

UNIVERZITET U SARAJEVU

Filozofski fakultet

Odsjek za anglistiku

ZAVRŠNI RAD

*Usmeno prevođenje: Izazovi konferencijskog prevođenja u tranziciji: BiH
naspram EU*

Mentor: prof. dr. Amira Sadiković

Student: Zerina Maksumić

Sarajevo, Septembar, 2024

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Prevodilački smjer

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University of Sarajevo
Faculty of Philosophy
Department of English Language and Literature
Translation and Interpreting Studies

Master's Thesis

***Interpreting studies: Interpreting challenges in transition: BiH vs.
the EU***

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to delve into the differences in educating an interpreter, and general interpreting practices between the market of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and that of the European Union (EU). By comparing the interpreting markets of BiH and the EU, this paper aims to provide a deeper understanding of the disparities in practices, standards, education, and challenges interpreters face in these distinct environments. After providing the comparative analysis of the curricula and educational standards in conference interpreting (simultaneous and consecutive interpreting) at selected universities in the EU, such as the University of Zagreb and the University of Ljubljana, with those at the University of Sarajevo and the University of Zenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The analysis involves an examination of the curriculum structures, international accreditation, practical training opportunities, and technological resources available to students. EU universities are found to adhere to strict international quality standards, evidenced by their membership in prestigious organizations like CIUTI and EMCI, and their alignment with the European Master's in Conference Interpreting (EMCI) framework. These institutions also benefit from extensive practical training opportunities through collaborations with European entities such as the European Commission and the European Parliament. In contrast, the programs at the University of Sarajevo and the University of Zenica show room for development to align with international standards. Recommendations for Bosnian universities include the introduction of specialized courses tailored to conference interpreting, the implementation of more rigorous entrance and final examinations, and the formation of partnerships with international institutions to provide more practical experience. This comparative analysis underscores the importance of adopting these enhancements to elevate the quality of interpreting education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby better equipping graduates to meet global market demands.

Keywords: Interpreter Education, Conference Interpreting, Consecutive Interpreting, Simultaneous Interpreting, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), European Union (EU).

Sažetak

Cilj ovog rada je istražiti razliku u nastavnim planovima i programima, obrazovanju i obrazovnim standardima u konferencijskom prevođenju na odabranim univerzitetima u Evropskoj uniji (EU), kao što su Univerzitet u Zagrebu i Univerzitet u Ljubljani, u poređenju s onima na Univerzitetu u Sarajevu i Univerzitetu u Zenici u Bosni i Hercegovini, s posebnim naglaskom na razlike između konsekutivnog i simultanog prevođenja u različitim jezičkim, kulturnim i profesionalnim sferama. Također, cilj je napraviti komparativnu analizu i identifikovati ključne razlike u obrazovnim pristupima i predložiti moguća poboljšanja za institucije u Bosni i Hercegovini. Analiza uključuje detaljno ispitivanje struktura nastavnih planova i programa, međunarodnih akreditacija, mogućnosti za praktičnu obuku i tehnoloških resursa dostupnih studentima. Univerziteti u EU pridržavaju se strogih međunarodnih standarda kvaliteta, što potvrđuje njihovo članstvo u prestižnim organizacijama kao što su CIUTI i EMCI, te njihovo usklađivanje s okvirom Evropskog mastera za konferencijsko prevođenje (EMCI). Ove institucije također imaju značajne mogućnosti za praktičnu obuku putem saradnje s europskim institucijama kao što su Evropska komisija i Evropski parlament. S druge strane, programi na Univerzitetima u BiH, kao što su Univerzitet u Sarajevu i Univerzitet u Zenici pokazuju prostor za razvoj kako bi se uskladili s međunarodnim standardima. Preporuke za univerzitete u Bosni i Hercegovini uključuju uvođenje specijalizovanih programa usmjerenih isključivo na konferencijsko prevođenje, sprovođenje rigoroznijih prijemnih i završnih ispita, te uspostavljanje partnerstava s međunarodnim institucijama za obezbjeđivanje praktične obuke. Dodatno, investiranje u moderne kabine za prevođenje i digitalne resurse je ključno za modernizaciju ovih programa. Ova komparativna analiza naglašava važnost usvajanja ovih poboljšanja kako bi se unaprijedio kvalitet obrazovanja u oblasti konferencijskog prevođenja u Bosni i Hercegovini, te se na taj način bolje pripremili budući prevodioci za zahtjeve globalnog tržišta.

Ključne riječi: Edukacija prevodilaca, konferencijsko prevođenje, simultano prevođenje, konsekutivno prevođenje, Bosna i Hercegovina (BiH), Evropska Unija (EU).

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1. Introduction

Interpreters serve a vital function in bridging linguistic and cultural divides, facilitating effective communication and understanding between individuals who speak different languages. An interpreter faces a unique challenge: they must grasp the core message, perform a rapid mental analysis of the spoken text, strip it of any filler words, and then convey the refined message to the listeners or audience in the target language using the appropriate syntactic structures.

The role of an interpreter demands high adaptability due to frequent meetings on diverse topics and irregular hours. It requires the ability to quickly understand complex issues, respond to shifting circumstances, and communicate effectively. Interpreters must be capable of working under pressure, both independently and collaboratively, and adapt to a multicultural environment. Continuous professional development, including in technology, is expected throughout your career. Additionally, you may need to broaden your language skills to meet service requirements, particularly if recruited by the European Parliament.

“The interpreter deals with spoken words and transfers the meaning content of those words into spoken words of another language and culture. Interpreters are always on the move, doing their work on public stages, in closed meeting rooms, in courts, in hospitals, under fire in war zones, and at the Olympic Games and other international events.” (Obst, 2010:34)

Interpreters rely almost entirely on the knowledge in their heads, as they have no time to consult dictionaries or reference materials, noted Obst (2010:35). Their translations must be ready within two or three minutes for consecutive interpreting, or within just a few seconds for simultaneous interpreting.

“Although interpreting in a live public environment has much in common with acting, the difference is that interpreting does not allow for prior rehearsals. It is totally immediate in nature, requiring courage and a balance of skills. The renowned Russian diplomatic interpreter Viktor Sukhodrev, when asked to describe the difference between interpreting and translating, stated that translating is like walking on a rope lying on the ground, interpreting is like walking on a rope suspended ten feet in the air.” (Obst, 2010:35)

Interpreting can be categorized based on the context in which it occurs: conference interpreting, court interpreting, and community interpreting. Conference interpreting takes place in international conferences and other high-profile settings, such as summit meetings. Court interpreting refers to interpreting within legal environments, including courtrooms, prisons, and police stations. Community interpreting occurs in community settings, such as schools and hospitals, where the goal is to provide access to public services for individuals who do not speak the majority language of the country.

Interpreting involves translating spoken language into another spoken language. The primary modes of interpreting include simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, chuchotage (whispered) interpreting, relay interpreting, liaison interpreting (bilateral), sight interpreting, and remote interpreting.

According to Dukāte (2009:37), interpreting can also be classified by the mode in which it is performed: consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, liaison interpreting, and whispered interpreting.

Consecutive interpreting typically occurs in conference-like settings, where the interpreter listens to a segment of speech, takes notes, and then conveys the message in the target language after the speaker has finished, noted Dukāte (2009:37).

