case, the addressee could perceive non-

verbal communication simultaneously with the interpreted content. During unofficial meetings, more precisely with inexperienced orators, it is very common for the speaker to look at the interpreter, give them the floor, remain silent and start to look at the listeners. On the contrary, it is essential in the official meetings for the partners to maintain eye contact even if they do not understand each other. In the case of business or negotiating interpreting, during group conversations, it is required that the interpreter indicates, for instance, with a nod, the person that is being interpreted. When the interpreter and the speaker understand each other by eye contact, it optimizes the communication. The interpreter can point something out quickly without verbally interjecting.

The interpreter must be able to visually perceive the orator, that is, a direct view of the speaker the projection screen. If not possible (for instance, in big halls), it is necessary to allow them to see through a camera or a screen.

#### **2.4.2. Gesticulation**

Without gestures, every speech that do not have to be very noticeable, looks unnatural. The usage of gestures is unconscious and automatized and can say a lot about the mankind. A certain part of gesticulation is innate and spontaneous, and the rest is acquired and learned by observing our social surrounding. The environment and culture, where one was born play an important role in gesticulating.

Vertanová (2015, p. 124) states that it was approved in practice that people communicating in many languages change their gestures according to the communication code. They tend to gesticulate even more in foreign languages than in their native language. In general, if one does not know a foreign language, they tend to use more gesticulation to express themselves.

Knowing the basic differences in the gesticulation of their working language is one of the interpreter's communicative competences. If they do not know the gesture specifics of another communicant, it leads to miscomprehension or suspicion of being uncivilized. It is then essential to command fundamental gestures of the lingual community together with their language. The interpreter must pay particular attention to the international gestures because their meanings can completely differ depending on the culture. For instance, waving at somebody to say goodbye means "Go to hell!" in Greece.

### 2.4.3. Posture

People always move during speaking consciously or subconsciously. During human evolution, communication with movement precedes the lingual one. Vertanová (2015, p. 125) declares that we can read a degree of self-confidence, feelings of inferiority, and the emotional mood of a person from their posture and movements. Namely, lowering our head communicates unwillingness to make contact, and contrarily, by lifting our head and opening our chest, we show interest in communication. Characters and the power of movements are related to one's temperament, culture, profession, age, and emotional mood.

Every interpreter needs to strengthen their confidence in their translation competences. Public speaking jitters are also manifested by movements: crossing legs or arms, turning around, smoothening of clothes or hair, etc. Upright back and head is the correct posture of the interpreter because it enables them to check the whole communication situation with eyes. The posture also has an impact on breathing and voice work. It is important for the interpreter to be in an upright position with their feet on the floor when seated. In that position, they can breathe freely, the energy can flow through their body, therefore, psychological concentration and physical expression improves. When the interpreter is standing, it can be disturbing to sway or approach the audience and then move back constantly. Interpreters must keep neutrality, stand on two slightly separated feet that, and avoid putting their hands into pockets (because it transmits that they are nervous) or crossing their arms which represents disagreement. It is convenient to turn towards the orator while they are speaking and then turn to face the audience while interpreting.

### 2.4.4. Proxemics

It is required to respect mutual distance and one's self-space in the interpersonal contact. One's personal zone (proxemics) represents rather a psychological category; individuals can perceive their personal zone differently. When it is disturbed, it can cause aggressivity or the unrest in people.

In communication, the proxemics depends on who we are talking to, and on our current psychological and emotional mood, too. According to American anthropologist *Edward T. Hall* (1966, in: *Vertanová, 2015, p. 127*), we distinguish 4 types of distance between the members of communication: **intimate** space (0 - 45 cm), **personal** space (45 - 120 cm), **social** (1,2 – 3,6 m) and **public** space (more than 3,6 m).

As the interpreting situation is not a typical communication situation, the distance follows slightly different rules. In case of chuchotage, the interpreter and their client inevitably remain in the intimate zone, because the interpreter whispers the translation directly to their ear. Each of them can be seated or stand; in official events, interpreters are usually seated on lower chairs behind the client's back. Even though the interpreter is in the client's intimate zone, physical contact must be limited only to the extent necessary. During consecutive translation, the interpreter should not be more than 2 meters away from the speaker due to the auditory reception of the information (if they do not have an auxiliary technology). It is thus a transition between personal and social space.

The proxemics is also related to the culture. According to Škvareninová (1995, in: Vertanová, 2015, p. 127), smell is the decisive factor of distance for the Arabs. The distance in which they can smell the other person's odor is an intimate zone for them. If they do not smell anything, they consider it to be the official distance. The nations of southern Europe tolerate closer physical proximity in comparison to those of the north. The Germans and the people of England require a huge personal space.

The field of proxemics forms a part of the protocol of official ceremonies. If the interpreter has a possibility to choose, they should choose a place with a good view and audibility; and from which they will be well seen and heard on all directions. Usually, the audience is seated in the semicircle around the interpreter.

#### **2.4.5. Image**

Vertanová (2015, p. 129) observes that as approximately 80% of the information is perceived by sight, our mutual communication is influenced by colors and shades. It is evident that the interpreter must be dressed in accordance with their mission. Under any circumstances, their dress must be not only sufficiently decent, but also functional. It should provide enough freedom, movability and it should not cause concerns whether it will unbutton or unzip during the movement, etc.

Since the interpreter is supposed to be rather in the background, they should be inconspicuous with their clothes. Because of this reason, strong colors are inappropriate for them.

Makarová (2004, in: Vertanová, 2015, p. 129) suggests the ladies' suit for women (but not with a T-shirt), more precisely, a nice dress with a jacket of dark blue black, grey, olive green or cream color. Flowers or other strong patterns; high slits on the skirts; deep neckline;

distinctive jewelry or anything that could bring more attention to the interpreter than to their verbal speech is inappropriate. Interpreters are supposed to wear two layers – a blouse or a dress with a jacket and alternatively a decent scarf. It is not suitable to wear pants. Footwear is supposed to be comfortable and closed, with an appropriate heel height that is comfortable enough for long walks. Stockings are mandatory for women at any time of year.

