





# Training legal translators and interpreters: Creation and reception of didactic materials and resources to train non-professional translators and interpreters in languages of lesser diffusion

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**Abstract.** Amidst the shift in migratory paradigms, the Erasmus+ project DIALOGOS aims to offer a solution to linguistic barriers faced by migrant population when it comes to accessing Public Services. Said barriers are even more significant in the case of Languages of Lesser Diffusion (LLD) speakers, for which there is a lack of qualified linguistic professionals and, thus, ad hoc interpreters with no formal training are drawn on. This results in inequalities in accessing services like healthcare or legal assistance. In this context, DIALOGOS suggests the creation of a training course in Public Service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT) addressed to LLD speakers, to enable them to provide quality linguistic assistance. This paper focuses on analysing the materials designed as part of the legal-administrative module of the course, as well as the didactic methodologies adopted. We will also consider the feedback received from the attendants of the pilot course, which took place on March 2024 in Madrid. Our main objective is to present the methodology for materials creation and PSIT training, with special emphasis on the legal field and its peculiarities. Additionally, in line with the project's general objectives, we aim at contributing to the inclusion of migrant population in the host society and the professionalisation of PSIT.

**Keywords.** PSIT, languages of lesser diffusion, interpreting and translation training, legal-administrative setting, social inclusion.

## Formación en traducción e interpretación jurídico-administrativa: Creación y recepción de materiales didácticos para la formación de traductores e intérpretes no profesionales en lenguas de menor difusión

**Resumen.** En un contexto de cambio en los paradigmas migratorios, el proyecto Erasmus+ DIALOGOS nace con el objetivo de ofrecer una solución para las barreras lingüísticas a las que se enfrenta la población migrante a la hora de acceder a los servicios públicos. Estas son aún más significativas en el caso de los hablantes de lenguas de menor difusión (LMD), para los que apenas existen profesionales lingüísticos cualificados y, por ello, se recurre a intérpretes *ad hoc* que carecen de formación. Esto implica desigualdades a la hora de acceder a servicios como la sanidad o la asistencia jurídica. Por esta razón, DIALOGOS propone la creación de un curso de formación en Traducción e Interpretación en Servicios Públicos (TISP) dirigido a hablantes de LMD que les permita proporcionar una asistencia lingüística de calidad. En este artículo, se analizarán los materiales diseñados como parte del módulo de traducción e interpretación jurídico-administrativa del curso de DIALOGOS. Describiremos el proceso de creación de materiales, explicando los contenidos que se han incluido y las metodologías didácticas adoptadas. Se analizará también la recepción por parte los alumnos del curso piloto, que tuvo lugar en marzo de 2024 en Madrid. Así, se presentará una metodología de creación de materiales y formación en TISP, con especial énfasis en el ámbito jurídico, dadas las dificultades

específicas que comporta. Como objetivos generales del proyecto, se pretende contribuir a la inclusión de la población migrante en la sociedad de llegada y la profesionalización de la TISP.

**Palabras clave:** TISP, lenguas de menor difusión, formación en traducción e interpretación, ámbito jurídico-administrativo, inclusión social.

**Summary.** 1. Introduction and objectives. 1.1. PSIT, communication barriers, and social inclusion. 1.2. The DIALOGOS Erasmus+ Project: overview and objectives. 1.3. Translation competence and legal translation challenges. 1.4. Objectives. 2. Methodology. 3. Results: material creation and reception. 3.1. Results from module design: methodologies and resulting materials. 3.2. Results from the surveys: reception of the pilot course's legal-administrative module. 4. Discussion of the results from the surveys. 5. Future steps and conclusions.

## 1. Introduction and objectives

Southern Mediterranean countries often serve as the first landing points for migrants, acting as gateways into the European Union. Therefore, countries such as Greece, Italy, and Spain face specific challenges related to migration. In this context, multilingual professionals should be on hand to address any communication barriers that may arise when providing migrants with urgent medical or administrative support upon arrival. Nonetheless, ad hoc individuals who lack training in intercultural communication, mediation, translation, and interpreting are usually relied on to provide linguistic assistance. Hence, the need for the Erasmus+ Project: DIALOGOS, which brings together representatives from both academia and society to develop a foundational training in Public Service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT) for ad hoc interpreters and translators of Languages of Lesser Diffusion (LLDs).

Thus, in this section we will 1) explore the communication and inclusion barriers faced by migrant population who do not speak the language of their host societies; 2) present an overview of the DIALOGOS project, its steps and objectives; 3) delve into the notion of translation competence, with a special emphasis on legal translation, as a departure point to take into account for the material creation; and 4) present the objectives of this paper.

### 1.1. PSIT, communication barriers, and social inclusion

As Vitalaru (2024: 1) states, multicultural societies are characterised by the coming into contact of local and newcomers' groups. This gives way to new situations in the political and socioeconomic realms, stemming from the asymmetry in cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Vitalaru 2024: 2). In this same line, Lázaro Gutiérrez (2022: 254) points out that language is one of the main access barriers to public services. Under this light, the need for professional interpreting and translation services is highlighted, and PSIT viewed as a useful tool to grant the migrant population access to said services (Pena 2016: 2). What is essential about PSIT is its focus on crucial areas for the migrant population's social inclusion, such as healthcare, education, social services and employment, or the legal-administrative setting, on which this paper focuses. If we consider statements such as Pena's (2016: 2) that oftentimes, without PSIT intervention, professionals and users remain unaware of the occurrence of communication problems, we can imagine what the situation will be for users of public services who are speakers of LLDs. In this vein, the DIALOGOS project has defined LLDs as languages for which it is more difficult to find support in the form of written information materials, mediation resources, linguistic professionals, training, etc. in each geographical area. Authors such as Hale (2011: 7) have pointed out the fact that, whereas for more established community languages there is a wider array of highly trained professional interpreters, that is not necessarily the case for new and emerging community languages.