Simultaneous interpreting, which is according to Dukāte (2009:37) the most common mode in conference settings, involves the interpreter sitting in a booth, listening to the proceedings through a headset, and simultaneously interpreting into a microphone for delegates, who hear the translation via their headsets.

Liaison interpreting, often used in business meetings and official visits, involves the interpreter translating short segments of speech, usually without notes. (Dukāte, 2009:37).

Signed-language interpreting is a distinct mode and, while relevant, falls outside the scope of this discussion.

“Chuchotage or 'whispered interpreting' is for certified interpreters a form of whispered simultaneous interpreting for which no interpreting equipment is required as the interpreter, who is positioned right next to the listener, simply whispers to the listener what the speaker is

saying. Chuchotage is generally used when, on account of there being only one or two users of a specific language involved, consecutive interpreting would be impractical.” (Apfelbaum, 2010:72)

During high-level visits, two or more interpreters from both sides are typically employed, each focusing on a single language—translating from their native language into a foreign one. Official discussions usually take place in a meeting room where both delegations sit at the table with the interpreters.

However, the interpreters' role extends beyond the meeting room; they are often required to interpret conversations while traveling by car, explain various contexts, and more. “When gala dinners and banquets are on the agenda, interpreters are served in a separate room before the dinner begins. During the meal, they are seated behind the key participants and provide whispered interpretation, allowing them to remain fully engaged in interpreting without being distracted by the meal. Official speeches, along with the menu, are translated beforehand and placed in front of each guest in their respective language.

When larger delegations from scientific, cultural, or other organizations visit factories, research institutes, or schools, the interpreter typically works in both directions, translating from their native language into the foreign one and vice versa. They assist the visitors throughout the day, including during breakfast, lunch, and dinner, often leading to a long workday that requires constant attention and concentration.” (Bowen, 1990:34).

“Relay interpreting is used when multiple languages are involved, an interpreter first translates the speech into a common language (often English), and then other interpreters translate from that version into other target languages. This is often seen in international organizations like the UN. “Another way to define this way of interpreting is to say that relay interpreting is the practice of interpreting from one language to another through a third language. Thus, for example, when a conference delegate is speaking Arabic and is to be interpreted into English and German where no Arabic-German interpreter is available, the German output may be mediated via the English *"pivot"* (or *"relayer"*).

In some cases, the pivot may even be occupying a *"dummy booth"*; i.e., in the above example, it may be the case that no English interpreting is required, and the English is produced solely

for the sake of enabling German interpretation. RI is most often used for languages of limited diffusion, and is particularly common in multilingual conferences in countries where most interpreters have only two working languages. Relay interpreting was also standard practice in what used to be the Eastern Bloc countries, with Russian as the pivot language.” (Gambier, 2013:276)

Liaison (Bilateral) interpreting is when the interpreter translates two-way conversations between parties, commonly used in business meetings, interviews, and diplomatic discussions. A number of different types of interpreting have evolved for different situations. “In bilateral or liaison interpreting, sometimes referred to as ad hoc interpreting, it is often the case that the interpreter uses two languages to interpret for two or more people. This type of interpreting is often used in informal situations, for business meetings and for community interpreting.” (Phelan, 2001:12)

Sight translation/interpreting is when the interpreter reads a written document aloud in the target language. This method is used in legal and medical settings where quick translation of documents is needed. According to Ho Chen-En (2022:2), sight interpreting/translation is a cross-modal activity and a hybrid form of translation and interpreting. The information is received via reading, whereas the output is produced either in oral form or sign language.

This mode of communication is known by several names. Some scholars prefer the term "*sight interpreting*" because it is often performed in contexts that require real-time communication. Another common term is "*sight translation*," which appears frequently in the literature and has its own merits. “For instance, sight translation can be used as an exercise to develop interpreting skills, similar to consecutive interpreting, or as a language learning activity. It can also serve as a quick method to produce translations, thereby increasing translators’ productivity.

To encompass the broadest range of scenarios and avoid confusion with Simultaneous Interpreting (SI) with text—sometimes also referred to as sight interpretation—sight interpreting/translation (SiT) is advocated as a hypernym. The real concern, however, is not merely terminological but lies in our understanding of SiT, which still appears to be in its early stages.” (Ho Chen-En, 2022:2)

Remote interpretation has become possible due to technological advancements. Interpreters can now work remotely via phone or videoconferencing. This method is increasingly used for medical, legal, and customer service purposes.

“This way of interpreting is often envisaged as a cost-effective way of breaking the language barriers in international and intercultural communication. In many countries, telephone interpreting has been widely used across various sectors, such as healthcare and legal institutions. Several telecommunications companies have established telephone interpreting services to cater to both public and private sector needs, both domestically and internationally.” (Garzone, 2000:142)

According to the European Parliament (2020), valise interpreting is a technical aid for simultaneous (real-time) interpretation allowing the interpreters to speak into a microphone and allowing listeners to hear this translation via headphones. It is used for meetings where booths are not available (lunches, dinners), and for missions outside the three places of work of the European Parliament.

Interpreting, whether simultaneous or consecutive, is a highly intricate discourse exchange where language perception, comprehension, translation, and production are executed nearly simultaneously. “When interpreting simultaneously, the interpreter translates the spoken words in real-time, almost simultaneously with the speaker. This mode is commonly used in conferences, large meetings, and live broadcasts. Simultaneous interpretation is defined as the process of interpreting the target language at the same time as the source language is being delivered.” (Russell, 2005:136) In addition, when the interpretation is delivered simultaneously, it is performed under severe time pressure.

According to Russel (2005:136), consecutive Interpreting is characterized by having the interpreter listen to a segment of speech, waiting for the speaker to pause, and then translating it. “Consecutive interpretation is defined as the process of interpreting after the speaker or signer has completed one or more ideas in the source language and pauses while the interpreter transmits that information. When interpreters face content that is complicated, detail-laden, or presented using linguistic structures that are challenging for the interpreter to construct meaning from, consecutive interpreting should be used.” (Russell, 2005:157) This method is often used in smaller meetings, interviews, and legal settings.

Each method requires specific skills and techniques, depending on the context and the needs of the participants. The process of interpreting involves several cognitive and linguistic operations carried out almost simultaneously. Interpreters must rapidly perceive and comprehend the source language, mentally translate the message into the target language, and then produce the translation in a coherent and fluid manner. This requires exceptional listening skills, memory retention, and the ability to think quickly under pressure.

“The interpreter must also be adept at managing stress and maintaining concentration, as the task demands a high level of mental agility and endurance.” (Pöchhacker, 2016:185) To be a well-rounded interpreter is to be both theoretically and practically skilled individual.

“Interpreting, despite the fact that it is often taught at universities, is not an academic subject; it is far more akin to a craft or a sport. One cannot learn to interpret by going to a lecture (or reading a book) and understanding an explanation of how interpreting works. Interpreting is a skill or, to be more exact, a combination of skills that one can explain and understand quite quickly, but which take far longer to master in practice. In practice, and through practice!” (Gillies, 2019:3).

