

Migration Representations – Representing Migrations in Interpreting Studies

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ABSTRACT

Interpreter-mediated communication may occur in a wide range of situations, involving a variety of participants with different roles. These may likewise include migrant people and/or other subjects speaking *to* or *about* them, as is commonly the case in asylum hearings and other public service interpreting settings (mostly with liaison or short consecutive interpreting) and European Parliament debates (with simultaneous interpreting), respectively. The research areas and problems that are more orthodox in Interpreting Studies in relation to migrations, as well as the linguistic representations therein, are examined in this chapter by adopting a discourse analytical approach, aided by corpus linguistics. Using the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (Pöchhacker 2015) as a corpus, the following terms are searched for collocations and co-text: migration(s); migrant(s); immigrant(s); immigration; refugee(s); asylum. The resulting occurrences provide insight into the research areas mentioned in the corpus (e.g. 'Community Interpreting', 'Dialogue Interpreting', 'Child Language Brokering', interpreters' 'role' and 'positioning') as well as lexico-semantic features which depict or accompany the phenomenon (e.g. 'procedures', countries such as 'Australia') and the subjects under consideration (e.g. 'parents', 'refugees', but also 'tourists', 'deaf people'). Overall, the bulk of the research mentioned in the corpus pertains to interpreter-mediated communication with/to migrant people and not *about* them. With a view to redressing this imbalance, some potentially rich data sources are among the recommendations provided for prospective future developments of this line of research in Interpreting Studies.

Keywords: migration representations, Interpreting Studies, discourse analysis, collocations, co-text

1. Introduction:

Communication about/of/with migrations

The way migrations and migrant people are represented in and through communication has attracted the interest of scholars from various disciplines. For instance, in the social sciences, attention has been paid to the discourse about migrations in order to identify how relevant concepts (e.g. the notions of borders and people's mobility) are expressed and re-contextualised even in controversial manners across various media and domains, such as to argue in support of or against migrations (Zapata-Barrero et al. 2022).

Similarly, in the humanities, above all in applied linguistics, the focus has been placed not only on the discourse *about* migrations (e.g. in news articles dealing with that topic or official statements by politicians putting forward migration-related measures), but also on the discourse *of* migrant people (e.g. how certain linguistic features manifest themselves among the members of a specific migrant speech community interacting with the dominant community). There are in fact numerous studies, spanning from multilingualism and translanguaging (Mazzaferro 2018) to critical discourse analysis (Taylor et al. 2025) and sociolinguistics (De Fina and Mazzaferro 2021), which have highlighted, *inter alia*, how language is used in identity building processes and to represent oneself and the other through opposition systems.

The same discourse analytical approach to Migration Representations–Representing Migrations (herein referred to as MR-RM) may even be extended to scrutinise academic disciplines in themselves and their epistemological approaches on that subject matter, as these eventually contribute to shaping migration representations insofar as these are influenced by their own theoretical constructs and orientations, so much so that a call has been made to go beyond ‘old’ principles, such as multiculturalism, and encompass the ‘new theoretical trends that migration studies have identified these last years: transnationalism, super-diversity, solidarity and cosmopolitanism’ (Zapata-Barrero 2019: 349). If these trends are to be identified as contexts and normative drivers of our societies, they may likewise prompt scholars to embrace diversity as a unifying feature rather than a divisive parameter through which separations are re-stated and, accordingly, reinforced. In order to attain such ‘methodological interculturalism’ (ibid.), a meta-analysis of MR-RM within academic disciplines can serve as a cornerstone to increase scholars’ awareness and better orient our research focus. In fact, it may be argued that the abovementioned trends have always been central to interpreter-mediated communication research, especially where interpreters are requested to facilitate exchanges with members of a migrant community who do not speak the same language or share the same culture of the new community to which they have relocated.

1.1 Interpreter-mediated communication

Interpreter-mediated communication may occur in a variety of settings. As aptly illustrated by Pöchhacker (2022), these can range from inter-social to intra-social settings, thereby encompassing several kinds of situations wherein

participants may have the same or opposite objectives and interests, equal/unequal status and similar/dissimilar power.

As an interpreting scholar, when migrations (and migrant people) are taken into account, I would immediately consider community or public service interpreting (PSI), which is a type of interpreting where interpreters are generally required to work in short consecutive mode and to manage dialogic interaction between two or more parties within settings such as schools, hospitals, police stations, asylum hearings and so on. On a communication level, it can be assumed that in those situations the communicative exchange occurs *with* migrant people, as the non-migrant participants are there to speak to them and/or for them. Conversely, there are other interpreter-mediated communicative situations in which participants talk *about* migrant people and migrations, as is the case with parliamentary debates and international political conferences, where migration-related issues have always been in the public eye, even more so in the last two decades with the emergence of the so-called demographic challenge (Fargues 2011) and, more recently, with new initiatives (i.e., legal frameworks and regulations) to manage asylum and migrations in the EU (European Union 2024).