In the case of the legal setting this question becomes crucial. In fact, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM-UN 2019: 3-4), access to justice is also a tool to ensure fulfilment of other rights. Precarious access to justice for migrants, particularly those who have no regular status, is due to both situational and institutional factors (ibid.). The situation in which the migrant population finds itself may already be vulnerable, given that they may not know the language, legal processes and culture of the host society, and access barriers to public services like justice further increase vulnerability. In the case of LLDs, vulnerability is even higher: the lack of professionalisation of PSIT in certain countries, such as Spain (see Vitalaru 2024: 2) added to the scarcity of resources in LLDs, leads to the use ad hoc interpreters. This practice raises questions regarding ethical issues, as these interpreters belong to the communities they interpret for, sometimes they might even be children brokers (see Iliescu Gheorghiu & Ortega Herráez 2015: 24), or have no formal quality training in PSIT, which might result in unbeneficial outcomes. In this regard, proposals such as Aning's (2023) arise, offering different solutions to guarantee LLDs speakers' access to public services, such as language training, provision of translation and interpretation services, and promotion and protection of linguistic human rights for all individuals, regardless their background, on the side of civil and community organisations. Nonetheless, when the provision of professional interpreters and translators is not possible and ad hoc interpreters are the only option available for speakers of LLDs, other measures might be required. This is where the DIALOGOS project comes in.

### 1.2. The DIALOGOS Erasmus+ Project: overview and objectives

*DIALOGOS: Communication in Public Service Interpreting and Translating with Languages of Lesser Diffusion* (2022-1-ES01-KA220-HED-000086867) is a project funded by the European Union which has three partner countries: Spain, Greece, and Italy. There is one university and one partner association for each

country, namely, the University of Alcalá, and the association *Fundación Abrazando Ilusiones* in Spain; the University of Genoa and the San Marcellino Association in the case of Italy; and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Major Development Agency Thessaloniki in Greece. The project's goal is to design a training module in PSIT for LLDs, for which there is a lack of training options, in alignment with the EU's core principles of diversity and inclusion. To achieve this, four Work Packages (WP) are contemplated within the project development (for a more in-depth explanation regarding WPs, see the DIALOGOS webpage<sup>1</sup>). WP1 focused on the administrative side of the project, establishing aspects such as the division of tasks between the participating entities. Through a set of surveys and interviews from relevant stakeholders, WP2 aimed to identify the needs of translators, interpreters and public service providers currently working with migrants, the most widely used LLDs, and who exactly carries out translation and interpreting activities, as well as to ascertain the contents and methodologies that should be included in a PSIT training course. Furthermore, a mapping task was carried out to determine training offers in PSIT in the partner countries, as well as the materials available in LLDs. Subsequently, WP3 focused on course design and material creation, participant selection, and course piloting. Thus, the expected results from WP3 were to develop a pilot training course and to produce an analysis report. Finally, WP4 concentrates on designing a blended open-access course. This paper focuses on the materials created for the legal module of the pilot course developed within WP3.

### 1.3. Translation competence and legal translation challenges

To develop PSIT training materials and modules, professional translation competences should be considered as a means of enhancing employability (Vitalaru 2022: 335). In fact, according to Prieto Ramos (2024: 139), since the Bologna Process, the competence-based approach to translator training has gained momentum. Translation competence is in general considered as an acquired and acquirable one, which goes beyond mere bilingualism, and within which all sub-competences are interlinked and influence both the translation process and product (Hurtado Albir et al. 2022: 30). This has a special importance when we are dealing with LLDs ad hoc interpreters, for whom, in an area like Spain, there is not much training available, as the mapping task carried out as part of WP2 showed. In general, the main gap that is found is that of training offers that intersect LLDs, DIALOGOS' settings of interest (social-healthcare and legal-humanitarian, in a broad sense: PSIT) and the higher education level<sup>2</sup>.

Regarding the legal setting, according to Cao (2014: 107), legal translation/interpreting is "a type of specialised and specialist translation" which "has its unique challenges [...] and [...] unique pedagogical issues". In this regard, Prieto Ramos (2024: 139) points out that competence development is at the centre of legal translation training. Among the specific challenges of the legal setting, we can find the degree of specialisation. Legal language and terminology are often complex for trainees without prior experience in PSIT. The specialised terminology, its variation (Biel 2023: 91) and asymmetry in the pair of legal cultures which may even belong to different legal traditions, account for some of the most well-known issues. The normative and performative nature of the legal language (Cao 2007: 13) might also pose a challenge, as it makes the accuracy of the translations crucial. Another challenge is the variety of genres, which characteristics the legal translator/interpreter should know (Prieto Ramos 2014: 263). Additionally, the legal field requires standards of ethics and confidentiality, making it necessary for trainees to be aware of the functioning of their working legal systems and cultural differences.