In the case of men, the clothing is more compact. They are supposed to wear a dark suit and a white shirt with a decent necktie. They must wear shoes with laces. Men must particularly pay attention to the socks: long black ones prevent them from poking out their legs above the socks while they are seated.

Smart hairstyle, washed hair, and manicured nails also contribute to the overall credible image of the interpreter. Although the long-term effects of the first impression (which reportedly lasts 4 minutes) have been experimentally disproved, the interpreter should not underestimate it.

## **2.5. Teaching Interpreting at Slovak Universities**

There are several universities in Slovakia that offer translation and interpreting studies, namely Comenius University in Bratislava, the University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, the University of Prešov, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava.

Concerning the internal structure of this study field, Djovčoš (2018, pp. 41-42) states that the lessons taught in the mentioned universities focus on the theory of interpreting, interpreting skills, techniques, and strategies; lingual competence development, improvement of the quality of the speech, and cultural competence development by learning about the culture and its history. The preparation of future interpreters and translators stands for the students' professional experience, too. The universities collaborate with various translation agencies, companies, and institutions, that offer professional experience for the students.

Moreover, Djovčoš (2018, p. 42) claims that the way of the teaching through global simulations of authentic communication situations has been proven successful among the students. They also try out the role of the interpreter and the speaker. First, they study the background materials on their own, the procedure of the simulated event, and the whole context of the communication situation. Then, they simulate the event at the lesson they have

prepared for, so they can practice the competencies of the interpreter and the speaker. Students are also given real collective translation assignments, for instance, subtitling documentaries for various institutions or festivals, where they can try out the work on demand within a certain time range (under the guidance of the professor).

This study program is very dynamic, so it is necessary to react flexibly to changing labor market conditions. Djovčoš (2018, p. 42) affirms that some new technologies, such as soundproof cabins for simultaneous interpreting have been successfully implemented to the teaching process.

With regard to the distribution of time in interpreting lessons, there are no more than 2 semesters of the interpreting lessons at the universities. Withing this amount of time; it is difficult to acquire sufficient competencies required in the practice. On the other hand, Djovčoš (2018, p. 130) informs that there are optional courses during the master studies, which allow to deepen and broaden knowledge and skills in specific fields of interpreting, e.g., Conference Interpreting (Comenius University) or Interpreting for European Institutions (Matej Bel University).

### **3. Application of Cultural Diplomacy to the Interpreter**

The first chapter was devoted to the description of diplomacy, the second to the interpreting and the process of its teaching at the Slovak universities. This chapter, which concludes the theoretical part of our work, connects diplomacy and the interpreter. We will analyze the supposed interpreter's language at diplomatic missions and their competencies we described in detail applied not only in this communication situation, but in various multilingual communication situations in general.

As already mentioned, interpreters have been working in the political and diplomatic spheres for a long time. Fifiková (2017, p.1) affirms that interpreters used to accompany merchants and monarchs as respected professionals. When we read about the monarchs' expeditions, meetings of various lingual communities, or conferences of international organizations in the past, there is no mention of interpreters. Their job descriptions are now better known thanks to advanced technology and media. However, there is a lack of sufficient information on what criteria an interpreter should meet, what is expected of him/her in terms of competencies and what type of training they should have. Usually, the interpreting belongs to only one of the tasks of the authorized person in a company,

organization, or even the employees of diplomatic missions, who are members of the embassy administrative staff.

As we already know from the previous chapter, each interpreter is supposed to pose certain competences, which are prerequisites for a successful job performance. The competences were the following: linguistic, intercultural, rhetoric, communication, interpretative and expert themed. It is important to know how this theory of the interpreter's competences is applied in the specific communication situation of diplomatic missions.

### **3.1. Current Languages Used for Diplomatic Communication**

There is no doubt that the most important competence of each interpreter is to command the foreign language at a professional level. The diplomatic and conference interpreter *Christopher Thiéry (1990)* defines diplomatic interpreting as “*the way how the language barriers are overcome during the negotiations of the heads of state and high state representatives.*” (*Ch. Thiéry, 1990, in: Madej, 2022, p. 74. Translation: AM*) In the diplomatic sphere, there are certain languages, which are officially used during the conferences. It is useful to know which languages are official in certain important international organizations and conferences.

Baranyai (*2011, pp. 5-6*) claims that the importance of the French language, which formed a monopoly in the Western diplomatic exchanges, has significantly declined since World War II, but has not disappeared completely from its domain. In the United Nations, French belongs to one of the two working languages. Moreover, it plays an important role in the European Union because it is the official language of the Council of Europe, the General Court and the Court of Justice, and the European Court of Auditors as well. The most important event of sports diplomacy, the Olympic Games, also uses French as the official language.

As far as the United Nations were concerned; Arabic, Chinese, Spanish and Russian are also considered to be working languages despite French and English.

Apart from French and English, there are several other languages used for diplomatic purposes, especially in those international organizations that assume multilateral diplomatic activity, such as the Danube Commission or the OPEC. The Danube Commission uses French, German and Russian as the working languages. Arabic, English, and Spanish belong to the official languages of the OPEC.

We must take into consideration the fact that some countries share the same official language, but their lingual conventions vary, so it might lead to some misunderstandings between the countries. For instance, despite France, French is spoken in Canada, Belgium, the French-speaking part of Switzerland, and in numerous African countries as well. English is not spoken only by the United Kingdom and the United States, but also by numerous states besides the mentioned ones. Also, Spanish is used in Latin America besides Spain; or Arabic is spoken in Maghreb and Mashraq countries.

Finally, even though the mentioned countries share the same language, there are some words and expressions with completely different connotations that differs from country to country and each interpreter must take it into consideration to avoid possible misunderstandings.

### **3.2. Solutions for Linguistic Issue in Diplomacy-Related Situations**

As diplomacy is related with meeting of diverse lingual communities, which obviously requires the use of different languages, problems of mutual understanding might occur. On the other hand, the problems can be solved in different ways between diplomats from different nations and thus possess different mother tongues. Baranyai (2011, p. 6) suggests various solutions.