A recent work on MR-RM in parliamentary debates (Calzada Pérez 2023), where political agents address migration-related issues from various standpoints and orientations but almost always talking *about* migrant people and not *to* or *with* them, has served as the inspiration for this chapter.

Calzada-Pérez carried out a comparable analysis of four datasets making up the European Comparable and Parallel Corpora (ECPC) Archive of Parliamentary Speeches, which includes debates in Spanish and in English in the form of speeches and written interventions delivered as both original and translated/interpreted texts. In her work, the parliamentary settings under consideration are Spain's lower house, Great Britain's higher house and the European Parliament (EP) in the time period between 2004 and 2008.

Notwithstanding the variation in frequencies and collocations of the searched key terms regarding migrations in each parliamentary setting, a common representation of migrations and migrant people emerged depicting these as an 'illegal flow of participants and events that requires control and management' (Calzada Pérez 2023: 7).

The texts taken from the EP debates are available not only as original texts delivered by EP members, but also as translated and interpreted texts. In fact, in Calzada-Pérez's analysis, 'translated text was not segregated from

the original text; they were studied together since that is how they function and interact in the world' (Calzada Pérez 2023: 3), thus prioritising end users' position, who may have access or be exposed to those texts (namely the verbatim reports of each sitting) from a monolingual perspective regardless of the mode of production, albeit an original or translated text in the same language.

A parallel approach can be identified in other works still querying EP debates but with a focus on how certain instances of speech, which may be relevant to migrant people or other minority groups, are managed by simultaneous interpreters. For example, Beaton-Thome (2013) considered controversial lexicalisations in EP debates (in German and English) and found evidence of lexical contraction and self-correction by simultaneous interpreters, thus altering to some extent the ideological impact of such referents. Similarly, Bartłomiejczyk (2020) focused on racist speech in Polish and English source speeches, together with the corresponding target speeches into German and English/Polish. Although a common pattern could not be identified across the three language booths, there is evidence of interpreters' propensity to downplay or omit racist items (together with cases of preservation or strengthening of the pragmatic effect).

Against this background, an attempt was made to take advantage of existing EP corpora (see Bendazzoli et al. 2020), particularly the European Parliament Interpreting Corpus (EPIC) (Russo et al. 2012) and the European Parliament Translation and Interpreting Corpus (EPTIC) (Ferraresi and Bernardini 2019), to continue the analysis of MR-RM in settings mediated by simultaneous interpreters. Unfortunately, the debates included in the two EP corpora as available at the time of writing did not contain a sufficient number of occurrences of migration-related key terms (such as those used in Calzada-Pérez's work) to warrant further research thereof. In EPIC, for example, the largest sub-corpus of English source speeches, including 43,260 words, only yielded 49 hits when queried for *migrā*, coupled with 48 hits in each of the corresponding target language sub-corpora of interpretations into Italian and Spanish. Considering the relevant collocations, the use of pre- and post-modifiers, along with other lexical items appearing in close proximity (i.e., the co-text), the resulting general picture is largely consistent with the findings obtained by Calzada-Pérez: in addition to the representation of migrations as a 'problem' that is negative, illegal, inevitable

and to be controlled, there are likewise allusions to positive and proactive representations, (e.g. with occurrences such as ‘legal’, ‘desirable’, ‘integration’) nevertheless revolving around a system of oppositions. All this is largely mirrored in the two sub-corpora of target speeches, although in the Italian language, there are no occurrences of ‘migrant*’ but only of ‘immigra*’. The debates in EPIC date back to 2004 and perhaps at that time the use of the more neutral term ‘migra*’ (for *migranti* or *migrazioni*) was not as common as it may be in more recent debates.¹

These limited conclusions from an even more limited dataset may have been addressed by expanding the EPIC and EPTIC corpora in a manner wherein additional EP plenary sittings be taken into consideration where migrations are at the centre of the agenda. Nevertheless, this would have required a considerable amount of time and effort that was beyond my capabilities at the time of writing this chapter. Faced with such an impasse, I came to the realisation that there was another source of communication as regards migrations and nonetheless applicable to the field of linguistic and cultural mediation, just ready to be examined, namely the very discipline of Interpreting Studies. Therefore, while adopting a discourse analytical approach, the research questions that are addressed in the present work are: what migration representations can be identified in the scientific literature of interpreting research? What kind of epistemology have we, as a research community of interpreting scholars (and, to some extent, practitioners) been building around migrations as reflected in scholarly research output?