Under this light, acquisition of translation competence will be an important ally when it comes to legal translation and interpreting. In this regard, the EMT Network's (2022) model is constituted by five main areas in which translators should acquire competence, namely 1) language and culture, 2) translation, 3) technology, 4) personal and interpersonal sub-competence, and 5) service provision sub-competence. As mentioned above, due to the specific challenges posed by legal translation, our focus for the legal module of the pilot course was on developing the 1) language and culture, 2) translation, and 5) service provision sub-competences. Other aspects of the EMT Network's competence model were worked on in other modules of the course. According to the EMT Network's description (2022: 6-11), the language and culture sub-competence includes transcultural and sociolinguistic awareness, and communicative skills. Thus, the translator should be able to identify cultural elements, values and references, and comply with the genre conventions. The translation sub-competence, on the other hand, contemplates the methodological, strategic, and thematic competences that precede the meaning-transfer (e.g. research, documentation and quality assurance processes). This sub-competence states that the translator should acquire thematic and domain-specific knowledge (i.e. terminology and concept systems) and should know how to mediate in specific intercultural contexts (like PSIT). Finally, the service provision sub-competence entails the skills related to the implementation of translation and language services in a professional context, like the critical assessment of one's work, and the knowledge and implementation of codes of ethics, among others.

### 1.4. Objectives

Before moving on to the methodological part of this paper, we will review its objectives. In this vein, the specific objectives of the present paper are 1) to analyse the materials designed as part of the legal module of the pilot course for DIALOGOS, 2) to describe the process of material creation, detailing the contents

<sup>1</sup> DIALOGOS (n.d.). <https://DIALOGOSerasmus.eu/>

<sup>2</sup> For further information regarding the mapping task results please, see the DIALOGOS website's Project Report Activity 2.3. <https://DIALOGOSerasmus.eu/reports/>

included and the didactic methodologies employed, and 3) to analyse the reception of the pilot course by students.

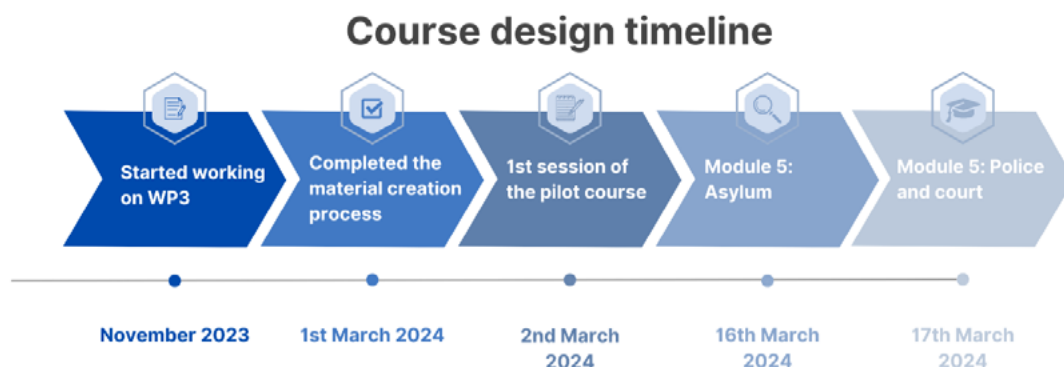
## 2. Methodology

The course design process was encompassed in WP3 within the DIALOGOS project. Accordingly, we considered some of the results gathered from the previous work packages, specifically, the answers obtained in the interviews made as part of WP2.

Regarding contents, the focus was placed on practice rather than theory. The value of hands-on learning was highlighted by all respondents to the WP2 surveys, suggesting the introduction of role plays and mock scenarios to better equip trainees to operate across different contexts and cultural environments. Additionally, they also emphasised the importance of enhancing language proficiency and intercultural competence, along with other psychosocial skills like empathy, stress management and non-verbal communication. On the other hand, in terms of training methodologies, interviewees across Spain, Greece, and Italy agreed on the advantages of self-paced and collaborative learning formats. Based on these findings, we developed the course structure. Drawing on the team's experience in the Master's Degree in Intercultural Communication, Interpreting, and Translation at the University of Alcalá, we proposed a thematic structure comprising modules that addressed key areas of interest for DIALOGOS: PSIT within healthcare, legal, humanitarian, and asylum contexts. Specifically, Module 5 focuses on translation and interpreting in legal contexts.

As mentioned above, DIALOGOS' goal is to develop an online course; however, we first needed to pilot the materials to evaluate their effectiveness and make any necessary adjustments. The effectivity of these materials was tested in a pilot course held in Madrid, Spain. A total of seventeen participants took part in the pilot course, who were certified with a University of Alcalá's official course certification. The course consisted of six sessions of four hours each, which took place on 2nd, 3rd, 9th, 10th, 16th, and 17th of March 2024. All of them were video recorded for their subsequent analysis. Every two sessions, trainees were handed a survey to assess the reception of the module. Figure 1 shows the course design and teaching timeline.