The diplomat can freely choose the language they can speak, but even making the right decision of which language to choose requires a sense of diplomacy. To give an example, the diplomat who speaks Hebrew very well can hurt the sensibility of the Arab diplomat by the choice of talking to them in Hebrew.

When diplomat greets their counterpart in their own language, it is a sign of courtesy and special respect. Many statesmen do this during their visits abroad, e.g., the leaders of the diplomatic delegations at international conferences express their respect towards the chairman of the event. Another good example for diplomats that illustrates the special respect, is greeting the pope with the words “His Holiness”.

Another useful tool for reaching a consensus is when one of the negotiating parties decides to use the native language of the other party. It means that the negotiating party accepts the possible difficulties in expressing themselves compared to the other party who would use their mother tongue. Moreover, the native speaker is much more aware of the connotative meanings and the implications of the expressions than in their second language. This issue represents one of the reasons why it is hard to find commonly accepted and

acknowledged language in multilateral diplomacy, where none of the negotiating parties would be at a disadvantage.

One of the widely used methods in the practice of international diplomatic communication is the mutual acceptance of using a third language which is not spoken by any of the participants as the native language. It is another possible way to overcome linguistic barriers. In this case, none of the negotiating parties is at a disadvantage in terms of their linguistic competence. Nevertheless, they might not command the third language perfectly which can lead to misunderstandings.

According to the diplomatic protocol, the high-ranking statesmen and heads of the state should use their native language in particular official events. In these occasions, they are accompanied by interpreters for tactical purposes as well.

### **3.3. Interpreters in Diplomatic Communication**

Baranyai (2011, pp. 7-8) affirms that the official profession of the diplomatic interpreter was invented after the Treaty of Versailles since the Treaty established the use of two official languages instead of one. As we have mentioned before, the profession of the interpreter has been known for a long time, but the evolution of the official consideration of this profession is quite new.

The employment function of the interpreter in the multilateral diplomacy differs substantially from their tasks from the bilateral one. In the first case, the interpreter's function is to understand completely the speech. It requires strong linguistic competence. In the bilateral diplomacy, especially during the diplomatic negotiations, the interpreting is much more complex with wider scale of the required functions. Nevertheless, the advantage of having interpreters in the bilateral negotiations is that the negotiating parties have more time to think over what they would like to say and reply while the interpreter is translating the spoken word. On the other hand, the non-verbal elements are significantly contributing to communication and are observed and analyzed, so it can provide information of a great importance to the other party.

It cannot be denied that having interpreters on these important occasions always carries certain disadvantages, e.g., additional cost, time-consuming character, but mainly, possibility of incorrect interpreting. Even though they command excellently the main and the target language, the fact that they never reach perfection in the linguistic competences of

the language different from their mother tongue remains. Misinterpretation can lead to serious damage to diplomatic relations between countries.

### 3.4. Application of Interpreter's Competences at Diplomatic Missions

Fifiková (2017, pp. 3-5) specifies the interpreting at the diplomatic missions as it is mostly the consecutive interpreting (the only exception was a chuchotage, which we already know that requires a simultaneous type of translation). The types of diplomatic missions are negotiations, guide interpreting, speech and chuchotage.

The negotiation is on a specific topic, or a range of topics, about which the interpreter should be informed in advance. The challenging part is **interpreting under the pressure** of the increasingly debated phenomenon of political correctness. In the political discourse, it is used to **obfuscate the true meaning**. In the diplomatic environment, the obfuscation is expressed by **euphemisms** to soften the meanings or negative attitudes. The interpreter's task is to **distinguish expressive words, commanding taboo lexis**, and the **correct identification of linguistic phenomenon**. It is necessary to use the **conditional** and to **avoid direct statements, hyperboles**, and **diminutives**. On the other hand, the interpreter depends on the diplomat who is the orator. Although the negotiations contribute to the commercial sphere as well, there are several differences in the competencies that the interpreter should possess in case of diplomatic and commercial matters (see Table 1).

The interesting feature of the guide interpreting is that it can occur under diverse circumstances in diverse places. You can interpret the tourist guide; accompany the participant in the conference and be the consultant and the interpreter at the same time when dealing with the official matters. Sometimes, it requires **good physical condition**, for instance, interpreting in difficult terrain or during unfavorable weather conditions; **psychological resistance and prudence** (e.g., interpreting in foreign police or an orphanage); and the presence of mind at other times (business trips with a fixed program). In conclusion, it is necessary to have the ability to **react promptly, discretely**, and in case of the emotional interference, to **choose an adequate language**.

Interpreting speech usually takes place in official events, on stage, and in front of the audience. It is the time when the rhetorical competences of the interpreter and their performance without jitters are clearly manifested. **The rich vocabulary and resourcefulness** help the interpreter during spontaneous speech, especially when the orator uses metaphors, jokes, or phraseology. Normally, the translation of the figurative language

differs from the main and the target language, and interpreters cannot always have the adequate translation in their mind. On the other hand, it is important to develop linguistic competence to express themselves in the way that they conserve the meaning and the message of the metaphor or phraseology while interpreting.

In the case of chuchotage, it is essential to **express themselves briefly**, to separate the important message from the unimportant one, to understand the essential part, and to shorten the speech or the text using words and formulations which express the original message briefly and aptly. The interpreter must command the **etiquette** (seating plan, dining rules) on this occasion.

During the interpreting at the diplomatic mission, they can deal with translation, research, reports within the research, and correspondence or documentation management.

### **3.5. Interpreter's Transferable Skills**

Having mentioned the interpreter's competences in general and then at diplomatic missions, this subchapter is dedicated to how these skills can be used in other bilingual or multilingual communication situations.

Vargová (2020, p. 558) defines the term of transferable skills as those which students can learn at school, but they develop them during extracurricular activities and through diverse life and labor experience. Examples of these transferable skills are the ability to communicate effectively through working with people or the ability to collect and analyze data and create databases through working with information. She also confirms that these transferable skills are in high demand on the labor market.

