

Taking Stock: Evaluating New Brunswick's Current Court Interpreter Training Program

Jeff Staflund

EDUC 7026: Action Research Project

Yorkville University

April 15, 2014

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	4
Section 1: Introduction.....	5
The Importance of Training	5
New Brunswick's Current Training Program	6
Screening.....	7
Training.....	7
Post-training.....	7
Purpose of Research.....	7
Research Questions	7
Literature Review.....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	8
Training in the International Context.....	10
Canadian Context.....	11
The New Brunswick Context.....	12
The Complexity of the Court Interpreter's Task.....	13
Training Program Components.....	14
Conclusion	15
Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations.....	16
Significance of the Study	17
Section 2: Research Method and Design	17
Introduction.....	17
Design of the Study.....	18

Participants.....	18
Data Collection and Analysis.....	18
Ethical Concerns	19
Soundness of the Research.....	20
Section 3: Findings	21
Interviews.....	21
Sample of Participants	21
Main Themes	21
Components of Court Interpreter Training Programs.....	25
Discussion and Conclusions	27
Recommendations.....	29
References.....	36
Appendix A: Open Competition for Interpreters	41
Appendix B: Informed Consent Form	42
Appendix C: Interview Questions.....	44
Appendix D: Work Permission Form	49
Tables	
Table 1: New Brunswick’s program vs. common components in other programs.....	25
Table 2: Time spent on each component (VCC vs. NB)	26

Abstract

This paper describes a qualitative action research project aimed at determining whether or not the Government of New Brunswick's current training program for court interpreters is working well and if not, what could be improved. A two-pronged approach was utilized: 1) interviews with stakeholders, 2) a review of the literature on court interpreter training, as well as available documentation pertaining to the program. Six key stakeholders were chosen based on availability, geography, and the frequency and type of contact they had with court interpreters and/or the program. A case study approach was used for the interviews, given the limited number of participants and the corresponding need for rich data. The data was collected, collated and analyzed over a two-month period in early 2014. Stakeholders perceive the current program as well delivered, interesting and relevant, yet paradoxically, not highly effective at preparing candidates well. The main concerns seem to be that the program is too short and that not enough attention is given to developing practical skills. The literature review highlighted deficiencies in the areas of ethics and evaluation. The paper ends with 24 recommendations on ways to improve the current program.

Keywords: court interpreter training, legal interpreting

Section 1: Introduction

The Importance of Training

Court interpreting is a vital service. It can impact not only people's ability to participate fully in legal proceedings that directly affect their lives but also disrupt the administration of justice. "Empirical research has found that inadequate interpreting can have a significant impact on the outcomes of legal cases" (Hayes & Hale, 2010, p. 119). Poor interpretation can lead to cases being postponed or even thrown out, escalating costs, and adverse impacts on all parties. In extreme cases, misrepresented testimony can jeopardize reputations and lives.

Surprisingly, the importance of quality interpretation is often underestimated. Hayes and Hale (2010) point to a "lack of understanding of many judges, legal practitioners and police officers about the nature of language and the interpreting process, and the consequences of not employing competent interpreters at all levels of the judicial process" (p. 119). The authors conclude that:

[I]legal interpreting is a highly complex activity requiring practical and theoretical knowledge and skills, for which specialist training is essential. Being "bilingual" or highly proficient in two languages is merely a prerequisite to be able to train as an interpreter.

(Hayes & Hale, 2010, p. 129)

Just as the importance of quality interpretation is often underestimated, so too is the importance of training. The legal system is vast, complex and constantly evolving, and most court interpreters do not have formal legal training, which makes both initial and ongoing training important.

In 2010, a proficiency test was developed for Ontario court interpreters and all accredited interpreters were required to pass it (Ontario, 2010). Some 40% of the first group taking the test failed, and many of the unsuccessful candidates had been working in the field for years. Some questioned the test's validity but it appears that a lack of training might have played a significant role. My own experience in the field supports the idea of a serious shortage of training for court interpreters. As a past coordinator of the now defunct court interpreting program at Vancouver Community College aptly put it, "Playing the piano doesn't make you a concert pianist, and it's the same with language. Just speaking a language doesn't make you an interpreter" (Sadava, 2003, n.p.). Court interpreting requires serious training.

I work as an interpreter with the Government of New Brunswick and was recently asked to help improve and deliver the provincial court-interpreter training program. Given my unfamiliarity with the program and its stakeholders, I decided to begin by conducting a baseline study and evaluating the current training program. What did it look like and how did key players perceive its effectiveness? An action research project seemed the best way to get answers.

New Brunswick's Current Training Program

The Government of New Brunswick's Translation Bureau (the "Bureau") is the sole body that certifies the province's French/English court interpreters, and only those who are certified can work in court. Interpreters of other language combinations must pursue training on their own, and courts that wish to hire them must go through agencies and other contacts. Since the Bureau deals only with official-language interpreters, this research project focused only on French and English.

Screening. People interested in court interpreting must meet certain criteria before they can apply (see Appendix A). Applicants submit their résumés on line, and screened-in candidates are

invited to the Bureau to undergo a number of aptitude tests. Promising candidates receive the Court Interpreter's Manual, which summarizes the main areas of law they are likely to encounter.

Training. Candidates then spend nine days working through the binder, attending lectures, and building skills and vocabulary. Once this initial training is complete, candidates are assigned to simple, half-day court cases. After 10 months, candidates must then pass a written exam consisting of knowledge-based questions, and an oral exam, consisting of a role-play.

Post-training. Very few resources are available to court interpreters after their initial training. The Bureau has tried to offer workshops in the past but the cost is prohibitive and organizing such training is onerous because of limited staff. Interpreters are essentially left to fend for themselves.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this project was to gain a clearer picture of the current training needs of court interpreters in order to better understand and respond to those needs and plan and develop the training more effectively.

Research Questions

The primary questions were: is New Brunswick's current training program working well? If not, what can be improved?

More specifically:

1. How do key stakeholders perceive the program?
2. Is it preparing candidates well for actual court work?
3. How does the program compare to others described in the literature?
4. How can the program be improved with currently available resources?

A two-pronged approach was selected to find answers: 1) interviews with stakeholders, 2) a review of the literature on court interpreter training, as well as available documentation pertaining to the program.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework. There are many theories as to what constitutes learning. Cognitivists believe it is the acquisition of knowledge and meaning through sequential development of cognitive abilities while behaviourists argue that learning is essentially about forming habits (Yilmaz, 2011). Constructivists view learning as a process of building knowledge and understanding of the world through experience and reflection (Ültanir, 2012).

Likewise, there are many philosophical orientations when it comes to adult learning. Vocationalists see education essentially as preparation for work, liberals focus on acquisition of social and cultural knowledge, and humanists view learning through a personal growth and self-actualization lens (MacKeracher, 2004).

While all approaches have merit, a constructivist, liberal approach to learning seems to lend itself well to court interpreting. A court interpreter's work is about building an ever-expanding pool of knowledge about the legal system through study, experience and reflection, and continually developing one's skills. Yet knowledge and skill are not enough. Interpreters must also cultivate their intellect and ability to navigate the social and cultural nuances of the legal system and the various parties for whom they work. They must be able to transition smoothly from a small claims matter to a first-degree murder trial, and from a ballistics expert to a lobster fisher.