Professional development is critical to an interpreter’s career, as the field constantly evolves with new technologies and methodologies. Continuous learning through workshops, certifications, and practice is essential for interpreters to stay current with best practices and emerging trends in the industry. Additionally, interpreters often “...specialize in specific fields, such as legal, medical, or conference interpreting, which requires further training and knowledge of the relevant terminology and procedures.” (Moser-Mercer, 2008:22)

“Ethics also play a vital role in the practice of interpreting. Interpreters are bound by a code of ethics that emphasizes confidentiality, impartiality, and accuracy. They must navigate complex ethical dilemmas, such as managing conflicts of interest, maintaining neutrality, and ensuring that their personal biases do not influence the translation. Adhering to these ethical principles is essential to maintain the trust and credibility of the interpreter and the integrity of the communication process.” (Hale, 2007:103)

Given this foundational information, we can conclude that being an interpreter requires one to be a well-rounded individual regarding education in various fields. However, when it comes

to interpreter education, there isn't a standardized approach adopted uniformly by both EU member states and non-EU countries. This discrepancy creates differences in the interpreting markets between these regions.

However, the first step in bridging the gap is to identify the possible differences between the educational standards of the two. This involves an analysis of the curricula, training methodologies, and certification processes in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU. Key areas to explore include the extent of language proficiency required and the practical experience provided through internships or simulation exercises.

In EU member states, interpreter training programs adhere to certain quality standards that will be analysed in detail later, and practices influenced by EU institutions, promoting a high level of proficiency and consistency. These programs "...include a uniform educational background, demanding training sessions and practicals, a comprehensive understanding of cultural nuances, and specialized knowledge in areas such as law, medicine, and international relations." (European Commission, n.d.)

On the other hand, non-EU countries may have varying standards for interpreter education, resulting in diverse levels of training quality. This can lead to significant disparities in the skills and competencies of interpreters, affecting the overall effectiveness of communication in international settings. Consequently, interpreters from non-EU countries might face challenges in meeting the high demands of global markets, where precise and nuanced interpretation is crucial.

To bridge the gap between the education of interpreters in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU, there is a growing need for collaboration and the establishment of unified standards.

Such efforts would enhance the quality of interpreting services within the region and ensure that interpreters from Bosnia and Herzegovina are equipped to meet the complexities of multilingual communication in line with EU standards. This alignment would not only improve the proficiency and consistency of interpreters from Bosnia and Herzegovina but also facilitate their integration into the broader European interpreting market.

2. Aim and Methodology

The aim of this paper is to highlight the differences in the educational backgrounds of interpreters in Bosnia and Herzegovina compared to those in the EU and to compare the path one interpreter has to take in order to become a well-rounded interpreter. The paper seeks to explore how these differences impact the quality and effectiveness of interpreting services.

By examining these disparities, it will inspect the possible strategies for aligning the educational standards of Bosnia and Herzegovina with those of the EU to enhance the proficiency and marketability of Bosnian interpreters. To achieve these aims, the following methodology was employed: literature review and comparative analysis.

A literature review can be defined as “...the selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which contains information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed.” (Hart, 1998:13)

This included academic articles, books, and official reports from both EU and non-EU sources. Key topics covered included curriculum design, training methodologies, certification processes, and practical training opportunities.

According to Aityan (2022:14), comparative analysis plays a crucial role in making informed decisions, as it involves evaluating multiple features based on the research objectives and priorities. This method is widely used across disciplines, including business research, to assess alternatives and guide decision-making processes. “This method involves a systematic approach to examining the characteristics of the entities being compared, considering various factors such as goals, scope, resources, and constraints.” (Aitayn, 2022:14)

Comparative analysis is used by comparing the curricula and training programs of interpreter education in Bosnia and Herzegovina with those of the EU. This involved analyzing course content, duration, language proficiency requirements, and the inclusion of practical training components such as internships and simulation exercises.

3. The Differences Between Interpreting and Translation

To pursue a career as a professional translator or interpreter, the basic steps for both are the same, according to Kent State University's Department of Modern & Classical Language Studies (2024). First, it is essential to strengthen language skills by regularly using both native and target languages and engaging with additional resources. Earning a degree is also important, as it enhances qualifications and allows for the selection of a specialization that aligns with one's interests.

Regular practice, including attending workshops, and seminars, and interacting with other speakers, is crucial. Joining relevant associations can help expand one's network and provide access to valuable resources. Lastly, networking with professionals in the field is key to uncovering new job opportunities, according to the Kent State University (2024).

“Translation and interpretation, while related, are distinct activities. Unfortunately, they are sometimes used interchangeably, likely due to their similarities. Translation involves converting a written text from a source language into a written text in a target language. In contrast, interpreting is the process of listening to spoken language or observing signed language in a source language and converting it into a target language, either simultaneously or consecutively.” (Ferreira, 2023:1)

“A translator works with written material, taking content in one language (the "source language") and reproducing it in written form in another language (the "target language"). In contrast, an interpreter listens to spoken language in the source language and provides translation orally, either consecutively or simultaneously, in the target language. Both translators and interpreters must have a strong command of the target language and a solid passive understanding of the source language(s) they work with. For most interpreters, the target language is typically their native tongue.” (Nolan, 2012:3)

The translator's work relies heavily on thorough research, using background materials and dictionaries to produce the most accurate and readable translation possible. On the other hand, the interpreter must focus on conveying the essence of the message to the target audience in real-time, without the luxury of consulting resources, noted Nolan (2012:3).

While no translation can ever be perfect due to differences in cultures and languages, translators are generally held to a higher standard of accuracy and completeness, including

the ability to replicate the original style. Interpreters, however, are expected to immediately convey the core meaning of the message.

The translator's role is more akin to that of a writer, painstakingly searching for the precise technical term or the right words. “In contrast, the interpreter's performance is more like that of an actor, who must quickly come up with a suitable paraphrase or rough equivalent if the exact term eludes them, so as not to keep the audience waiting. Some individuals are capable of both translation and interpretation, while others find that their temperament and personality are better suited to one over the other. Generally, experience as a translator can provide a solid foundation for becoming an interpreter.” (Nolan, 2012:3)

Translators and interpreters also differ in the environments where they work. Translators typically work in a more solitary and controlled setting, allowing them the time to refine their translations with precision. They may work from home, in an office, or as part of a larger translation team. “On the other hand, interpreters often work in dynamic, high-pressure situations that require quick thinking and immediate response. These settings can range from conferences and meetings to legal and medical environments, where interpreters must make rapid decisions to ensure accurate communication between parties.” (Mikkelsen & Jourdenais, 2015:30)

The cognitive demands of each role also vary significantly. Gile (2009:71) noted that translation requires a detailed, methodical approach, where the translator can pause to consider the best way to convey a concept. In contrast, interpretation is more spontaneous and mentally exhausting, as interpreters must process and reproduce speech almost simultaneously. This often leads to a higher cognitive load for interpreters, who must manage listening, understanding, and speaking in quick succession without the ability to revise their output.

Overall, we can say that “...while both translators and interpreters play crucial roles in bridging language barriers, their skill sets, working conditions, and the nature of their tasks set them apart. Understanding these differences is vital for anyone considering a career in either field or for those who require their services.” (Kent State University, 2024).