Figure 1. Course design and teaching timeline



Specifically, Module 5 focuses on translation and interpreting in legal contexts. As mentioned above, DIALOGOS' goal is to develop an online course; however, we first needed to pilot the materials. Since the pilot course was set to take place in Spain, the materials were designed with the Spanish context in mind. Consequently, Module 5 addressed the following topics: 1) law enforcement in Spain; 2) the Spanish legal system; and 3) interpreting and translating in police and court settings –see Table 1 for a more detailed overview of the specific issues addressed. Following evaluation, the content would be adapted to the online format.

Table 1. Contents of Module 5 of DIALOGOS pilot course

Topic	Sub-topics	Sub-competence tackled	Structure within the pilot course
1) Law enforcement in Spain	Law enforcement: The different corps and their organisation – <i>Cuerpo Nacional de Policía</i> – <i>Guardia Civil</i> – Autonomic corps	Language and culture Translation	10-11.30h 17/03/2024
2) The Spanish legal system	How does the Spanish legal system work? – Branches of law – Figures and institutions – Main courts	Language and culture Translation	12-13h 17/03/2024

Topic	Sub-topics	Sub-competence tackled	Structure within the pilot course
3) Interpreting and translating in police and court settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In which situations is a translator or an interpreter needed in police settings?</li> <li>- In which situations is a translator or an interpreter needed in court or administrative settings?</li> <li>- Challenges of legal settings</li> <li>- Codes of ethics</li> </ul>	Translation Service provision	13-14h 17/03/2024

As can be seen, topics 1) and 2) are aimed at reinforcing both the language and cultural, as well as the thematic (part of the translation sub-competence in the EMT Network's Framework, 2022) sub-competences as described in section 1.3. of this paper. Finally, topic 3) would be related to the service provision and translation competences and helps the students understand the unique aspects of translating and interpreting in police and court settings, equipping them to identify challenges and apply appropriate strategies to address them in alignment with professional ethical principles.

After establishing a fixed-course structure, we began the material design process, addressing several key challenges. Apart from the difficulties specific to the legal field, we needed to consider the profile of our students: bilingual and bicultural individuals fluent in Spanish and at least one LLD, who may not have a university-level education or prior experience in PSIT. This required the team to ensure that the materials were accessible, using clear language and practical examples while avoiding overly complex academic or technical terms. Additionally, while foundational PSIT concepts are introduced in earlier modules, trainees may need extra time to fully internalise them. Therefore, the materials for the legal module had to be designed to continually emphasise critical areas such as intercultural competence, cross-cultural communication, interpreting and translation challenges and ethical considerations.

Time limitations presented an additional constraint. As noted, one of DIALOGOS' objectives was to create a PSIT course suitable for crisis situations, aimed at quickly training LLDs speakers to provide linguistic assistance. Furthermore, due to logistical constraints, the pilot course was limited to a maximum of six 4-hour sessions, with only one session allocated to Module 5. Consequently, the materials had to be concise and focus solely on the most essential content whilst making sure not to overload students with excessive information. This required finding a balance between providing critical theoretical information and promoting trainees' participation and discussion to aid in internalising course content.

Additionally, every two sessions, surveys were conducted to gather the students' feedback. The content and structure of the surveys is simple and short, to ensure the correct linguistic understanding of the questions and make sure that as few questions as possible were left blank. Hence, the survey consists of six questions and a final section for comments. The questions included are aimed at facilitating the provision of feedback from students and are as follows: 1) Did you like yesterday's and today's sessions? Why?; 2) What did you like the most [about the sessions]? Why?; 3) What did you like the least? Why?; 4) What would you change?; 5) What would you add?; 6) Please, indicate your level of understanding with respect to the following aspects on a scale of 1-5 (1-not at all, 2-very low, 3-medium, 4-high, 5-very high); and 7) Other comments you would like to add. All questions were open-ended, except question 6, in which participants had to assign a score to a series of items listed in section 3.2.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the final DIALOGOS course is meant to be an online training program accessible to a global audience interested in PSIT, mediation, and linguistic assistance. Consequently, the materials and methodologies developed for the pilot course had to be adaptable for an online learning environment that may limit opportunities for real-time interaction, trainees' collaboration and hands-on practice.

### 3. Results: material creation and reception

This section is divided in two subsections. The first will cover the methods employed in the material creation and teaching of Module 5 within the pilot course. In the second section, we will present the results of the surveys conducted to receive feedback and assess trainees' reception.

#### 3.1. Results from module design: methodologies and resulting materials

Considering the challenges mentioned above, as well as the results from WP2, it was our aim to develop materials that were engaging for students and fostered their interest whilst covering the main issues involved in translation and interpreting in police and court settings.

Research has shown that videos can be an effective tool for enhancing learning outcomes, as they enable trainees to construct mental representations of concepts through the combination of image and sound (Magadán Díaz & Rivas García 2021: 187). For this reason, two short videos were created to cover the most theoretical aspects of Module 5, as they could be perceived as especially complex by students. The first video outlined the main characteristics of law enforcement bodies in Spain, whilst the second focused on law and the functioning of the Spanish legal system. Both were voiced over by the authors of the present paper, who were as well the instructors of the legal module in the pilot course. The objective of the videos

was to describe key theoretical concepts in a clear and engaging manner. For instance, to explain the various branches of law, the videos used cartoons illustrating the issues each branch addresses, helping trainees assimilate the information more effectively (Figure 1). Additionally, real images of different courts operating in Spain were included to help students become familiar with courtroom layouts, allowing them to understand where each party stands in a trial and where interpreters are positioned.