Another framework that seems well suited to the field of interpreting, particularly with respect to ongoing professional development, is the concept of communities of practice (CoPs)

developed by Lave and Wenger. Defined as “groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger, 2006, p. 1), CoPs offer a model that helps organize and coordinate learning and research efforts. Such a group already exists in the interpreting community with Critical Link, a Canadian-based “international, non-profit organization committed to the advancement of the field of community interpreting in the social, legal and health care sectors” (Critical Link International, n.d.).

Finally, because we are dealing with adult learners, one could argue that the principles developed by Knowles (1970)—that adult learners are internally motivated and self-directed, goal oriented, relevancy oriented and practical, that they bring life experience and knowledge to learning, and that they must be treated with respect—should be incorporated into any training program.

It is conceivable that a multi-faceted approach may be more effective than a single one in training interpreters, given the complexity of skills needed and the heterogeneity of legal contexts. For instance, the CoP model could provide the framework, while liberalism, constructivism and Knowles’ adult-learning principles could guide curriculum and methodology choices.

Few peer-reviewed studies focus specifically on court-interpreter training, and many of them date back to the late 80s and early 90s. Several articles are broad in their scope and focus on community interpreting with only short sections on court interpreting (e.g., Downing & Tillery, 1992), while others deal with signed rather than spoken interpreting (e.g., Napier, 2004). To answer the research questions, articles were chosen with a focus on issues related to transferrable ideas, such as descriptions of training programs and best practices, innovative training techniques, and promising research.

Five main themes emerged: training in the international context, the Canadian court-interpreting context, the New Brunswick context, the complexity of the court interpreter's task, and training program components.

Training in the International Context. The need for court interpreter training appears to be recognized worldwide, as reflected by the fact that programs have been implemented in many countries. Downing and Tillery (1992) described 30 such programs, including two aimed specifically at court interpreters: the Vancouver Community College (VCC) Certificate Program in Court Interpreting, and the Summer Institute for Court Interpreting at the University of Arizona (U of A) in Tucson. Downing and Tillery's research investigated a battery of themes, including scope, focus, level, duration and content of training, evaluation and certification of competence.

Obviously, the study is dated. There have been significant changes since 1992. VCC no longer offers the training, while the U of A stills organizes a summer program, though under a different name (Court Interpreter Training Institute website, n.d.).

Despite the study's age, it offers a baseline for comparison. For instance, VCC's program consisted of 150 hours of instruction over two terms, from October to May (Downing & Tillery, 1992). The curriculum was divided into six components: law (39 hours), interpreting skills (40), interpreting practice (56 hours), professional seminars (15), mock trials, and court observation.

Downing and Tillery (1992) also offered compelling arguments for the need to train interpreters. "[T]he proficiency and reliability of a given interpreter cannot be assumed without a formal performance evaluation and [...] interpreter training programs can make a significant difference in an individual's interpreting proficiency" (p. 7). The authors cited two studies: a New York City study (New York City Health, 1986) showing that seasoned interpreters with no

formal training committed substantially fewer errors after 50 hours of training, and an Arizona study (Gonzales, 1983) that reported significant performance improvement among interpreters after training.

Napier (2004) compared sign language interpreter training, testing and accreditation practices in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States and discussed standardized training courses, license maintenance systems, and interpreting guidelines. Of particular interest was the use of accreditation categories. At the time of the study, the U.K. had three categories: 1) interpreters with training and experience; 2) interpreters with knowledge and training but little experience; and 3) interpreters currently enrolled in training. The division merits further consideration. In New Brunswick, a level-1 interpreter can only perform consecutive interpretation, while a level-2 interpreter can do both consecutive and simultaneous. The distinction accounts for skill but not experience, which is extremely important in court. It would be worth studying how the triple-tier system might apply to New Brunswick.

Canadian Context. Bergeron (2002) and Viens, Bastin, Duhamel, and Moreau (2002) offered a comprehensive overview of the evolution of the right to interpretation in Canadian courts. That right has existed for nearly 100 years and continues to be relevant as the country welcomes an ever-growing number of immigrants (Bergeron, 2002). In 1915, the Criminal Court of Appeal, in the matter of *R. v. Lee Kun* (1915), commented that an accused who did not speak the language of the court was entitled to have the evidence translated into his or her own language. Those comments laid the groundwork for future cases involving interpretation (Bergeron, 2002).

Section 2 of the *Canadian Bill of Rights* clarified that:

no law of Canada shall be construed or applied so as to [...] (g) deprive a person of the right to the assistance of an interpreter in any proceedings in which he is involved or in

which he is a party or a witness, before a court, commission, board or other tribunal, if he does not understand or speak the language in which such proceedings are conducted.

(Canadian Bill of Rights, 1960, n.p.)

Later documents and decisions further entrenched the right to interpretation, including Quebec's *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* in 1975 and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1982. In 1994, a pivotal case was heard before the Supreme Court of Canada (*R. v. Tran*, 1994). A Vietnamese individual successfully appealed an assault conviction on the grounds that his interpreter had only summarized the evidence. The case led to five standards that guide the provision of services today (Viens et al., 2002): interpretation must be continuous, precise, impartial, competent, and contemporaneous.

On a practical level, there is a veritable patchwork of approaches to court interpretation throughout Canada (Edoo, Fourier-Ruggles, Mattis, Matulewicz & Rogers, 2010). Despite commonalities, each province and territory strives to meet its obligation to provide interpretation in different ways. There is no training or professional development body governed by a federal authority, although there has been a recent attempt to create a pan-Canadian training program (see paragraph on the *Centre canadien de français juridique* on page 14 of this report). Some jurisdictions, like New Brunswick, have a centralized body that coordinates the hiring and supervision of interpreters while others leave that role up to each individual court (Edoo et al., 2010). In addition, only a handful of institutions provide prospective interpreters with initial training and even fewer offer ongoing professional development (Edoo et al., 2010).

The New Brunswick Context. New Brunswick is obligated to provide court interpretation services to its citizens under the province's *Official Languages Act* (Official Languages Act, n.d.). In 2009, there were 10 court interpreters serving the entire province, eight of whom were

over the age of 55 (Surette, 2009). That number had fallen to nine by 2012 (Surette, 2012). There was an urgent need to ensure an adequate supply of interpreters. The *Court Interpreter's Manual*, created by the Bureau in the early 1990s to train court interpreters, was revamped in 2010 (Translation Bureau, 2010) and the current nine-day program was implemented, with the hope that seven full-time court interpreters could be trained within the next five years (Surette, 2012).

The Complexity of the Court Interpreter's Task. A number of researchers (Bergeron, 2002; Bonilla & Farkas, 2006; Jacobsen, n.d.; Monaghan, 2006; Russell, 2004) explored the complexity of court interpreting. Court interpreters must not only be fluent in their working languages. They must also understand the legal system and its jargon (Monaghan, 2006). It takes years to attain a certain level of mastery.

Often as the only persons who speak both languages fluently in the courtroom, interpreters may be sensitive to dynamics not apparent to others, which in turn creates unique ethical challenges (Jacobsen, n.d.). For instance, the court interpreter's role is not to advocate on behalf of the accused but if the interpreter perceives that the accused does not fully understand the proceedings, should he or she intervene or simply continue to interpret? Interpreters facing similar situations in Danish courts were found to add content as a coping strategy (Jacobsen, n.d.).