4. Becoming an Interpreter in the EU

To become an interpreter in the EU, having a university degree is highly beneficial and sometimes even mandatory, depending on the employer. In some cases, a university diploma isn't required if the candidate has many years of professional experience in interpreting, according to the European Commission (n.d.).

A bachelor's degree in interpreting can be sufficient, or a bachelor's degree in another related field followed by a master's degree in interpreting. Table x shows a short list of some of the EU universities offering degree programs in interpreting. The list provided was created through a manual search of each university's webpage. This process involved individually visiting the official websites of the mentioned universities to gather and verify information directly from the source.

Table x: A short list of EU universities offering degrees in interpreting

University	Degree Program
University of Zagreb (Croatia)	Master's in Conference Interpreting
University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)	Master's in Translation and Interpreting
University of Vienna (Austria)	Master's in Conference Interpreting
KU Leuven (Belgium)	Master's in Interpreting
Charles University (Czech Republic)	Bachelor's and Master's in Translation and Interpreting
Sorbonne Nouvelle University (France)	Master's in Conference Interpreting
University of Heidelberg (Germany)	Master's in Conference Interpreting
University of Trieste (Italy)	Bachelor's and Master's in Translation and Interpreting
Pompeu Fabra University (Spain)	Master's in Conference Interpreting
Stockholm University (Sweden)	Master's in Interpreting

To add to this topic, it is also important to notice that, according to the European Commission (n.d.), the following countries offer high-quality master's level training for translators in line with the European Master's in Translation (EMT) standards: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, and Lebanon.

The European Master's in Translation is a collaborative initiative between the European Commission and universities offering master's level translation programs. This quality label, awarded by the Directorate-General for Translation (DGT), is granted to higher education institutions that meet established professional standards and align with market demands.

According to the European Commission (2023), the EMT's primary goal is to enhance the quality of translator training, improving young language professionals' integration into the labor market. The EMT competence framework, which outlines essential skills for successful translators, serves as a model for many universities, even beyond the EU.

Membership in the EMT network offers universities several benefits, including access to short-term training placements for students, increased visibility for their programs, and opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing with other member institutions, noted the European Commission (2023). EMT members regularly meet to exchange best practices and innovate their curricula, with strong ties to the language industry to stay current on tools, technology, and employer expectations.

The European Commission supports these activities by organizing network meetings, fostering research collaboration, and promoting partnerships between academia and business. In return, EMT universities assist the DGT in ongoing professional development efforts. (European Commission, 2023)

Aside from the accreditation test required for interpreters to work at EU institutions, there is no single, overarching certification for interpreters across Europe. Instead, certification requirements vary based on the specific employer or country.

“Conference interpreters can find work with various entities, including the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), the World Health Organization (WHO), major political events, and international conferences.” (Institute of Translation and Interpretation, 2023)

The requirements for employment vary according to the organization or event. Therefore, by understanding the varying requirements across different organizations, candidates can better prepare themselves for a successful career in interpreting.

The following chapter presents a short case study on becoming an interpreter for official EU institutions, as well as those of Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing a practical overview of the standards expected of conference interpreters.

4.1 Criteria for Becoming an Interpreter Within EU Organizations

For institutions of the European Union that offer interpretation services—such as the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Court of Justice of the European Union—“interpreters can work either as permanent officials or freelance conference interpreters.” (European Parliament, 2020)

The European Parliament boasts one of the world's largest teams of interpreters. These professionals are crucial for facilitating effective communication in this institution, which operates daily in 24 different languages, noted the European Parliament (2020).

According to the European Parliament, (2020) the European Communities recognized the four languages of its founding members: German, French, Dutch, and Italian, resulting in 12 possible language pairings.

With each enlargement, new languages were incorporated. In 1973, English and Danish were added, along with Irish/Gaelic, which was limited to Ireland's accession documents and basic texts. “In 2013, the Croatian language was added, making the number of total official languages 24, and having 552 possible language combinations.” (The European Parliament, 2020)

According to the European Commission (n.d), to become a permanent staff interpreter for the EU, you must first sit a competition for interpreters. Precise eligibility criteria, particularly regarding the required language profile, are different for each competition. If you are successful in the competition, you may be offered a permanent AD (administrator-grade) contract.

4.2 Permanent Officials

To become a permanent interpreter, candidates must pass a test organized by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO). These competitions create reserve lists for filling vacant positions across EU institutions.

According to the European Personnel Office (2015), each competition has specific eligibility criteria, such as language requirements and professional experience.

To manage the broad scope of this chapter, the focus is narrowed to a specific example: the Notice of Open Competitions issued by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) in 2015 for conference interpreters in Czech, Croatian, Lithuanian, and Maltese (European Personnel Selection Office, 2015).

Some of the eligibility criteria for the competition in question are as follows, according to the European Personnel Selection Office (2015):

Being a citizen of the EU state, have a perfect written and spoken command of the language of the competition, and a four-year full-time undergraduate degree in conference interpreting/ Master's degree in conference interpreting/ a three-year undergraduate degree in any subject followed by at least one year's professional experience as a conference interpreter/three-year undergraduate degree followed by a postgraduate conference interpreting training of at least one year.

Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria are invited to a preliminary interpreting test, which consists of the simultaneous interpretation of a pre-recorded speech (approx. 10 minutes). Successful candidates then take a consecutive interpreting test that consists of a

maximum of six minutes-long speech, and a simultaneous interpreting test of audio/video recordings of speeches that is a maximum of 12 minutes long.

Successful candidates move on to the next stage of the competition, which involves Assessment Centre tests. This stage includes three multiple-choice tests on verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, and abstract reasoning, as well as three additional assessments: an oral presentation, a competency-based interview, and a group exercise. These tests evaluate various skills, including problem-solving, organization, and resilience.

Candidates who got satisfactory scores on both interpretation and Assessment Centre tests are placed on a reserve list and may be recruited as needed.

4.3 Freelance Conference Interpreters

“To work for institutions of the EU as a freelance conference interpreter, the candidate must pass the inter-institutional accreditation test.” (European Union, 2024).

To apply for the accreditation test, candidates must meet the criteria described by the European Union:

An undergraduate degree in Conference Interpreting (4 years)/Graduate degree in Conference Interpreting/undergraduate degree in any subject and a Post-graduate diploma in Conference Interpreting or at least one year of professional experience. have a language combination in demand with the EU interpreting services, and have not failed an accreditation test three times.

The applicants who meet the eligibility criteria take the accreditation test. This test includes simultaneous interpretation of a speech that is 10 to 12 minutes long, and consecutive interpretation of a speech that is approximately six minutes long.

Those who pass the test are added to the joint EU database of accredited Conference Interpreting Agents (ACIs) and may be recruited by the three interpreting services of the European Union.

4.4 Interpreter Demand within EU Organizations

The European Parliament (EP) stands out among EU institutions due to its extensive need for interpreting services. This demand stems from the high number of meetings and various languages used.

According to the European Parliament (2020), the EP is committed to multilingualism and follows a policy of "*controlled full multilingualism*." This policy allows Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to speak in any of the EU's 24 official languages. As a result, a meeting with all 24 languages requires 72 interpreters to facilitate effective communication.