Figure 2. Screenshots taken from the video on the Spanish legal system created for Module 5.



The use of slide decks is another effective method for enhancing trainees' learning outcomes (Murat Uzun & Kilis 2019: 41). Consequently, we developed a presentation to complement the information provided in the videos, with a focus on the specificities of translating and interpreting in legal settings. The presentation addressed the following key aspects: (1) legal contexts in which language professionals are needed; (2) domain-specific challenges encountered by translators and interpreters; (3) professional ethics and codes of conduct for legal translators and interpreters; (4) recommended resources for further study; and (5) a final activity involving a collaborative glossary, which entailed giving trainees a set of frequent words in the legal field and asking them to translate these terms into their LLDs (Figure 2). Additionally, the presentation also included open-ended questions to foster students' reflection on several issues, like how they would act when facing certain ethical or cultural dilemmas.

Figure 3. Photograph taken during the pilot course showing the final collaborative glossary with the translation of different legal terms as provided by trainees.

Término origen	Término meta
Policia	boolis (Arabic: الشرطة) / 警察 (Chinese)
Juez	gansore (Arabic: القاضي) / 法官 (Chinese)
Victima	dhibane (Arabic: الضحية) / 受害者 (Chinese)
Pasaporte	basabor (Arabic: جواز سفر) / 护照 (Chinese)

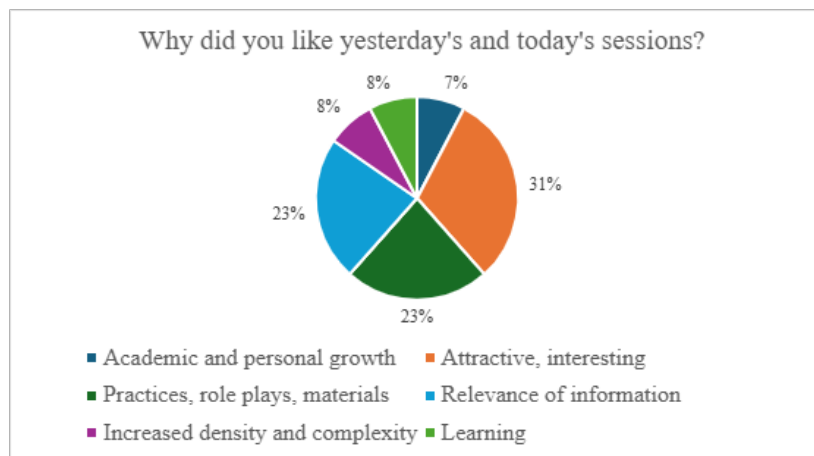
To complement the theoretical foundation provided by the videos and slide deck, we designed a set of roleplays, since these are widely regarded as the most effective method for practising legal interpreting and becoming familiar with specialised terminology (Dahnberg 2023: 292, Klabal 2023: 34). The first roleplay is set in a court, where a woman participates in an interview related to a gender-based violence complaint. The second roleplay continues the narrative and involves an arrest. Finally, the third roleplay takes place in a police station and addresses a drug-related offence. All of them are written in Spanish since it is the only language trainees are expected to share. Accordingly, their aim becomes to help students to improve their listening, note-taking and memorisation skills whilst becoming aware of the specific difficulties involved in translation and interpreting in court and police settings. Apart from specialised terminology, the roleplays also incorporate swear words, idioms and culture-specific items to prompt trainees to consider how they might translate these aspects into their LLDs. For instance, the drug-related roleplay included words like *camello* (dealer) and *mula* (mule), which are common in drug argot and might present some challenges when rendering them into LLDs. Besides, the scenarios depicted also show ethical dilemmas to prepare students to respond appropriately if faced with similar situations in their professional careers as translators and interpreters. Finally, to assess trainees' level of knowledge acquisition, we designed an interactive quiz via Kahoot, including questions related to the functioning of law enforcement and justice in Spain, and the specificities of legal translation and interpreting.

### 3.2. Results from the surveys: reception of the pilot course’s legal-administrative module

We will now present the results from the surveys carried out after the legal module. The surveys were passed out to the 13 students in the classroom after the last session of the module on 17 March 2024, which was conducted by the authors of this paper. Nevertheless, these surveys also cover the materials piloted in the previous session, which was specifically focused on the asylum process in Spain and the role of translators and interpreters along its different stages. The materials developed for this session were created by researchers other than the authors of the present paper and thus they have not been considered for this research. However, trainees also took them into account when responding the surveys.