In addition, court interpreters must develop strategies to deal with different styles of communication in order to "promote cohesion within the narrative and to create meaningful exchanges between parties that do not share the same language and culture" (Russell, 2004, p. 9). Russell described the difficulty of that task for sign language interpreters:

The deaf witnesses wanted to present their perspectives on the events that led them to the court proceedings. Crown attorneys wanted to lead the witnesses through their narrative

and to emphasize the critical details of the case. Alternatively, the defense lawyer wanted to cast doubt on the witnesses' credibility and to downplay some of the events being relayed by the witness. These intents and the courtroom setting shaped the context of interaction, and added to the challenge that the interpreters faced in ensuring participants' goals were met and the interpretation represented the meaning being woven together by the participants.

(Russell, 2004, p. 2)

Clearly, court interpreters perform a challenging task, further underscoring the need for training.

Training Program Components. The composition of effective court interpreter training programs and innovative new approaches to training are additional areas of importance to consider. Downing and Tillery (1992) identified ethics, terminology development, cultural awareness, note-taking and interpreting/translating as key components. Bonilla and Farkas (2006) recommended four: 1) terminology; 2) standards and ethics; 3) "stories from the trenches" (p. 48); and 4) role play.

Roy, Winston, Monikowski, Pollitt, Peterson, Davis, and Metzger (2004) discussed the effectiveness of various training techniques: the use of videotapes of working interpreters, discourse mapping, critical discourse analysis, recall protocols for assessing comprehension, the use of translation techniques to teach interpreting, and interactive role plays. Each technique could be explored further for New Brunswick's training program.

Gile (2001) recommended ongoing evaluation, gradually moving from a focus on discrete aspects of the interpretation process to a focus on product. It may be difficult to move gradually

in a nine-day training program but the concept of ongoing evaluation is worth considering. As it stands, in New Brunswick's program, success hinges on two final exams.

Ko (2008) explored the effectiveness of sound-only teleconferencing in the training of interpreters and found that students trained by distance mode achieved similar scores to students taught using conventional methods. The author concluded that with the proper preparation, distance training could be technologically and pedagogically feasible. With interpreters spread throughout New Brunswick, this finding could have important implications not only for the current program but also professional development.

Still on the topic of technology, discussing two recent international surveys of court professionals, Knox and Kiefer (2014) reported that most respondents believe it is highly likely that courts will implement remote interpretation by 2025. This has financial and pedagogical implications for future training. New equipment may be required, and the training would need to be adapted.

Finally, it is worth mentioning recent efforts in 2011 by the *Centre canadien de français juridique* to initiate a pan-Canadian professional development series for official-language court interpreters (Violy, 2011). Stakeholders from around the country were canvassed, with a view to gauging the training needs in this area. A final report was produced containing an analysis of the Canadian context, four recommendations, including developing an experimental national training program, and a preliminary schedule of training that was to be implemented from 2011 to 2013. Unfortunately, the initiative was shelved for lack of funding before a detailed training program could be prepared. That said, the Centre could be a potential partner.

Conclusion. Hence, the literature supports the notion that court interpreting involves a complex set of skills and requires extensive training. It also provides examples of curricula against which

the current program can be compared and offers techniques that could be tested in New Brunswick.

The review also four ideas that might enhance the current training program: revisiting the classification system for interpreters, revamping the evaluation process, incorporating technology, and partnering with like-minded organizations.

If a communities-of-practice model were adopted, the community members might want to experiment to see what works, keeping in mind that a multi-faceted approach may be more effective than a single one.

The perceptions of program stakeholders could bring additional perspectives to the issues and ideas raised in the literature. A small action research project was carried out to gather those perceptions.

Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

This research project was approached from the perspective of a trained, practicing and experienced interpreter with a background in adult education. It involved a small number of stakeholders. It was hoped that limiting the number might produce in-depth feedback not available through more superficial methods of inquiry. It was understood that the small number might also reduce the applicability of the findings outside New Brunswick but it was felt that at least some of the conclusions may be of interest given the broad similarity in provincial and territorial court systems and the fact that the *Criminal Code* and many other federal laws apply nationally.

The choice was made to focus solely on New Brunswick's training program. It was the most immediate teaching need, and the study was the capstone project for a Master of Education

degree program, which limited its scope. Furthermore, since each province and territory seems to have its own approach to court interpreting, it was felt that limiting the scope was appropriate.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study will lead to more effective training of court interpreters in New Brunswick and give rise not only to better initial training but ongoing professional development. This will benefit not only interpreters, who will feel better prepared for and supported in their work, but also the provincial justice system as a whole and all who come into contact with it.

The hope is also to share New Brunswick's experience within Canada's language-services community and other jurisdictions, thereby contributing to the national and even international dialogue on improving interpretation services for all.

Finally, it is hoped that the study will add to the practice-based research available on the topic, and in so doing, enrich the field of adult education.

Section 2: Research Method and Design

Introduction

The project was conducted in two stages: a review of the literature and relevant administrative documentation, and interviews with key stakeholders.

Because the research questions called for perceptions, opinions and feelings, it was felt that a qualitative rather than quantitative approach would be more useful. Given the limited number of participants, the data needed to be rich so that meaningful conclusions could be drawn from them. Case studies lend themselves well to this because they “focus on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon [...resulting in...] a rich description of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 109). Case studies are often used to

describe and evaluate programs or approaches to ongoing programs and are especially useful “for exploring an area of a field of practice not well researched or conceptualized” (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 112). Indeed, the literature review revealed little research directly related to court interpreter training.

However, some quantitative analysis was needed to compare programs.

Design of the Study

The researcher’s philosophy is primarily interpretivist/constructivist. An interpretivist philosophy is one that “emphasizes the ability of the individual to construct meaning” (Mack, 2010, p. 7). One of the project’s focuses was to explore the current training program’s significance for key stakeholders. One can have a scientifically sound and efficient training program, but if stakeholders do not feel it works well and “buy into” it, it has little value. An important question was whether or not key stakeholders felt the program was preparing candidates well for their work and if not, what could be improved.

Participants. Six individuals—two past trainees, two government officials, one freelancer and one court official—were chosen for the interviews. They were selected in consultation with Bureau officials and the researcher, based on availability, the frequency and type of contact they had with court interpreters and/or the program, and where they lived. Efforts were made to choose a variety of perspectives and represent different regions of the province.

Data Collection and Analysis. In early February 2014, the researcher identified and contacted the potential participants to explain the purpose of the study and invite them to take part. All accepted the invitation, and places, dates and times for the interviews were set.

Between mid-February and mid-March 2014, each participant was interviewed in person, with the only exception being one stakeholder who preferred to use Skype. Basic demographic

data (job title, gender and age) were collected at the start of each interview. Some responses were noted during the interview, but the exchanges were also recorded using either an ICD-P620 Sony audio-recorder or the Voice Recorder application on an iPhone 4S.

In early March 2014, the researcher began compiling the data and writing the final report. Yorkville University's allocated supervisor, the Dean of Education provided feedback and guidance throughout the process.

Ethical Concerns. Since the project involved a Bureau program, the researcher made sure his employer's approved the project (see Appendix D).