The Parliament's interpreting services include simultaneous, consecutive, and whispered interpreting (chuchotage), along with valise interpretation, Ad Personam (IAP) and remote interpreting. The European Parliament employs about 275 staff interpreters and also hires external accredited interpreters (ACIs) as needed. (European Parliament, 2020)

5. Becoming an Interpreter in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Currently, there are two common pathways to becoming an interpreter and/or translator¹ in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The most preferred option is to complete a master's degree in translation and interpreting at the university level. Three universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina offer master's programs in translation and/or interpreting (the University of Sarajevo, the University of Tuzla and the University of Zenica), while one university provides translation/interpretation courses as elective courses (the University of Banja Luka and the University of Mostar).

In the second pathway, one does not have to obtain a language degree, in order to become a translation and/or interpreting specialist. By finishing a court interpreting exam, one can become a translator, who is often booked for interpreting gigs, too.

Several states or entities require the interpreters to pass an exam in order to evaluate and ascertain their skills (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland, San Marino, UK-Northern Ireland). Often a certain level of experience is necessary. It is also common to require a high level of confidentiality and clear interpretation. Those criteria are sometimes combined in order to achieve a higher quality of interpretation. (European Commission, 2010)

Without this specific license, translations lack the authority and power to certify that the translated document, whether in the translator's native or working language, remains faithful to the original. Documents translated by a court interpreter include legal texts, records of births, marriages, deaths, certificates, and citizenship documents. Therefore, it is crucial that the state carefully selects individuals who are authorized to perform the duties of a court interpreter and the conditions under which they do so.

To become a court interpreter, one must pass a specialized examination.

According to A1 Prevodi (2022), the Ministry of Justice issues a public notice outlining the specific requirements that future court interpreters must meet. The law does not specify when this notice must be issued; rather, the Ministry of Justice assesses when there is a need for a

¹ Currently, there isn't a specialized Master's programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina that trains (conference) interpreters only. The available programmes include both interpretation and translation, therefore, those two fields are often mentioned together.

new court interpreter in the market. This means that public notice could be issued infrequently, or there could be a demand for court interpreters more regularly, depending on factors such as the needs of various municipalities or unexpected events, like the sudden death of the only court interpreter for a particular language. Generally, in practice, the notice is issued once a year, specifically for municipalities where there is a need to appoint a court interpreter for a particular language.

If the candidate for the position of court interpreter has not completed studies at a faculty of philology, where a diploma would serve as proof of language proficiency, they must present a certificate verifying their language skills. The applicant must have at least five years of translation experience and must be well-regarded in the municipality where the public notice is issued, which means having no criminal record. Additionally, the court interpreter must be a citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of legal age, and have a registered residence within the municipality where the interpreter is needed. (A1 Prevodi, 2022)

According to the European Commission, Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with other Western Balkans countries, was recognized as a potential candidate for European Union (EU) membership during the Thessaloniki European Council summit in June 2003. Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have benefited from visa-free travel to the Schengen area since 2010. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) came into force on June 1, 2015, though its trade provisions have been in effect since 2008, resulting in progressive trade liberalization.

In February 2016, Bosnia and Herzegovina formally applied for EU membership. “The European Commission issued its Opinion on the country’s application in May 2019, identifying 14 key priorities that Bosnia and Herzegovina must address before EU accession negotiations can begin.

The EU Council endorsed the Commission’s Opinion and the identified priorities in December 2019, establishing a roadmap for comprehensive reforms in areas such as democracy, the rule of law, fundamental rights, and public administration.” (European Commission, n.d.)

In October 2022, the European Commission recommended granting Bosnia and Herzegovina candidate status for EU membership, contingent upon the country taking specific steps. By

December 2022, the European Council officially granted Bosnia and Herzegovina the status of a candidate country. In December 2023, the European Council resolved to commence accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina once the country achieves the necessary compliance with EU membership criteria. The Council also requested the Commission to report on the country's progress by March 2024 to facilitate a final decision.

Building on the Commission's recommendation from March 12, 2024, the European Council decided in March 2024 to open accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. It invited the Commission to prepare the negotiating framework, which the Council would adopt once all the relevant steps outlined in the October 2022 recommendation are completed (European Commission, n.d.).

As Bosnia and Herzegovina moves closer to achieving EU membership, there is optimism that this progress will positively impact various sectors within the country. One area where significant improvements are anticipated is in interpreting education, and job opportunities. With EU membership comes increased demand for high-quality language services and professional interpreters, given the multilingual nature of EU institutions and interactions.

As Bosnia and Herzegovina aligns its standards with those of the EU, it is expected that interpreting programs will see enhancements in curriculum and training, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of an expanding European market.

The growth of international and EU-related activities in the country may lead to an increase in job opportunities for skilled interpreters, fostering a more dynamic and competitive job market.

This development holds the promise of advancing Bosnia and Herzegovina's role in the global arena, while also contributing to the broader goal of integrating the country more deeply into European and international systems.

6. Educational Comparison Between Bosnia and Herzegovina and EU Standards in Interpreting and Translation Studies

Universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina offering translation and interpreting studies are the University of Sarajevo, the University of Tuzla and the University of Zenica. Currently, there are no bachelor's programs solely dedicated to translation and interpreting. However, students at these universities have the opportunity to specialize in translation and interpreting at the master's level.

The University of Banja Luka and the University of Mostar do not offer specializations at the bachelor or master levels, but they do provide some courses in translation and/or interpreting.

6.1 The University of Sarajevo

At the University of Sarajevo's Faculty of Philosophy, according to the Department of English Language and Literature (2018), the Department focuses on linguistics, contemporary English, English and American literature, British and American social and cultural history, English teaching methodology, and translation and interpreting studies.

The study program includes a three-year bachelor's degree and a two-year master's degree. "The bachelor's degree awards a Bachelor of English Language and Literature, while the master's degree confers a Master of English Language and Literature" (University of Sarajevo, Department of English Language and Literature (2018).

The master's degree confers a Master of English Language and Literature, with specializations in Literary Studies, Linguistics, Teaching, or Translation and Interpreting Studies. These specializations have been offered since 2018, according to the English Department's curriculum.

The study plan at both Bachelor and Master level includes lectures, seminars, and practical sessions. Students enrolled in the academic specialization in Translation Studies, in addition to studying linguistics, modern English, and English literature, take highly specialized courses:

Introduction to Translation Theory

With this course, students focus on understanding basic concepts in translation studies, such as equivalence, units of equivalence, types of translation, and types of translation strategies, as well as translation of literary and non-literary texts, with a critical analysis of the translation process, according to the curricula from the Department of English Language and Literature (2018).

Theory and Practice of Translation

Students are introduced to various approaches to translation studies, ranging from linguistic to cultural perspectives. Students begin working on simultaneous interpreting. Skills and competencies that the students acquire are: written translation, applying acquired theoretical knowledge; interpreting, translation of non-literary texts, with a critical analysis of the process; consecutive interpreting using note-taking.

Translation and Cultural Studies

According to the Department of English language and literature of the University of Sarajevo (2018), the course emphasizes the impact of cultural differences on translation, preparing students for cultural mediation. It covers the cultural aspects of Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, and English-speaking communities and their influence on translating different text types. Students will engage in research to address cultural differences and develop translation strategies. The course aims to enhance awareness of cultural importance in translation, introduce theoretical approaches, and build practical skills in both interpreting and written translation.