Section 2 illustrates the data and the method used to address the research questions, while the results and discussion are presented in Section 3. Section 4 provides conclusions and identifies potentially rich data sources that may be of interest for future research.

¹ A similar query in the ParlaMint corpus (Erjavec et al. 2023) yielded 1,912 hits for *migrante* vs. 993 for *immigrato*, 101 for *emigrato*, fifty-five for *emigrante* and ten for *immigrante*. The Italian sub-corpus of ParlaMint is based on the plenary sittings of Italy’s Senate between March 2013 and November 2020, therefore including additional recent data, and is far larger than EPIC for parliamentary debates in Italian.

2. Data and method

In order to examine migration representations in Interpreting Studies, the first step is to compile a corpus with good representativeness of the relevant academic research output. Nevertheless, due to the interdisciplinary nature of this research field (Snell-Hornby et al. 1994) and the increasing number of approaches adopted over time (Pöchhacker 2008), this may be challenging. As mentioned in the preceding section, some settings are intuitively more prone to having migration-related subjects involved, as can be the case in community interpreting or PSI. However, restricting the focus to the PSI literature might have skewed possible representations (or lack thereof). For this reason, a comprehensive view was deemed more appropriate as a starting point.

This was identified in the monumental volume *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (Pöchhacker 2015), as it provides a comprehensive, albeit not exhaustive, overview of the state of the art in Interpreting Studies research across modes and settings. Notwithstanding the inevitable gatekeeping effect of the 139 contributors and four editors involved, in terms of both content selection and linguistic style, this extraordinary tome of approximately 500 pages (and more than 295,000 words) represents a multiplicity of voices with the objective of offering ‘a single, detailed survey of the field that would include the various domains and research traditions of interpreting not only side by side, but in an *integrated* manner’ (Pöchhacker 2015: x, emphasis in the original). This means that an effort was made purposefully to present each topic from a broader perspective, thus covering all interpreting modes and settings to the furthest extent.

The volume is organised alphabetically, and it also includes an introductory thematic overview of the entries. In total, the tome consists of 221 articles of variable length, some of which are structured into sub-sections with their sub-headings. There are furthermore 79 headwords that only appear as blind entries, as these redirect readers to other entries identified by the editors and the contributors with a bottom-up approach.

Access to the electronic edition of the full tome has made it particularly convenient to retrieve the key terms that are relevant to migration representations. The key terms were taken from the above-mentioned Calzada-Pérez’s work and include the following:

- migration(s)
- migrant(s)

- immigrant(s)
- immigration
- refugee(s)
- asylum

Each key term was searched in the main body of the text, including all the entries, and in the final list of references (more than 2,100 items) with a dual objective: firstly, identifying under which entries and in which research areas these key terms are mentioned; secondly, examining concordances so as to analyse the relevant collocations together with neighbouring lexical items and identify possible categories and patterns of migration representations.

Previous critical discourse studies have identified a number of categories that are particularly relevant to migration identity representations. Baker et al. (2008), likewise cited in Calzada-Pérez's paper, considered refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants (RASIM) in a large corpus of migration-related news articles and could relate RASIM to the following categories:

- provenance/transit/destination
- number
- entry
- economic problems
- residence
- return/repatriation
- legality
- plight

As reported by the same authors, '[t]hese categories are regularly used in ways which negatively reference RASIM, particularly those concerned with Entry, Economic problems and Legality' (Baker et al. 2008: 286).

Similar results were obtained in Calzada-Pérez's analysis with the emergence of reactive representations over proactive representations, particularly in relation to security, stability and resource efficiency. All the main collocations were subsumed under the following thematic tags:

- denomination of migration-related events
- participant(s) in migratory events
- migration-related institutions
- movements as distinguishing features of migration
- places of interest

- causes and effects of migration
- proposals (or action plans)
- quantity as an objectifying representation mechanism

The above-mentioned categories were likewise taken into account in the present analysis to supplement the interpretation of results. Further categories, where appropriate, were established on the basis of the semantic fields of occurrences that would not fall under any of the existing categories.

3. Results and discussion

The computer-assisted retrieval of all the key terms taken into consideration in this study yielded a total of 203 occurrences in the main text and 58 in the list of references. Table 1 shows the specific number of occurrences broken down by key terms, from lowest to highest frequency in the main text. The frequency column is divided into three parts: the results for singular and plural forms (where applicable) are shown in the first two columns, which start from the left, and the total number of each key term, including both singular and plural forms, is shown in the third column.