Vargová (2020, p. 559) states that the students of interpreting are provided portable competences such as **managing oneself** (i.e., multitasking, the ability to reflect on one's own work), **analytic skills** (comprehension and analysis, definition and acquisition of key information, problem solving), **oral communication competences** including the ability to perform in front of the audience, produce a coherent text with appropriate language register, and the technique of making notes. Other examples of the skills are the ability to **effectively use memory**, **evaluate the relevance** of the **information**, **cultivated self-expression**, etc.

According to Vargová (2020, p. 561), the interpreter is guided by principles such as **high ethics**, **honesty**, and **professionalism**, which broaden the spectrum of transferable skills and open the possibility of a career as a **lobbyist**, because they represent the basic principles of lobbying. Interpreting develops portable competencies of coping with psychological stress,

assertiveness, and lingual skills, which can be a prerequisite for successful negotiation with, for instance, the state authorities, political or economic entities and therefore for successful lobbying. The work of an interpreter may include public relations, advising on public affairs or representing a company or its product.

#### **4. Research into Interpreting Teaching at Slovak Universities Related with the Interpreting at Diplomatic Missions**

The theoretical part of this bachelor thesis stands for explaining the concept of diplomacy and the interpreting, and how the cultural diplomatic competences can be applied on the interpreter at diplomatic missions (or other communication situation). As the thesis is focused on the application of the cultural diplomacy skills for the students of language study programs, the approach is dedicated to mapping the current teaching of interpreting at the universities in Slovakia with reference to specific diplomatic competences required at diplomatic missions. The thesis is enclosed with suggestions and proposals for the improvement of teaching interpreting at the study program called Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication at the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava, as this study program offers a wide range of knowledge from cultures, economic and political sphere, and translation and interpreting.

##### **4.1. Research Goal**

Translation and Interpreting study programs at the chosen universities offer good preparation for future employment in translation or interpreting field. The students can work for translation agencies, or institutions where interpreting is needed. In general, they come across with multicultural environment.

There is a very specific study program at the University of Economics in Bratislava called Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication of the Faculty of Applied Languages. This faculty includes translation and interpreting courses, but this field only contributes as one specific direction of the program. Courses related to the economic, academic, or cultural field of the foreign languages also contribute to the program. As the study program comprises the cross-cultural communication, the students of this faculty are supposed to have developed the communication and lingual skills. This may be the reason why the concept of diplomacy should be included in some of the subjects, especially in

interpreting. In other words, diplomacy deals with the intercultural field, where lingual, communication, and cultural competences are needed. The skills listed above are ones that students in this faculty are acquiring and should have developed. The combination of these competences can be perfectly combined in the position of the interpreter at diplomatic missions. However, it is necessary to investigate the practice and whether the students receive theoretical and practical preparation for this specific field of work in the diplomatic sphere. This investigation will contribute to the purposes of the practical part of our piece.

The fact that the Departments of Translation and Interpreting in Slovakia offer detailed knowledge in interpreting cannot be denied. This leads to the first hypothesis that the faculties of the Slovak universities aimed only at translation and interpreting provide more knowledge about the competences, which the interpreter should have not only in general, but also at diplomatic missions in accordance with the diplomatic protocol.

Having mentioned the specific study program at the University of Economics in Bratislava, there is not sufficient time allocation for interpreting lessons as the faculty is not focused only on this area. That is the reason why we assume that the students of the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava do not possess sufficient competencies for interpreting at the diplomatic missions.

The research we conducted serves for the deduction whether our hypotheses are correct. The investigation deals with the experience of the students from various Slovak universities with the consecutive interpreting, as this type of interpreting is used for diplomatic missions. The aim of the research is to get an overview on teaching consecutive interpreting regarding to the specific diplomatic competencies and then to suggest proposals for efficiency improvement in teaching consecutive interpreting for the study program Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication at the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava.

## **4.2. Research Methodology**

The qualitative methodology used to conduct this research refers to the empirical approach where the data are not formed by numbers. Qualitative research is based on something that is experienced or observed, so it deals with subjectivity and living contexts of the research participants.

The type of the qualitative methodology we applied in this approach is an interview with 8 students of master's degree from various Slovak universities. To be more specific, we

interviewed two male students from the last year of their studies at the Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava, 2 female students of the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Comenius University in Bratislava, 2 female students of the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, and 2 female students of the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. They were given 4 questions related to teaching consecutive interpreting at their universities and the competencies with reference to the interpreting at diplomatic missions. Having mentioned the explanation of the qualitative methodology and its purpose, the aim of the interview was to map the students' experience of consecutive interpreting subject and their personal consideration of playing a role at interpreting at diplomatic missions.

The dialogue was realized via telephone and only one student from the interviewees asked for the questions before the interview to have the answers prepared in advance. It was a structured discussion, as we had prepared the same questions for each student avoiding extra questions that could have led to digression from the topic. We asked the following questions:

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?
2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?
3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions? (If not, we used the following pattern of the answer to provide a brief explanation of this type of interpreting: It deals with interpreting at international conferences, meetings of states representative or other official international events, where various culture speaking different languages are present. The interpreter is supposed to have specific skills, primarily lingual (a high level of proficiency in the required language), cultural (knowledge about intercultural communication, foreign cultures which the interpreter comes across with, and the ability to represent their own culture, as they are the representatives of it), or communication competences (the interpreter as the speaker is supposed to, for instance, handle their voice and be aware of the appropriate non-verbal communication). They should be aware of the diplomatic

protocol as well (dress code, appropriate expression, and correct behavior during the diplomatic mission).

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

### **4.3. Results of the Research**

As we have mentioned before, the interviews were realized with two students from each university listed in the beginning of this chapter. The answers of the respondents to the questions above are attached in the *Attachments* section. Even though the sample of the students from each university was small (only composed of two respondents), their answers did not differ much. We will analyze the answers of the students for each question and interpret them in the following subchapters.