Translation Techniques

The course covers various types of translation, including written (literary and non-literary) and conference methods (consecutive, simultaneous, chuchotage). It focuses on both theoretical aspects and practical skills, such as using translation consoles and equipment. Students will develop competencies in translation that meet established accuracy criteria, with a particular

emphasis on acquiring skills in conference translation techniques like simultaneous, consecutive, and chuchotage.

Styles and Translation

The course aims to help students identify and apply various literary styles and stylistic figures in translation. It ensures that graduates can translate literary and artistic texts effectively by understanding and applying literary styles and rhetorical figures. Emphasis is placed on metaphor, metonymy, and their translation, including the challenges of translating humorous texts from drama to prose. Students will also develop skills in recognizing and applying different text types, registers, and metalinguistic structures in translation.

The Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo is equipped with a modern booth for simultaneous interpreting. This facility enhances the practical training and professional preparation of students by providing a real-world environment for mastering simultaneous interpretation techniques.

It is worth mentioning that, in addition to offering a master's degree in translation, the English Department at the University of Sarajevo's Faculty of Philosophy integrates translation-focused learning throughout both the bachelor's and master's programs. A notable feature of the curriculum is the subject "*Contemporary English Language*," which is included in every semester. This course emphasizes translating essential terminology and engaging with modern topics and jargon, ensuring that students develop practical skills relevant to current language use and professional translation demands.

6.2 The University of Tuzla

The Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Tuzla, offers a bachelor's program designed to train English language and literature teachers and translators. According to the University of Tuzla (n.d.), this program lasts four years, and graduates earn the title of Bachelor of English Language and Literature. For the master's level, the department provides four programs: "English Linguistics, English Translation, English Language Teaching Methodology, and Anglo-American Literary Studies, all of which receive the title of Master of English Language and Literature.

Although the bachelor's program does not specialize in translation and interpreting, it provides an overview of translation studies.” (University of Tuzla, 2024). Mandatory courses *"Contemporary English Language V"* and *"Contemporary English Language VI"* provide an introduction to translation theory and its practical applications. They cover modern translation theories, fundamental translation principles, and address context and specific registers. According to the University of Tuzla’s English department curricula, students translate texts focusing on political language, advertisements, and current news articles, while also exploring issues of equivalence in translation.

Additionally, the bachelor's program offers two specialized elective courses:

Introduction to Translation Theory I

According to the University of Tuzla’s English department curricula, this course introduces students to contemporary trends in translation theory and provides a theoretical foundation for understanding translation as a cross-cultural communicative act. It aims to develop fundamental translation skills through practical experience, teach text analysis, identify translation issues, and apply appropriate strategies and procedures.

Introduction to Translation Theory II

This course builds on practical skills learned previously. It emphasizes analyzing texts from an interdisciplinary perspective, recognizing the appropriate register, and discussing translation tasks in smaller groups. Students engage with key translation topics and modern theoretical approaches, including error analysis in translation teaching. Practical activities involve translating texts related to international organizations and various fields and include practicals with a focus on simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, according to the University of Tuzla’s English department curricula.

The Master’s Program in English Translation at the University of Tuzla focuses on contemporary translation theory, offering a theoretical foundation for translation. It introduces students to modern research methods in translation science and linguistics, and teaches the application of different language styles and registers. The program also includes

training in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting methods, translation ethics, and written translation of literary, scientific, technical, and media texts. It is completed in one year, consisting of seven subjects and a master's thesis, according to the University of Tuzla's curriculum (2024).

The subjects are:

Translation Theory

The main objective of the course, according to the University of Tuzla's English department curricula, is to provide students with a theoretical foundation for translation as a cross-cultural, interlingual communicative act, emphasizing that translation involves more than just high language competence. The course aims to dispel the misconception that knowing a foreign language alone ensures successful translation, highlighting the importance of cultural, ethical, and political implications. It also seeks to instill awareness of the need for professionalization in translation to protect national and cultural interests. Course content includes translation theory, equivalence, functional theories, discourse analysis, and new trends such as audiovisual translation and localization.

Translation of Technical and Scientific Texts

The course develops translation skills for social, natural, and technical sciences texts, focusing on scientific and technical language. Students are said to learn to use linguistic elements from English and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian effectively, and address translation challenges like terminology standardization.

Basics of Consecutive and Simultaneous Interpreting

The course introduces theory and methods for consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, covering translation ethics and differences between interpreting and translation. It includes practical exercises with authentic materials to develop skills in analysis, presentation, listening, memory, and public speaking. According to the University of Tuzla's English department curricula, students will also engage in independent study and preparation for simulations, and will be trained in terminology preparation and note-taking.

Research Methodology in Language and Translation

The course teaches students to plan and conduct research in language and translation, develop critical evaluation skills, and apply scientific methods. It covers research planning, theoretical models, hypothesis testing, and data analysis, with a focus on academic writing and ethical standards.

Media Translation

This course helps students develop professional written translation skills, focusing on translating, editing, and proofreading news articles, reports, and press releases. It addresses specific challenges like headlines, introductions, citations, and linguistic pitfalls for journalists.

Literary Translation

This course focuses on developing translation skills for literary texts, covering various genres such as essays, novellas, novels, and potentially drama. Students will critically compare translations with originals, study literary translation literature, and emphasize practical work. They undertake their own translation projects, participate in workshops, and learn approaches, strategies, and revision skills for professional literary translation.

5.3 The University of Zenica

The University of Zenica's Faculty of Philosophy's English Department, offers a curriculum that is said to be designed to provide students with a solid foundation in English language, literature, and culture. The University of Zenica's Department of English Language and Literature offers a four-year bachelor's degree program and a one-year master's degree program.

For students aiming to study translation and interpreting, the English Department provides specialized courses that focus on the principles and practices of these fields. The curriculum

is designed to develop students' linguistic competence and cultural awareness, essential for effective translation and interpreting.

Students are trained in various translation techniques and are given opportunities to engage in real-life interpreting scenarios. According to the University of Zenica (2023), the program offers courses in translation theory, practice and interpreting techniques, terminology, and the use of translation tools, equipping students with the necessary skills that are said to meet the demands of the translation and interpreting industry.

These courses are complemented by practical workshops and internships, allowing students to gain hands-on experience and to apply their knowledge in professional settings, according to the University of Zenica (2023).

The University of Zenica's Department of English Language and Literature, just like the University of Sarajevo's Department of English Language and Literature, offers the course "*Contemporary English Language*," where students have the opportunity to translate a wide range of essential terminology and modern language topics. This course plays a key role in both universities' curricula, providing students with practical translation skills.

The courses that the University of Zenica's Department of English language and literature provides are the following:

Administrative Business English Register

This course, according to the University of Zenica's English department curricula (2023), focuses on refining students' skills in the administrative-business register and enhancing their competence in translating texts from BHS to English. Students are expected to master the basic principles of consecutive interpreting at business meetings, including interpretation in both directions. The course also emphasizes the development of autonomy in resolving translation dilemmas typical of this register (in areas such as lexicon, collocations, and structure). The course intensifies work on translating into English with specific hours dedicated to consecutive interpreting. The ultimate goal is to equip students with solid competencies in translating administrative-business texts in both directions, facilitating their integration into translation-related jobs.