Table 1: Total number of occurrences of each key term in main text and list of references

Key Terms	Frequency in main text			Frequency in references		
	sing.	plural	sub-total	sing.	plural	sub-total
migration(s)	12	1	13	5	0	5
migrant(s)	11	6	17	1	1	2
immigrant(s)	8	15	23	7	0	7
immigration	24		24	5		5
refugee(s)	18	13	31	12	6	18
asylum	95		95	21		21
TOTAL			203			58

The highest number of occurrences concern the key term ‘asylum’ in both the main text and the references, followed by ‘refugee(s)’. Although the overall

picture is in line with the intuitive expectation mentioned earlier in relation to PSI, these absolute frequencies alone must be taken with caution. In fact, the use of certain key terms also depends on their grammatical categories, as these may or may not be used as pre- or post-modifiers to different extents, and therefore cannot shed much light as regards migration representations. A more qualitative analysis is provided in the following sub-sections where the results are also discussed in greater detail, starting with the main text (Section 3.1) and then continuing with the list of references (Section 3.2).

3.1 Analysis of main text

The analysis of the occurrences in the main text is structured into two main steps. Firstly taken into consideration are the kinds of entries wherein the key terms appear at least once. In the event that an entry is organised into sub-headings, these are specified along with the general headword from which these are derived. In the second step, the analysis focuses on the relevant text concordances to scrutinise collocations and the co-text.

3.1.1 Headwords

The key terms under consideration were identified in a variety of entries making up the entire encyclopaedia. Table 2 specifies all the headwords and sub-headings under which the key terms appear at least once (the < symbol is used to relate subordinate entries to their relevant higher level headword). The headwords with (+) indicate higher frequency, although this part of the analysis is more qualitative, therefore quantitative information is not provided.

Table 2: Headwords in which key terms occur

Key terms	Entries
Migration(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Australia · Immigration and interpreting · Spain · Fictional interpreters · Asylum settings · Societal bilingualism · Community interpreting as a profession · Child language brokering (CLB) · Non-professional interpreting

(Continued)

Table 2: *(Continued)*

Key terms	Entries
Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration and interpreting < Australia • Accreditation < Australia • CLB • Telephone interpreting • Videoconference interpreting legal interpreting • Definition < Dialogue interpreting • Critical discourse analysis (CDA) • Discourse management • Stakeholders and guidelines < Education • Egypt • Face • Legal foundations and professional guidance < Legal interpreting • Positioning • Power • Role
Migrant(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous languages • Dragomans • Community interpreting • Mediation < Dialogue interpreting • CLB • Psychosocial issues < Pediatric settings • Discourse management < Community interpreting • Turn-taking • Lingua franca • Accent
Immigrant(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLB (+) • Non-professional interpreting • Signed language interpreting < Australia • Telephone interpreting • Utilisation patterns and barriers < Healthcare interpreting • Interpreters in conflicts, trials, diplomacy and camps < Memoirs • The post-colonial period < Africa • Spain • Positioning • Societal bilingualism • Language policy • Shlesinger

Key terms	Entries
Refugee(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Asylum settings (+) · Conflict zones (+) · Telephone interpreting (+) · Community interpreting · Videoconference interpreting · Disaster relief interpreting · Interpreter self-care < healthcare interpreting · Interpreters in conflicts, trials, diplomacy and camps < Memoirs · Legal foundation and professional guidance < Legal interpreting · Discourse management · Lay vs. professional < micro-interactive research · CDA · Narrative approaches · Epistemological approaches < sociological approaches
Asylum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Asylum settings (+) · Methods and approaches · Micro-interactive research · Availability of competent interpreters: lay versus professional · Positioning of the interpreter in the interaction: experiential vs. institutional · Replicability of the interpreter's rendition: transient (oral) vs. replicable (written) · Macro-ideological research · Domain-specific challenges < Dialogue interpreting · Legal interpreting · Sight Interpreting/Translation · Ethics · Face · Gaze · Neutrality · Power · Role · Critical discourse analysis · Sociological approaches

Considering the analytical categories discussed in the methodological section, *place* refers to both specific geographical areas (countries or continents such as 'Australia', 'Spain', 'Africa' and 'Egypt') and communication contexts in a broad sense. These range from 'asylum' to 'paediatric settings', 'conflict zones', 'trials', 'diplomacy' and 'camps'.

As regards *participants*, the occurrences point to interpreters ('fictional', 'competent', 'lay' vs. 'professional') and to one particular scholar who is specifically mentioned in a single headword, namely our dear Miriam Shlesinger.