#### **4.3.1. The Process of Teaching Interpreting at the Universities**

Each of the students confirmed that before the practical part, they had received some theoretical introduction to the course, which consisted mainly of learning how to do notations and the list of the most used abbreviations. The students from the departments of translation and interpreting attended this subject in their bachelor's studies, while the students of the Faculty of Applied Languages studied translation in master's degree. The students also had exercises aimed to their memory and attention, which they considered a useful tool before the practical part. Some of them had the course of consecutive interpreting only during one semester and previously just the theoretical subjects like Propaedeutics or Interpreting Methodology.

The process of teaching consecutive interpreting at Comenius University stood for giving the vocabulary to the students before each class. During the course, the professor had a speech and he picked up two students who had to interpret it. Firstly, one of them went out from the class not to listen to the interpreting of the second student who was interpreting the speech; then they changed, and the second student interpreted the same. After interpreting, they were given feedbacks from their classmates about their performance and their verbal and non-verbal communication.

Teaching consecutive interpreting at Constantine the Philosopher was based on playing videos each class to be interpreted by two of the students. They were also given a glossary before every class. One of the interviewed students from this faculty took this course online because of the pandemic. They used a platform called “Discord” where a professor played a video and then divided the students into virtual cabins of two and they interpreted the speech from the video. At the beginning of each class, they did exercises for attention and memory.

At the University of Matej Bel, the students had to prepare some notice from the world about politics, sports, or other field, and then one of them was chosen to read it so the other student could interpret it. After interpreting, they had a feedback discussion about their emotions, feelings, and mistakes.

The students from the last course of the University of Economics claimed that they had this subject in the 4<sup>th</sup> year, and according to new accreditation, it is only an optional subject, so one of the interviewed students does not attend the course this year. Firstly, they were given a list of the most frequently abbreviations and then they started with the practical part. They also did exercises for practicing their memory during the lessons of interpreting.

#### **4.3.2. Students’ Ability to Make Use of the Theoretical Knowledge in the Practical Part of the Course**

Positive answers for this question were provided by most of the interviewed students. To be more precise, five out of eight students responded that they were able to make use of the theoretical knowledge in the practical part. They mentioned that the list of the abbreviations, the instructions about how to make notations (which formed the mayor part of the lectures), and advice along with the suggestions, which were given to them from the professors were very useful for them.

On the other hand, the rest of the students who responded negatively had the opposite point of view. One of them stated that the way of making notations they had learnt did not suit to her needs. The rest of the students claimed that there was a lot of useless theory they did not make use of.

The student from the university in Nitra does not consider it necessary to have an exam from the theoretical knowledge in this course, as this subject, in her opinion, should be more about the practice.

The impression of the course of the student from the University of Economics was that it was mainly about the theory. He affirms that he forgot a lot when they started with the practical part. His preference would be to start practicing the interpreting much sooner.

#### **4.3.3. Awareness of the Interpreting at Diplomatic Missions**

This question resulted as the most peculiar for the students, because only one of them responded positively to the question. The rest of the students did not know what it meant in practice, so I had to explain them the meaning using the pattern we described in the subchapter of *Research Methodology*. In other words, they could not imagine this type of interpreting in practice, as they did not possess the knowledge about diplomacy and diplomatic missions. After introducing them the topic briefly, they were able to answer with their experience from the interpreting courses related somehow with this type of interpreting.

Half of interviewees just mentioned that they talked about interpreting in general, or maybe something related to it was mentioned in the peripheral importance during the classes. Two of the students claimed that they did not interpret political speeches, one of them said that there were students who had to search for the speeches to interpret them in the class.

The second half of the interviewees responded with diverse answers after we introduced them this type of diplomatic interpreting. The student from Matej Bel's University claimed that they would do a simulated international conference in the interpreting course at the end of the semester.

The student from the University of Economics in Bratislava gave a very interesting answer. He stated that they were not informed about this type of interpreting specifically, but they had subjects such as Intercultural Communication, European Union and Institutions, and International Economic Relations. They could choose Diplomacy as an optional subject for this last academic course, too. We can observe from his answer that our university provides a broad knowledge from the international fields and institutions which is very useful for interpreting at diplomatic missions, even though none of the offering subjects are related directly to this type of interpreting.

Comenius University resulted as the one with the most useful information about the diplomatic interpreting provided for the students. They had professors who has interpreted in various European institutions, they are offered a paid internships as interpreters in the European Commission in Brussels, or an unpaid internship in the European Commission representation in Slovakia. The university also invited a guest to one of the interpreting

lectures who worked as an interpreter in the European Parliament, so he talked about his personal experience there.

#### **4.3.4. Students' Competency at Interpreting at Diplomatic Missions**

Most of the interviewees can imagine themselves as competent at interpreting at diplomatic missions. On the other hand, they differ the “competency of the students from their faculty in general” and “their personal consideration of themselves” about interpreting in this sphere.

Only the students from Constantine the Philosopher University answered negatively providing the same argument. They said that they certainly do not consider themselves competent enough due to the lack of sufficient number of lectures and preparation. They affirmed that mainly, it required more experience in interpreting of the political speeches.

Six out of eight interviewees reacted positively. Two out of these six answers considered the students from their faculty competent in general, but they did not see themselves personally competent due to their low self-confidence and introverted personality. Another two students affirmed that they need more specific materials before interpreting at diplomatic mission. The student from Comenius University affirmed that as she was very well informed about this type of interpreting, she considers herself competent, but firstly, she would prefer interpreting in less important and demanding occasions.

#### **4.4. Interpretation of the Results**

This subchapter provides our own observations and the interpretation of the interviewees' answers to each question. These observations will serve as helping clues for making suggestions and proposals for the improvement of teaching interpreting at the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava. Moreover, we will analyze if the assumptions we mentioned were proved.

From the answers to the first question, we can observe that there are lectures providing the theoretical knowledge before executing the practical part of interpreting at every of the interviewed universities. The lectures are mainly a particular course, and then the practical part of the interpreting is another course which, according to the respondents, is taught during two semesters maximum. Moreover, there are notations and abbreviations that

contribute mainly to the theoretical part of the interpreting subject. Those already mentioned exercises for memory and attention provided, too.