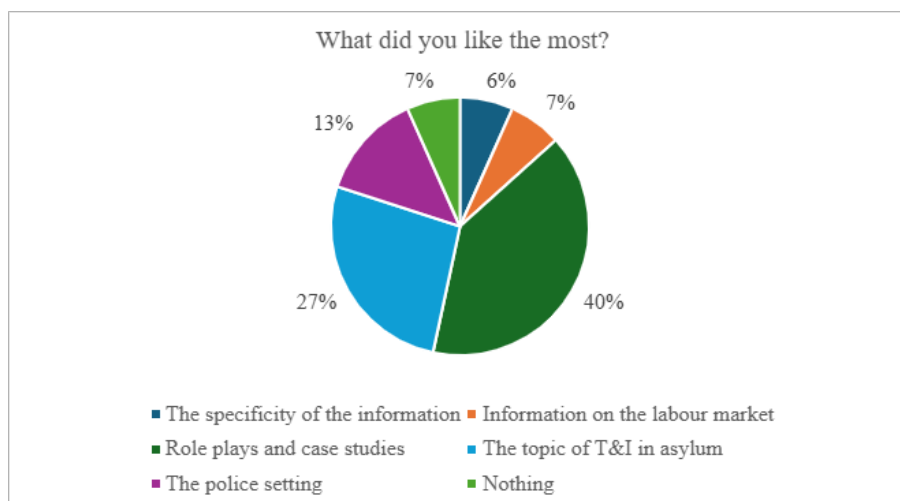
Regarding the first question, on whether the students liked the session or not, and why, all respondents gave positive answers. As can be seen in Figure 3, the largest proportion (31%) responded that they liked the sessions because they were “attractive” or “interesting”. The second most common reasons for positive feedback were both that they considered the information included to be relevant (23%) and that they enjoyed the inclusion of practical activities in the form of role plays and case studies (23%). It is also interesting to mention that one respondent (8%) liked the sessions and, although they found the complexity of the information to be higher in comparison to other sessions, “they weren’t difficult”. Another respondent (8%) noted that the sessions would be valuable because they had the chance to “learn about issues that will allow me to grow on the academic and personal level”.

Figure 4. Q1. Why did you like yesterday’s and today’s sessions?



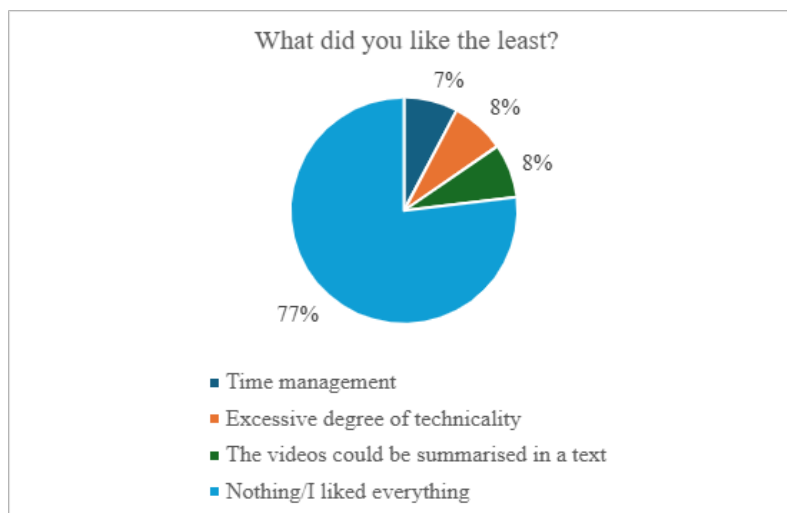
The second question (Q2) focused on the aspects that the students highlighted more positively. The count of answers considered the fact that students sometimes mentioned different aspects in a single answer. For example, one student mentioned that they liked “the case studies of the judicial system and the experiences of the asylum office”. Thus, as can be seen in Figure 4, the majority (40%) of respondents considered the role plays and case studies to be the best part of the sessions, followed by the content of Translation and Interpreting in asylum seeking settings (27%), and the information regarding the police setting (13%). The same respondent who considered that the complexity of the information was higher in this module, regarded the specificity of information as one of the better-liked aspects (6%).

Figure 5. Q2. What did you like the most?



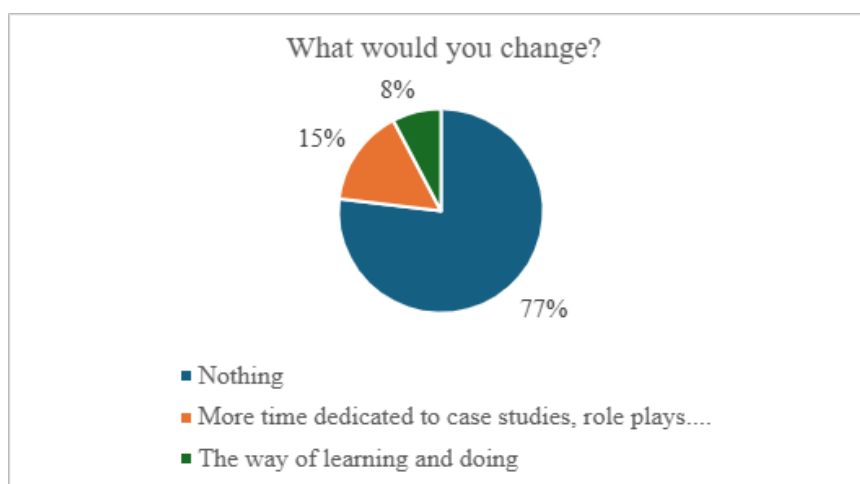
When asked about the aspects they liked the least (Q3), most respondents (77%) claimed to have liked everything or, at least, that there were no aspects they did not like (Figure 5). One respondent mentioned that time management would be improvable, since some contents “were not touched upon due to lack of time”. Another student considered the depth in which the judicial and police settings were presented as “too technical”. Finally, one respondent stated that the information presented in a video format could have been summarized in a text, but they added that they considered the videos “a way to make the content different so keeping the videos is still fine”.