In fact, given the particular kind of representativeness of our corpus, that is, scholarly research in Interpreting Studies, further analytical categories were required to be established in order to encompass the entirety of the resulting occurrences. For example, there are clear references to *types of interpreting and interpreting modes*, which may echo communicative situations and/or interpreting techniques. In this regard, the results include general referents, such as 'community interpreting' and 'dialogue interpreting,' along with more circumscribed labels such as 'child language brokering' and 'non-professional interpreting.' Among the referents to other types of interpreting are 'legal interpreting,' 'healthcare interpreting' and 'disaster relief interpreting,' while other referents evoke the medium or the interpreting modality or mode involved, as in the case of 'telephone' and 'videoconference' interpreting, 'signed language interpreting' and 'sight interpreting/translation.' Another additional category that emerged from the analysis is that of research *approaches and paradigms*. These encompass 'critical discourse analysis,' 'micro-interactional research,' 'narrative' and 'epistemological and sociological approaches.' Finally, the rest of the entries relating to the key terms under investigation may be grouped under the category of *research problems*, a number of which encompass more general societal issues. Many of these are contingent on the primary participants in interpreter-mediated communication, that is, interpreters and service users: 'positioning,' 'role,' 'power,' 'neutrality,' 'ethics,' 'face,' 'discourse management,' 'gaze,' 'turn-taking,' 'interpreters' self-care,' 'psychosocial issues,' 'accreditation,' 'stakeholders' (in education), 'professional practice and guidance,' 'lingua franca,' 'accent,' 'bilingualism,' 'indigenous languages,' 'dragomans,' 'utilization patterns' and 'barriers.'

Overall, based on the headwords and sub-headings of the entries where migration-related key terms occur in the corpus, the emerging migration representations mostly concern community interpreting and the main research problems therein. Other areas that are not represented in the corpus may be missing simply due to their low relevance. Conversely, these may be

under-researched or may appear in combination with the identified items without being specifically mentioned. For instance, Voinova and Ordan (2016) studied community interpreter trainees' experience combining narrative analysis, which is mentioned among the occurrences, with corpus-based methods, which do not appear in the list of occurrences.

3.1.2 Concordances: collocates and co-text

The analysis of concordances took into consideration the immediate collocates, that is, the content words immediately before and after the key terms (e.g. pre- and post-modifiers) and also the broader co-text within an average span of at least ten words, depending on the types of entry in question.

Table 3 specifies all the collocates for each key term, with high-frequency items highlighted with (+) as in the first research step based on the analysis of headwords.

Table 3: Collocates of key terms in the main text

Key term	Collocates
Migration(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Studies · Program · Policies · Flows · Waves · Mass · Large-scale labour · Crossroads · Hybridity
Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Waves · Department of Immigration (AU) · Proceedings (CA) · Australia, Canada, Sweden · Forms · Service encounters · Hearings (claimants) · Interview · Officer, official, judge (powerful party/doctor, lawyer)

(Continued)

Table 3: (Continued)

Key term	Collocates
Migrant(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Hong Kong (source of) · Largest migrant groups · Refugee, indigenous or deaf populations · Vulnerable/disadvantaged children and adults · Communities · Patients · Political refugees or as assisted migrants. · Parents · Language
Immigrant(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Many, millions (need for guidelines, certification processes for quality interpreter) · Settlement of (lack of L services in Asia, Mediterranean vs. Australia, Sweden) · Foreigners, tourists, refugees and immigration (public services) · Children of immigration parents · Members of groups, communities, sub-communities, multilingual populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · -Latino, Moroccan, North African, Germany, Italy, Spain · -Minority, small, deaf · US Army · Illegal (interpreter's solidarity) · Languages (South Africa >> interpreter working conditions) · Training course
Refugee(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Large numbers (Spain, Japan) · Massive influx (Turkey) · Status determination · Hearings · Languages · Law · Camps · Advice Centre guide (Finland) · Armed conflict · UNHCR · Interpret-ing/-er · Protection officer · Community interpreters working for migrant, refugees, indigenous, deaf populations · Advocate · Traumatized · Torture victims, refugees, asylum seekers (special demands) · Somali Bantu · Applicants · Immigrants, refugees, tourists · Displaced persons · Political refugees

Key term	Collocates
Asylum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Settings (+) · Legal settings (prison) · System · Adjudication · Procedures · Protection · Application process (+) · Submitting documents, explaining · Hearing · Review hearing · Status determination interview (+) · Right to an interpreter · Power asymmetry, rigid patterns · Deontology vs. un/professional practice (+) · Interpreter intervention (+) · Interaction · Officers · Interpreters · And refugees · Seekers, seeking · Seekers' (narrative) account · Illiterate applicant