The second question serves as helpful feedback from the students to the theoretical lectures. The answers demonstrated that the acquired theoretical knowledge was useful for most of the answerers. To be more specific, most of them appreciated being taught about the notations making. The feedbacks from the classmates to the interpreting performance of the interpreting students, and suggestions along with advice from the professors were very helpful for them as well. On the other hand, two of the interviewees criticized the classes with the theoretical part explaining that they dealt with too much theory for them which did not suit them. According to them, the theory was useless, and they forgot a lot in practice. This negative observation of the students demonstrates that everybody has different necessities, and it is hard to find the suitable amount of the theory taught at the universities from which every student could make use of as much as possible. We can clearly see this problem from the answers, where one of the students praised the possibility of having been explained the way how to do the notations and, subsequently, be able to follow it successfully. While one was able to make use of the instructions to do the notations, the other one said the opposite - that the taught way of making the notations did not suit her.

As the purpose of interpreting is to translate a message from one language to another in order to be understood by two different nations, it is obviously used mostly in the official occasions when there is the need that the transmitted message must be well understood by the people from different cultures. However, the results of the research revealed that only Comenius University provides specific information about the interpreting at diplomatic missions. The other universities teach interpreting in general without specifying or mentioning the diplomatic field. This means that our first assumption about the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Slovak universities provide better knowledge about the interpreter's skills at diplomatic missions was not affirmed. The results demonstrated that they do prepare the students for interpreting via learning theory, doing exercises, and practicing interpreting, so the students seem to be competent. However, they do not study diplomacy in general, nor practice the interpreting of political speeches. Moreover, from the answer of one of the students from the University of Economics in Bratislava, we can observe that the Faculty of Applied Languages offers a wide range of knowledge from the cultural and international field, which is necessary for this type of interpreting. The student of this Faculty, besides the lingual competencies they acquire at translation and interpreting courses, they also possess skills from the intercultural field because of the Intercultural

Communication course, knowledge about the European Union and its Institutions, and, according to the new accreditation, they can choose Diplomacy as the optional course in the last semester. Even though there is no specific subject related to interpreting at the diplomatic missions, the students of this faculty have a wide knowledge related to this specific type of interpreting from various courses, so they could easily interconnect their knowledge from each subject with the diplomatic sphere. This means that they do possess diverse competencies required for interpreting at diplomatic missions, which is in contrast with what we assumed.

In conclusion, the approach revealed that both of our hypothesis statements were disapproved, as the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Slovak universities do not provide the students with the knowledge about the competencies that the interpreter should possess at diplomatic missions according to the diplomatic protocol. Even if the department is more specified for translation and interpreting, comparing to the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava, the approach demonstrated that it does not mean that they provide lessons of Diplomacy or practice diplomatic speeches in interpreting classes. The Faculty of Applied Languages, as it is not specified for translation and interpreting, provides knowledge from diverse fields, such as economic, political, and the cultural one. Moreover, it offers optional subject Diplomacy, so we can observe, that the students of this faculty possess a wide range of competencies, such as lingual (because of the academic and economic language course, translation, and interpreting subjects), cultural (because of the Intercultural communication course), political (European Union, International Economic Relations) and some knowledge about the diplomatic protocol (optional course, Diplomacy).

#### **4.5. Suggestions and Proposals for the Improvement of Teaching Consecutive Interpreting at the University of Economics in Bratislava**

As it was mentioned before, the Faculty of Applied Languages offers knowledge from diverse fields, such as lingual, cultural, and political through various courses during both bachelor's and master's degree. In bachelor's degree level, there are courses dedicated to studies of foreign languages from various fields including the technical (linguistics, academic and economic field), and cultural aspect (learning about their culture and history), and then the courses such as Intercultural Communication, Introduction to Translation and translation seminars in different languages. There are several courses in master's degree

level, where students can continue with translation or courses, that contribute to knowledge about linguistics. Moreover, the master's degree level includes interpreting courses which are optional according to the new accreditation from 2022, European Studies and Diplomacy. We can observe that there is no specific course dedicated to diplomatic interpreting.

As the courses provide a wide range of knowledge from various fields, especially translation and interpreting courses, are worth a high number of credits, it would be useful for the students to provide them with some extra knowledge about the interpreting at diplomatic missions. We already know that the Faculty of Applied Languages is not specifically dedicated to translation and interpreting, nor to diplomacy, so there is no need to create a specific course for diplomatic interpreting, as diplomacy and interpreting only contribute partly to the study program.

The conducted research revealed that Comenius University in Bratislava offered information about this specific type of consecutive interpreting through inviting guests experienced in interpreting for the European Institutions for interpreting lectures, or they are offered internships as interpreters for the European Commission or the European Commission representation in Slovakia. Moreover, there is an optional course called Simulated Conference at the University of Matej Bel, where the students can practice interpreting at official occasion, more precisely, at the international conference, which is considered to be the place where the diplomatic interpreting is provided as well.

The Faculty of Applied Languages could be inspired by the mentioned ways of providing further information about the consecutive interpreting at diplomatic missions. The University of Economics could also invite special guests for interpreting lectures that could speak about their personal experience in diplomatic interpreting. They could be employees of the European Institutions as those from Comenius University; or they could come from embassies and talk about their experience there. As the time allocation of the interpreting are four lessons per week, it would be possible to implement some political speeches from diplomatic missions to practice interpreting. Moreover, some theoretical knowledge about diplomatic interpreting could form a part of the topics taught at the Diplomacy course at the Faculty of Applied Languages, as the translation and interpreting contribute significantly to the study program.

It is known that students from this faculty are offered an internship at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, but only in translation field. It could be implemented at this faculty as well that the students would be offered the same internships

in interpreting as Comenius University offers. Moreover, the faculty could make an agreement with some embassy which would offer internships in interpreting field for students. In this way, the embassies would provide to the students of this faculty some new job opportunities in the future, as they are skilled in lingual and cultural aspect.