Technical English Register

This course familiarizes students with the specific lexical and grammatical features of written scientific-technical texts. According to the University of Zenica's English department curricula, it covers the main characteristics of technical writing (clarity, informativeness, precision, conciseness, consistency, coherence, and correctness of form), style (nominalization, passivization, impersonal forms, modality, etc.), and reading strategies (previewing, skimming, scanning, predicting). The course also addresses the translatability of texts, translation equivalence, the importance of context, and the translator's familiarity with extralinguistic content.

Legal English Register

This course introduces students to different types of legal texts that are commonly translated from and into English. It also covers the norms and practices established in legal text translation.

6.4 The University of Mostar

According to the University of Mostar's (2022) curricula, certain subjects within the four-year bachelor's degree program offer insights into translation. Although the university does not provide a specialized master's degree in translation, the bachelor's program encompasses a range of relevant subjects.

Contemporary English Language

According to the University of Mostar's curricula (2022), this course introduces students to translating various types of texts by using contemporary English, enhancing their practical translation skills.

Audiovisual Translation

This course aims to expand students' knowledge of audiovisual translation (AVT) as both an academic discipline and practical activity. „It equips students with the skills needed to understand and interpret the specifics of subtitling and dubbing, the most commonly used forms of audiovisual translation. Students are also trained to identify and resolve linguistic and technical issues related to audiovisual translation.“ (Sveučilište u Mostaru, 2022)

Introduction to Translation Theories

According to the Sveučilište u Mostaru (2022), this course enables students to understand and interpret various historical approaches to translation. It helps students recognize similarities and differences among translation theories, including their advantages and limitations. The course also fosters critical thinking about different translation theories.

6.5 The University of Banja Luka

The English Language and Literature program at the Faculty of Philology, University of Banja Luka, includes a four-year bachelor's degree followed by a one-year master's program. Graduates of the bachelor's program earn the title of Professor of English Language and Literature and are equipped for careers in teaching, editing, and translating. The master's program further qualifies them with the title of Master of English Language and Literature, noted the University of Banja Luka (n.d.), but lacks specialized tracks like those at the University of Sarajevo.

Bachelor's programs at the University of Banja Luka lack specialized courses in translation and interpretation, with only an elective in *Scientific and Technical Translation* available, found at the University of Banja Luka's website (2022). At the master's level, students have the option to take the following elective, according to the faculty's curriculum:

Translation Theory

According to the University of Banja Luka's curricula (2022), this course offers a comprehensive exploration of translation, blending theoretical concepts with practical examples from English and Serbian. It covers the history of translation, translation equivalence, and various theoretical paradigms. It examines translation techniques such as natural and directional equivalence, genre-specific translation, and prosodic effects. Additionally, it "addresses types of interpreting, including consecutive and simultaneous interpreting." (University of Banja Luka, 2022)

To assess the standards of interpreter education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this analysis will also include a comparative examination of higher education opportunities and standards in neighboring countries which are a part of the European Union, Croatia and Slovenia.

6.6 The University of Zagreb

The University of Zagreb's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences offers „a three-year undergraduate program in English Studies, leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Baccalaureus) in English Language and Literature“ (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024) but it does not offer a specialized bachelor's program specifically focused on translation and interpretation.

In addition to the undergraduate program, the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences offers a „graduate program in English Studies, which includes several specialized tracks: Literary and Cultural Studies (with a focus on Anglophone or American studies), Linguistics, Teaching, and Translation“ (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024).

Among other subjects, students specializing in translation within the master's program study specialized courses such as:

Translation of Scientific Texts

The course, according to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024), aims to enhance students' translation skills through practical experience. It focuses on analyzing translation situations, understanding communication and functional factors, identifying translation issues, and applying appropriate strategies and procedures based on the communication context and end-user needs.

Translation Theory

The course aims to familiarize students with key translation topics and contemporary theoretical and scientific approaches through lectures, reading, discussions, and group tasks, according to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024).

EU and International Organizations

The course aims to educate students on the structure and functioning of the European Union through lectures and to teach them how to translate EU-related texts, such as news articles and official documents (e.g., directives, regulations).

Translation and intercultural communication

The course involves analyzing the cultural components and text types of the source material, addressing challenges in creating the target text based on theoretical models, especially intercultural communication models. Students will use various strategies to respect cultural conventions in translation and justify their decisions while maintaining a critical perspective, according to the curricula of Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024).

Cognitive Linguistics and Translation

The seminar is said to aim to introduce students to translation theory and practice from a cognitive linguistics perspective. The knowledge gained will help students identify potential translation issues, particularly when translating to and from English.

Fields of Translation Activities

The course aims to, according to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024), familiarize students with audiovisual translation (subtitling) and literary translation. Within this course, students learn about professional norms, practices, translation skills, and strategies relevant to these fields. The course includes topics such as the translation process, quality control, pricing, deadlines, and different types of translation jobs. Students will “interact with experienced translators and participate in real translation projects” (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024), gaining foundational skills and insights into these specializations.

Graduates of the two-year master's program at the University of Zagreb receive the title of Master in English Language and Literature.

Additionally, the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024) said it offers postgraduate specialist programs that provide highly specialized knowledge and skills known to be in demand in the job market. One such program is the Postgraduate Specialist Study in Conference Interpreting, which focuses on both simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. This one-year program was first introduced at the University's Center for Postgraduate Studies in the 2005/2006 academic year.

The curriculum is designed to mirror the European Master in Conference Interpreting program, incorporating translation exercises and theoretical courses, as well as subjects that familiarize future interpreters with the structure of key European and global institutions, diplomacy, and legal and economic topics essential for their professional careers.

Prospective students must demonstrate proficiency in Croatian and foreign languages during an entrance exam, where a panel of experts evaluates their language skills and suitability for the role of a conference interpreter. To apply for the entrance exam, candidates must submit proof of a completed university degree (four-year undergraduate study or a university master's degree) (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024). They are to engage in the following subjects:

Translation Theories

The course explores the theoretical aspects of the translation process and its status as a scientific discipline. Topics include translation theory, translation as communication, translation models and procedures, translation and culture, translation as a linguistic act, Skopos theory, and translation ethics.

Methodology of Interpretation

The course covers various aspects of interpretation, including methods and forms, differences from written translation, required skills and qualities for conference interpreters, and the working context. It examines consecutive interpretation processes, note-taking, simultaneous interpretation challenges, strategies and procedures, non-linguistic elements of communication, practical aspects of the profession, and interpreter ethics.

Contemporary Croatian Language

Students explore the concepts of language and speech as parts of linguistic activity and their basic forms—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Lectures cover fundamental concepts of modern standard language studies, while seminars focus on their application to contemporary Croatian.

Verbal Communication

The course covers orthoepy, focusing on pronunciation standards, prosody, and intonation in Croatian. It addresses issues like dialectal variation and foreign name pronunciation. Students will also learn about optimal voice use and articulation for simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, with practical exercises in voice and pronunciation.