Because the research was conducted as the capstone project for a Master of Education degree program and involved interviewing people, a research ethics application was submitted to Yorkville University's Research Ethics Board outlining the due diligence that would be performed in relation to the project's ethical dimensions.

Given the researcher's double role as researcher and employee and the possibility that trainees and freelancers may feel obligated to take part or risk losing work, time was spent during the initial contact and again at the start of the interview to explain the project's intent and reassure interviewees that participation was voluntary and anonymous. Informed consent was obtained from all participants (See Appendix B). Participants were also told their responses were being recorded and would be transcribed, kept under lock and key and destroyed after the study.

Anonymity was ensured by not discussing the names of participants with anyone and excluding as much identifying information as possible from the report. As an additional safeguard, it was decided that only the University would receive the full report. The Bureau would get only the recommendations.

Keeping all hard-copy documents and electronic files containing personal data under lock and key ensured confidentiality. All electronic files were password-protected and saved on a USB key that could be locked up when not in use. Only the researcher knew the password.

Soundness of the Research. The researcher endeavoured to implement Creswell's (2003) strategies to enhance the soundness of qualitative research.

To achieve credibility, the following strategies were employed: 1) triangulation (consulting participants with differing perspectives and using different methods of data collection); 2) member checking (sending all participants a copy of their transcript and asking them whether they wanted to change anything); and 3) checking with the academic supervisor throughout the research process.

To promote generalizability, the researcher attempted to obtain a rich description of the situation by asking comprehensive questions during the interviews and reviewing the documents thoroughly.

Confirmability was addressed by including past and present stakeholders in the study.

Finally, the researcher also attempted to follow the recommendations for achieving validity listed in Ali and Yusof (2011): "listen more than talk; record accurately; begin writing early and share ideas with others in the setting; provide rich and complete descriptions; report fully; be candid; seek feedback; try to keep a balance through rigorous subjectivity; and write accurately" (p. 31).

Section 3: Findings

Interviews

Sample of Participants. The sample consisted of a 38-year-old female (P1); a 50-year-old male (P2); a 48-year-old male (P3); a 59-year-old male (P4); a 58-year-old female (P5); and a 38-year-old male (P6).

Main Themes. There seemed to be a consensus that interpreter performance has improved in the past few years. “The Bureau has done well with few resources” was a theme echoed by many. P4, in particular, said he was generally very pleased with the service provided and noted that the level and quality of interpreters had improved in recent years: “You can tell the interpreters now are more educated. They speak, they’re more fluent in both official languages. Most of the time you can’t denote an accent either in English or in French.” P3 commented that although the quality had increased, interpreters were still interrupting too much. He felt they needed to develop their memory and note-taking skills so as not to impede the flow of communication. P1 added that most complaints about interpreters were based on unrealistic expectations, such as requiring interpreters to work for long stretches of time without a break.

P1 suggested that the Moncton courthouse should hire a full-time team of interpreters since it is the busiest court. P1, P5, P6 wondered whether it would be possible to get the Department of Justice more involved in the training. They felt the latter could provide expertise, funding and resources.

P1 and P3 provided useful background information on the Bureau. P3 described the initial wave of interpreters hired in 1967 when the Legislature decided to offer simultaneous interpretation. Most of those interpreters had received training in a field other than interpretation and had to learn on the job. The second wave arrived in the 1990s and was trained by the first

wave. At the time, the Bureau hired candidates for two years and offered them intensive training in both simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. P1 explained that in 2009, a new chief interpreter was hired. That individual set about to revise the manual and bring all court interpreters to Fredericton for re-testing. Her efforts were met with resistance and fear. Some interpreters did not pass the tests and were not rehired.

All interviewees agreed that interpreters need to be familiar with the legal system. As P3 put it, “interpreters are not parrots.” P1, P2, P3 and P4 felt that simply knowing legal terminology is insufficient. Interpreters need to know who is who in the court room, be flexible, keep abreast of developments in the field, be able to sight-translate jurisprudence, know how to prepare for assignments, and possess a general understanding of court procedure and common legal arguments. The importance of memory-building and note-taking were also mentioned.

Most interviewees who had seen the manual felt it was useful and relevant. P2, P5 and P6 described it as well written and a good introduction to the field. P5 and P6 liked its structure and believed they had been given enough time to read it before the training began. P2 and P6 felt the manual was neither too difficult nor too easy.

P6 was concerned that explanations were not always clear, that there were not enough exercises, and that the manual lacked an oral component. “Everything is written. Interpretation, after all, is a spoken art,” he argued, “so why are there not more speaking and listening exercises?” P2, P3 and P5 wanted new sections dealing with topics like note-taking and practical issues (e.g., where to stand, how to address judges, whether water bottles and food were allowed in court, etc.).

There was unanimous praise for the guest lectures, which were deemed helpful, well delivered, of sufficient duration, and interesting. They allowed participants to ask questions and

were perceived to provide a good overview of the legal system from a non-interpreting perspective.

Most respondents felt the training was too short. P1 believed that the training just gets candidates to the starting line and then leaves them to figure out the rest alone. P3 suggested the training should last six months and include intensive supervision. Only P2 felt the training was long enough but quickly added “for someone with an interpreting background.”

Most people were pleased with the venue and location of the training. The rooms in Fredericton and Moncton were considered to have good lighting and comfortable chairs and were easy to find. Several respondents indicated that greater emphasis should be placed on recruiting and training interpreters in north-western New Brunswick since that is where the shortage of interpreters is felt the most. P6 argued that training in different locations gave candidates an opportunity to see different courthouses and got them used to traveling. All interviewees were open to the idea of taking some if not all the training on line.

Stakeholders who had had contact with the initial screening process generally found it effective. P2 believed it allowed evaluators to see who was ready. P6 described the process as “very interesting and short, but to-the-point.” P3 commented, “a résumé is fine but we need to meet the candidates and see what they can actually do.”

Stakeholders had both positive and negative comments about the final tests. P2 and P3 felt the written test was fine because it measured whether interpreters had actually read and processed the manual. They believed that interpreters needed to be ready for anything. P2, P3, P5 and P6 thought that enough time was given for the written and oral exams and that the exams themselves were not unreasonably difficult. P5 added that exam administrators had made her feel

at ease. P2 commented that the tests demonstrated preparedness for work in that they allowed candidates to demonstrate the extent of the knowledge they could access if needed.

P3 argued that language proficiency standards should be relaxed. He pointed out that the quality of French spoken by lawyers and judges in the province was not always exemplary so interpreters should not be held to unreasonably high standards. He also felt that a lot of weight should be given to perseverance because court interpreters usually work on their own, in conditions that can be stressful and challenging. They need to be able to “keep on going when the going gets tough”.

P6 felt the exams were fair overall but had a number of suggestions. First, candidates should receive detailed feedback if they fail a test so they know where to focus their efforts. Second, questions should be based on statistically relevant information, i.e., things that interpreters must know, rather than interesting but non-essential information. Third, questions should be weighted by importance. The current written exam attributes two points per question, regardless of length of response, subject or difficulty. Fourth, candidates should be allowed to attempt the exams as many times as they want. He likened the process to obtaining a driver's license, where candidates can try until they pass. He added that candidates could perhaps even pay after their first attempt. And finally, the oral exam should sound more natural. Currently, two interpreters play the role of a lawyer and witness and read from a script.