Figure 6. Q3. What did you like the least?



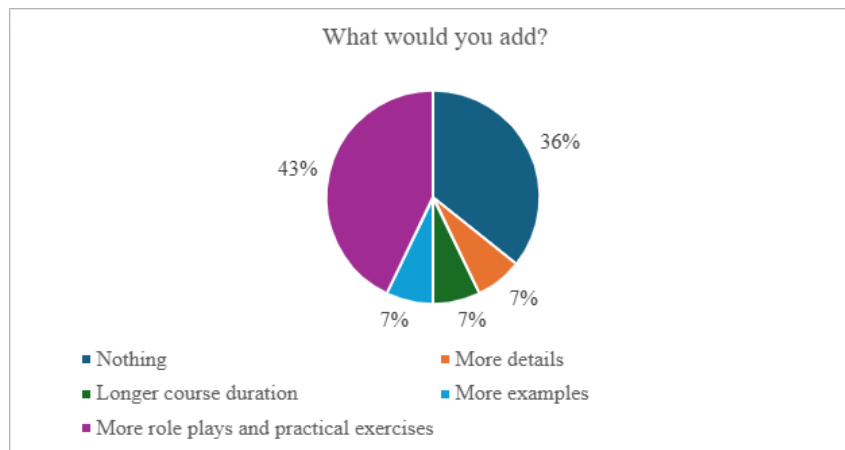
Q4 asks the respondents about the aspects of the sessions they would like to change (Figure 6). In line with the results of the previous question (Q3. What did you like the least?), 77% of the respondents stated that there was nothing they would like to change. Two students (15%) answered that they would have dedicated more time to practical activities. Out of those two respondents, one of them mentioned that practical activities were “more interesting and applied”. It is worth drawing attention to the fact that one respondent (8%) mentioned that they would like to change “the way of learning and doing”, although nothing else is specified. This is a respondent that had previously answered that there were no aspects they liked (Q2) or disliked (Q3) and responded affirmatively when asked whether they had liked the sessions (Q1).

Figure 7. Q4. What would you change?



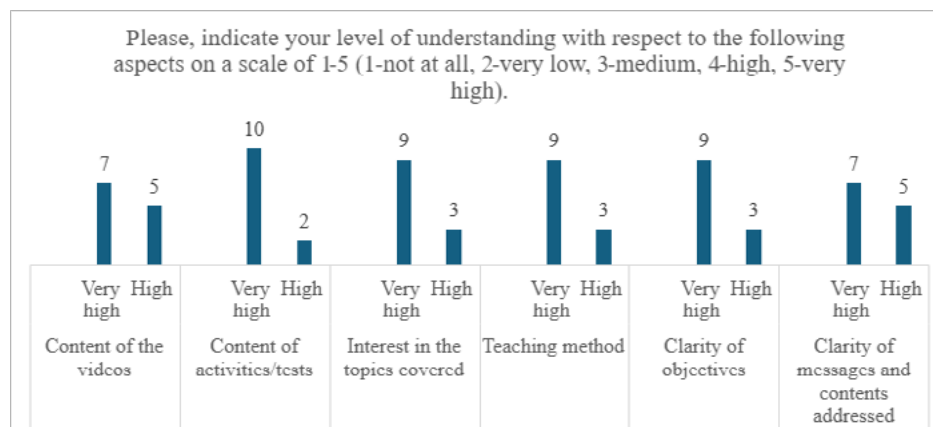
In line with the changes they would introduce, respondents were asked whether they would add anything to the contents of the sessions (Figure 7). Also, in line with the results of the previous questions, a majority (43%) answered that they would add more case studies and practical activities. Within the six students that would add this type of activity, one mentioned that they would include “document translation practices”, showing an interest in translation of written specialised texts and/or sight translation. Some of the responses were slightly vague, like the two students who stated that they would add “more details” (7%) and “more examples” (7%), respectively. It might be argued that the latter might also be referring to the inclusion of more practical activities (case studies). Finally, one respondent (7%) mentioned that they would add “more course hours”. As in Q1, the count considered the fact that students sometimes mentioned different aspects in a single answer.

Figure 8. Q5. What would you add?



In the next question (Q6) respondents were asked to rate from 1 to 5 the level of understanding of or interest in a number of items, namely: the content of the videos, the content of the activities, their interest in the topics covered, the teaching methods, the clarity of objectives, and the clarity of the messages and the contents addressed. It is relevant to note that none of the respondents ranked their understanding of or interest in the items to be lower than 4 (high) on the scale from 1 to 5 (see Figure 8). It is also important to mention that one of the 13 respondents did not answer this question, and percentages have been calculated for the 12 responses we got. Hence, regarding the content of the videos, seven students (58%) considered their understanding to be very high, and six (42%) to be high. The understanding of the content of the activities carried out in class was also considered very high, with ten respondents (83%) selecting that option. Their understanding of the teaching methods and the clarity of the objectives was considered to be very high (75%), with three students (25%) claiming that it was high. The interest on the topics covered was ranked as very high by nine students (75%) and as just high by three of them (25%). Finally, we observe a slight decrease in the understanding of the messages and contents addressed in the sessions, with seven respondents (58%) stating that it was very high and five (42%) that it was high. It should be mentioned that no follow-up question was included to allow understanding of the motivation behind their responses.