Legal System of Croatia in an International Context

According to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu's English Department / Anglistika (2024), the course covers fundamental legal concepts and institutions of the Croatian legal system, emphasizing law's role in social regulation and international integration. It also presents the basic principles

of the constitutional and legal order within a broader international context and highlights their roots in the value systems accepted by the international community, including foundational acts of the UN, EU, Council of Europe, and other organizations to which Croatia belongs.

Croatian Economy in an International Context

The course provides students with foundational knowledge of key economic trends in Croatia and major international economic issues, including “financial institutions of the EU and other international organizations.” (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024)

European Union Institutions and Translation

The course addresses European integration and institutions with a focus on translation. It covers the history and development of European institutions, EU policies, multilingualism, and translation issues, including terminology and document types. Students will learn about the EU's translation service, its operations, tools, databases, and glossaries, with contributions from experts in the field, said Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024).

Translator and Computer

This course introduces students to key advancements in computational linguistics, focusing on language resources and tools used in translation. According to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024), students learn to use electronic language resources and tools essential for professional conference interpreting.

Consecutive Interpretation Exercises

The course covers preparatory exercises for interpretation, including general and consecutive interpretation practice. It includes consecutive “interpretation without notes, note-taking exercises, consecutive interpretation with notes, and methods of preparation for working alone and within a group.” (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024)

Simultaneous Interpretation Exercises

The course content includes preparatory exercises for simultaneous interpretation, practicing simultaneous interpretation of increasingly complex speeches, and sight translation exercises. According to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024), students translate longer speeches (up to 20-25 minutes) with diverse themes and styles, allowing them to master key terminology used in translation practice.

Cultural Aspects of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

According to the Sveučilište u Zagrebu (2024), this course focuses on the interplay between linguistic and non-linguistic elements in speech, highlighting the importance of non-verbal components such as gestures, body language, and facial expressions for effective communication.

Upon successful completion of the program, students earn the title of “*sveučilišni specijalist konferencijskog prevođenja*” or University Specialist in Conference Interpreting.

The Conference Interpreting program at the University of Zagreb also includes a “*comprehensive examination process*” (Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2024). Students must first pass an oral entrance exam that involves consecutive interpreting of a short speech to demonstrate their language proficiency, general knowledge, and aptitude for conference interpreting. At the end of the winter semester, students are tested on their consecutive interpreting skills through a speech lasting up to 5 minutes. This exam is not eliminatory, but it must be passed before taking the final exams.

The final exams, conducted at the end of the summer semester, assess both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting abilities. The consecutive interpreting portion is similar to the mid-term exam but with a slightly longer and more challenging speech. The simultaneous interpreting exam involves interpreting a speech that lasts around 10 minutes. The program benefits from financial and pedagogical support from the European Commission and the European Parliament, ensuring high standards and professional guidance (University of Zagreb, 2024).

6.7 The University of Ljubljana

The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts offers a “three-year first-cycle program in Translation, leading to the professional title of Bachelor of Arts” (University of Ljubljana, n.d.). This program is said to equip students with linguistic, cultural, and contrastive textual knowledge in Slovenian, English, and a selected third language, alongside fundamental translation skills.

According to the University of Ljubljana (n.d.), graduates of this program become proficient in both written and oral communication in Slovenian and one or two foreign languages.

The program allows students to study seven distinct language combinations: Slovene-English-French, Slovene-English-Italian, Slovene-English-German, Slovene-English, Slovene-German, Slovene-French, and Slovene-Italian.

The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts also offers a two-year second-cycle program in Translation, which includes a master's degree with the same seven tracks as the ones available at the bachelor's level.

Among these tracks, the programs focusing on Slovene-English-French and Slovene-English-German are joint degree programs, “developed in collaboration with universities in France and Austria” (University of Ljubljana, n.d.). This joint program requires students to spend at least one semester studying abroad at a partner institution.

According to the University of Ljubljana's curriculum, students enrolled in the second-cycle of the Translation program (Slovene-English-German) (joint degree) study, among others, the following subjects:

Translation from English into Slovene,
Translation from German into Slovene,
Translation-Oriented Text Skills in English,
Translation-Oriented Text Skills in German,
Translation Theory,

Terminology Management,
Interpreting, and
Translation and Interpreting as a Profession.

Graduates of the Translation program are “highly skilled in translating texts from various fields and are equipped for roles in professional and literary translation, subtitling, computer-assisted translation, and lexicographic and terminological work.” (University of Ljubljana, n.d.) They receive the professional title of Master of Arts (M.A.).

The University of Ljubljana offers the only MA programs in Translation and Interpreting in Slovenia that adhere to the highest international quality standards, according to the University of Ljubljana (n.d.).

These programs have been evaluated by several prominent bodies, including the International Permanent Conference of University Institutes of Translators and Interpreters (CIUTI), the European Master’s in Conference Interpreting (EMCI) consortium—established by the European Commission’s interpreting service and the European Parliament—and the European Master’s in Translation (EMT) network under the Directorate General for Translation of the European Commission. Additionally, the department is a founding member of the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (EULITA), said the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (n.d.).

6.8 Comparing the Standards for Master Degree Studies

When it comes to international recognition, the University of Zagreb and the University of Ljubljana stand out for their international recognition and integration with European institutions and networks. This ensures their programs meet high standards in conference and simultaneous interpreting.

Regarding program structure and exams, the University of Zagreb provides detailed and structured examination processes, ensuring students are well-prepared for professional roles in

interpreting. The University of Ljubljana's programs likely follow a similar rigor, though specific details are not provided.

Regional vs. international focus: the Universities of Sarajevo and Zenica appear to have a more regional focus, potentially lacking the same level of international integration and recognition found at Zagreb and Ljubljana.

This comparison highlights the strengths and potential areas of focus for each institution's interpreting programs, particularly in how they prepare students for professional roles in conference and simultaneous interpreting.

To enhance the educational standards in conference, simultaneous, and consecutive interpreting at the University of Sarajevo and the University of Zenica, several improvements could be considered:

1. International Accreditation and Recognition

Both universities could strive to obtain accreditation from prestigious international bodies like CIUTI (International Permanent Conference of University Institutes of Translators and Interpreters) and EMCI (European Master's in Conference Interpreting). Achieving such recognition would elevate the programs to international standards, providing students with globally recognized qualifications and improving their employability in international institutions.

2. Curriculum Development

Introducing more specialized courses focused explicitly on conference, simultaneous, and consecutive interpreting would enhance the depth and breadth of students' skills.

Courses could include advanced interpreting techniques, interpretation technology, and specialized vocabulary for fields like law, diplomacy, and economics.

The curricula should be aligned with the standards and experiences of European programs, such as those offered at the University of Zagreb and the University of Ljubljana. This could include adopting the European Master in Conference Interpreting (EMCI) framework, and the Postgraduate Specialist Study in Conference Interpreting—like study on just conference interpreting.

3.Enhanced Career Support and Alumni Networks

Establish career services that assist students in finding internships and job placements in international organizations. This could include organizing job fairs, networking events, and providing one-on-one career counseling.

Building a strong alumni network and involving successful graduates in mentoring current students could provide invaluable guidance and open doors to professional opportunities.

By focusing on these areas—international recognition, curriculum development, and career support—the Universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina could significantly enhance the quality of their interpreting programs.

These improvements would not only align their programs with European and international standards but also better prepare their graduates for successful careers in the global market.

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