The analysis of the concordances can provide insight as regards the migration representations that emerge in the corpus and, to some extent, the kind of academic discourse and epistemology that have been constructed in relation to the broader notions of migrants and migrations in the field of Interpreting Studies. Before looking at the collocates and co-text results in greater detail, it is worth reiterating that the corpus under consideration is representative of multiple voices from a common perspective, that is, Interpreting Studies, furthered by the research endeavours of scholars who may also be involved in interpreter education and who may themselves have an active or former background as professional interpreters.

In this part of the analysis, more analytical categories from the previous studies on the abovementioned MR-RM are applicable than in the case of the headwords. Starting with *place* referents, once again there are mentions of specific countries or geographical areas, such as 'Australia', 'Canada', 'Sweden', 'Finland', 'Hong Kong', 'South Africa', 'Germany', 'Italy', 'Spain', 'Japan', 'Turkey' and 'the Mediterranean'. Most of these referents are destination countries where migrant people relocate to in pursuit of better life opportunities (e.g. Spain and Japan are mentioned as recent destinations for larger

groups of migrant people). Nevertheless, reference is likewise made to: (a) the Mediterranean, which is commonly perceived as a transit space (where, sadly, so many lives are lost among migrant people) and (b) countries that are now considered a source of migration (e.g. Hong Kong) or departure countries (provenance). In addition to this differentiation, another indirect opposition can be perceived between countries that are able to provide the required PSI and mediation services and those that are less well-organised. In fact, new geographical areas may have emerged over time given the fact that the encyclopaedia was published back in 2015 (see, e.g. Berbel 2020), as well as other areas may have been overlooked due to not only socio-political factors influencing mainstream information dissemination, but also academic presence and resources.²

Certain *institutions* are specifically mentioned in the results for collocates and co-text, for example, Australia's 'Department of Immigration', the 'US Army', the 'UNHCR' and the 'Advice Centre' of Finland's immigration service. Somewhere in between places and institutions are various *situations and settings* that collocate with the key terms and can provide insight into the research focus as regards migrant people's experience in relation with interpreting services or lack thereof: 'service encounters', 'armed conflicts', (review) 'hearings', (status determination) 'interviews', 'legal settings' (prisons) and 'adjudication'. Apart from the first two hypernyms, all the other collocates always bring the legal sphere to the fore, especially from procedures to determine the status of migrant people.

Moving on to the category of *participants*, certain interesting variations can be discerned, as collocates include not only referents to subjects generally found in administrative procedures as regards migrations but also other, somewhat unexpected categories. On the one hand, there are the civil servants in charge of the administrative procedures or service providers: (protection) 'officers', 'official judge', 'doctor', 'lawyer' – all of whom hold high positions of authority – and 'advocate'; on the other hand, there are migrant people and, more generally, service users, including mentions of other groups or

² According to UNICEF (Dilger 2024), the following are the major migration routes in the world: Central America route, Central Mediterranean route, Easter Mediterranean route, Western Mediterranean route, Balkan route, West Africa route, Southwest Asia route, Southeast Asia route, East Africa route, North Africa route and South Africa route.

subjects. It is worth grouping these collocates by grammatical category to define a type of emerging profile. The occurrences of nouns encompass broad categories based on age and social roles ('children and adults', 'parents', 'labour') and other general groups ('foreigners', 'tourists', 'patients', 'deaf people', 'communities', 'sub-communities', 'populations'), along with more specific categories, some of which are particularly relevant to administrative procedures ('claimants', 'applicants', 'torture victims', 'Somali Bantu'). As regards the occurrences of adjectives, apart from 'multilingual' and 'indigenous', these mostly allude to participants as weak parties: 'vulnerable', 'disadvantaged', 'assisted' (migrants), 'illiterate' (applicants), (asylum) 'seekers'/'seeking', 'illegal', 'traumatized' and 'political' (refugees). The migration representation in the corpus with respect to participants clearly reflects the research efforts that have been made in community interpreting thus far, as the bulk of migration-related investigations have considered refugees and asylum seekers in PSI. It is interesting to note that other communities are nonetheless mentioned together with migrant people, for example, 'tourists', 'patients' and 'deaf people', somehow disclosing that other kinds of migrations may be included in interpreting research, not necessarily related to underprivileged individuals.