Figure 9. Q6. Please, indicate your level of understanding with respect to the following aspects on a scale of 1-5 (1-not at all, 2-very low, 3-medium, 4-high, 5-very high).



Conclusively, regarding the last section, which asked the students to include any other comments, it seems worth mentioning that one respondent (8%) stated that they were “interested in more of these courses and in a career in translation and interpreting”.

#### 4. Discussion of the results from the surveys

In general, the students enjoyed the sessions of the legal module. The main reasons seem to be the inclusion of practical activities (role plays, case studies), which they identified as an aspect they liked, and which increase they included as an aspect that they would change. Such activities enable them to envision themselves in the context, consider potential challenges, and reflect on how they would address these challenges while receiving immediate feedback from the trainers.

The students’ understanding of the objectives of the session, topics covered, teaching methods, and materials employed was high, even as some of the respondents pointed to the increased thematic complexity. This might have been due to several reasons: the clarity of the materials employed, the teaching methods, the students’ prior experience in the legal settings covered (asylum, court, police) ... Nonetheless, further

research should be conducted to determine a clear relationship between students' understanding and its motivation. However, it might be argued that one of the challenges of the legal setting, namely its high degree of specialisation, has been, if not overcome, at least successfully introduced to students, laying a foundation for later understanding of more complex legal concepts. On the other hand, at least one student mentioned that they found this complexity enticing and included it in their reasons for liking the sessions. It was also common, as seen in the responses to Q5 (What would you like to change?), for the students to demand more information and examples, signalling that, despite complexity, students' motivation plays a key role in teaching challenging concepts. In this vein, students' motivation might be directly related to their personal motivations, the teaching methods, and the syllabus.

It might also be argued that there are certain branches or aspects of legal translation and interpreting that might benefit from and allow a more practical approach, such as the asylum or the police setting. This might be since, in said settings, it is common to find a combination of specialised and general discourse (i.e. interviews, witness statements, etc.) and what poses a challenge in those cases is not just the thematic knowledge but the ethical considerations a professional should observe, as well as context-related aspects, such as the sensitivity of the situation. Ethics and sensitivity are also relevant in court settings; however, language is often extremely formal and specialised, and courts normally follow highly structured procedures where the role of each party is very limited. Hence, having a sound thematic and terminological knowledge becomes essential for interpreters to be able to understand and accurately render the proceedings. Therefore, court settings might require a more theoretical approach, at least in the early stages of the learning process.

Finally, it is worth noting that the results from the surveys presented here correspond only to the legal and asylum module from the pilot course, and that the actual teaching of the course, the real-time development of the lessons, and the reaction of the students, were also valuable sources of information in the piloting process. The students completed the same survey every two sessions, so the amount of information available to the project to develop the online course is greater and more significant.

## 5. Future steps and conclusions

Creating effective materials for legal translation and interpreting was challenging for many reasons. The specificities of the legal field often pose difficulties and, in the case of the DIALOGOS course, the students' profile and the tight schedule were also relevant constraints. Nevertheless, after having piloted the materials designed, we obtained very positive feedback, with trainees pointing out that the materials created were helpful to understand the content. We must take into consideration that the pilot course took place in person, and therefore significant changes will have to be made in adapting content to the online, asynchronous format. This is especially problematic under the light of the survey's results, since the students expressed a strong preference for analysing "real" cases (case studies and role plays). While they could still be included in an online format, the online students will miss out on the teacher's guidance and the reality of practice with classmates. The opportunity to directly ask trainers questions was crucial for trainees to fully understand certain concepts, particularly those related to the functioning of law enforcement in Spain at both the police and court settings. In general, the pilot course was perceived as useful training for the attendants, who, in class, showed high levels of motivation. This is in line with the survey's results. The course was motivating for some students because it allowed them to recognise in themselves an essential quality in the PSIT area, namely that they are speakers of LLDs, and therefore, their collaboration as translators and interpreters is crucial. After the course some students gained employment opportunities in the field, fostering their social inclusion, as well as their autonomy development process. This, as opposed to the potential accusations of intrusiveness, should be seen from the point of view that ad hoc interpreting is something that many of them were already doing without even the most basic training provided by the pilot course. Furthermore, at least one student expressed their interest in pursuing a university education in PSIT. Piloting the legal module and the course in general was also a helpful experience for the instructors as well as for the development of the project. The surveys helped us understand what materials were more engaging for the students and what contents presented more difficulty, as the level of complexity of the legal setting in PSIT training can be adjusted.

To conclude, we would like to mention that, although professional translators and interpreters are, due to their formal training background, the most effective resources in cases of linguistic and cultural asymmetries, ad hoc interpreters are still the providers of linguistic and cultural assistance within the LLDs communities. Thus, as a result from the DIALOGOS project, it is expected that the provision of training helps those ad hoc interpreters initiate a training process in PSIT, encountering certain key points, i.e. ethical considerations, the relevance of thematic and strategic competences, and acknowledgment of the difficulty settings like the legal one entail. Hopefully, what might be achieved as the ultimate goal of the project is the professionalisation of the PSIT discipline through training *also* in LLDs, starting gradually with basic courses until a wider range of university level courses are offered. DIALOGOS could be (one of) the foundation stone(s) for this.

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