## Conclusion

The thesis dealt with the interpreting at diplomatic missions and the competencies that the interpreter should possess in this specific communication context. The practical part revealed how the students of language study programs in Slovakia are prepared for diplomatic interpreting. Many suggestions for the efficiency improvement in the teaching process can be made due to the realized analysis, which might contribute to better preparation of the future interpreters at diplomatic missions from the Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava.

The theoretical part of the thesis consisted of three chapters that provided a basic explanation of the concepts related to this topic, such as diplomacy, interpreting, and application of the interpreter's competencies at diplomatic missions.

The first chapter is dedicated to diplomacy, the definition of the cultural diplomacy, diplomatic missions, and its functions, and finally multilateral diplomacy as a part of the intercultural communication.

The second chapter comprises the definition of interpreting and its types, the characteristics of the interpreter and their required skills in both verbal and non-verbal communication, and the teaching process of interpreting at chosen Slovak universities.

The third chapter relates the theoretical knowledge of diplomacy with the interpreting and explains the application of cultural diplomacy on the interpreter and their transferable skills in non-diplomatic communication context.

The practical part is dedicated to the research of how the students from the language study programs in chosen Slovak universities are prepared for consecutive interpreting at diplomatic missions. The aim was to get an overview about how the consecutive interpreting is taught in the Slovak universities and, subsequently, to suggest the efficiency improvements of teaching consecutive interpreting at the study program Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication at the Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava. The answers of the respondents denied both hypotheses we proposed, which revealed that the students at the Department of Translation and Interpreting in Slovakia do not have any specific preparation for interpreting at diplomatic missions. The students of Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava receive the knowledge from the lingual, cultural, and political field necessary in the diplomatic sphere, so they can be considered as prepared (also theoretically) for teaching at diplomatic missions.

## Resumé

V súčasnej multikultúrnej spoločnosti narastá potreba prekladateľov a tlmočníkov v rôznych oblastiach. Štátni a diplomatickí predstavitelia cestujú do zahraničia kvôli mnohým medzinárodným konferenciám či rokovaniam. Je teda nutné, aby ich obsahu dokonalo porozumeli vo svojom materinskom jazyku, nech následne môžu urobiť dôležité rozhodnutia a uzavrieť dohody. Úloha tlmočníka je na týchto podujatiach kľúčová a jeho rola si vyžaduje disponovať rôznymi zručnosťami. Hlavným cieľom tejto bakalárskej práce je získať prehľad o výučbe konzekutívneho tlmočenia na Slovensku, ktoré sa využíva pri diplomatických misiách a následne odporučiť návrhy na zlepšenie výučby tohto typu tlmočenia vzhľadom na špecifické diplomatické zručnosti na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov Ekonomickej univerzity v Bratislave.

V teoretickej časti sme sa v dvoch kapitolách zaoberali *diplomaciou* a *tlmočením* vo všeobecnosti a následne charakteristikou procesu výučby tlmočníctva na slovenských univerzitách. Vysvetlené koncepty sme v tretej kapitole prepojili a opísali *aplikáciu kultúrnej diplomacie na tlmočníka*.

V prvej kapitole je zadefinovaný pojem *diplomacia*, *kultúrna diplomacia*, *diplomatické misie* a jej *funkcie*, a napokon *multilaterálna diplomacia* ako súčasť *interkultúrnej komunikácie*.

Druhá kapitola obsahuje definíciu *tlmočenia*, jej dvoch *základných typov* a *verbálna* a *neverbálna charakteristika tlmočníka*. V poslednej podkapitole je opísaný *proces výučby tlmočenia na slovenských vysokých školách*.

Tretiu kapitolu sme venovali *aplikácii kultúrnej diplomacie na tlmočníka*, jeho *zručnostiam*, ktorými by mal disponovať na *diplomatických misiách* a napokon jeho *prenosným zručnostiam* v iných komunikačných situáciách.

Praktická časť práce pozostáva z kvalitatívneho prieskumu realizovaného cez telefonický rozhovor s ôsmimi študentami z magisterského štúdia z rôznych vysokých škôl na Slovensku. Interview bolo štruktúrované a každý študent dostal tie isté štyri otázky.

Z výskumu vyplynulo, že na Fakulte prekladateľstva a tlmočníctva na väčšine vysokých škôl na Slovensku študenti nedostávajú informácie o tlmočení na diplomatických misiách (okrem Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave). Ďalej sa zistilo, že študenti z Fakulty aplikovaných jazykov disponujú potrebnými zručnosťami pre tlmočenie na diplomatických misiách. Počas ich piatich rokov štúdia nadobudnú cez širokospektrálne predmety

dostatočné *jazykové, kultúrne a komunikačné* kompetencie. Zistené skutočnosti teda vyvrátili naše stanovené hypotézy.

Študentom Fakulty aplikovaných jazykov ako absolventom predmetov zameraných na preklad, tlmočenie, kultúry a lingvistiku by sa však mohli ponúknuť informácie o diplomatickom tlmočení na hodinách tlmočenia a povinne voliteľného predmetu Diplomacia. Taktiež by sa záujemcom o tlmočenie mohli poskytnúť stáže v Európskych inštitúciách či na veľvyslanectvách, kde by sa dostali do kontaktu s diplomatickým tlmočením.