In terms of *number, quantity* and kind of *movement*, the emerging migration representations are especially linked to figurative language relating to water metaphors, such as 'flows', 'waves' and 'influx' of contrasting size. On the one hand, there appear collocates recalling big crowds of people ('mass', 'massive', 'millions', 'large-scale', 'large'); on the other hand, the phenomenon is presented as more circumscribed to 'small' and 'minority' groups.

Finally, a number of *miscellaneous* collocates contribute to delineating a representation of migrations as a multifaceted, hybrid phenomenon ('cross-roads', 'hybridity', 'languages', 'law', 'special demands') that unfolds in situations characterised by features such as power asymmetry, rigid patterns and interaction, at times with serious issues due to the unavailability of adequately qualified interpreters ('right to an interpreter', 'lack of language services'). In fact, these are some of the *research problems* that have been thoroughly examined, particularly in order to debunk numerous misconceptions as regards the invisibility and neutrality of interpreters (Baraldi and Gavioli 2012; Wadensjö 1998). Further research approaches and areas are alluded to by the remaining collocates, which give special emphasis to interpreters'

behaviour and professional development needs ('deontology' vs. 'un/professional practice', 'interpreter intervention', 'narrative account', 'need for guidelines', 'certification processes for quality interpreting', 'training course' and 'working conditions').

3.2 Analysis of references

Out of the over 2,100 items included in the final list of references, forty-five contain at least one of the key terms. More specifically, thirty-five entries have a single occurrence, seven have two occurrences and three show up to three occurrences. As can be seen in Table 1, the most frequently used key terms are the same as those in the main text, that is, refugee(s) and asylum, while all the other key terms are appreciably much less frequent. The occurrences appear in the title of books (eleven items, including three with two occurrences), journals (seven items), chapters (six items), papers (twenty-eight items) and one online report.

Although these forty-five references only account for slightly more than two per cent of the entire bibliography, the very existence of academic outlets such as scientific journals containing explicit mentions of the key terms under study in their titles is clear evidence of how important migrations are for multiple disciplines, even for Interpreting Studies. The titles of the scientific journals are listed below:

- *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care*
- *International Migration Review*
- *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*
- *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*
- *Journal of Refugee Studies*

Interestingly, two journal titles reference 'health' in combination with 'immigrant', 'minority' and 'migration', which is likewise consistent with one of the major public service interpreting (PSI) research focuses on interpreter-mediated doctor-patient communication.

Taking into consideration the relevant collocates and co-text, the resulting representations may be grouped under the following categories, which also applied to the main text, albeit with certain variations. In terms of *places*, specific geographical areas can be found both for destinations ('Belgium', 'Canada', 'Italy', 'Southwest Idaho', 'the USA' and 'Geneva' for conventions)

and for provenance (though only in terms of demonyms such as ‘African’, ‘Chinese’, ‘South Asian’, ‘Somali Bantu’).

Named *institutions* are the ‘European Parliament’, UK’s ‘Home Office’, the Spanish ‘Asylum and Refugee Office’ and Canada’s ‘Immigration and Refugee Board Audit and Evaluation Committee’ (with specific mention of the ‘Ellis Report’ as regards the use of videoconferencing in refugee hearings).

References to refugee status determination are even more prevalent in the category regarding *types of setting and procedure*: (asylum) (appeal) (review) (immigration) ‘hearing’, ‘interview’, ‘political asylum adjudication’, ‘legal settings’, ‘asylum procedure’, ‘status determination’. Other referents under the same category concern the medical area: ‘health care’, ‘symptom reporting and referral’, ‘treatment’, ‘consultations’, ‘emergency department’, ‘patient visits’, ‘health services’, ‘psychotherapy’, ‘education and medical settings’, ‘medical encounters’ and ‘health’ and ‘social care’.

Moving to the *research approaches and problems*, these still provide a representation of the subject matter of analysis that is deeply rooted in personal experiences where communication undergoes critical processes of participation and negotiation of one’s role and identity: ‘narrative’, ‘narrative inequality’, ‘experiences’, ‘participation status’, ‘roles’, ‘norms’, ‘identity’, ‘discursive practices’, ‘ideology’, ‘definitions’, ‘dilemmas’, ‘participatory research’, ‘nursing science’, ‘reflexivity’, ‘social construction of identity’ and ‘comparative analysis’. Considering communication, the resulting collocates and co-text bring to the fore the significant role played by language(s) and the fact that it is not always straightforward: ‘language barriers’, ‘language’, ‘national order’, ‘sensitive personal information’, ‘dialogical view’, ‘media effect’, ‘challenges’, ‘mediation’, ‘uncertainty’, ‘breakdowns’, ‘troubled’, ‘cross-cultural misunderstandings’, ‘socio-political construction’, ‘contrasted points of view’, ‘bilingualism’, (linguistic) ‘issues’ and ‘challenges’.