All interviewees agreed that post-training support is necessary. P2 and P5 felt that candidates need only be accompanied on the first few assignments, whereas P1 and P3 felt that the Bureau should hire candidates on a temporary, full-time basis. P3 stressed the importance of providing a forum for debriefing after difficult assignments. P5 wished that interpreters could meet once every year or two to network and learn. Ideas such as mentoring, a dedicated website,

on-line support in the form of courses and webinars, and in-person professional development sessions were supported by everyone.

The importance of confidence-building was another common theme. Finally, P6 felt the training was too “linear” both in the sense of superficial (i.e., not going deep enough) and undifferentiated (i.e., giving equal weight to everything instead of focussing on the most important aspects).

Components of Court Interpreter Training Programs

Downing and Tillery (1992) listed the components common to interpreter training programs around the world. The following table indicates to what extent, if any, New Brunswick’s program addresses those components.

Component	Sub-category	New Brunswick’s Program
Content	Ethics	—
	Terminology development	✓
	Cultural awareness (i.e., legal system)	✓
	Note-taking	✓
	Interpreting/translating skills development	✓ Interpretation but not translation
Teaching methods	Interpreting simulations	✓ (Role play, use of transcripts)
	Guest lectures	✓
	Language instruction	Candidates must master both

		languages before training
	Lab work	✓ (Memory-building, sight translation)

Table 1: New Brunswick’s program vs. common components in other programs

The table suggests that New Brunswick’s current training covers most of the topics common to other programs. There does, however, seem to be a deficiency in the area of ethics, and the fact that none of the stakeholders mentioned it as an important consideration for court interpreters seems to suggest that ethics might have been neglected in their training. This is a concern since interpreters are constantly confronted with ethical situations (e.g., being asked for advice or required to perform duties beyond the scope of their role, issues of confidentiality, etc.).

Downing and Tillery (1992) also recorded the time spent by many of the training programs on each component. For instance, Vancouver Community College’s (VCC’s) program was organized as follows:

Topic	VCC (hours)	% of total	NB (hours)	% of total
Total training hours	150		54	
Law (systems, procedures, terminology)	39	26%	18	33%
Skills development (lectures and exercises, mock trials, court observation)	96	64%	36	67%
Seminars (ethics, public speaking, research)	15	10%	0	0%

Figure 2: Time spent on each component (VCC vs. NB)

The table shows that both programs spend a similar percentage of time on skills development and learning about the legal system and terminology, and confirms that New Brunswick spends no time on ethics. The table also highlights the fact that New Brunswick's program is substantially shorter than the VCC program (54 compared with 150 hours).

Discussion and Conclusions

The answer to the primary questions of this project appears to be that the current program is perceived as well delivered, interesting and relevant, yet paradoxically, not highly effective at preparing candidates well. The main concerns seem to be that the program is too short and that not enough attention is given to developing practical skills. The program is substantially shorter than other programs cited in the literature. Ethics is also not given proper consideration in the training.

How can the program be improved based on currently available resources? This is a difficult question to answer. The Bureau has no budget for training. It must apply each year for a grant under the Provision of Official Language Services (POLS) program, which only pays half the expenses. Staff interpreters generate money for the Bureau, so when staff is assigned to training, the Bureau loses income. Many of the stakeholders' recommendations come with a substantial price tag that cannot be passed on to the client. Mentoring, for example, would require hiring more experienced interpreters to accompany mentees. If staff interpreters are assigned as mentors, then their income is lost to the Bureau. Similarly, if the Bureau lengthens the training period, the costs increase: preparation time, food and accommodations, lost income-generating capacity for trainers. One could argue that a long-term increase in quality

compensates for a short-term monetary loss, but the reality is that more funding is required at a time when the government is forced to reduce spending.

It is difficult to identify the current program's philosophical underpinnings. There is evidence of cognitivist, behaviourist and constructivist elements throughout but no dominant approach. Instead, the program appears to have been designed by practitioners well versed in the needs of their profession but not necessarily adult-learning theory. This makes sense if we consider that the first wave of interpreters had to learn on the job and then train the second wave. They essentially built a program based on their own experience as interpreters and what they understood was needed.

The transition to a community-of-practice approach might involve a shift of decision-making power to the broader community—something often difficult for governments to do—but not necessarily a huge cultural shift. In fact, one could argue that it was a community of practitioners that created the current manual and program. That is one of the program's strengths, i.e., the fact that people working in the field designed it.

The program's Achilles' heel, however, seems to be that educators were not involved in the planning. The evaluation component in particular appears to have been neglected. Authentic evaluation is ongoing, communicated and employs a variety of methods (Fenwick & Parsons, 2009) yet the current program does not seem to provide clear objectives or give adequate feedback to participants, and success hinges on two high-stakes exams.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are geared to enhancing the program and stem entirely from the findings. They are in no specific order although revisiting the way candidates are evaluated might be a good place to start. Ultimately, the Bureau must decide how much time and resources it is willing to dedicate to improving the program and set its own priorities. If the choice is made to transition to a community-of-practice framework, it would be up to the members of that community to decide which avenues to explore.

1. **Revisit the way candidates are evaluated.** The current system needs revisiting to ensure that evaluation is more ongoing, participative and holistic. Less weight should be given to exams and more to ongoing development and observation. Furthermore, more input is needed from the trainees themselves. The evaluation methods must also be communicated more clearly to candidates so they know what is expected of them and better understand what they need to improve.
2. **Clarify what is meant by levels 1 and 2.** The stakeholders interviewed in this project were not clear on the distinction between levels 1 and 2. Some thought it meant the ability to perform consecutive versus simultaneous interpreting. Others thought it meant being able to work on longer and more complex cases, while still others believed it meant criminal versus civil matters. The levels need to be more clearly delineated and communicated. The U.K.'s triple-tier model mentioned in the literature might provide an interesting starting place. Once the levels are clear, the training and exams would need to be redeveloped.
3. **Change the wording of the current advertisement.** It is difficult to find candidates who meet the criteria. The advertisement for court interpreters posted on the

government website (see Appendix A) reads as though candidates must be based in Fredericton, which is not true. The Bureau could be losing out on qualified candidates who think they have to relocate.

4. **Foster a better understanding of the court interpreter's role among clients and interpreters alike.** Clients seem frequently unable to recognize good interpreting and often impose unrealistic expectations on interpreters. Likewise, court interpreters and trainees do not always sufficiently understand the ethical dimensions of their work or the importance of ethics, and the current program does not adequately address the issue.
5. **Foster better communication between the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Bureau.** A number of stakeholders suggested closer ties between the two entities. Better communication could lead to increased cooperation and a better understanding of each other's needs. This might include meetings between officials, participation at DOJ conferences and seminars, and presentations at professional development sessions. For instance, Judge Yvette Finn, based in Caraquet, provides French-language training to judges. The Bureau might want to consider using that opportunity to address those judges, who are likely to encounter interpreters in the course of their work.
6. **Explore partnerships in the legal community.** Consider memberships in or partnerships with the Bar Association, Legal Aid and other organizations, and explore the possibility of presenting workshops to private-practice lawyers.
7. **Explore the sharing of responsibilities and costs with DOJ.** Three stakeholders commented that since DOJ is the expert in legal matters and the primary user of court

interpreters, it follows that they should play a greater role in the training of candidates, even if their participation is only financial. DOJ could provide instructors, material and funding, leaving the Bureau to focus on building interpreting skills. DOJ could also put an actual courtroom at the disposal of trainers, provide lawyers for mock trials and even participate in, or assume responsibility for, the coordination of court interpreters.