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## Attachments

**Table 1.** Comparison of interpreter's competencies in diplomatic and commercial matters

<b>Interpreter's competencies</b>	<b>Diplomatic issues</b>	<b>Commercial issues</b>
<b>Personal characteristics</b>	Interpreting under high pressure, psychological resistance, prudence, good physical condition	No good physical condition necessary
<b>Lingual skills</b>	Rich vocabulary in both professional and figurative field, commanding taboo lexis, correct identification of linguistic phenomena, use of conditional, euphemisms, no hyperboles, no diminutives	Rich vocabulary in the finance field
<b>Communication skills</b>	Discreetness, prompt reactions, choice of adequate language in case of emotional interference, commanding rhetorical competencies	Self-confidence during the speech to convince the counterparty
<b>Cultural skills</b>	Commanding the etiquette, culture taboos and differences in non-verbal communication	Same as in diplomatic issues
<b>Political skills</b>	Political correctness, no direct statements, obfuscation of the true meaning	Direct statements permitted in appropriate situations

## Transcript of Recorded Interviews with Students

### 1<sup>st</sup> Respondent from the University of Economics in Bratislava

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“The 4<sup>th</sup> course stood for the theoretical part in winter semester, and the practical part in summer semester. According to the new accreditation, there is a possibility to choose the interpreting as a compulsory optional subject in the 5<sup>th</sup> course.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“No, I am not. From my point of view, the interpreting course was mainly about the theory, so I have forgotten a lot from it, when we started with the practical part. I would prefer starting with practicing the interpretation much sooner.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“No, I haven't. I consider the diplomatic interpreting as a specific field, which is above the standard.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“I would consider myself competent for my lingual competencies, but I would need to study materials for it before realizing the interpreting.”*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Respondent from the University of Economics in Bratislava**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“We had this course last year, now it is a compulsory optional subject, which I didn't choose. Before the practical part, we were given a list of the most frequently used abbreviations.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“Yes, I were, because I learnt the abbreviations which was usable for me.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“No, we weren’t informed about this type of interpreting concretely, but we had subjects such as Intercultural Communication, European Union, European Institutions, International Economic Relations, and we could choose a Diplomacy as a compulsory optional course for this year.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“No, I don’t, but I think that in general, our university can prepare the students for this type of interpreting because of the subjects I have listed before.”*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Respondent from Comenius University in Bratislava**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“We started with the Propaedeutics (introductory course into the interpreting), which mainly consisted of the principles of the interpreting, and many suggestions and proposals related to it. In the beginning, the practical part was about exercises for memory, and then we started with the interpreting. While one or two students were interpreting, the rest of the class were listening to them, and then they gave them feedbacks about their verbal and non-verbal communication during the interpreting.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“Yes, I was. I made of use the advice and suggestions that were given to me from the professors.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“Yes. Some of the professors from my university had interpreted in various European institutions. We had lectures as well about the interpreting in European Commission representation in Slovakia, where we were offered also an unpaid internship. The students were offered a paid internship in the European Commission in Brussels, too.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“As we were informed very well about this type of the interpreting, I consider myself competent, but firstly, I would prefer interpreting in smaller occasions.”*

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Respondent from Comenius University in Bratislava**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“We had that subject in the second and the third course of the bachelor’s degree. Firstly, we had an introductory lecture to the consecutive interpreting and then we turned to the practical part. It consisted of that before each lesson we were given the vocabulary related to the topic we were going to interpret and then the professor had a speech, we made notations and then he picked up two students who had to interpret the speech. Then we gave them feedback.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“Yes, there was not a lot of theory and I have learnt a lot from the feedbacks.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“We have not been given more details, but we have had many guests on the lessons so far and one of them was an interpreter in the European Parliament, so he talked about his personal experience there.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“I think that if I were given sufficient materials, I would be able to do so, but now I wouldn’t dare to do it.”*

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Respondent from Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“We had this subject in the third course via discord platform (because of the covid). We listened to speech and then we were divided into virtual cabins in two by two. In the beginning of each course, we had exercises for attention and memory. In the beginning of the semester, we had a theoretical part where we were learning the abbreviations.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“No, the notations didn’t suit to me. Maybe I made use of something, but I don’t know what in concrete. The things we learnt during the exercises were useful.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“No, we didn’t speak about this concrete type of interpreting. We always searched the speeches on our own before every class and sent the glossary for classmates.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“Definitely not, because we didn’t have enough classes of the consecutive interpreting, nor political speeches. Maybe when I return to it someday, I would be better in it.”*

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Respondent from Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“During the classes, some short video was played, sometimes we knew which one would be played, sometimes not, but we have prepared a glossary. Before having this course, we had a subject called Interpreting Methodology composed by lectures and seminars. We were talking about the interpreter’s job in the real life during the lectures and had exercises for attention and memory in the seminars.*”

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“No, it was useless, especially in the exams where were theoretical questions. I don’t think that it is important to know the theory in case of interpreter’s job.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“No, we haven’t. Maybe we have mentioned it, but just in the peripheral importance. The speeches we had were rarely from the political sphere, they were mostly from everyday life.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“No, I don’t. I wouldn’t be able to give a good performance. It requires a lot of experience, more classes of the interpretation, not only once a week.”*

### **7<sup>th</sup> Respondent from University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“We had this subject only one semester and it was divided into the theoretical part (lectures) and the practical part (seminars), where we had various exercises related to the interpreting, and subsequently the discussion about our feelings and opinions. We had to prepare a notice from various fields (sports, politics, etc.) and then one of the students was elected to read it and the other student had to interpret it.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“Yes, I was. The acquired knowledge from the theory helped me a lot in the practical part.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“Well, we did not talk about the diplomacy, only about the interpreting in general.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“Yes, I do due to the good preparation from both theoretical and practical parts, but personally, I would not go to interpret to diplomatic missions because of my low self-confidence.”*

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Respondent from University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica**

1. How is/was the consecutive interpreting teaching at your university?

*“We had the interpreting methodology in the first course (mainly the consecutive one), where we talked about the interpretation in general, we were given the clues and suggestions about how to do the notations in the seminars, and then we started to interpret. We had to prepare some notice from the world (about politics/sports...) and to read it. While the reading, some of the students was picked up for interpreting it.”*

2. Are/were you able to make use of the theoretical knowledge from the interpreting courses in the practical part of the subject?

*“Yes, I was able to make use of it. The first course was dedicated more to the theory and the notations, but then we entered more to the practical part.”*

3. Have you been informed about the interpreting at diplomatic missions?

*“No, I haven’t. But actually, we will do a simulated conference in the interpreting course in the end of this semester.”*

4. Do you consider yourself being competent enough to execute interpreting at diplomatic missions after having acquired the theoretical and practical knowledge?

*“I consider the students of my faculty as competent because of the wide theoretical and practical knowledge we possess, but I do not consider myself as a competent due to my introverted personality.”*