Among *participants*, the representation of migrant people revolves around referents that are mostly negative, weak or problematic (‘enemy combatant’, ‘traumatized’, ‘war and torture victim’, ‘patients with cancer’, ‘parents of children with cancer’, ‘limited English proficiency patients’, ‘unaccompanied children’, ‘powerless’ vs. ‘gatekeepers’ and ‘ethnic minorities’), although certain further general referents can also be identified for younger age groups (‘youth language and culture’, ‘childhoods’, ‘children’) and actions (‘constructing credibility’, ‘presence’, ‘speaker’, ‘seeking’, ‘hearing voices’, ‘productive

other’). Only ‘nurses’ and ‘gatekeepers’, and of course ‘interpreters’, are mentioned as non-migrant participants. Interpreters are depicted in a positive light (‘intercultural agent’, ‘decreasing inequalities’), as visible (‘presence of third party’, ‘agency’, ‘habitus’, ‘role’, ‘responsibility’, ‘power’, ‘saving face’) and with one reference to child language brokering (‘young from immigrant communities’). More generally, interpreting is also represented with mentions of interpreting modes, especially ‘videoconferencing’ (along with ‘different modalities’), some performance-related issues (‘accurate’, ‘quality’, ‘professionalization of community interpreting’) and communication features (‘interaction’, ‘dialogue’, ‘services’).

4. Conclusions

This chapter has analysed the concordances, including collocates and co-text, obtained from a list of key terms in relation to migrations and migrant people with the objective of identifying patterns of representation in a corpus made of all the entries (headwords and main text) and references included in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* (Pöchhacker 2015).

The results have provided insight as regards the research areas, approaches and problems that are particularly relevant to migrations as addressed in the corpus. Furthermore, the analytical categories related to the kinds of places, institutions, settings and procedures, participants, number, quantity and movement have disclosed epistemological orientations that are more or less ubiquitous in representing migrations within the field of Interpreting Studies. Recurrent referents concern public service and community interpreting in legal, health care and educational settings (including telephone, videoconference interpreting and child language brokering), with a special focus on asylum and refugee status determination, though other groups co-occur (e.g. tourists, patients, deaf people) along with conflicting dimensions (large/mass movements vs. small/minority communities). Participants are referenced above all as weak, disadvantaged subjects (for migrants) interacting with high-power parties (e.g. doctors, officers) with the assistance of interpreters (where available and not necessarily qualified). In fact, migration-related interpreters’ representations are also built around critical issues such as educational needs and requirements, role and positioning, working conditions and interaction strategies.

This discussion is obviously restricted to the results obtained from the corpus, which is a comprehensive and by no means exhaustive collection of short articles in the form of encyclopaedia entries about Interpreting Studies research, taking stock of scientific output published prior to 2015. It would be interesting to extend the analysis to a larger corpus including the research output in terms of monographic volumes, chapters and papers as regards specific types of interpreting, not just PSI.

Thus far, few interpreting scholars seem to have pursued this line of research to look at minority or, more specifically, migrant representations in conference interpreting. Existing corpora of EP debates would require to be expanded for greater representativeness, while other communicative situations could be tapped for additional data. For instance, other EU institutions (such as the European Commission and the European Migration Network) or international organisations outside the EU (such as the UN and some of its agencies and affiliated organisations) regularly hold debates and conferences addressing migrations with the assistance of highly qualified interpreters. Similarly, political conferences often include migration as a prominent point in their agenda, and interpreting services are provided in a number of them, should international guests be present, in case the event is streamed online or even just subsequently uploaded on a media platform. It stands to reason that many of these conference-like events would still entail participants talking *about* migrations. A quantum leap would be made if migration discourse could also be represented in such situations directly by participants with a migratory background. Based on my experience as conference interpreter, this direct participation seems to be gaining ground within the context of events concerning the promotion of human rights, food sovereignty and biodiversity, solidarity and new measures that are introduced to manage migration such as the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. A greater focus on this type of discourse may lead to broadening our knowledge as regards ‘the proactive messages’ (Calzada Pérez 2023: 11) materialising in migration representations and to understand the relevant implications of (conference) interpreting therein. Accordingly, this could open up, if not redress, to some extent our research interests and epistemology so that the aforementioned pressing notions of transnationalism, super-diversity, solidarity and cosmopolitanism are taken into account and that diversity is likewise discussed as an inclusive rather than a divisive feature of our communities.

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PETER LANG

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