8. **Explore the idea of hiring full-time interpreters for the Moncton courthouse, where the need for interpreters is the greatest.** If a cost analysis showed it would be less expensive to hire full-time interpreters rather than freelancers, perhaps an arrangement could be made to that effect.
9. **Target north-western New Brunswick for the next training session.** That region requires interpreters on a regular basis but currently has none living in the area. Efforts should be made to recruit and train candidates there.
10. **Obtain statistics on the frequency and type of court cases and offences, and adapt the training and testing accordingly.** Statistics might allow the Bureau to better focus the training and evaluation on what candidates actually need to know.
11. **Develop a list of on-line resources for court interpreters.** A web page listing available information and resources could go a long way to supporting interpreters after training. It would save time and money because everything would be kept in a single location. The page could include role-plays, case studies, videos and simulations more suited to a constructivist approach where learners build their knowledge through reflection and experience. An on-line resource would also fit a CoP approach because members could build it together.

12. **Develop a repository of hard-copy resources for court interpreters.** Similarly, the Bureau already has a small collection of legal resources and many other resources are likely already available. Such a repository could be created in cooperation with DOJ or the *Université de Moncton*'s centre for legal translation and terminology, and should be readily accessible.
13. **Develop a practical component to complement the current manual.** Court interpreting is a practical art, so it stands to reason that trainees would benefit from a greater understanding of the practical aspects of the work. This could include coping strategies (what to do when...), a FAQ section, stories from the trenches, etc., and could be developed at little expense by soliciting contributions from seasoned interpreters, again in keeping with a CoP framework and a cognitivist approach to learning.
14. **Develop a training module on memory building and note taking.** It takes time and experimentation to build one's memory and develop a personal note-taking system. Many stakeholders expressed a desire for help in this area, and both skills lend themselves well to weekend or evening workshops. Since all stakeholders expressed willingness to participate in on-line learning, on-line sessions could also be developed to accommodate participants from all locations. The OmniJoin web conferencing software could be used to facilitate the sessions.
15. **Place more emphasis on building confidence and creating a safe learning environment.** Many stakeholders emphasized that confidence building is paramount at the beginning. This could be better incorporated into the current training by

planning for a more gradual progression in the level of difficulty, team-building exercises and so on. More thought needs to be given to this aspect.

16. **Provide a forum for debriefing after difficult assignments.** Beginner and seasoned interpreters alike occasionally need to talk through difficult situations and ask questions. The Bureau, perhaps in cooperation with DOJ, could explore different ways of enabling such discussions (e.g., an on-line discussion board, dedicated contact persons, a buddy system, etc.). Confidentiality would be an important consideration.
17. **Record speaking and listening exercises for trainees.** Interpretation is a spoken art, so it makes sense that trainees need exercises and opportunities to practise listening and speaking. There is currently too much focus on reading and writing. The Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General has audio files on its website for candidates preparing for the court interpreting exam (Preparing for the Bilingual Court Interpreting Test, n.d.). The Bureau should prepare similar exercises with an emphasis on the New Brunswick context. Exercises could include exposure to various accents and dialects spoken around the province, as well as different registers and topics. Exercises should be as realistic as possible and professionally recorded. This could be done in cooperation with DOJ.
18. **Explore a partnership with the *Université de Moncton*.** The U de M offers an undergraduate Translation degree that includes an Introduction to Interpretation Course, which two stakeholders had taken. A few stakeholders also mentioned that the U de M has a courtroom for its law program and wondered whether it would be possible to use the room. It would be worth exploring what types of sharing could

take place. Perhaps the Bureau could send an experienced interpreter to speak during the Intro course in exchange for the right to use the University's courtroom for training interpreters.

19. **Explore participation in regional competitions for law students such as the McKelvey Cup.** One stakeholder provided the name of a contact person for the McKelvey Cup at *Université de Moncton*. The Bureau should follow up on this lead and enquire about participating, or at the very least observing, these types of events when held locally. Currently, the McKelvey Cup uses a simultaneous interpreter, yet simultaneous is not the standard form of interpretation used in court, so students are being exposed to the exception rather than the norm.
20. **Incorporate more technology into the training.** Stakeholders expressed willingness to embrace technology, and its greater use could enhance the training experience by bridging geography, making the training more engaging, and enabling greater communication.
21. **Develop more post-training support.** Stakeholders identified this as a key issue. Various options could be tested, depending on resources and interest: on-line lessons, exercises, resources and discussion boards, professional development sessions, a mentorship program, an "open-door" policy where freelancers could meet with the chief interpreter when they were in the region, or even an online social network.
22. **Clarify the exam policy.** Clarify the policy with regard to the maximum number of attempts. This should include establishing a waiting period between exams, exploring the idea of charging candidates to re-try failed exams, and allowing experienced interpreters to challenge the exams without taking the training.

23. **Explore a partnership with the *Centre canadien de français juridique (CCFJ)*.** As previously mentioned, the CCFJ attempted to establish a cross-Canada training program for court interpreters in 2011. The initiative never got past the report stage but the Centre may be open to collaborating on a pilot project in New Brunswick. The Centre may also be willing to share its resources, expertise and network of contacts.
24. **Explore the implications of remote interpreting.** In cooperation with DOJ, the Bureau needs to explore how and when remote interpreting might be implemented in the province's courts and what the implications might be for training in terms of costs, infrastructure and methodology.

References

- Ali, A. M., & Yusof, H. (2011). Quality in qualitative studies: The case of validity, reliability and generalizability. *Issues in Social and Environmental Accounting*, 5(1/2 December 2011), 25-64.
- Bergeron, G. (2002). L'interprétation en milieu judiciaire. *Meta : journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal*, 47(2), 225-232.
- Bonilla, N., & Farkas, A. (2006). Mid-career training for medical interpreters. *MultiLingual*, March 26, 47-51.
- Canadian Bill of Rights, c. 44 S.C. § (1960).
- Court Interpreter Training Institute website. (n.d.). <http://nci.arizona.edu/citi>. Accessed on April 4, 2014.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Pubs.
- Critical Link International. (n.d.). <http://criticallink.org>. Accessed on April 4, 2014.
- Downing, B. T., & Tillery, K. H. (1992). *Professional Training for Community Interpreters. A Report on Models of Interpreter Training and the Value of Training (CURA-92-9)*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Minnesota University. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.
- Edoo, A., Fournier-Ruggles, L., Mattis, C., Matulewicz, K., & Rogers, F. (2010). *White Paper on Quality Interpretation Services*. Retrieved from York University, Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law Program and Justice System Administration Program: www.yorku.ca/igreene/documents/ACCAWhitePaper11b.doc
- Fenwick, T.J., & Parsons, J. (2009). *The art of evaluation: a resource for educators and trainers* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.

- Gile, D. (2001). L'évaluation de la qualité de l'interprétation en cours de formation. *Meta : journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal*, 46(2), 379-393.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7202/002890ar>
- Gonzales, R. D. (1983). *Summer institute for court interpretation: a description and evaluation of a pilot training model*. Tucson: Department of English, University of Arizona.
- Hayes, A., & Hale, S. (2010). Appeals on incompetent interpreting. *Journal of Judicial Administration*, 20 119, 119-130. Retrieved from
http://alejandrahayes.com/images/journal%20of%20judicial%20admin_hayes_hale.pdf
- Jacobsen, B. (n.d.). *Additions in Court Interpreting: A PhD Project Investigating the Language of Court Interpreters in Danish Courtrooms* (Doctoral thesis, The Aarhus School of Business, Denmark). Retrieved from <http://criticallink.org/conferences/conference-papers/critical-link-2>
- Knowles, M. S. (1970). *The modern practice of adult education: From andragogy to pedagogy* (Rev. ed.). Retrieved from
http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/medicine/hospitalists/downloads/cc4_articles/Education%20Theory/Andragogy.pdf
- Knox, P., & Kiefer, P. (2014). *Handout for shared interest group #3: Court trends in 2025 - and Future of courts 2025: The next big thing - Combined spring and summer 2013 survey results*. Paper presented at the National Association for Court Management (NACM) 2014 Midyear Conference, Savannah, GA. Retrieved from
<http://nacmconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Handout-1-10-2014.pdf>

- Ko, L. (2008). Teaching Interpreting by Distance Mode: An Empirical Study. *Meta : journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal*, 53(4), 814-840.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7202/019649ar>
- MacKeracher, D. (2004). *Making sense of adult learning* (2nd ed.). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Mack, L. (2010). The Philosophical Underpinnings of Educational Research. *Polyglossia*, 19, 5-11.
- Merriam, S. B., & Simpson, E. L. (2000). *A guide to research for educators and trainers of adults* (2nd ed.). Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company.
- Monaghan, P. (2006). Legal Language, on the Fly. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52(24), A56.
- Napier, J. (2004). Sign Language Interpreter Training, Testing and Accreditation: An International Comparison. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 149(4), 350-359.
- New York City Health and Hospital Corporation. (1986). *Ad hoc interpretation in psychiatric care: report on the pilot program*. New York City: Health and Hospitals Corporation, Office of Mental Hygiene Services.
- Official Languages Act. (Assented to June 7, 2002). Retrieved on April 12, 2014 from the Government of New Brunswick Website: <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowPdf/cs/O-0.5.pdf>
- Ontario court interpreters failing tests. (2010). Retrieved March 15, 2014, from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-court-interpreters-failing-tests-1.871586>
- Preparing for the Bilingual Court Interpreting Test. (n.d.).
www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/interpreters/bilingual_test/. Accessed on April 6, 2014.

R. v. Lee Kun, [1915] 1 K.B. 337 (C.C.A.).

R. v. Tran, [1994] 2 SCR 951.

Roy, C., Winston, E., Monikowski, C., Pollitt, K., Peterson, R., Davis, J. E., & Metzger, M. (2004). *The Critical Link: Innovative Theory and Practice for Educating Interpreters*. Paper presented at the Critical Link 4 International Conference, Stockholm, Sweden. Retrieved from criticallink.org/conferences/conference-papers/critical-link-4

Russell, D. (2004, May). *Interpreting Strategies in Legal Discourse*. Paper presented at the Critical Link 4 International Conference, Stockholm, Sweden. Retrieved from <http://criticallink.org/conferences/conference-papers/critical-link-4>

Sadava, M. (2003, December). Misinterpreting: crisis in court interpreting. www.lawyersweekly.ca. Retrieved from www.lawyersweekly.ca/index.php?section=article&articleid=1306

Surette, L. (2009). *Briefing Note to Deputy Minister, Department of Supply and Services*.

Surette, L. (2012). *Succession Plan for Interpretation Section*.

Translation Bureau. (2010). *Court Interpreter's Manual / Manuel de l'interprète judiciaire*.

Ültanir, E. (2012, July). An epistemological glance at the constructivist approach: Constructivist learning in Dewey, Piaget, and Montessori. *International Journal Of Instruction*, 5(2), 195-212. Retrieved from www.e-iji.net

Viens, C., Bastin, G. L., Duhamel, S., & Moreau, R. (2002). L'accréditation des interprètes judiciaires au Palais de justice de Montréal. *Meta : journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal*, 47(2), 289-293.

Violy, C. (2011). *Rapport final. Projet pancanadien de perfectionnement en français juridique auprès des interprètes judiciaires (anglais-français) - Phase 1.* : Centre canadien de français juridique.

Wenger, E. (2006). Communities of practice: A brief introduction. Retrieved November 19, 2013, from <http://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/06-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>

Yilmaz, K. (2011). The cognitive perspective on learning: Its theoretical underpinnings and implications for classroom practices. *The Clearing House*, 84(5), 204-212.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2011.568989>

APPENDIX A: Open competition for interpreters

(<https://www.ere.gnb.ca/competition.aspx?lang=E&t=Y>, accessed on August 5, 2013)

Department of Human Resources [Home](#) | [Français](#)

Open Competitions[Screen Help?](#)

**** Do you have what it takes to be a Court Interpreter? ****

The New Brunswick Translation Bureau has an ongoing requirement for qualified professionals to supply court interpretation services on a freelance basis. Court interpretation services are contracted through the Government of New Brunswick's public tendering process.

To expand the pool of qualified professionals in the province to meet current and future needs, the New Brunswick Translation Bureau will conduct an evaluation session for individuals interested in pursuing Level 1 Interpreter Certification. Qualified applicants will be invited to participate in certification training provided by the New Brunswick Translation Bureau.

To be eligible, you must possess the following qualifications:

- a university degree in interpretation or translation; or a related degree with a minimum of 2 years directly related experience
- excellent working knowledge of French and English
- ability to work independently and travel for work

Please submit your resume and qualifications to:

www.ere.gnb.ca

Department of Government Services
Human Resources Branch
Marysville Place
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1
Phone : (506) 462-5199
Fax: (506) 444-4400

We thank you for your interest however only those invited to attend the evaluation session will be contacted.

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

Dear participant:

New Brunswick is one of the only provinces in Canada to provide initial training to candidates interested in becoming French-English court interpreters, but that training has never been formally assessed. This research project will serve two goals: 1) to seek input from key people who have had past or current involvement with the training in different capacities, in order to evaluate it and recommend improvements; and 2) to satisfy the final requirement of Yorkville University's M.Ed. (Adult Education) program, which involves conducting an action research project. The researcher and M.Ed. student is Jeff Staflund. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Please read the text below and, if you agree to participate in the project, indicate your consent by signing the form and sending it back to Jeff Staflund by e-mail at jayy98@yahoo.com, fax at (506) or mail at 20 Frederick Lane, Fredericton, New Brunswick, E3B 9J6. If you have any questions or concerns you might like addressed before completing the consent form, please contact Jeff Staflund by email or telephone at (506) 478-3206.

Yorkville University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This form and the information it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures involved. Your signature on this form will signify that you have had an adequate opportunity to consider the information, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

The primary focus of this project will be on gathering your perceptions, opinions and feelings about the training through a face-to-face interview-conducted by the researcher. The interviews will be carried out during the month of February 2014.

Having been asked to contribute as a participant in this research project, I understand and agree to the following:

- My comments and thoughts about the training will be collected through an interview. I will have the option to decline to answer any of the questions asked without having to provide a reason.
- Although the researcher is also an employee of the Translation Bureau, my identity will not be shared with the Bureau and my participation in this project will have no impact on my working relationship with the Bureau.
- My interview will be transcribed, saved and stored until the final report has been graded.
- All uses of this research data will remain confidential. No names will be mentioned in the final report. Knowledge of your identity is not required. You will not be required to

write your name or any other identifying information on the research materials. Materials will be held in a secure location accessible only by the researcher and destroyed after the completion of the study.

- The final report will be submitted to the University in late March.
- I give my permission for my comments collected through the interview to be used for research. I understand that I may withdraw my permission at any time. I also understand that I may register any concern or complaint I might have about the research with the researcher mentioned above, or the supervisor of the project, who is also the Dean of Education, Rita Kop. She can be reached in Fredericton at (506) 454-1220, ext. 1379 or at rkop@yorkvilleu.ca.
- A summary of the final report and/or recommendations may be shared with other individuals or entities interested in the training of court interpreters and the findings may be discussed at symposia or other similar forums. However, the names of participants will be kept confidential at all times.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**Identifying Information**

1. Name:
2. Job title:
3. Gender:
4. Age:

Interview Questions

1. What type of work do you do?
2. Please describe *in detail* the type of contact you have with official-language court interpreters.
 - a. Nature and frequency of contact
 - b. How long have you worked with court interpreters?
 - c. Do you get to see them working in court?
 - d. Do you get feedback on interpreter performance from other parties?
3. What is your understanding of the work that court interpreters do?
 - a. What is your educational background, particularly with regard to legal studies and/or language?
 - b. How would you assess your level of fluency in the official languages? What type of training or experience do you have with official languages?
 - c. How familiar are you with court proceedings?

- d. Do you think the interpreters need to know the legal system well to do their jobs well?
 - e. In your view, what are the most important things that court interpreters need to know to do their job well?
4. Were you aware that official-language court interpreters in New Brunswick have to take the Translation Bureau's training and pass the Bureau's exams before they can interpret in court? (For interviewees with in-depth knowledge of the training program, the questions in italics will be asked.)
- a. What do you know about the Translation Bureau and how it operates?
 - b. What do you know about the training program and/or the exams?
 - c. Who received the training?
 - d. How much funding is available for training?
 - e. *In your words, what is the difference between a level-I and a level-II interpreter?*
 - i. *Is the distinction helpful? Please explain.*
 - ii. *Can you think of a more accurate system of levels?*
 - f. *What do you think of the course materials? (if applicable)*
 - i. *Manual*
 1. *Was the manual clear and understandable?*
 2. *What did you think of the way it was organized?*
 3. *Is there anything you would change about the manual?*
 - ii. *Exercises*
 1. *How helpful were the exercises?*
 2. *How did they help or impede your learning?*

3. *What did you think of the level of difficulty? Were some exercises too difficult?*
 4. *Were the exercises enjoyable?*
 5. *Is there anything you would change about the exercises?*
- iii. *Presentations by guest speakers*
1. *How helpful were the presentations?*
 2. *Which ones were useful and which were not?*
 3. *Is there anything you would change about the presentations?*
- iv. *Facilitators*
1. *Were the facilitators well prepared?*
 2. *In your view, how effective were they at:*
 - a. *Keeping your interest?*
 - b. *Getting the main ideas across?*
 - c. *Engaging you?*
- v. *Facilities (classroom, equipment, lighting, etc.)*
- g. *What do you think of the duration of the training? Sufficient, too long, too short?*
 - h. *What did you think of the workload?*
 - i. *Before the training?*
 - ii. *During the training?*
 - i. *What do you think of the location of the training? (Translation Bureau in Fredericton)*
 - j. *Are you familiar with the initial screening process?*
 - i. *Can you describe your experience with the initial screening?*

- ii. *Do you believe it measures aptitude accurately?*
 - iii. *Is there anything you would have done differently?*
 - iv. *If you're involved in the screening, what is your sense of the success rate?*
 - k. *Are you familiar with the final tests?*
 - i. *What is your experience with the final tests?*
 - ii. *Do you believe they measure ability accurately?*
 - iii. *Do you believe they reflect what court interpreters need to know to do their jobs well?*
 - iv. *Many court-interpreter tests (CTTIC, Ontario) have a written component that requires substantial knowledge of the legal system. What do you think of that?*
 - v. *Does the training prepare candidates adequately for the test?*
 - vi. *Is enough time given?*
 - vii. *Is there anything you would do differently?*
 - viii. *How many tries should interpreters get?*
 - ix. *Should evaluation be done differently? If so, how?*
 - l. *How well did the training prepare you for actual court work?*
 - i. *If you felt it did not prepare you well, what could have been done differently?*
5. *Did you feel supported throughout the training? Please elaborate.*
6. *Would you be interested (and to what extent would you be interested) in participating in the following:*
 - a. *An on-line component (particularly for learning vocabulary and legal concepts)?*

- b. A discussion board where participants could post questions and interact with other interpreters?*
 - c. A mentoring program where a participant would be matched with an experienced court interpreter?*
 - d. Professional development sessions offered:*
 - i. On-line (through webcast, podcast)?*
 - ii. In person, likely in Fredericton?*
 - iii. By mail?*
 - iv. If such sessions were offered, how often would you be able to participate in them?*
7. Is there anything you would like to add?
8. Is there anything further you would like to know about the study?
9. Would you be willing to be contacted again if the interviewer has more questions?
10. May the research quote you (anonymously) in the final report?
11. Would you like to have the opportunity to read over the transcription of your interview and make changes?

APPENDIX D: WORK PERMISSION FORM

Date: January 15, 2014

To: Pascale Bergeron, Acting Managing Director, Translation Bureau
Department of Government Services, Government of New Brunswick

From: Jeff Staflund, staff interpreter

Subject: Request for permission to conduct study related to the court-interpreter training program

Pascale,

As discussed, here is a summary of the research project that I wish to conduct regarding the Translation Bureau's court interpreter training program. I discussed the program on numerous occasions with Lisette Surette and she is very supportive of it. I am carrying out this project in fulfillment of the final requirement of Yorkville University's M.Ed. (Adult Education) program.

My research project is aimed at evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the Government of New Brunswick's current training program for court interpreters. The primary focus will be on gathering perceptions, opinions and feelings about the training by interviewing a small number of key stakeholders (court interpreters who have taken the training, Translation Bureau officials/staff, and court employees from the New Brunswick Department of Justice) and reviewing various administrative documents (reports, feedback) and any other documentation deemed relevant and to which the researcher has access. The data will be collected, collated and analyzed over a two-month period in early 2014. A final report containing the analysis and recommendations will then be drafted in March 2014 and submitted to the University for marking by the end of that month. The recommendations will also be shared with the Translation Bureau for future improvements to the training program. Please note that Yorkville University adheres to the Tri-Council ethical standards related to research involving human participants.

Because this project deals with a Translation Bureau program, I need documented proof that you are giving me permission to conduct it. Please do not hesitate to contact the Dean of Education, Rita Kop, at rkop@yorkvilleu.ca, or me if you have any questions or concerns. By signing this form, you are indicating approval.

I, Pascale Bergeron, authorize Jeff Staflund to conduct the research project described above.

(Signature)

(Date)